

YEDITEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

THE SELF AS A PROBLEM OF EXISTENCE AND
ITS IMAGERY IN PLASTIC ARTS

A Thesis Submitted
by
Elvan G ng r

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
Department of Plastic Arts and Painting

Supervisor
Prof. Dr. M. Turan Aksoy

Istanbul - 2023

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work and that all information in this thesis has been obtained and presented following academic rules and ethical conduct. I have fully cited and referenced all material and results as required by these rules and conduct, and this thesis study does not contain any plagiarism. The necessary permissions have been obtained if any material used in the thesis requires copyright. No material from this thesis has been used to award another degree.

To the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material accepted for the award of any other degree except where due acknowledgment has been made in the text.

I accept all kinds of legal liability that may arise in cases contrary to these situations.

Elvan Güngör

ABSTRACT

THE SELF AS A PROBLEM OF EXISTENCE AND ITS IMAGERY IN PLASTIC ARTS

What is expected from the unity of art and philosophy is to reveal an understanding of art that will mediate the discovery of existential reality by considering existence with an ontological approach. The man who thinks about his own consciousness needs philosophy to make sense of his spirituality. The problem of “existence”- “non-existence” and “self” is the basis of philosophy, which is identical with “ontology” and “metaphysics” and these concepts have been discussed from Ancient Greek ontology to contemporary metaphysics and interpreted in the context of its own era. The knowledge of the existence that the artist sees and determines as reality, constitutes the core subject of art, therefore the aesthetic attitude is primarily based on ontology. While the artist puts the essence of existence into an aesthetic form in matter, he externalizes his perception of being, embodies it, and by reflecting himself, he objectifies the “self” in the work of art. In this study which intends to raise awareness about the interdisciplinary dimensions of the concept of self as an alternative perspective in approaching the artist-artwork relationship; it is aimed to investigate how the artist objectifies the “self” in the work of art throughout the historical process, to examine the representation of consciousness of the self and ontological ways of seeing the existence in intellectual history in plastic arts, to examine what kind of consciousness the artist establishes during the creation process and where reality is positioned according to the artist and finally to examine at what layers self-representations are visible in the artwork according to the ontological approach. To make the ontological statement clearer, the concept is also discussed within psychology and sociology, and the artistic representations are exemplified. The evaluation of the meaning and formal characteristics of the personal works was made by referring to various artists' works.

Keywords: Art, Consciousness, Existence, Ontology, Reality, Self

ÖZET

BİR VARLIK SORUNU OLARAK BENLİK VE PLASTİK SANATLARDA GÖRÜNÜMÜ

Sanat ve felsefenin birlikteliğinden beklenen varlığın ontolojik bir yaklaşımla ele alınarak varoluşsal gerçekliğin keşfine aracılık edecek bir sanat anlayışını ortaya çıkarabilmesidir. Kendi bilinci üzerine düşünen insan, tinselliğini anlamlandırabilmek için felsefeye gereksinim duyar. Varlık ve benlik problemi ontoloji ve metafizikle özdeş olan felsefenin temelidir ve bu kavramlar, Antik Yunan ontolojisinden çağdaş metafiziğe ele alınmış; kendi çağı bağlamında anlamlandırılmıştır. Sanatçının gerçeklik olarak belirlediği varlığın bilgisi, sanatın öz konusunu oluşturur bu nedenle estetik tavır öncelikle ontolojiye dayanır. Sanatçı, varlığın özünü maddede estetik bir forma sokarken, varlığa yönelik algısını dışlaştırmış, cisimleştirmiş ve kendisini yansıtarak, sanat yapıtında benliğini nesneleştirmiş olmaktadır. Sanatçı- sanat yapıtı ilişkisine yaklaşımda alternatif bir bakış açısı olarak, benlik kavramının disiplinler arası boyutları hakkında farkındalık yaratmayı amaçlayan bu çalışmada; sanatçının, bulunduğu tarihsel süreç içinde sanat yapıtında, benliği nasıl nesnelleştirdiğinin araştırılması; insanın düşünsel tarihinde benlik bilincinin ve varlığı ontolojik görme biçimlerinin plastik sanatlardaki temsili, yaratım sürecinde sanatçının nasıl bir bilinç kurduğu ve gerçekliğin sanatçıya göre nerede konumlandığı ve son olarak bu benlik temsillerinin ontolojik yaklaşıma göre sanat nesnesinde hangi katmanlarda görülür olduğunun incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Ontolojik anlatımı daha belirgin hale getirebilmek için kavram, psikoloji ve sosyoloji içinde de ele alınarak, sanatsal temsilleri örneklendirilmiştir. Kişisel çalışmaların anlam ve biçimsel özellikleri üzerine değerlendirme çeşitli sanatçı yapıtları referans gösterilerek yapılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sanat, Bilinç, Varoluş, Ontoloji, Gerçeklik, Benlik

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iii
ÖZET	iv
LIST OF FIGURES	vi
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. THE IMAGERY OF THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE SELF AND EXISTENCE IN ART HISTORY	12
2.1. Renaissance and Before.....	14
2.2. Post-Renaissance	31
2.3. Modernist Period	42
2.4. Postmodern and Contemporary Period	66
3. THE ARTIST WHO REFLECTS THE SELF	83
3.1. The imagery of the self as features of consciousness in the work of art	83
3.2. The imagery of the artist's understanding of reality in the work of art	96
3.3. Evaluation of self-representations that become visible in artwork according to the ontological approach	103
4. THE ARTIST WHO TAKES HIMSELF AS THE SUBJECT	110
4.1. Self-portrait in relation to the concept of the self and psychology.....	114
4.2. Identity art in relation to the concept of the self and sociology	123
5. THE IMAGERY OF THE SELF IN ELVAN GÜNGÖR'S WORKS	127
CONCLUSION.....	143
REFERENCES	146

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Abraham Mosaic; Basilica of San Vitale, Byzantine, 6th century, Ravenna...	19
Figure 2: Sultan having fun with his entourage, Külliyyat Kâtibi, Topkapı Palace TSM R989, (And, 2002: 35).....	21
Figure 3: Wang Hui (Chinese, 1632-1717) and assistants The Kangxi Emperor's Southern Inspection Tour, Scroll Three: Ji'nan to Mount Tai, Period: Qing dynasty (1644-1911), Metropolitan Museum, NYC.....	22
Figure 4: Giotto di Bondone, The Arrest of Christ (Kiss of Judas), 1304- 1306, Scrovegni Chapel, Padova.....	24
Figure 5: Ambroggio Lorenzetti, Annunciation, 1344, Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena.....	25
Figure 6: Masaccio, The Tribute Money, 1427, fresco, Brancacci Chapel, Santa Maria del Carmine, Florence.....	28
Figure 7: Michelangelo Buonarroti, The Creation of Adam, 1508-1512, Sistine Chapel ceiling fresco.....	29
Figure 8: Leonardo Da Vinci, Vitruvian Man, 1492, Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice...	30
Figure 9: Rembrandt van Rijn, The Night Watch or The Militia Company of Captain Frans Banning Cocq, 1642, oil on canvas, 363 cm × 437 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.	34
Figure 10: Caspar David Friedrich, Wanderer above the Sea of Fog, 1818, Hamburg, Germany.....	41
Figure 11: Kazimir Malevich, Black Square, 1915, Oil on Canvas, TATE, UK.....	50
Figure 12: Van Gogh, "A Pair of Shoes", 1886. According to Schapiro's findings, the work mentioned by Heidegger in The Origin of the Work of Art, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.....	54
Figure 13: Alberto Giacometti, Cage, Bronze, 1950, Seattle Art Museum, USA.....	57
Figure 14: Alberto Giacometti, Hands Holding the Void, 1934, Bronze, Leopold Museum, Vienna.....	59
Figure 15: Robert Rauschenberg. Mirthday Man (Anagram [A Pun]). 1997, MOMA, NYC.....	77
Figure 16: Antony Gormley "Between You and Me", Kunsthal Rotterdam, Rotterdam, Netherlands, 2008, Robert Rauschenberg Foundation, NYC.....	79

Figure 17: Albrecht Dürer, 1500, Self Portrait, oil on lime, Bavarian State Painting Collections, Munich.....	119
Figure 18: Vincent Van Gogh, Self-Portrait with Bandaged Ears, Easel and Japanese Print, January 1889 Courtauld Institute Galleries, London	121
Figure 19: Marc Quinn, 'Self' series, 1991, 2001, 2006, Blood (artist's), stainless steel, Perspex and refrigeration equipment, Marc Quinn Studio, London.....	122
Figure 20: The Self, Elvan Güngör, 2023, Oil on Canvas, 60x80 cm.....	129
Figure 21: The veil of Illusion, Elvan Güngör, 2023, Oil on Canvas, 50x70 cm.....	130
Figure 22: Alberto Giacometti, "Hand, 1947, Bronze, 57 x 72 x 3,5 cm, Institut Giacometti, Paris.....	131
Figure 23: Alberto Giacometti, Falling Man, 1945, Bronze, Institut Giacometti, Paris...	132
Figure 24: Reality, Elvan Güngör, 2023, Oil on Canvas, 60x80 cm	132
Figure 25: The Self 2, Elvan Güngör, 2023, Oil on Paper, 35x50 cm	134
Figure 26: Balkan Naci İslimyeli, Suret (A portrait of the artist's three hundred years of sleep), Mixed media on Canvas, 1998, "Me" 50 Years with Art, Retrospective Exhibition, Şevket Sabancı Culture and Art Centre, 2023, Bodrum Muğla.....	135
Figure 27: Balkan Naci İslimyeli, Suret (A picture of the artist maturing through self-torture), Mixed media on Canvas, 1998, "Me" 50 Years with Art, Retrospective Exhibition, Şevket Sabancı Culture and Art Centre, 2023, Bodrum Muğla.....	136
Figure 28: Balkan Naci İslimyeli, Steps, 1996, Mixed media on Canvas, "Me" 50 Years with Art, Retrospective Exhibition, Şevket Sabancı Culture and Art Centre, 2023, Bodrum Muğla.....	136
Figure 29: Balkan Naci İslimyeli, Suret, (It is the picture that art is the true face of the artist), 1998, Mixed media on Canvas, "Me" 50 Years with Art, Retrospective Exhibition, Şevket Sabancı Culture and Art Centre, 2023, Bodrum Muğla.....	136
Figure 30: Balkan Naci İslimyeli, Suret, Mixed media on Canvas, 1998, "Me" 50 Years with Art, Retrospective Exhibition, Şevket Sabancı Culture and Art Centre, 2023, Bodrum Muğla.....	137
Figure 31: Balkan.Naci İslimyeli, Hiç 1, 1985, Mixed Technique, 173x77 cm, "Me" 50 Years with Art, Retrospective Exhibition, Şevket Sabancı Culture and Art Centre, 2023, Bodrum Muğla.....	138
Figure 32: Existence, Elvan Güngör, 2023, Oil on Canvas, 60x80 cm.....	138
Figure 33: Luc Tuymman, Issei Sagawa, Oil on canvas, 2012, TATE, UK.....	139

Figure 34: Luc Tuymman, The Walley, 2007, David Zwirner Gallery, LA, USA.....	139
Figure 35: Luc Tuymman, "Der Diagnostische Blick V," 1992, Wexner Centre for the Arts private collection.....	139
Figure 36: Analysis of an Artist, Elvan Güngör, 2022, Mixed Technique on Paper, 60x60 cm.....	140
Figure 37: Identity, Elvan Güngör, 2023, Mixed Technique on Paper, 40x40 cm.....	140
Figure 38: Reality, Elvan Güngör, Oil on Canvas, 2023, 35x 40 cm.....	140
Figure 39: Being, Elvan Güngör, 2023, Oil on Canvas, 60x 60 cm.....	141
Figure 40: Mehmet Ali Uysal, Untitled, 2010, Private Collection.....	141
Figure 41: The Shadow of Nothing, Elvan Güngör, 2023, Oil on Canvas, 25x35 cm....	142

1. INTRODUCTION

Understanding the nature of the self as a mental entity, revealing the relationship between ontological self theories and works of art, and the idea of philosophical and metaphysical approaches corresponding to different understandings of reality formed in this direction becoming visible in artworks, constitute the purpose and basis of this thesis study. The object represented in the work of art has become a part of the debate about reality, whether it is the representation of existence or the representation of representation. What is intended to be done is to be able to read the ontological meanings of the objective entity that has gained visibility in the work of art which is seen as an ontological existence, in connection with the artist's self and to try to explain it in relation to the philosophical understandings in the history of thought and their understanding of reality. The long histories of philosophy and art, their different conceptions of reality and the interdisciplinary nature of the concept of self make the subject difficult; the relationship of the self with psychology and sociology and the situations in which the artist as the person who creates the representation, takes himself as the object of his art, raise even more complex questions. For this reason, the study focuses on the following subjects within the framework of the relationship between art and philosophy, with a tendency to be as limiting as possible:

1. How the artist perceives and represents the world of entities (Work of art as representation of entity-object interpretations in art history)
2. The imagery of the concept of self as features of consciousness in the art production process
3. The imagery of the artist's understanding of reality in the work of art
4. Ontological analysis of the features of consciousness and reality representations that become visible in works of art

The study focuses on the following subject within the framework of the relationship between art and psychology and sociology:

5. How personality and identity, as concepts that differ from the philosophical self, are represented through the artist who takes himself as his subject; the imagery of these representations in self-portrait and identity art within the framework of interdisciplinary relationship with psychology and sociology and an answer is sought for the relationship between the concept of self and art.

The man who thinks about his own consciousness needs philosophy to make sense of himself. Tezcan says that art has the most similarities with philosophy among other types of knowledge, in that the form of expression depends on the person expressing it. Philosophy is an evaluation about the existence it expresses, it is the philosopher's ability to see and express what exists from his own perspective. The philosopher and the artist are similar in terms of their attitudes towards existence. They both look at existing things (entities) from a personal perspective and see, sense and express what not everyone else sees or senses (Tezcan, 2018, p.137). Farago says that the history of art is the history of the relationships between content and form and form of expression (Farago, 2006, p.134). In this context, a relationship is established between philosophical views and artistic views since they are based on the same object interpretation and understanding of existence.

The starting point of philosophy is to think with self-consciousness. Being, which is the main subject of philosophy that strives to reach the knowledge of reality, is related to the meaning and essence of existing things as a whole. The problem of existence is the root of other problem areas as it is the basic concept on which philosophy is structured (Heimsoeth, 2014, p. 21). The discipline of ontology, which determines the relationship between essence and existence, therefore developed as one of the main branches of philosophy in ancient times and knowledge was considered as the knowledge of existence. As the subject of ontology, the knowledge of the existence or the knowledge of the object that the artist perceives and accepts as reality constitutes the core subject of art, it can be argued that artistic activity or an aesthetic attitude is primarily based on ontology and then becomes an epistemological and ethical problem. When we look at the artist's relationship with the object in the history of philosophy, we see that the epistemological view is on the possibility and transferability of knowledge about the object, the ethical view is on the value of the art object and the subject-object relationship in the ontological dimension is based on the question of whether the object exists or not.

Philosophy looks at the knowledge of self and existence as a whole, which in the sciences is divided into individual parts. The metaphysical essence of existence is non-material, inner meaning, and this meaning takes form in matter. In this context, while the artist puts the essence of existence into a form in matter, he externalizes his understanding of existence and embodies his “self” in the work of art by reflecting himself. No matter which means of expression the artist uses, he subjectively expresses the object of interest due to the nature of creative dialogue and makes visible what is hidden within himself. According to the idealist and existentialist approach, the interpretation of existence and the self, which come together in the art object, cannot be considered separately from each other. According to Heidegger, if there is no “I”, there is no “existence”, the two are an inseparable whole. “As long as Dasein (the pure self that has realized its existence) exists, existence exists” (Heidegger, 2018).

Tunalı, states that what makes an artistic entity an aesthetic entity is the artist's way of handling and comprehending it, within the framework of the interaction between the self and the existence; he says that the subject-self externalizes a thought, perception or intuition as the object-non-self. In the work of art, as the product of an aesthetic vision that includes subject-self and object, consciousness and non-consciousness, all opposites disappear, self and non-self, free and necessary appear together (Tunalı, 2014, p. 149). Since the self is concretely revealed in the work of art, art objects should be considered as the complex product of a design process belonging to the self in all its aspects. The place of metaphysical thought in terms of grasping the meaning of this design is to examine the relationship between art and philosophy, creativity and spirituality.

It can be argued that the artist's interpretation of entities is formed according to the zeitgeist he lived in. Thinkers and art historians such as Hegel, Dilthey and Burckhardt have endeavoured to articulate the connections between art and philosophy, belief systems and science through the fundamental unity of culture and cultural expressions. According to Hegel, who assumes an infinite nous coming into existence behind history, civilization has its own unique zeitgeist, a universal consciousness embodied in a specific time and space, and this consciousness manifests itself in different ways through both ideas and objects (Holly, 2012, p. 32-35). Tunalı says that just as there are individual differences in the vision

and perception of existence, the perception and interpretation of entities by the collective consciousness is different in each period and therefore each philosophy expresses seeing existence in a new way. Considered as a history of styles, art history is also a history of interpretations of entities (Tunalı, 2003, p.12). According to the expressive approach, art is the aesthetic embodiment of the cultural consciousness that marked the period in which it was created (Tezcan, 2018, p.48). Taftalı, based on Hegel's thesis of the identity of the object and the concept, states that every concept informs us of an object interpretation, an object description and that there is a direct relation of determination and influence between the conception of the external world and the interpretation of the object envisaged by each theory of knowledge and the zeitgeist of the time corresponding to that period (Taftalı, 2005, p.56). In the context of self-object relationship in the history of philosophy, it is seen that how the artist acquires knowledge about the object; theories of knowledge and interpretations of the object are important in the emergence of works of art, although they bring about various debates. Taftalı defines the imagery of the object through four theories of knowledge: Objective materialism, subjective materialism, objective idealism and subjective idealism and the horizontal- vertical relationships between them and emphasizes that it is possible to encounter all of these object interpretations simultaneously in any period of history and that all of them still exist.

Since mimesis was the philosophical answer to the question of what art was from Aristotle until the end of the 19th century, it was accepted that imitating external reality was the basic tendency of art, while with Modernism, the act of representation gradually abandoned the object depicted by mimesis in order to focus on the subject's way of grasping the object. Painting is nourished by a dialectic that weaves an endless shuttle between representation and the thing represented, the object and the essential content according to Farago and this dialectic has led to the emergence of numerous understandings of representation since the end of the 19th century (Farago, 2006, p.14-15).

When the philosophical history of the concepts of self and object is analyzed, it is seen that the New Age and Renaissance thought wanted to break the faith and tradition-based understanding of the Middle Ages with the help of rational reason and in this respect, the importance of the 17th century and Descartes' philosophy is that the whole philosophy was shaped through the idea of self for the first time and gradually man, who was seen as an

individual being of reason, turned to himself with self-consciousness in order to recognise himself and existence. Thus, the cognizant subject gains independence and the process of producing a philosophy of subject begins from a philosophy of substance. Considering the object, which has reality and existence outside the mind, as something opposite to this cognizant subject or consciousness, reveals the subject-object dualism that is at the basis of today's thought. The conception of the immortal soul going out of the body, which started with Aristotle, developed with Descartes' Cartesian way of thinking and the holistic understanding of existence is gradually disappeared thus the rational man has neglected the phenomenon of existence while thinking about himself. Enlightenment, which points out to the transition from believing to knowing, was the attempt to enlighten the life of man with his reason and experiences, who frees himself from being bound by religion, traditions, authority and prejudices in thinking and evaluation. The determination of knower and known, subject and object, which is a metaphysical problem, reached as far as Kant and shaped later philosophy. Understandings that embrace and oppose the idealist view in the sense of Kant, revealed two different object concepts: Ontological object and phenomenal object (Sözer, 2009). The idea of uniting the "thing-in-itself" and the subject-self went as far as to German idealism and in this context, Romanticism developed as a reaction to rationalist thought and the Enlightenment, which glorified analytical reason by denying the sensory side of man.

Despite the many stages it has gone through, the thinking behind Western philosophy and art is dualist, analytical and mechanistic. Unlike Western philosophy, where physical reality is separated from the metaphysical, traditional Eastern philosophy, which does not see existence in a dual polarization such as subject- object, self- mind, soul-body, self-centred-collective consciousness, is based on the understanding of "the unity and integrity of existence" and has a design of the universe in which everything is thought to have a vital relationship with everything else. Within the historical development of self-perception in the West, it can be argued that an important transformation was realized with the Existentialist philosophy. The idea of existence, which has become central to 20th-century Western philosophy, coincides with Eastern esotericism's concept of "vücüd" (come into being)- that man is a "particular being", a self arising from his actions. While pre-existential philosophies depended on rationalist principles, conditions and rules, for the existentialist, freedom is an ontological necessity and brings about the recognition and recreation of

oneself. Heidegger says that the real being is its own discoveredness, its how in its discoveredness. This means that when his individual existence attains the real being, his existence is nothing (Heidegger, 2018, p.356). On the way to overcoming duality, Sartre explains that by making the world and the self, the object of "absolute transcendental consciousness", man first comes into existence and then creates his own meanings and essence. The consciousness is thus able to choose itself by rising above the individual self (Tura, 1989, p.70- 72). Since the subject self includes the transcendental side of man connected to absolute consciousness, it cannot sometimes be explained by scientific methods but can only be interpreted through philosophy. Because of this unrevealed essence within oneself; man is an infinite being which cannot be consumed or captured by knowledge. The subject self, who cannot realize the transcendental side within himself, is dependent on a culturally and conceptually created fictional self that can be defined as the individual self and is not free. In this case, he becomes the guardian of the culture and becomes alienated from his own essence.

The artist is a creator of culture and creates works that reflect the zeitgeist of the age in which he lives. In the West, the old worship-ritual value of art was replaced by the value of beauty in the New Age, while in the age of capitalism and mechanical production, the value of display came to the fore in the copy. This value differentiation can be associated with the gradual transformation of man from his existence as a "subject" or spontaneity into an individual personality or a being of identity. With the emergence of individualization movements in the West with the Renaissance and its gradual increase after the Industrial Revolution, individualization became a goal for the artist and especially since the Postmodern period, man, who is the axis of the universe, now has become a problem for himself. It can be stated that in the historical process, the artist's core self finding a place in artworks has been replaced by artists' self-representations through identity, with postmodern theories since the 1970s. Foucault, who calls the practices of the subject to form himself as a moral subject "self-practice", says that the individual invents himself with the moulds suggested and imposed by culture and society and that this can only be effectively overcome through self-practices (Foucault, 2021, p. 234-235). In Lacan's mirror theory, since man and society are identified with each other in a vicious circle, the individual is created according to the culture every time he reconstructs himself and this chain cannot be broken (Lacan 2018). Since socio-cultural symbolism completely eliminates the core self and there is no

non-symbolized life experience in the individual, only symbolic realities about man can be examined by becoming objects of research.

According to Giddens, every tradition is made up of choices from an infinite variety of different behavioural patterns but with modernity, the individual confronted with a complex variety of choices, is offered limited help in deciding which options to choose. In other words, in order to give a material form to the narrative of individual identity, in high modern conditions, the individual is not only forced to maintain certain lifestyles but also to behave accordingly (Giddens, 2010, p.110). For Mansfield, the modern age is an age of the subject and in the last few centuries the theory of the self does not deal with "subjectivity per se" but only with the politics that determine "personality" and "identity". One of the reasons for this is the rise of capitalist individualism and the need of the free market economy for an autonomous individual, free from communal and familial determinations (Mansfield, 2005, p.213).

A prominent perspective in analyses of the self and postmodernity, in discussions theoretically related to poststructuralism is that individual selves like society, are divided, dispersed, contextual and fragile. The individualism of free thought aimed at achieving human rights in the democratisation processes of the past centuries, has lost its meaning and has evolved into an individualism that pushes oneself into loneliness in today's social structure and weakens social ties and humanistic feelings (Tezcan, 2018, p.151). Postmodernist theorists argue that modernism is a culture that aspires to universalise its own experience in the search for a hidden eternal essence of both life and meaning and that the grand narratives that cling to these cultural productions are not a "transcendental human principle" but the legacy of the West itself (Mansfield, 2005, p.221). Building on this basic understanding; in postmodernist philosophy and art which is shaped by the variable, dynamic, random, active, pluralist society model and relative world views specialized according to cultures, with the imagination focused on destruction and the principle of deconstruction adopted to break the moulds and reach the creative source of art, all kinds of traditions are deconstructed, in a philosophical sense. It can be argued that the aim is to reach the creative power of "nothing". Since the self has been deconstructed in postmodernity, the individual self (ego) and the world of objects are now entirely self-referential, a world that exalts itself. As addiction has become a lifestyle in modern societies, narcissism seems to

have intensified as a response to the reactions to powerlessness that occur in many areas and this culture has also turned into a culture of survival (Giddens, 2010, p.218-219). In this context, it can be said that today, a call is made to the power of imagination, under the control of the individual self and egoic mind, with the rejection of a universal reality.

Defining the content that becomes visible by objectification in the work of art in the context of the self, can be possible by examining the artist's consciousness in the creativity process along with object interpretations. The reason for this is that the concept of self is discussed in connection with consciousness, and the representation of the artist's perception of reality in the work of art is also discussed around the characteristics of consciousness. When the individual creative process that appears in a work of art is approached independently of aesthetic judgement, the relationship between the artist's consciousness (characteristics pertaining to consciousness) and the design process begins to emerge. In this context, the relationship between the concept of self and consciousness and the idea that the features of consciousness within the framework of this relationship become visible in artworks are included in the third part of the study. The science disciplines that examine the concept of consciousness, which still remains the most mysterious subject in 21st century science and philosophy have deep philosophical, historical and conceptual roots. Within the limits of this study, the subject is constructed around the ideas that consciousness has both a transcendental aspect defined as absolute consciousness and ability features -including all cognitive and mental processes such as thought, intuition, awareness, emotion, perception, knowledge, unconsciousness, memory, etc. - and that the individual self, constituted as the object of consciousness, possesses absolute consciousness.

To study consciousness is to investigate the nature of our existence. What consciousness is, which is the center of all cognitive attitudes of man and which other cognitive and mental processes it works with are the main subjects of the philosophy of consciousness and self. Theories on this subject are also discussed on different scientific grounds within Neuroscience and Neurophilosophy which have emerged as unique disciplines in recent decades. When evaluated from the perspective of idealism, in the process of producing a work of art, the artist encounters his own world, in other words, consciousness imaginatively creates what is going on in his own world of meaning and the dialectical process that the artist enters into with the external world-existence consists of his

own mental interpretations. In this framework, it can be argued that the process of creation requires all transcendental and mental characteristics (ability features) that cover the cognitive, intellectual, sensory and emotional relations established between the artist and the object he is orientated towards.

Understanding how reality is perceived in the process of artistic creativity or where it is positioned for the artist emerges as another important issue in explaining the connection between the concept of self and art. The aim of this part is to investigate how the individual artist's perception of reality is represented in the artwork and, in this context the philosophical and metaphysical ideas that can determine artistic forms. According to Heidegger, the artist between truth and reality in the process of creation can approach these concepts in the design phase (Heidegger, 2018, p.21). The objective materialist perspective limits subjective qualities to the object, in other words, the object is not expected to go beyond the physical reality and the designs to be realized by different artists may not differ in terms of the ontological determination of the object. According to the idealist view, which is opposed to materialism, consciousness is a mental reality, while physical matter or the world of objects is an appearance or illusion that has no reality and depends on mental perception (Revonsuo, 2017, p.77). Being is subject to the organisation of the man's mind in the sense of being the object of a thinking, perceiving mind (Cevizci, 2014, p. 345). Therefore, it can be suggested that the outside world is seen through a lens formed by the mental model and individual perception filter shaped by life experience. The individual perception filter that determines the artist's way of seeing existence is formed in the world of self consisting of mental concepts such as thoughts, feelings, wishes, desires, experiences, memories, belief values, assumptions, prejudices and their traces in consciousness and that this personal world is formed by the overlap of consciousness, which is connected to existence with individual, social and cultural values, with the individual self and that the artist shapes his understanding of reality according to these facts. Consciousness, which is conditioned and structured by objects, makes the mistake of considering them as itself since the objective side of the self shows possessions by hiding the infinite transcendentality or essence within itself. In a vicious circle, individual reality connected to self constructs the perception filter, and the perception filter constructs the individual reality. In this case, the diversity of works of art designed by artists with different perception filters within their

mental processes can be evaluated in the light of this theory of knowledge, according to idealism.

Man's need to connect with something inward that he perceives and questions inevitably leads him to metaphysical expression in the sense of remembering the essence of existence and reality. When the artist aims to show this perceived inner reality, transcendental meaning or the metaphysical essence of existence in the production of art, he uses various forms of abstraction and symbols that transcend time-space boundaries and shape objects not as they are, but with their meaning. From the beginning of art history until today, the tendency towards abstraction and the use of symbols have been directly related to beliefs and lifestyles.

Ontology accepts beings as a whole that can be thought of as a pyramidal structure consisting of layers. It can be argued that the artist's self, reflected in the work of art, becomes visible as layers of meaning and these different layers are, to a certain extent, similar to the layers of beings contained in the ontological approach to art. Evaluating the imagery of self-representations in a work of art according to the ontological approach requires clarifying at what layers these representations are visible in the art object. The self can become visible with medium, through necessity, sometimes through the organisation of the surface and depth that formed, sometimes spontaneous coincidences, inventions, sometimes through the reflected excitement, a special way of seeing etc. Thus, we encounter the discipline of the ontology of art and the concept of aesthetic object analysis which investigate the type of existence of an artwork. The question of where the works of art that have participated in the world of entities in the history of philosophy stand in reality, has brought with it the necessity of determining what kind of existence they have. Tunalı defines the work of art as an objectified transcendental entity (Tunalı, 2012, p. 66-72). According to Hartmann's definition of the aesthetic object, an artwork is an objectification, the transfer of the world of transcendental (irreal) meaning into a real object, the presentation of something that does not exist. Since what is depicted transcends existence, works of art are transcendent entities in terms of meaning (Hartmann, 1998). It can be said that the layers of existence, which gradually deepen from the front to the back structure of the artwork, are the expression of the artist's self -mental and transcendental characteristics- that become visible as layers of meaning. According to Hegel, the absolute consciousness, which needs objectification in

order to be known and comprehend, recognizes its own characteristics in the artwork through the artist (Farago, 2006, p.133).

Due to the interdisciplinary dimensions of the concept of self, it is explained first from an ontological perspective and then in connection with consciousness and after determining the visibility of these phenomena in works of art, it becomes necessary to define the concept within Psychology and Sociology in order to be better understood. This is due to the idea that the concepts of personality and identity are distinguished from the ontological self as two separate aspects of the subject self. Both concepts lie in the idea that people are their own objects; hence when the self as an object is examined, the concept of "social self" or identity appears to be a sociological construct, while the concept of personality appears to be a phenomenon related to both subjective and sociological processes (Hewitt/ Shulman, 2019, p.85- 127). In the fourth part of the study, the relationship of the artist's self -which takes itself as a subject- with the plastic arts is discussed in a limited way within the framework of Psychology and self-portraiture, then Sociology and identity art.

2. THE IMAGERY OF THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE SELF AND EXISTENCE IN ART HISTORY

(Work of art as representation of object interpretations in art history)

The changing ontological meaning of the concept of self in the history of philosophy, the different forms of perception of the world of entities in relation to the self and the idea that artworks gain visibility with this effect as representations, constitute the basis of this section of the study. The subject, which is examined in chronological order as Renaissance and before, Post-Renaissance, Modern Period, Postmodern and Contemporary Period, is explained throughout Western philosophy and art but examples from Eastern philosophy and art are also given.

As a being of meaning, a being arising from his actions, man needs philosophy in order to make sense of his transcendental side, his self and consciousness. Ontology, whose fundamental problem is being, emerges as a philosophical approach in Antiquity and is addressed from different aspects by many philosophers such as Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre, especially within the scope of idealist thought. The concepts of self and being as the basic concepts of philosophy that are identical with ontology and metaphysics, are included in various forms of thought from Ancient Greek ontology to contemporary metaphysics. Hegel says that each philosophy wants to represent the absolute and be the only true criterion, to see the past from a holistic point of view, to detach itself from it and to represent the present more adequately and differently from others. It should also be remembered that all philosophical perspectives from the past represent reality in some way and are integrated in their interrelationality (Ateşoğlu, 2020, p.34).

Tezcan says that art has the most similarities with philosophy among other types of knowledge, in that the form of expression depends on the person expressing it. Since the philosopher and the artist are similar in terms of their attitude towards existence, they both look at entities from a personal perspective and see, sense and express what not everyone else sees or senses. According to Tezcan, the subject of art is the aesthetic relationship between man and reality, that is, life itself and according to the narrative approach, art is the aesthetic embodiment of the cultural consciousness that marked the period in which it was created (Tezcan, 2018, p.48, 137). Farago, also, argues that there is a great affinity between

philosophical and artistic views since they are based on the same object interpretation and understanding of existence and that the history of art is the history of the relations between content and form and forms of expression (Farago, 2006, p.134).

Taftalı says that, although life is continuous, the effort to divide time and therefore history into periods and define them with the name of an era might be the result of the desire to understand and give meaning to the time we live in. According to Hegel: The relevance of political history, state laws, religion and art to philosophy is not that they are the cause of philosophy or, on the contrary, that philosophy is the cause of them but that the common ground of all of them is the *zeitgeist* (Taftalı, 2005, p.54). Just as there are differences in the way each person sees and perceives existence, the way the collective consciousness perceives and interprets existence is also different in each period and each philosophy expresses a new way of seeing existence (Tunalı, 2003, p.12). Based on Hegel's thesis of the identity of object and concept, it is seen that concepts express the interpretation or description of an object. Accordingly, Taftalı concludes that there is a direct relation of determination and influence between the conception of the external world and object interpretation envisaged by theories of knowledge and the *zeitgeist* corresponding to that period (Taftalı, 2005, p.56). In this context, he identifies the main theories as: Objective materialism, subjective materialism, objective idealism and subjective idealism. In objective materialism, objects express reality literally as a truth independent of the self and consciousness is shaped by objects outside itself. Throughout the Renaissance and the Enlightenment period until the early 19th century, art perceives the world of objects in an objective materialist way. Subjective materialist theory, which accepts the reality of the external world but treats it in a subjective relationship and argues that material reality is shaped by varying individual sense perceptions, time and space concepts and in this sense, the interpretation of entities should be determined by the subject; influenced Continental Europe from the 19th century onwards and the world of objects is interpreted as constantly changing and emerging. Impressionist art, an expression of the subjective materialist interpretation of the object, sees the world of beings as phenomena in change and formation. The objective idealist theory and object interpretation which accepts that everything physical is not the existence itself but a reflection of it and that the perception of real existence occurs through consciousness, not the senses, due to its immutability and absoluteness, is effective in the process starting from Plato until the Enlightenment period. However, the same

interpretation of the object is also adopted by Husserl. The understanding of "monistic self" in which no reality other than the self can be mentioned and the world outside the self is shaped by the self, is defined within the framework of the subjective idealist theory of knowledge and shows integrity with Plotinus' monistic understanding of existence (Taftali, 2005). Within the framework of this explanation, the concepts of self and existence whose ontological meanings change in philosophy and art history, the ways of perception of the objects and the imagery of these phenomena in artworks as representations are explained in historical order.

2.1. Renaissance and Before

The realisation of man's consciousness of his own thought is assumed to come with Ancient Greek philosophy. According to Cassirer, in Ancient Greek philosophy, which succeeded in removing the concepts of self-consciousness and the world from the realm of mythic thought, an ontology emerged with Parmenides who articulated the problem of "being" and "nothingness" for the first time; nothingness was denied, existence was conceived in its entirety in the context of the existence of beings and knowledge was accepted as the knowledge of existence (Cassirer, 2018, p.168). However, since the existence of movement requires emptiness, the negation of nothingness brings the problem of the inexplicability of movement. Since a systematic spatial sense is unthinkable in a finite universe where the sky that can be seen is accepted as the limit, art is not a construction of space that finds expression in perspective but a non-systematic and non-inclusive understanding of space.

Panofsky states that the ancient theories treated space as a system based on simple relations between height, width and depth and did not dissolve the differences between object and non-object within the three-dimensional space which is a higher and more abstract concept. Since there is no concept of a continuous quantity that occupies the space between object and non-object, in which individual objects can dissolve, the world of objects and the space in which it is located remain a discontinuity. According to Panofsky, perspective is one of the symbolic forms in which the content of a transcendental meaning is connected to a physical indicator and it is important not only whether periods in the history of art used perspective but also what kind of perspective they applied (Panofsky, 2017, p.24). In this

sense, while a painting based on perspective reflects an anthropocentric understanding, a painting which perspective is not applied shows a God-centered-holistic understanding. A perspective-based painting which depicts objects as they are, shows us that the physical being (objective self) is real and that objects exist as separate entities, whereas a painting in a holistic view assumes that not the physical being but its essence is real and that this essence is one and the same thing with the self.

The ancient period man, who conceived himself as part of a universe dominated by natural law, is explained by the physical universe, the world of existing things. In Plato's metaphysics, "ideas" which are immutable realities at a high ontological level are defined as real existence, things perceived by the senses are the shadows (images) of ideas and the soul is defined as the part of the human being capable of sensing ideas. In Aristotle's ontology, there is a distinction between being and existing, while being is glorified, what exists is what is at the moment. The problem of how existence can be known is added to this problem of being which he calls the eternal problem but real existence was individual objects. According to Cassirer, Aristotle, who proposes the logic of matter here and now, unlike Plato, does not consider the absolute idea as an external feature independent of the object but as a unified formation with the object (Cassirer, 2018, p.171). Aristotle, who recognises the soul as the form of the body, the power of movement and the active force inherent in the body, divides the human being into two as the body and the immortal soul and establishes philosophy as a theoretical discipline of the knowledge of existing things thus creating the way of thinking that will determine the direction of Western philosophy and traditional understanding of religions. Since the only reality for Plato is ideas, objects are copies that have no reality; in this case, the work of art would be a copy of a copy. According to Aristotle, man derives aesthetic pleasure from mimetic depictions because he has a need to imitate by nature therefore art's imitation of nature- the aesthetics of mimesis- is legitimate. By saying that objects can be depicted as they are, as they should be and as tradition presents us, Aristotle determined the forms of artistic tendencies in a framework that continues to this day.

In the relief figures and the figures in the painting reflecting the understanding of existence of the Classical Antique period, a disconnection and unrelatedness with the background space is seen. Objects are not depicted as singular elements and placed in a holistic space but are brought together in parts or in a group and fixed to each other. Since

space is not perceived as a continuum, integrity is achieved by combining separable parts of various sizes and functions. In Hellenic art, it is seen that along with the value of the body or object, the surface was gradually taken into consideration; in addition to living nature, inanimate nature, in addition to solid objects, the spatiality that surrounds and connects them begin to be deemed worthy of representation. However, the artistic design form still depends on individual objects and do not contain spatiality. According to Panofsky, this space is not perceived as something that serves to overcome or eliminate the opposition between object and non-object but only as something left over between objects. Thus, space is presented artistically as a simple superimposition or succession. Considering the traditional understanding of perspective, in cases where the feeling of looking through the colonnades at an extending landscape should be evoked, the represented space remains as a stacked space (Panofsky, 2017, p.25- 29).

With the radical change in art during the Plotinus period of late Antiquity, a holistic understanding of art emerged in which beings were depicted from the perspective of God. According to A. Grabar, the abandonment of the perspective applied in Athens from the 5th century B.C. within the anthropocentric framework constitutes the origin of medieval aesthetics and Plotinus' way of evaluating the work of art, the philosophical and religious value he attributed to intuition, foreshadowed the medieval art viewer (Farago, 2006, P.14-61).

According to Plotinus, since everything emerges from the "one" and is one being there is no separation of the seeing subject and the seen object. The way of seeing the image varies depending on whether it is seen with the external eyes or the inner eye because it is only this inner eye that can see beyond the object. Since focusing on oneself means focusing on the center, this also means the end of the fragmentation in the self. While in Aristotelian philosophy, the sensory object, the physical universe and the essence of matter in nature were discussed, whereas with Plotinus; the concept of introspection and absolute love has emerged in philosophy. According to Farago, this is a new explanation in terms of the history of aesthetic thought and such expressions are also encountered in the pioneers of abstract painting that came out at the beginning of the 20th century (Farago, 2006, p.66).

A. Grabar states that while the images of classical Greek and Hellenistic tradition attempt to identify the results of a rational analysis of the object depicted, Plotinus sees the expression of a holistic knowledge of the essence of things and the universal soul in art (Farago, 2006, p.67). In this period, the arts are a metaphysical way to realise the experience of reaching God and being a reflection of superior intelligence- divinity- is the *raison d'être* of the work of art. Plotinus says that the painter, abandoning the depiction of groups of people and objects placed at different distances, deliberately brings them to the foreground which is a specific plan. In parallel to this, he tries to describe the finest details, replaces the shaded and nuanced colors of things that are at different distances from each other, with local, flat and, uniform tones. The same principle applies to the objects depicted as well (Hadot, 2020). According to Grabar, the teaching of Plotinus which is the understanding that perspective and the object are eliminated and the essence of the object is depicted, the image as a whole is reduced to a single colored surface that receives light therefore does not contain shadows; finds application in the art of the late Roman Empire and, paintings consisting of uniform colours without shadows emerge (Farago, 2006, p.62, 63). In these paintings, a texture that is not material but also have no gaps; although based only on color or light, creates a unity. Although the individual elements of the painting have not become completely flat, they have transformed into forms based entirely on the idea of plane. It is felt that space and place are now perceived as a continuum but at the same time they seem to be robbed of their density and rationality. This imagery; the idea of the unity of object and non-object, self and non-self is an expression of the understanding of existence of the period. The unity in which the plurality of singular objects dissolves is realised by the immobilization and isolation of objects as if frozen that are spatially connected to each other. The image of succession towards the depth is replaced by superimposition and juxtaposition. Based on Taftalı's view, it can be said that the objective idealist understanding of existence in Ancient Greek thought transformed into a subjective idealist understanding in this period (Taftalı, 2005). The period in which perspective was abandoned, starting with the Late Antiquity and extending with the medieval Christian art, would gain importance again with the return to classical Antiquity with the Renaissance.

The giant portrait statues of Ancient Egyptian gods, which date back much further than the Ancient Greek period, emphasize the abstract attitude, timelessness, immutability and divinity of the Egyptian sculpture style. These abstract forms, which refer to a higher

ontological reality, can be seen as the expression of a holistic approach to art. Boorstin who argues that no other nation in the history of art has created a style as long-lasting and uniform as the Egyptian prototype of human sculpture, states that the Pharaoh's face and gestures are not features of a character portrait but of the image of God or the universe and that Egyptian artists never developed perspective, their sculptures do not show any individual understanding of time or the character of their models (Boorstin, 1992, p.147- 152).

Scholastic thought in the West and religions in general are what gave the Middle Ages its character. Religious thinking was systematised in the Middle Ages and the highly passivised man was drowned in dogmas and subjugated to religious authorities. It is thought that true knowledge is contained in the sacred books and in the Greek (Plato and Aristotle) and Roman (Thomas Aquinas) works from which these sacred books are derived and that the task of philosophy is to place religious dogmas in some solid framework. Scholastic philosophy's view that "absolute meaning is in God and this meaning can only be reached through personal belief" is fundamentally different from the ancient view that absolute meaning is in the universe. The existence of the object is in a secondary position next to the existence of God, which is the essential reality, therefore things that affect the senses are accepted as existing and the object is seen as a form that stimulates the cognitive ability.

In the Middle Ages, Ibn Rushd and Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi, who were prominent in Eastern philosophy and Islamic metaphysics, put forward the view of a single absolute being (Wahdat-i Vucûd) that invalidated the human-God duality. While the self is reduced to a state of isolation, the act of thinking involves breaking away from this isolation and merging with the one absolute mind. Cassirer says that 13th century Christian thinkers opposed this understanding, that completely destroyed the principles of subjectivity and individualism, in order to preserve the principle of independence of the individual soul (self), which was the most important part of their basic religious assumptions. According to the scholastic philosopher Thomas Aquinas, the function of thinking can only be known by an individually thinking self, since the two members of a fundamental religious relationship, God and the self, must maintain their independence. To disable this self means to eliminate the truth that every theory of knowledge should take as its basis (Cassirer, 2018, p.172, 173). This religious subjectivism, which had already been clearly set out by Augustine, the first thinker to systematise Christianity, appears to be the basis of the Cartesian view formulated by

Descartes centuries later. According to İpşiroğlu, the dialectical Christian understanding, on the one hand, wants to transcend matter but does not try to strip it of its existence in order to achieve this; on the other hand, in order to make you think of God, it emphasizes matter as a form devoid of soul and does not want to make you forget that you are in the material world (İpşiroğlu, 2011, p.59).

Since Medieval Christian art developed under the influence of Ancient Greek art, it initially appears to have developed in the direction of naturalism. However, when the religious view and the effort to transcend the world came to the fore, it began to see man not as a living being but as an empty form. According to İpşiroğlu, form, abstracted from its content, turns into symbols that point to a reality above itself, to the transcendental existence of God. Medieval artists, adhering to the abstract concept of space, aligns various stages of an event over time in the same painting and space is given as a level devoid of depth. These forms are gold-coloured or stand out from a natural background (İpşiroğlu, 2011, p.58, 65). According to Panofsky, despite the ever-emerging sympathy for ancient illusionism, there is also an effort to consistently maintain the reduction of space to the surface in Byzantine art. The Abraham mosaic in the Ravenna-San Vitale Church, where the dissolution of perspective can be seen clearly is particularly noteworthy (Panofsky, 2017, p.31).



Figure 1: The Abraham Mosaic; San Vitale Basilica, Byzantine, 6. Century,

The art of late antiquity and early Christianity, under the influence of Plotinus, is a world of space and objects based on the surface in every respect. Byzantine art however wanted to elevate the line as the only means of fixation and systematization within the two-dimensional surface. According to Panofsky, although the lines of light and traces of shadow of the illusionism specific to the ancient period, which could not make a fundamental break from the ancient tradition, were thickened and turned into line-like forms but did not become mere border contours. Byzantine art, holding on to mosaic, seems unable to make the decision to abandon the pictorial style and form the world entirely linearly. Regarding perspective, Panofsky states that Byzantine art was able to retain the characteristics of the ancient perspective space structure for the Renaissance (Panofsky, 2017, p.33).

As an artistic representation of Islamic metaphysical thought, the art of miniature painting, which started in the Middle Ages and continues to the present day, can be cited as an example. When the intellectual foundations of form in miniature painting are investigated, space appears as a symbol of the infinite and absolute. According to the Eastern traditional view, since the world of objects, which is not an independent system of realities, can only be perceived with the help of space, space is synonymous with the manifestation of the sacred. According to Ergüven, the space in painting should be defined as the way of seeing the object (Ergüven, 2002, p. 68). Konak also states that, in paintings depicting a metaphysical understanding of absolute space, the form represents a structure that is far from experimentation and is not personalised, contrary to the realist approach (Konak, 2014, p.34). When the absolute is tried to be depicted, there is no known space characteristic in terms of space relations. The most important principle, the understanding of reality that determines the formal characteristics of the painting, is the unity of being. For this reason, selves or objects seem to not exist within this only being.

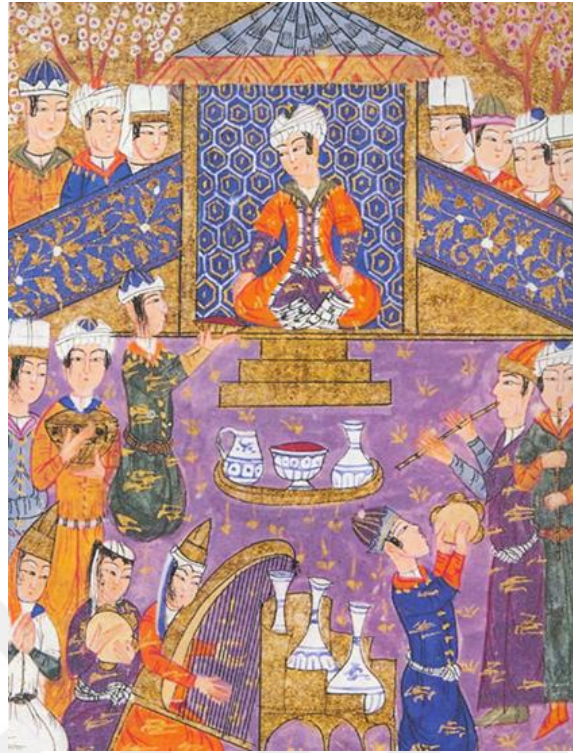


Figure 2: The Sultan's Fun with His Surroundings, Topkapı Palace TSM R989, (And, 2002: 35)

Miniature painting is not established on any subjectivity and therefore has a two-dimensional superficial view of space. Miniature painting can be said to be naturalistic in terms of objective environment and subject but close to abstract painting with its position of designed reality. Burckhard says that the vertical and static structure of the surface provides the artist an objectively abstaining expression by rejecting individuality, so that the variability of the physical space can be shown within the immutability of the metaphysical space (Burckhard, 2020, p. 39).

The great contrast between the perception of being and the self in Eastern and Western thought, especially since the Renaissance and Enlightenment, is also noticeable in the philosophy and arts of the Far East. In contrast to the Western world, which believes in an amazing creation and individual man's struggle with nature, Far Eastern beliefs show the pursuit of unity with nature and the universe, the renunciation of the self in order to transcend existence. For this reason, landscape painting, which developed late and very slowly in Western art, is a very old art in the Far East. In ancient Chinese landscapes the human figure is either not seen at all or is in the form of a point.



Figure 3: Wang Hui (Chinese, 1632–1717) and assistants The Kangxi Emperor's Southern Inspection Tour, Scroll Three: Ji'nan to Mount Tai, Period: Qing dynasty (1644–1911)

Ancient Greek philosophy and science arose from the desire to know while the Buddha's aim was to know himself only, to forget what he knew and to avoid the suffering of existence. In Far Eastern teachings, as in Islamic and Christian mysticism, there is no idea of an individual self: Reaching Nirvana is only possible by erasing the self. Boorstin says that the Chinese saw their painters as practitioners of the art of living and that the task, subject matter and even the materials to be used by the painter following this path were determined. Before painting a landscape, Chinese painters try to forget their self, because only then is it thought that what is depicted by the painter is not a specific object but a whole formed in memory and the past and the future are united in that moment. According to Boorstin, the empty spaces in ancient Chinese painting are an untouched source of universal chi, a whole with mountains and rivers (Boorstin, 1992, p.17-18). The fact that they used an invisible linear perspective or bird's-eye perspective instead of the traditional Western perspective, reflects the holistic understanding of Chinese painting and the importance it attaches to the concepts of introspection and enlightenment. For this reason, Chinese paintings seem as if they do not require a frame.

Panofsky argues that the style called Romanesque in the mid-12th century- following the Carolingian and Otto Renaissance, which were preparatory to the Renaissance- broke away from the Ancient Greek and Byzantine arts and realised the transformation that was a prerequisite for a modern understanding of space and thus all kinds of spatial illusions were abandoned (Panofsky, 2017, p.34). Line is now a specific tool of graphic expression that

functions as a line in delimiting and decorating surfaces; the surface is the two-dimensional surface of an image carrier that does not indicate any non-material spatiality. When Romanesque painting reduces objects and space to the surface in the same way, their homogeneity becomes established for the first time; since objects and space are interconnected, the growth of the object is only possible if the space grows at the same rate. Panofsky argues that late medieval sculpture also erased all remnants of ancient illusionism, transforming the surface with a pictorial mobility and light and shadow distribution into an exterior surface that is grouped together and segmented by linear contours. In sculpture, an indissoluble unity is formed between the figures and their spatial surroundings- background surfaces. However, the unity here does not prevent the forms from standing out as three-dimensional. Neither the forms disappear on the ground nor the background space appears as discontinuity. The relief figures are not individual objects, as in antiquity but the figure and the relief background are manifestations of the same substance. Thus, for the first time in Europe, a style of architectural sculpture emerged that was applied by directly shaping the building material mass, instead of being placed individually inside or on the building, as in the metope reliefs or caryatids of Antiquity. The idea of pure surface in painting also finds expression as pure mass in sculpture. Unlike ancient sculpture, what is at stake is not the three-dimensionality and solidity of objects but the three-dimensionality and solidity of a homogeneous substance. In high period Gothic art, this mass decomposes into corporeal forms again, the sculpture becomes a structure independent of the wall and the relief figures are separated from the ground almost like free-standing statues. According to Panofsky, the architectural elements of Gothic cathedrals that regain corporeality and the sculptures and relief figures that gain plastic properties do not cease to be a homogeneous integrity; thus, with the emancipation of plastic objects, the emancipation of the spatial field that contains these objects is automatically realised. In the Romanesque period, it is seen that the ancient doctrine of space changed and the finitude of the universe began to be replaced by infinity as a holistic existence. According to Panofsky, this conception of infinity means actual infinity, although it is not yet thought to be realised in nature (Panofsky, 2017, p.35- 37).

The homogeneous substance formed by the figure and the ground in the reliefs is the representation of the one substance of the individual self and the surrounding space but the unity in this understanding of existence is a unity from the individual to the holistic, formed by individualities. In the understanding of existence of medieval art, objects and individuals

are not evident in the expression of holistic continuity that does not show dynamism. The representation of individualization in the perception of being and the self, which emerged during and after the Romanesque period and points to the early Renaissance, is also seen in painting. Giotto's individualized human representations, which paved the way for depicting human figures beyond the religious perspective by transforming schematic religious symbols into warm living figures, now fill up a place and carry their own weight (İpşiroğlu, 2011, p.63)



Figure 4: Giotto di Bondone, The Arrest of Christ (Kiss of Judas), 1304 – 1306, Scrovegni Chapel, Padova

In Giotto's paintings, where the symbolic painting technique was abandoned and the modern perspective approach was gradually felt, it is seen that even when the painting surface is given on a level, it creates an effect of depth and unmetaphysical space begins to replace abstract space for the first time. The depiction of the interior means a revolution in the formal evaluation of the represented surface defined as the picture plane. Panofsky states that within the painting "looking through" began to occur and that it makes us feel like we are looking at a "section" taken from a spatiality that goes to infinity but has a more rigid and unified organisation compared to the Ancient Age examples (Panofsky, 2017, p.39).

Cassirer argues that the modern understanding of nature, which is based on the theories put forward by philosophy and mathematics, has led to the understanding that the space corresponding to a system is substituted for the space corresponding to a total (Cassirer, 2018, p.177). The Renaissance conception of being includes the concept of infinity in the sense of actual infinity within nature, physically known in empirical reality. Thus, by mathematically rationalizing the image of space completely, which had previously been aesthetically united, a clear and conflict-free spatial structure with infinite extension can be established, the objects and the interval spaces within this space can be connected in principle. All the scientificities on the surface of the painting are completed, so that this great evolution from stacked space to systematic space reaches its non-final conclusion. According to Panofsky, the significance of Lorenzotti's "Annunciation" painting dated 1344 is that for the first time the floor plane is orientated towards a single point as a whole with absolute mathematical awareness.



Figure 5: Ambrogio Lorenzetti, Annunciation, 1344.

The official discovery of the vanishing point which is infinitely distant points of all lines of depth is a clear symbol of infinity. The other significance of the painting is the brand new meaning the floor plane acquires.

The inconsistency seen between the orthogonals in the painting shows that, on the one hand, the concept of infinity is still at the stage of formation and on the other hand, although the space is perceived as a whole with its contents or at least this is tried to be felt, the drawing order of the space comes after the figurative composition. Its importance in terms of art history is the idea that "the place exists before the objects brought to that place, so it must first be determined schematically" had not been reached yet.

Panofsky says that it was Jan van Eyck who realised an integrated orientation of a single plane, even the vertical plane and that the painting became a "section of reality" both in terms of its dimensions and meaning. Thus, he states that the imagined space now goes beyond the represented space and extends in all directions; in this way, the finitude of the painting makes the infinity and continuity of the space perceptible (Panofsky, 2017, p.42-45).

A painting using perspective is not just a mimetic work; it also expresses the desire to organize the world in a certain way -the relationship from self to non-self in the Kantian sense. It is a depiction of thought realized through the painting (Holly, 2012, p. 217). According to perception expert R. Arnheim, the Renaissance perspective system was invented not to create mimesis but to ensure continuity of spatial depth. These paintings combine the structural elements of the Renaissance system of illusion -unified light source, separation of planes, linear perspective, atmospheric perspective and colour perspective- to depict each figure and object in the painting only from a particular point of view (Dunning, 1991, p.332). Presenting a vertical image inspired by nature, where all objects exist in the same unified pictorial space, these paintings are combined in terms of viewpoint as well as point of view. Farago argues that the gaze of both the painter and the viewer is positioned in the painting, excluding any kind of impersonality and that the artist's self reveals itself through the small differences created in the story of the image; in doing so, he reconstructs the figure by imposing the conscious distance from his own self (Farago,2006, p.75).

With the Renaissance, the subjective visual impression was rationalised to such an extent that the transition of space from psychophysiological to mathematical in other words, the objectification of the subjective becomes possible and the expression of meaning on faces

was added to the mathematical structure of space (Panofsky, 2017, p.51). This transition of the human mind and self to rationalization and objectification, was realized with the new understanding of the universe and the discovery of infinity, by reaching a new consciousness about his own existence and for the first time perceiving both himself and nature through a world of experience -created nature- rather than in a theological dimension. Thus, the distance between the subject and the object, becomes a distance between the viewing eye and the world of existence, a distance that personalizes the subject on the one hand and objectifies things on the other, in perspective.

According to Tezcan, Renaissance art takes humanism, scientific naturalism which evaluates man in space and individualisation as three basic concepts (Tezcan, 2018, p.16). With man's transition to the objective world and his understanding of himself as a known object, individual selves gain importance and it is believed that the highest values can be gathered in human existence. In the Renaissance understanding of being, it can be said that the self and the object were completely separated but the self realized itself in the necessity of the object. The object was not only the opposite of the self; it corresponded to all the productive and creative forces of the self were directed to and in which these forces first became physically realized.

Despite the great development in the perception of space and place, the time in Renaissance painting is not a time of movement experienced in it. The figures give a feeling of being static and frozen, beyond any kind of change, as if they will never move. According to Tunalı, the time that determines almost all Renaissance art is not empirical but a rational time based on logic and immobility. Since Renaissance artists wanted to express what is unchanging and constant in their works but not the changing, the figures are on the surface of the painting, not in the depths. This is the attitude that grasps the object rationally -through reason- interprets it as an entity, transfers it to the canvas with strong rational forms and contours (what H. Wölfflin calls the category of line) and reflects a world of entities that is always self-subsisting, unchanging and on its own (Tunalı, 2003, p.83, 91). At the same time, despite the rationalizing individual mind, it is also the artist's expression of the holistic that does not change. According to Taftalı, the objective materialist understanding, which believes that the world of objects expresses the external reality and its own source is in that world of objects, influenced the entire Renaissance art and the enlightenment process that

developed afterwards, until the beginning of the 19th century. The world of objects were perceived and interpreted accordingly and expressed in an objective naturalist form that defines the artistic approach of the same period (Taftalı, 2005).

According to İpşiroğlu, while the Renaissance encouraged the awakening of consciousness, it also wanted to glorify the body, which was seen as an obstacle for salvation (İpşiroğlu, 2011, p.82). Renaissance painting reveals that life can have another aspect other than religion and instead of Jesus, Mary or saints, man as an individual and events in daily life begin to be depicted. As a result of the expression of individuality and the desire to be recognised and known, the art of portraiture was born. Although the artist began to display his individuality and sometimes his identity in activities such as self-knowledge, decision-making and the production of aesthetic works, these were still the initial stages of philosophical thought that will reveal a deep concept of subjectivity. According to Cassirer, the Renaissance principles of individuation attempt to reveal only the theoretical foundations and conditions of subjectivity (Cassirer, 2018, p.177). İpşiroğlu states that in Masaccio's paintings, it is clear that even the figures whose heads are only visible in the background, occupy a place in the space and that the figures are both connected and separated from each other by gathering around a centre with their position, movement and gaze within the group (İpşiroğlu, 2011, p.66). As each figure begins to acquire an individual appearance, the structural features of the objects also emerge. For the first time in his paintings, people are seen stepping on the ground.



Figure 6: Masaccio, The Tribute Money, 1427, Brancacci Chapel, Floransa

Art had not yet become a means of self-expression for independent individuals in the early Renaissance, while in the following centuries the individuality of the artist became more and more prominent. The manifestation of the painter's self and personality in the work of art reaches an unprecedented intensity in the 16th century. Cassirer argues that Renaissance metaphysics, supported by the theories of science and artistic creativity, was able to break away from the basic scholastic forms that persisted in both its spiritualism and naturalism (Cassirer, 2018, p.192). However, scholastic metaphysic and individualization were still represented together in philosophy and art.

The formation of Renaissance natural science on the relationship between conception and sensation, thought and experience, is the basis of the Rationalist and Empiricist views of philosophy, that would emerge as a definite distinction in the 17th century. Because of this dual approach, it can be said that the Renaissance artist both saw himself in the world of empirical appearances perceived by the senses and constantly endeavoured to move beyond it into a world of meaning.



Figure 7: Michelangelo Buonarroti, Creation of Adam, 1508-1512, Sistine Chapel

The figure of Michelangelo's Adam in the ceiling decorations of the Sistine Chapel expresses the spirit of the period very well in terms of reflecting the understanding of self and the individualisation effort of man. Refusing to dissolve into the existence of God, man becomes a creator who, far from passively imitating nature, adds his intelligence and the intensity of his emotions into it (Farago, 2006, p.69). An expression of inner power is evident in these frescoes in which man, who is depicted as being liberated by breaking away from

God, although in the idea of creation he comes from him. The fingers of God and Adam touch each other with an innate bond but then they separate and the created man is set free. This freedom is man's detachment from the incognisable, celestial God and his return to himself. According to Cassirer, the Renaissance understanding of the self emerges as both encompassing and contained being. The infinity of the universe threatens to destroy the self completely but since the mind is similar to the world it comprehends, the same infinity is also the source of the self's constant elevation of itself. The self can face the infinite universe because it finds within itself the principles that enable it to know that the universe is infinite (Cassirer, 2018, p.258). The source of this knowledge is not only logical reason but an intuitive certainty which is the special and vital principle of the self. The artist is no longer merely the humble copyist of nature, but the equal and rival in contact with God.

Another example reflecting the dual position of man is Leonardo da Vinci's "Vitruvian Man". According to Farago, the entire Renaissance thought and the core of the works based on it can be seen symbolically in this work. The transcendental side of the man is depicted by the position of the arms and legs separated in such a way as to maximally occupy the circle of the cosmos (the universe is depicted in the human body) and the physicality is depicted in a position reminiscent of the figure of the crucified man (Farago, 2006, p.67).

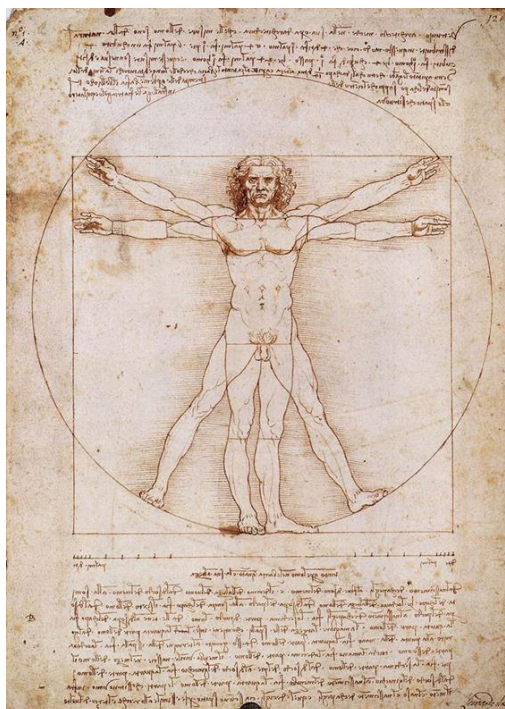


Figure 8: Leonardo Da Vinci, Vitruvian Man, 1492

Renaissance philosophy cannot resolve the dialectical contradiction inherent in this double relationship but it identifies the problem and transfers it to the following centuries when science and systematic philosophy will dominate. Nevertheless, it is certain that the human mind and its creative powers were liberated for the first time with Renaissance thought.

2.2. Post-Renaissance

While in the Late Ancient Greek conception of being, the object was perceived holistically by the subject, who saw himself not in opposition to existence but within it, at the beginning of the Modern Age, the meaning of the subject was definitively transformed and the subject and object were separated, man who evolved into the primary and only real subject, became the correlative center of what is. According to Su, at the same time, as the being turns into an object, something that is viewed only from the perspective of the man in the center, it is completely reduced to passivity and the world is taken over by the "thinking subject", the immutable absolute basis (Su, 2013, p.118). Thus, the theoretical consciousness conceives the world of beings as a picture separate from and opposed to the self, which it tries to make stable and secure by reducing it to calculable terms (Akarsu, 1987, p.22).

This understanding of existence and metaphysical will that shaped the art of the 17th century is built around the subjectivist and Cartesian modes of thought of the period and the concept of self, which systematically entered the agenda of modern philosophy for the first time with Descartes. The Renaissance principles of individualisation, which revealed only the theoretical foundations and conditions of subjectivity, evolved with the Enlightenment into an idea in which the man is identified and glorified with reason and consciousness, becomes increasingly independent with modern philosophy that opposes all the claims of scholasticism and mechanism that overthrows a gradualist understanding of existence. It can be said that all philosophy, until the linguistic turn, was shaped and defined through the idea of the self.

According to Mansfield, the two principles emphasized by the thought of Enlightenment and subjectivism are: The image of the self as the basis of all experience and knowledge in the world, as put forward by Descartes, who placed the self and self-

knowledge at the center of his philosophy and the concept of the self as defined by the rational faculty that gives order to the world (Mansfield, 2005, p.26). In the modern history of philosophy, the concept of the self is epistemologically characterized by the self as the subject of knowledge and the self as the object of knowledge; Rationalists emphasized the subject side of the self, while empiricists emphasized the object side. According to Yalçın, the self or soul as the subject of knowledge is seen as an immaterial substance that can exist independently of matter and the self's knowledge of itself as a subject is thought to be the attainment of intuitive knowledge of its own activities so it is assumed that such knowledge does not require the existence of a body (Yalçın, 2010, p.13). According to Tunalı, the understanding that started with Aristotle and turned into the problem of duality of the body and the immortal soul, which was created by the religious aspects of the Middle Ages, could not be solved by Descartes and was left to his successors as a deeper problem (Tunalı, 2003, p.27). Thus, for a longer period of time, man continues to be perceived as a being composed of two separate essences, the material side and the thinking side. The only difference is that whereas his ability of understanding was previously positioned in relation to the order of the universe, now the order of the universe is defined as a subject that is dependent on his ability of understanding and therefore comprehended by him. In other words, the transformation that finds its orientation with Cartesian thought in order to reconstruct Christian theology on a rational basis is achieved by replacing God as the source of competence that can explain the universe and human reason as the source of competence that can explain God. This transformation means the creation of a philosophical framework in which man can discover the order in the universe and gradually become the master of nature, based on reason and with a skeptical method. (Su, 2013, p.44,193).

Hume and similar empiricist philosophers, who emphasized the objective aspect of the self by describing it as a bundle of empirical perceptions, extended mechanicalism to the soul and eventually linked it to subjectivism (Bochenski, 1983, p.17). The understandings of the period, united in subjectivism regarding the correct method, find expression in art with both subjective and experimental features. The rationalist and Cartesian view of the self -the mathematisation of nature, grounded metaphysically by Descartes or the objectification of the world from the perspective of a rational self- is traced in the pictorial perspective. According to Dunning, the concept of self which was reached in the 17th century, dominated the perspective of society and important painters until the mid-19th century and painters

were forced to depict the outside world in a way that adopted this Cartesian paradigm. Dunning, based on David Carrier's "Deconstruction of Perspective" argues that traditional perspective assumes a Cartesian viewer who connects with the outside world through a series of instantaneous views, each located at a single point in space and that the paintings where the self comes to the fore of Italian Renaissance, Baroque, Rococo periods and the first half of the 19th century with their unified fields and viewpoints, were created with this understanding (Dunning, 1991. p.331, 332).

According to Farago, Baroque art, which emerged as an attempt to overcome the opposition between the God-centred worldview and scientific objectification processes and as a distinction between two different ways of seeing that are at the classical origins of Modernism; tries to fill the space that extends infinitely beyond all forms with a large number of sensible objects in order to reveal and clarify it. Since the function of these objects is not to exist in themselves but to authorise the space containing them to encompass and transcend as widely as possible, space becomes the shelter of a multitude of figures and the more the artist increases the detail that adorns things, the more obvious the transcendence and infinity of the content becomes. In human experience, every object can be grasped from an infinite number of points of view, with the space that spreads with the movements of the body passing from one point of view to another. Each different point of view creates a different perspective about the object whereas each subject can potentially take any point of view, thus enabling perspectives that vary widely according to their displacements (Farago, 2006, p.90-92, 103). It is seen that the infinity of space and perspectives explored is represented by a multiplicity of objects and their abundance of details. İpşiroğlu states that, starting with the art of the Mannerist period, the increasing subjectivism and the order of depth in composition replaced the Renaissance objectivism -two-dimensional superficiality on the surface of the painting- and that in this way the artist wanted to make the audience forget that they were in front of a painting and gave them the impression of being face to face with reality (İpşiroğlu, 2011, p.111).

In Baroque art, which can be called an art of multiplicity as opposed to the holistic view of art of the Middle Ages and the simplicity and stasis of the Renaissance, the infinity and the self are embodied on the same surface. Baroque art, which takes the bending movement of the curve to infinity along with the multiplicity of objects, differentiates it

according to the two aspects of infinity; matter and spirit. According to Tunalı, movement is the main subject of Baroque painting. As opposed to the Renaissance's logical understanding of time, Baroque painting depicts an empirical time determined by movement in the understanding of empiricist philosophy. By conceiving the object not as an existing entity but as an appearance of the reality, it declares that this reality is an integrity of appearance that our perceptions inform us about (Tunalı, 2003, p.83, 95)



Figure 9: Rembrandt van Rijn, The Night Watch, 1642, oil on canvas, 363 cm × 437 cm

The Rationalist and Empiricist philosophies of the period, which had an influence on Baroque art, generally see the work of art and forms of expression as the result of subjective processes. Descartes, in terms of philosophy and Desargues, in terms of perspective theory both stated that, the view that all distinctive features of spatiality in artistic representation are determined according to the subject. As the embodiment of a world-conception, it also symbolises the moment when space is free from all kinds of intervention. According to Panofsky, the history of perspective can be seen as an achievement of distancing and a sense of creating reality through objectification but it can also be understood as an indication of the man's who does not accept distance, desire to regulate, systematise and power the external world and in this sense indication of the self and rational reason expanding its

sphere. Therefore, artistic thought is confronted with the question in which sense these two understandings should be used (Panofsky, 2017, p.53-55).

According to Su, who says that in modern philosophy the subject is always understood as a cognitive being, the philosophers who gave the modern framework to cognitive developments that founded rational thought not in God but in man as "transcendental a priori" are Descartes and Kant who explored the limits of reason with the system of thought he established (Su, 2013, p.193). Rationalist and empiricist understandings reached a synthesis in the 18th century within the philosophy of Enlightenment. The experiments in the rationalist line, first rejected by Kant, evolved into German idealism in the 19th century as an idealist content with the transcendental rationalism he later developed and this understanding also formed the origin of 20th century currents of thought (Akarsu, 1987, p.24).

According to Yalçın, Kant, seeing the weaknesses of the rationalist and empiricist approaches to the self, follows a midway path and emphasises both the subject and object aspects of the self. On the subject of empirical self-knowledge, he adopts the rationalist line by saying that there is a transcendental self-consciousness but then he limits the similarity with the rationalists by saying that this consciousness is not the kind of intuition which shows us that the self is an essence (Yalçın, 2009, p.8). Thus, according to Kant's philosophy, which aims to establish the man as both an empirical and a transcendental pair, the man, who himself was a being among others, is now a subject among objects. According to Su, Kant's logic in this problematic, which is based on the opposition between subject and object, is to establish the man as the complex origin and owner of reality, the centre of control and sovereignty thus to found knowledge in man as the subject of knowledge and at the same time to make man an object of his own knowledge (Su, 2013). According to Kant, it is possible to have an a priori original form of consciousness concerning the content of the thinking self, which does not give information about what the self is but accompanies all forms of knowledge and experience (Yalçın, 2009, p. 98-99). Since there can be no knowledge of objects or experience in the subject without synthesis, which is a feature of the ability of understanding and without the combination of perceptions; the data coming from the senses must be associated with each other by this original self-consciousness (Kant, 2010). For this reason, it is possible to establish a connection with Plato's understanding of

reality in art and to see the roots of German idealism in Kant's -who in his transcendental aesthetics, considers the term aesthetics to mean the comprehension of beauty through perception and sensation, rather than the apprehension of beauty- distinction between the reality we perceive through the senses and the reality we grasp through reason (Cevizci, 2009, p.721). According to Kant, although they correspond to an object, non-existent, immaterial things “things in themselves” constitute the whole of the world. God himself is such a thing. For Kant, who pointed to the distinction between the aesthetic and natural spheres and defended the autonomy of aesthetic judgement; art, as a matter of pleasure, not knowledge, cannot provide knowledge in the logical sense but can bring us into contact with things that cannot be fully presented in experience or grasped through concepts. Thus, according to Kant, depiction does not depend on the object but only on the subject and beauty in art, which does not carry a truth value, is evaluated according to the judgements of pure taste, independent of the concept (Farago, 2006, p.107).

According to Danto, Kant thinks that philosophy answers the question of how knowledge is possible, rather than contributing to knowledge and a parallel understanding in painting would be to answer the question of how painting is possible rather than to depict the appearance of objects (Danto, 2010, p.29). In Kant's conception of being, which is shaped according to the reality of the empirical and phenomenal world, experiences are perceived as the activities of the subject, while reality is regarded as everything that exists or the continuous and permanent existence behind appearances, independent of the subject's knowledge and perception (Bochenski, 1983, p.18,19). This being is different from the world of conception that the subject constructs and synthesises with its abilities such as perception and imagination through self-consciousness (Cevizci, 2014, p.194).

According to Akarsu, this understanding, which divides the cosmos into the world of phenomena and the subjective world of man or the world of free personality, paves the way for Romanticism by seeing the creative self beyond the world of visible objects and emphasising the creative function of the intellect (Akarsu, 1987, s.49). Adorno and Horkheimer, by saying that the analytical-instrumental reason of the Enlightenment paved the way for totalitarianism, state that the project of the "subject", which positions itself as a power of thought in opposition to religious and metaphysical beliefs and argue for the emancipation of man from the domination of all kinds of beliefs through reason, is nothing

but an adapted form of the belief that God dominates the world, which is at the basis of religious explanations (Su, 2013, p.57, 59). The legitimacy of art, which was previously determined by religion, is now determined by rational-individual reason. By separating reason from emotion, the real from fiction, objective knowledge from subjective experience, some sort of domination is established over all mental and physical production processes and art is pushed to the background by being seen as the expression of emotions and experiences that are underestimated in the name of rationality (Su, p.17).

Romanticism differs from the Enlightenment in its conception of the man, aims to glorify the power of emotions, perception, intuition, experience and creative imagination against the analytical, scientific and critical subject-reason thus man begins to be seen not only as a being of reason but as a whole with all human aspects. However, according to Hegel, since this man, with all his features, is at the same time the embodiment of transcendent, in other words, the manifestation of God in human form; the type of art closest to the comprehension of transcendent is seen as Romanticism and art, like God, is conceived as a living, self-knowing being in this world. Hence, the Romantics, glorified art as not a means but an aim in itself, nevertheless they could not overthrow the supremacy of reason over art (Bochenski, 1983, p.20).

Fichte, Schelling and Hegel, who set out from the Kantian conception of the self, the source of German idealism and tried to establish an integrity of metaphysical system in the field of philosophical knowledge; became the representative of subjective idealism by suggesting that the content of the self as a subject can be known in order to reveal the aspects of the self that remain concealed in transcendental philosophy. The similar mental structures of Romanticism and Idealism as cultural phenomena of the same period, especially the idealist concepts of Fichte and Schelling, such as aesthetic intuition, genius and the emphasis on the metaphysical aspect of artistic creation, are traced in the works of Romantic artists. This absolute self of Fichte -who defines his system, in which the self is taken as the basis, as "an analysis of the concept of freedom" (Fichte, 2006, s. 11) and reduces Kant's dualism of subjective-objective self to the understanding of a single absolute-transcendent self- as a trans-individual principle, turns Kant's transcendental self into a metaphysical- ontological principle. The aim of subjective idealism, which defines dogmatism as the absolutising of the non-self, is to find out what this absolute self is (Cevizci, 2009, p.819). It is evident that

Fichte's ideas and German idealism in general were the precursors of the developments in the philosophy of the 19th and 20th centuries and that existentialism has its roots in them.

According to Hegel, who combines Kant's transcendental self and Descartes' "cogito", man is holistic and divine as a being of self-consciousness and action. The absolute, which really exists, is not static and is constantly progressing and moving, is not a reality separate from this world or transcendent of it but on the contrary, it is the reality of life as a whole. This absolute is a human being among human beings. Whereas previously in philosophy there was the idea of a transcendent being above the individual, in the unknown, with Hegel this absolute self sought is explained by the descent of the transcendent being into the world (Cevizci, 2009, p. 806-808, 827). The pure self, which cannot be objectified as an absolute, unconditional and unlimited activity or which resists being the object of consciousness, which is the first principle of philosophy as transcendent and the precondition for the unity of consciousness, can only be felt through momentary mental intuition, or in other words, it makes itself known to thought. Fichte calls this "the fundamental intuition of the self" (Fichte, 2006, p. 212-213). According to Fichte, who says that transcendental thinking can be realised through an introspective gaze, the intellect complements the sensory dimension of knowledge and the ability to understand is the cause of intuition. Since pure self-consciousness, which is not a phenomenon, is the first action, the concept of self is only possible through a return to oneself and this conception can be formed through the use of intuitive imagination in the subject-object relationship at the process of creation. In Schelling's aesthetic approach, artistic creation is defined as an intuition of the self, which is grasped within its own objectification in order to know the absolute and art brings the infinite and the finite together in an objective synthesis (Farago, 2006, p.122).

Philosophy is expected to clarify the experiential field in order to explain how the thinking self or conscious subject forms the world of objects in the mind. According to Fichte, an understanding of existence in which the object is independent of the subject is inconceivable because consciousness includes both existence and the knowledge of existence and all knowledge is based on the self, revealing the relation of identity between subject and object (Fichte, 2006, p.24-25). It can be said that this limit to the understanding of existence within the framework of subjective idealism is realised independently of objects and that its presentation in art is based on a metaphysics of the subject. Thus, the artist's

infinite possibility of combination becomes a finite-limited object that appears infinite when the work of art is objectified.

Hegel, who considers philosophy entirely as ontology and states that the fundamental characteristic of human existence is self-consciousness, proceeds from the idea that the development of human consciousness in general is parallel to the development in the individual, in other words, the development of universal consciousness is parallel to the development of the individual (Akarsu, 1987, p.71). History constitutes the perfect ontological dimension as the history of the embodied God, according to which man creates himself and history with his negating action and this history is the unfolding and manifestation of consciousness in time (Farago, 2006, p.127). In Hegel, who regards thought and objective reality as one, the natural sphere of existence is a sphere in which the absolute or the ideal is visible, in a sense, embodied (Cevizci, 2009, p. 832). Since the formation of art depends on the need of the essence (tin) to recognise itself in an object outside and to be objectified in order to be comprehended, the essence goes outside the self in order to reach its own consciousness and to gain reality. Man acquires self-consciousness in order to find out, to recognise himself in the objects he creates. In this way it becomes clear that art can play the role of a mirror that offers the viewer a more realistic experience of humanity than individual life. The objects conceived by the artist cease to be ordinary and become objects of inner observation (Farago, 2006, p.133). Since reality must be sought beyond directly perceived objects, art is by no means a mere appearance or mimesis of the world. Since everything that comes from the essence (tin) is superior to everything that exists in nature, since it has a higher reality and a more real existence than the reality of everyday life, it also serves the function of revealing the truth (Su, 2013, p.129).

Thus, Hegel wants to present art as creation instead of art based on mimesis; not as the conception of the ideal but as a sensory presentation of it. This attitude is not a depiction or definition of anything but only a reflection of the reality as itself- as that which is in itself or as a form of consciousness. Since an attitude in which the artist emphasizes himself would be poor, there should be a connection between the inspiration and intuition coming from the essence and the individual characteristics and feelings of the artist (Hegel, 2012, p. 49-50, 235). According to Hegel, the intellect must abandon the dignified immobility of the Greek gods detached from the world, the inertia that means death and pass from the ideal to the

conceptual because art, like God, lives in this world and knows itself. The unity of tin and matter is perfectly realised in classical art, but this does not mean that nothing can be more sublime than beauty. Thus Romanticism adds a negationist expression to the dialectic and rejects the reconciliation of tin with matter (Farago, 2006, p.141). According to the relationship between Romanticism and Hegel, it can be argued that art is the unity of the infinite thought, which is tried to be expressed in the finite object as a form of expression of divinity, in other words, the unity of the abstract divine revealed in man with the physical human form or the unity of absolute reality and human individuality. Su states that, religion and art became interchangeable fields in Romanticism because religion is a sensory subject and emphasises that the relationship between art and human being was divinized just as the relationship between God and man was aestheticised in Romanticism. Since the Romantic work of art can only be a product of genius and genius can only be a man who borrows divinity from God, the artist becomes a potential God (Su, 2013, s.122).

Tezcan describes Romantic art as a movement that appeals to emotion and sentiment, stimulates passion, emphasises expression and character instead of ideal beauty by putting forward personality, is individualistic, rebels against rules, escapes from extreme realism and the monotony of everyday life and symbolises the escape to the mystical, religious and miraculous. When pre-Romantic art is defined as reflection, its most prominent feature was that it was a mirror of the outside world, life, man and society whereas the artist himself - his inner world, his experiences and feelings come to the fore with the Romanticism movement and by giving the emphasis to the artist, the meaning of the work of art gains importance with features such as the artist who becomes conscious of his own feelings, the meaning he conceives in his mind and the ability to express the feelings that reality arouses in the artist (Tezcan, 2018, p.18).

While the tin, which needs to be objectified, is revealed from the artist through intuition and inspiration, the self is embodied in the work of art not only through reason but also through perception and emotions as absolute-infinite. Since man, with his transcendental self, is not static but constantly creates himself and history, the reflection of this self in art is also not stable. The aim of romantic painting is to achieve an inner visibility with an emphasis on detail. Farago says that Hegel wrote outstandingly on the surface and colour of the skin and the way in which the excitement in the face reflects the vitality of the

interior (Farago, 2006, p.143-144). According to Hartman, the Romantic period's emphasis on emotional self-awareness as a necessary precondition for improving society and the human condition was also influenced by the idea of the nation as a supra-individual entity. In Romantic painting, the traditional scenes of paradise, expulsion and salvation are replaced by nature, self-consciousness and imagination, while introspection, further exploration of human psyches and mental potentials, transcendental experience and the artist as a highly individual creator are prominent concepts in the Romantic period (Hartman, 1962, p. 561).



Figure 10: Caspar David Friedrich, Wanderer above the Sea of Fog, 1818.

Erinç states that the problem of the artist's mental health started to be focused on after the beginning of the Romantic movement and that Romanticism was the first and most important movement in which the artist and all his attitudes and behaviours were discussed in detail and made the centre of the art event (Erinç, 2004, p. 102). Antmen argues that the main point of the disagreement that lasted until the 19th century between the patternists, who associated art with reason and the colourists, who associated art with emotion, was that both romantic and classical artists were idealists in their core, in other words the artist did not transfer what he saw but what he imagined in his mind (Antmen, 2009, p.12).

Romanticism in art and philosophy can be described as realising itself under the creation of a subject. This subject, who has the power to do everything, is a force that independently constitutes the world and unites separate spheres. However, Romantic art presents this idealised man and his life with his individual characteristics such as emotion, perception and meaning as opposed to his rational subjectivity and gives him ideological characters. In this way, the work of art becomes a realisation of inner intensity, the highest point of his divine creation, which can only be understood with this ideal subject.

2.3. Modernist Period

In terms of the relationship between art and philosophy, it can be stated that Modernism was a period in which the reality of art was endeavoured to be defined and each of the modernist movements acted with this philosophical perception of reality regarding art. Defining art, philosophy and religion as the three moments of absolute tin, Hegel says that art invites us to an intellectual enquiry in order to know philosophically what it is. In art there is a kind of transhistorical essence that is everywhere and always the same and yet this essence reveals itself only through history (Hegel, 2012). According to Danto, after Hegel the richness of philosophical speculation merges with the richness of artistic production (Danto, 2010, p.55). However, according to Shiner, at the beginning of the 19th century, with the assignment of a transcendent spiritual task to the fine arts to uncover reality, the idea of craft in art was divided and in the course of a single century the model of construction was replaced by a model of deep contemplation that saw all fine art products as objects of attention. The idea of an objective contemplation, which until then had been reserved for God, now exists for art and art is deified and becomes a unique intellectual occupation at the level of the highest values (Shiner, 2001, p.25).

Within the scope of idealism, it can be argued that painting is nourished by the dialectic between the act of representation and the thing represented, the figure and the essential content and that this is what enables art to have a history. This history has gained momentum since the end of the 19th century, leading to the formation of numerous conceptions of representation (Farago, 2006, p.14-15).

Giddens argues that in the modern era, positivist thinking in its various guises, has become the central guiding mode of thought (Giddens, 2010: p.71). Since the end of the 19th century, against idealist syntheses such as phenomenology, existentialism and hermeneutics in philosophy, pragmatist, linguistic and materialist views have been shaped around positivism. From the early 20th century onwards, the comprehensive philosophical view called Analytic philosophy represents a reaction against the idealist or idealism-rooted traditions of continental philosophy and against Hegel's and idealist syntheses' conceptions of absolute reality or the independence of reality from external matter.

It is a proven fact that the conception of existence, which had been perceived as objectively materialistic since the Renaissance, underwent a transformation and became increasingly abstract in connection with the changing conception of reality in science and philosophy (as matter lost its solidity and was perceived as quantum, force fields and energy symbols etc.) at the end of the 19th century. Under the influence of idealist syntheses in which this abstraction can be traced in their conception of existence, Phenomenology, which deals with the problem of reality and phenomena and Existentialist thought, which places the problem of existence and essence at the basis of philosophy, art, which entered into an ontological search, gradually abandoned the mimesis of external reality in representation in order to transcend the visible. According to Farago, the transition from form to formlessness, from symbolic to abstract and from objectivity to non-objectivity indicates a search for pure ontological existence (Farago, 2006, p.10).

It can be concluded that as art acquired a metaphysical dimension, the objective naturalistic understanding was gradually replaced by abstraction and this abstraction became the main form of expression of 20th century Modernism. This period can be described as a period in which artists turned away from the materialist world towards spirituality and metaphysical pursuits, esoteric-hermetic philosophy and teachings re-emerged, this mystical character sometimes overtook positivism, realism and scientificism and influenced many artists in the transition to abstraction. The effect of abstract art, which has become synonymous with modern art, being a universal language that eliminates cultural differences is undeniable but according to Tunalı, giving form in abstract art should be understood not only in an aesthetic but also in an ontological sense because abstraction is not a method but a way of thinking and shaping the absolute (Tunalı, 2003, p.151-152).

The will to transition from individuality to universality inevitably leads to abstraction and art, which ignores the random appearance of objects, the subjectivity of the artist and turns towards the absolute being in the subject self, gains a metaphysical dimension. What can be said to have changed definitively with modernism is the gradual abandonment of the object depicted by mimesis in order to focus the representation which is considered to be the basic tendency of art, on the way the subject grasps the object. Danto states that Kant, whom Greenberg chose as the model of modernist thought, is imagined as the first true modernist and that with Modernism, the conditions of representation took centre stage so that art became, in a sense, the subject of itself (Danto, 2010, p.29).

Although there are various opinions on when modernity in art began, the general opinion is that it started with Impressionism. According to Tunalı, the reason for this is that the Impressionist painting, which fulfils the requirements of the Modern understanding of art, which emerged with the claim of purification, got rid of all formal elements (Tunalı, 2003, p.56). The first of the two great painting concepts, visual realism, completes its period by encompassing all traditional painting until the Impressionists, after which the reality of abstract art-conceptualisation, whose object is intellectual, begins. Tunalı states that the Impressionist concept of painting, which lacked geometric formal perspective, emerged as a two-dimensional surface painting with no perception of depth. He describes Impressionism as a subjective naturalism, an analytical way of seeing, an understanding of art influenced by the positivist thought formed within the framework of the philosophy of A. Comte and E. Mach as a continuation of empirical thought and based on this philosophy's interpretation of existence and self. According to this philosophical understanding, which sees the relation between subject and object as a bond of impression and the object as a complex of impressions, the self, which, like matter, consists of impressions and a number of changing and flowing phenomena, does not have a reality. For Tunalı, taking the reality of self and object to impressions means the denial of existence but the absolutisation of becoming (the formation) (Tunalı, 2003, p.25, 37, 44). Based on Descartes' and Locke's understanding of perception that everything that exists must be physical or mental, that the mind cannot contain anything other than its own thoughts, Denkel determines everything that is the content of consciousness as thought and the source of thought as the content of perception thus the sensory experiments are also mental (Denkel, 2021). Since the world of appearance

determined by impression is a purely subjective world, the nature shown by the Impressionist becomes a world of complexes of impression, an appearance dependent on the subject, grasped at a given moment. Such a painting is stripped of all rational elements, is composed of colour keys of various nuances, its contours melt away and the line disappears (Tunali, 2003, p.40). The scientific perspective, which had been used since the Renaissance, is replaced by depth and aerial perspective, which requires focusing on the holistic effect of the painting, that is achieved through colour rather than line. According to Antmen, this subjective aspect of Impressionism is based on the rapid interaction between the object and the subject and in the paintings they both move almost together (Antmen, 2009, p.23).

This conception, in which the rational mind is replaced by the senses and the moment becomes a dimension in which the artist grasps the objects, wants to depict what changes with a gaze adjusted according to the moment, rather than the constant, static and unchanging existence in art since the Renaissance. It can be suggested that Impressionist painting imposes neither an object nor an individual self on the viewer and that the artist's consciousness transcends the boundaries of time and space in the moment to find expression through the senses and produce a metaphysical meaning. Time and the self, which were first subjectively conceived as experience and impression in Impressionism, pass through Bergson and reach the philosophy of Existentialism. While the task of the painter who depicts objective reality is limited by the world that can be observed outside, the Impressionist's work is limited to the eternity of the moment. Light, which symbolises divinity (enlightenment) in the metaphysical tradition, also played a role in the emergence of modern art forms. By finding ways to capture light and impermanence, the Impressionist perfectly conveys the impressions of the painterly self from moments of light.

With the tendency towards abstraction, which began with the Impressionists and gradually developed, a gradual break from the reality of the visible world is observed in art. This rupture is realized by replacing the objects (sensually grasped existence) with the meaning of the objects (an abstract intellectual existence attributed to the object as an entity of consciousness, as the self). In other words, this is the replacement of external reality by the artist's essential reality. What distinguishes Cezanne from other Impressionists is the importance he attached to the structural basis of the painting, not to the external reality. With his attitude towards perceiving the objects in nature as a geometric essence, the world painted

by Cezanne is not a world that is sensually grasped but an abstract world that is intellectually constructed. In Impressionist painting, objects consisting of momentary vibrations come into existence as structural forms. Whereas the comprehension of objects as geometrical forms is a way of artist reaching and grasping the essence as a being of consciousness, in which sensory appearances are eliminated. Tunalı sees geometrical forms, which are an aesthetic ontological example for the forms of existence of universal reality, as the manifestation of the holistic in the individual. For Tunalı, abstraction is not a method but a way of thinking and shaping the absolute (Tunalı, 2003, p.123, 152). Previously, Plato, Plotinus and Hegel also understood the forms of nature as an obstacle to the attainment of universality, since subject and object do not exist in a plastic equivalence.

Tunalı states that the expressionism in Croce's philosophy gave the period its aesthetic character and the fact that art emerges from the inner world of man means the expression and externalisation of the world of emotion by grasping it from within. When it comes to expression, the supremacy of the self over the object, of internal processes over the objective external world is understood (Tunalı, 2003, p.166). As a result, the object of art shifts from the external world to the state of emotion belonging to the personal world; not to the impressions but to the intense emotions aroused by life. In expressionism, which is an individual and subjective form of expression, the artist's inner freedom and unlimited expression is essential. It can be argued that the subjective perception of existence by human consciousness and the emotions that arise in reaction to this perception create the expressive self. Cubism, like Expressionism, is not based on external reality but on the subject's world of the self whereas in Expressionism, reality is dependent on the instincts-emotions but in Cubism it is based on analytical reason and rational rules. The common points of expressionist artists, such as having an attitude that tries to distort the form, making use of the emotional and symbolic effects of colour, at the same time liberating colour from its naturalistic context with the intense textuality of paint, adopting an exaggerated understanding of pattern and perspective, are the statement of the liberation from objective reality and its replacement by the artist as an emotional being. The features of the artwork that reflect the production process and the emotional world of the artist, such as the thick layer of paint, gestuality, are seen in the first layer in the ontological analysis of the artwork by causing the expression to be perceived before the subject.

The common characteristics of the abstract expressionist artists who would emerge years later are capturing pictorial integrity and an understanding of composition that leads to a holistic perception of the dynamic or static paint area covering the canvas, rather than the relationship between the elements that make up the composition and the large dimensions chosen. The reason for Pollock's use of giant canvases in his works, in which he makes movement and spontaneity visible, excluding all kinds of objectivity and reflecting a gestural quality arising from the whole body, is to detach the viewer from the reality or level of consciousness while experiencing the painting. Pollock, who never presents a familiar world in his paintings, aims to interrupt the habits of daily life and the idealised perception of existence, in the world he creates and to make the viewer experience a kind of spatial experience between the drips and lines. This approach, which can be considered as an endeavour to make the reality of a metaphysical world experienced on its depthless surfaces by overcoming the sense of existence created by illusion, also wants to make the painting surface visible again. Rothko, describes the way to break away from everyday life at the level of consciousness as getting rid of any sense of security and says that only in this way one can become open to transcendental experiences (Antmen, 2009: p.232). Since it is assumed that everyday life does not symbolise a metaphysical world, the representation of metaphysical reality or transcendence is expressed not with the elements of the familiar world but with a series of symbolic forms and manners. This is how the abstract expressionist realizes the viewer to experience infinity and transcendence in his world where he reflects his emotions by emphasizing action and the moment.

Changing centuries-old understanding of visual representation of Western art, the Cubists reflected a conceptual rather than descriptive interpretation of nature, emphasising its two-dimensionality rather than creating the traditional illusion of three-dimensionality on the painting surface. Cubist painting, which allows the figure to be grasped from different angles, offers a new way of seeing to the artist, who has had a single-oriented perspective idea since the Renaissance and excludes the depth of perspective in traditional painting, which is constructed as if there is a window opening in front of the viewer; thus, the painting becomes a flat surface and the reality of the painting overcomes the realistic representation. Cubist artists say that there is no certainty beyond what the mind comprehends, that emotions distort what is shaped by reason and rules. However, they also realize that self-expression is impossible without leaving some formal traces in which individuality is evident. The

movements such as Cubism, Fauvism, Futurism and Constructivism cannot completely break away from external reality and the object retains its existence. Antmen argues that although abstract art includes various tendencies, it is not only the result of a search for an abstract expression and therefore, artworks realized by abstracting from the object should be distinguished from abstract works that do not refer to an external reality and that emerge as "things in themselves" in the Kantian sense (Antmen, 2009, p.47-55, 80).

Abandoning the Renaissance understanding of representation, the transition to abstraction, which tends to awaken the sense of existence, is dominated by the search for expression of concepts such as spirituality in art (Kandinsky), ultimate reality (Mondrian) or superior reality (Malevich). These artists, like Plato, argue that what is real is invisible to the naked eye and that abstraction is the only attitude that can bring man closer to the true essence of the universe and show him the truth. (Heartney, 2008, p.96). Kandinsky, who was influenced by the ideas of Plotinus, favours a conceptual understanding of painting that is completely abstract but also based on emotional expression, instead of a pictorial expression that is realized through abstraction from the object. This tendency towards mysticism in the works of Kandinsky, who thinks that art arises from an inner necessity, derives from the belief that art is the perception and expression of an infinite universal consciousness. Emotional expression can be interpreted as an indicator of an individual self. According to Mondrian, the abstract is the exclusion of individuality and the self in favour of universality (Tunalı, 2003, p.149). What is meant by this individuality is the reflection of emotions in the work of art. Under the influence of esoteric-mystical teachings, Mondrian passes through various stages and arrives at Neo-plasticism, the expression of a rational mysticism. According to Mondrian, although the manifestation of the unity in existence is seeded in our conscience, which is a localization of the universal consciousness, yet this unity cannot be seen because of our individual selves. In his conception of painting, which he based on this understanding of existence with a mental, rational, geometric discipline, his aim was to reach the essence behind objective appearances, to develop the pictorial language to express this essence and in this sense to express pure reality. In his paintings, in the equivalence of surface and depth, the infinite in the finite is described, gradually moving away from phenomenal reality. Realizing that form and natural colour characteristics evoke a subjectivity that obscures pure reality, he moves towards the means that allow him to create a picture of immutability, namely straight lines and clear primary colours. According to

Farago, Neo-plasticism, which is dualist in its formation, is an expression of the universal because of the real plasticity in formal relations, and of the subjectivity of the artist as an individual because of the material reality in the plastic structure. While revealing universality, the human element cannot be sacrificed (Farago, 2006, p.177, 183) While Mondrian shows the immutable through planes or straight lines without colour, the differences in the relations of proportion remain as an expression of his individuality. No matter how much abstraction and purification is attempted, it is obvious that an individual attitude, a characteristic related to the self, is always present in the art object.

Farago believes that Islamic geometric art is the expression of absolute consciousness, which is the basis of all art, in a form that constitutes a pure artistic expression (Farago, 2006, p.183). The attribution of meaning to geometry, which goes back to Antiquity, continues in Islamic art, largely centred on mysticism. According to L. Massignon's approach, geometry is the expression of the "Bâki" title of the absolute in forms (Massignon, 1962, p.8). Geometric compositions in traditional Islamic art show a conception of form based on a single repeating pattern. The reason why artists chose simple forms and used modular methods based on repetition is that the form itself has limited significance and the selection of complex basic units disrupts the unity of the whole (Antmen, 2009: p.197-198). This repetition of itself, as the repetition of the one, points to eternity. The absolute exists in man from before to after. Çaycı states that in Islamic art, the vertical emphasises the connection with the absolute, while the horizontal emphasises the connection with the realm of existence. The points of intersection are the centre (Çaycı, 2016, p. 196). Based on the symbolism of "the heavens and the earth" in the sacred books, the vertical symbolises the sky (*semâ*), which is the symbol of human consciousness in mysticism and the horizontal symbolises the earth, the dimension of man's existence and individual self. According to Akkach, man consciousness, which gathers all possibilities and all forms of existence in its own being, expands both horizontally and vertically. Vertical expansion is the comprehension of transcendent meanings, while horizontal expansion is the comprehension of meanings related to existence. The separation of man from other living beings with his linear and vertical corporeality pointing upwards is also related to the symbolism of the heavens (sky). In the opinion of W.K. Chorbachi, the entire geometrical relationship used in Islamic art and architecture, the division of a circle and its further division into subdivisions, is a presentation of the unity of being. In architecture, spatial features such as equidirectional

geometrical order and symmetrical organisation around a centre, the tendency towards single-centred and linear composition, the orientation from part to whole, from complex to simple, from coincidental to imperative, all carry the meaning of unity from multiplicity (Akkach, 2021).

In his suprematist paintings, in which he tried to develop the formal expression of the infinite and absolute, Malevich, who attributes intense meanings to pure forms, interprets nothingness, which is a problem of existence, at the plastic level. In contrast to the scientifically relative and discontinuous realities in the objective world, he says that the suprematic world reflects a complete reality in the sense of absolute unity and absolute nothingness and that this reality is the reality of man (Tunalı, 2003, p.183, 185). Malevich's idealist conception of existence is an infinity or nothingness, an incorporeal consciousness that cannot be depicted formally. The square on the white plane, which he called "Zero Form", symbolises nothing and the square in the white-on-white series symbolises the representative of the absolute in the world.

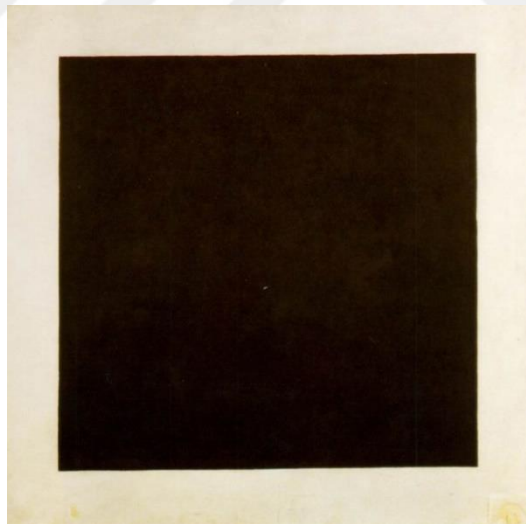


Figure 11: Kazimir Malevich, Black Square, 1915.

For Malevich, individual distinctions are erased in nothingness; escape from existence brings nothingness, which in turn brings the free self. Abstraction, which allows one to move to higher ontological levels, directs towards a mental intuition with holism. Malevich's abstraction is formed not through sensory, emotional or rational knowledge but through intuitive understanding that makes one feel creative unity. Farago says that in Malevich's

method, there is a silence towards the zero point of form, which Plotinus described as the absolute ineffable. When the object is formed, reality and infinity remain outside (Farago, 2006, p. 195- 201). It can be suggested that this pure abstract understanding, freed from the object and unconcerned with the necessity of representation, is related to Plato's theory of ideas.

The phenomenological approach, which does not consider the self as separated from experience, does not reject the existence of objects as reality but based on the inseparability of the subject and object connection, it proposes to eliminate this duality and to ignore the world of objects by parenthesis in order to reach absolute existence (Tunalı, 2003, p.140). According to Husserl, the reduction of the essence in phenomenology to mere consciousness is the setting aside of the existence of the external world, including the existence of our individual selves, and taking the self backwards until only the pure or core self, the transcendental consciousness remains at the end. The essences found in this way are now absolute and independent of time and space (Akarsu, 1987, p.158, 159). This understanding, which does not see the existence of the object as separate from consciousness, describes a relative objective world structured according to the perceptions and thoughts of the subject who experiences the world. For Gadamer, who says that the world embodied in intersubjective experiences is not an analytically definable objective world and that the subjectivity of the transcendently functioning self should be distinguished from the self that is a part of the world and is constituted with all its experiences; the pure transcendental self that constitutes all forms of the world fulfils its function both in all its absolute apodeicticity and in its own unique philosophical solitude as the self that essentially functions. Gadamer argues that Husserl's transcendental phenomenology is based on Kant's transcendental self establishing itself as an individual self (Ateşoğlu, 2020, p.198- 202) and that the subject self can only be known by this way.

It can be argued that the existentialist philosophy, which rises on the foundations of phenomenology, transforms the perception of the self within the historical development of the self in the West. The idea of Existentialism, in which existence and the self are made the object of absolute consciousness in the way of overcoming duality, is placed at the basis of philosophy. From a sociological point of view, it is observed that the people of the 20th century, especially after the two world wars, entered a process of agglomeration and

massification and moved away from individuality and subjectivisation processes. In the first half of the century, which began with a pessimistic atmosphere, metaphysical searches, the concepts of existence and nothingness came to the fore in philosophy with the effect of the scepticism created by increasingly abstract science and these years became the period when the idea of God and the self were most deeply questioned. Existentialism, considered as a continental philosophy, opposes systematic philosophy and classical metaphysics, the rational mind and the view that the world is a place where this rationality functions (Cevizci, 2014, p. 443).

In existentialist philosophy, the basis of ontological freedom is that man rises above the self as consciousness and creates himself (Tura, 1989, p.70, 72). In Islamic philosophy, this conception is called "vücûd" (come into being). It is observed that the idea of existence in Western philosophy approaches the concept of man being a "particular being", a self arising from his actions in Eastern esotericism. However, philosophy is still man's quest for sovereignty. Nietzsche says "concepts are the will to power". Islamic mysticism however, which is the product of thousands of years of wisdom and accumulation, has the understanding of transformation, change and metamorphosis through love. Existentialist thinkers, who want to gather the individual in the consciousness of his actual existence by replacing Hegel's abstract thinking with positivist thinking and objectivity with subjective thinking, ultimately take part in the idealist synthesis.

Heidegger says that existentialism's opposition to Idealist philosophy is like a radical critique of theology itself (Heidegger, 2007, p. 84). In Jaspers' metaphysics of existence, it is shown how existence connects with and ascends to the transcendent "one" that is the source of every being. Existential sublimities are not permanent as they last only in moments and the ascent to the transcendent must always be realized anew (Akarsu, 1987, p.193- 212). Heidegger, whose name has become synonymous with Existentialism, considers the traditional metaphysical view of the West, rooted in ancient ontology, i.e. the separation of being from the subject as an objective entity or the separation of the self and the external world, to be the scandal of philosophy.

According to Heidegger, who is in the hermeneutic line, Descartes paved the way for the effort to create absolute control over nature, which is the basis of modern technology by

centering man as a rational observer of the world (Su, 2014, p.118). Heidegger's understanding of being is the fact that man, who constantly redesigns himself in relation to others and nature through being, is not outside the world, nor is the world outside man but that man and life are constructed within it, together with it.

The term "dasein", the expression of pure being as the name of existence, has the tendency to understand its own existence in terms of what exists -the world, that has the same characteristics in its essence. Since pure existence is always my own, an ontic declaration is also included that it is "the self" and not someone else that exists. Heidegger's existentialist philosophy, which places the man at the centre, has similar characteristics with subjective idealism. He does not renew Hegel's understanding of aesthetics, which defines the work of art as the sensory appearance of the ideal but instead tries to overcome the opposition between subject and object, the self and object. He describes the existence of the work of art not on the basis of the subjectivity of the subject, but only based on it. With the removal of the sensory appearance, the idea gains its original form in the concept, so that the reality realised in the work of art becomes a unique unfolding of itself. According to Heidegger, from the point of view of being, in art, a new world opens up each time, the manifestation of being, the determination of reality as form, is directed towards being itself and the work of art always shows objectivity, although in different ways (Heidegger, 2007, p.93,100,101,113). It is evident that the idea of revealing the reality in the artwork by defining the meaning of existence is taken as a starting point in his approach to art (Su, 2014, p. 115).

The phenomenological expression "dasein in the self is in its essence, co-existence" has an ontological-existentialist meaning. Dasein is not the sum of all but a neutral all and the Dasein self, which is different from the individual self, is called the they-self. This "one-self" is scattered in everyone and has to find itself. When one's authentic self is revealed, this discovery is the removal of concealment, in other words, the removal of the individual self. In this case, the ontological gap separating the authentic self from the constructed individual self causes anxiety and boredom. However, realizing this fact is the end or death of the individual self but the beginning of real existence, the existence of absolute consciousness. Since existence is possible as long as the ontic possibility of this pure being exists, it can be said that what exists neither exists nor does not exist. Therefore, this means that its existence

is nothing (Heidegger, 2018, p.22-412). Whereas Scholastic and materialist ideas understood by the concept of being the existence of what they considered to be real, Heidegger is concerned only with the man as a being of meaning and in order for him to become the founder of his own structural plan, he must recognise his individual self and be liberated from it (Akarsu, 1987, p.217).

In "The Origin of the Work of Art", Heidegger reveals the limits of Western philosophy's metaphysical conceptions of what being is and describes a clear proof of his critical-phenomenological view through Van Gogh's painting "A Pair of Shoes".



Figure 12: Van Gogh, "A Pair of Shoes", 1886.

He argues that this painting, which he considers to be the first example of a true work of art, allows us to encounter the essence of art, suggesting that independence from man's designs is essential for understanding what beings or things actually are. He thus puts forward his own concept of the world as that which both informs and resists conceptualisation.

The first thing that is recognised is the fact that Van Gogh's painting represents an ordinary pair of farmer's shoes. However, according to Heidegger, Van Gogh's painting does not represent a pair of shoes, but in essence "nothing". Although the owner of these empty shoes is not depicted, he is still there. The nothingness that appears in the painting is not the

haunting presence of the absent owner of these shoes but rather the equally paradoxical and phenomenologically discernible appearance of neither being nor non-being. It is not merely nothing, it conditions our experience of all being. In other words, it is not yet something, but the evocative implication is the bringing into being of that which is not yet something by our capacities of disclosure through the phenomenological encounter with this active nothingness. What is paradoxical is not only that nothingness makes itself visible in Van Gogh's painting of an ordinary pair of shoes but also the opposite, what we think of as the present moment. According to Heidegger, then, truth arises from nothingness. The encounter with nothingness in the work of art destroys the taken-for-granted obviousness of the modern theoretical framework in which subjects try to dominate external objects. In this case, the phenomenological encounter with Van Gogh's painting destroys the modern worldview's understanding of being by returning us directly to the primordial level of existence where subject and object have not yet differentiated.

For Heidegger, this encounter should help us to transform our understanding of what beings are and take us beyond both the modern and late modern conceptions of being as objects to be dominated and resources to be optimized. When we pay attention to how these shoes are shaped on and against an inconspicuous dynamic background, we see that they emerge from a background that is not nothing at all, but rather a background that both supports and transcends the emergent intelligible world. Dasein- to be pure being is to be the being of the "in-between". This means that our encounter with Van Gogh's painting helps us to realize what we are and thus to become it. Because what we clearly encounter in art is our sense of the place in which we find ourselves, our making sense of a fundamental world that is always already at work in human existence. On a deeper level than understanding and experiencing ourselves as subjects who give meaning to an objective world, art teaches us to be what we already are by making us realize that we are implicitly participating in the process of the object. At the core of Heidegger's conception of art, one encounters a "nothing" that is not simply nothing but points to hidden possible meanings and retains its historical intelligibility to this day (Heidegger, 2007, p.25-31).

The metaphysical approach of the medieval period defines nothingness as the void before God created things and therefore, in theology, all that exists comes from nothingness. Modern science, which rejects nothingness by adopting this definition, takes only what exists

as a problem. According to Çüçen, Nietzsche, who exposes this attitude, says that the thinking principle of Western culture and modern science in general is nothingness in this perspective. Sartre, on the other hand, considers nothingness as the possibility of the man to realize his own self, his own essence, thus nothingness gains value in terms of being the cause of creation (Çüçen, 2018, p.138).

According to Sartre, a "researcher of freedom", man is a continuous re-creation from nothingness. For Sartre, who says that the essence does not constitute being, on the contrary, man as an existing being constitutes his essence through his actions, it is necessary that existence precedes essence (Akarsu, 1987, p.227). In choosing oneself, one chooses all human beings, so that every human being is connected to humanity at every moment. The transcendental field, which is free from all individual self-related structures, which does not belong to a subject because the passive self ceases to participate in it, is nothing; but this transcendental consciousness, that is nothing, or spontaneity which does not depend on the self, is at the same time the source of all and absolute existence, since it is the consciousness of all being. Since the individual self is the object-a structure of consciousness, situations and actions are constituted as productions of the self (Sartre, 2002, p.87- 92). It is transcendental consciousness or the intuitive truth of consciousness, where the meaning of the world and the self, in other words, the meaning of existence is constructed. According to Tura, Sartre thus puts existence at the centre of philosophy. Since consciousness is the act of externalization of the self, which means, it is always externalized as the consciousness of something, man creates his own meanings and essence with his absolute transcendental consciousness. Absolute consciousness makes the individual self something in the world, thus man rises above the self and can choose himself. In Sartre, freedom as an ontological imperative brings man to choose and create himself (Tura, 1989, p.70- 74).

Sartre says that the works of his close friend Giacometti are the imagery reflection of the existence of modern man between being and nothingness. Giacometti's sculptures, whose philosophical dimension is at the forefront and which evoke a sense of incompleteness, reflect the artist's ontological view. Yıldırım says that this feeling is a reference to the change, infinity and intellectual dimension of the man and that the conceptuality and intellectuality of the work takes its direction from here. His works become the subject of a philosophical scrutiny independent of the artist, extending from the relationship between

object and form, existence and nothingness to the tradition of language and interpretation (Yıldırım, 2015). Giacometti's loneliness and nothingness, which accompany him as he tries to grasp his own existence, is the same as that of all other people. The faces and bodies stripped of details in his portraits depict fearful people caught up in the chaos of the 20th century but deeper than that, they express their contradictions with themselves and their existential problems. In the artist's "Cage" (1950), the image of a cage, an existentialist motif, is used to explain that every decision people make with their individual selves, which they "think" are their own freedoms, are their own cages. The tall standing figure is like a part of the cage; his arms are like the horizontal bars of the cage and his thin body is like the poles of it. The other figure inside, engraves the connotations of nothingness in the viewer's mind (Giacometti, 2015).

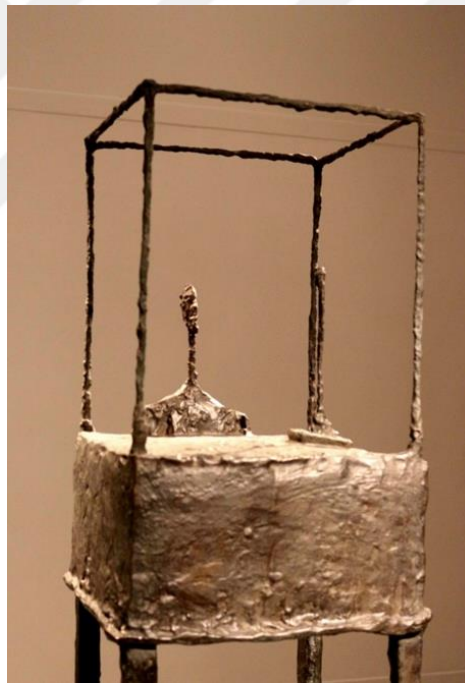


Figure 13: Alberto Giacometti, Cage, Bronze, 1950

According to Erinç, Sartre bases his theory on the phenomenological approach, accepting the basic method of finding and grasping the root cause of the realities of the external world, which we learn both through our sense and experience, in our consciousness. Man is what he makes himself to be: As an organic being, it may resemble one another, but as a being of consciousness one determines oneself, thus becoming a being first for himself and then for others. For Sartre, the work of art reflects the artist's awareness of this world,

his inner world and view of existence. What is expected of the artist is not to show the strangeness of the world but to transform the lived world into digestible subjective appearances (Erinç, 2004, p.107- 108).

Until then, sculptors had depicted man as a stone, an object or with his anatomical features, while Giacometti, for the first time, interpreted man not as an entity but as segments in terms of his existential characteristics (Urgancı, 2020). Giacometti, who always focuses on his works to reflect reality, can never make them exactly the same and each of his works raises a metaphysical question: Why is there something rather than nothing (Sartre, 1998, p.72). Since a phenomenological ontological understanding is a metaphysical questioning of existence, the affinity between Sartre and Giacometti helps to understand man as an existent. According to Giacometti, the distance between the sculptural figures and the viewers is the expression of the nothingness- the void in man. Ignoring this void and demanding to see what exists in completeness is unacceptable neither for existentialists nor for Giacometti (Urgancı, 2020).

In the text he wrote for Giacometti's exhibition, Sartre says that in order to express pure existence in his sculptures, Giacometti finds the solution in elongating his figures and that this is how he feels the absolute source of motion in these figures. He creates his works by utilising the source of void that exists in every man, which he defines as a wound. "Loneliness, as I understand it, is not a pitiable condition but rather a secret kingdom, a deep miscommunication, an inaccessible uniqueness, a more or less vague form of understanding," he says (Giacometti, 2015). Sartre says that Giacometti gives his sculptures an indivisible depth and reveals the absolute by adopting relativity from the very beginning (Yılmaz, 2004, p.29). The figure is in a field with no reality, it is what it is at a certain moment. He has found the solution to the problem of unity in multiplicity. Plaster and bronze can be divided, but a woman in motion has the indivisibility of thought and excitement. The figure is elongated in order to give a perceptible expression to the pure being, to deliver the essence, to capture the moment.

"Before Giacometti, sculptors thought they were sculpting entities and this melted away in the infinite multiplicity of images. But he presents men and women as they appear to us, not as he sees them and discovers the path to the absolute. He

proves that man is not there at first glance, but can be seen at another time. This man is such a being that his existence depends on others and this is his essence" (Sartre, 1998).

Giacometti's divine bodies, which are thin like twigs, gradually thinning in the void, melting and disappearing, are human figures that come from nothingness and go to nothingness. Sartre says that they are made of a substance of low density, just like the divine bodies we are promised (Yılmaz, 2004, p.31- 33). "In the sculpture "Hands Holding a Void" (1934), when the posture of the hands is analysed, what exists between these hands is nothing but the void.

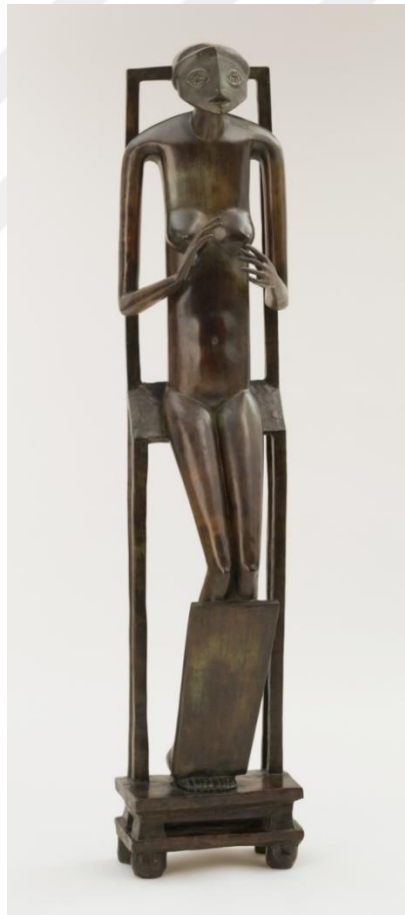


Figure 14: Alberto Giacometti, Hands Holding the Void, 1934, Bronze

The female figure holds this nothing but at the same time everything and eternal in herself. Giacometti describes both the existence and the nothingness of man extremely well. Long thin bodies, small bodies, narrow long faces, sometimes tiny heads, sometimes big

pedestals, are all related to Giacometti's way of seeing existence. But what is common in these sculptures is that they all appear as figures that seem to dissolve. This is a strong emphasis on "nonexistence". As the sculpture becomes thinner, its meaning increases for Giacometti. On the one hand, the figure is slowly dissolving and vanishing but on the other hand, it is gradually extended in space, exists more than ever with its divinity.

The aim of Surrealism, another movement that questions the authority of individual selves and egoistic reason, is the renewal of the world dominated by rational reason and logic and the transformation of lived reality into a surreal dimension. The surrealists' search for the subconscious, dreams, etc., beyond the apparent reality and reason, is also related to overcoming the limits of a cultural and social structure that they consider morally bankrupt. The surrealist, who criticises the existing social order, which he sees as an element of oppression, is a kind of romantic revolutionist and the principles of this revolution are in the content of an art that can go deep into the subconscious, fantasies and dreams. Breton said that their point of reference was the world of imagination and subconscious against the world of experiences established by the rational mind alone, which is presented as absolute reality (Tunalı, 2003, p.204- 209). It can be suggested that Surrealism, which puts the dream on the axis of thought and art, sees existence as a combination of the opposites of dream and reality, surreality and reality. Tunalı says that such an understanding is a panpsychism originating from the subconscious (Tunalı, 2003, p.212).

For the Surrealists, who recall the symbolists of the 19th century with their use of symbols created through dreams, reaching beyond consciousness and getting to the source of desires and anxieties is an extension of artistic creation. Antmen states that they questioned the meaning of the paintings they produced in a kind of trance through hypnosis and drugs and that they attributed the greatest importance in artistic creation to improvisation and the superiority of the creative process. Surrealist painting, which includes two approaches that can be defined as abstract, expressionist, associative and realistic, figurative, imaginary, atmospheric, aims to liberate the creation process, which is the expression of the subconscious mind, from all its limits and to free it from the control of reason and logic in order to free the image from the pressure of the egoistic mind and to shock the viewer with a view beyond the ordinary (Antmen, 2009, p.132- 137). This understanding, in which all approaches based on a rational mind, senses or emotions are invalidated and the

subconscious is glorified, can be described as the artist's expression of a meaning above the reality of reason by purifying like a child, purifying from traditional thought, popular symbols, all familiar objects and themes. More detailed information on the concepts of unconscious and subconscious and the reasons for the surrealists' orientation towards these concepts is given in the third part of the study.

His exploration of the relationship between reality and illusion, object and its image distinguishes Magritte, who is characterised as the philosopher of the Surrealists, from other Surrealists with his conceptuality. Magritte, who questions the understanding of existence by saying that the objects that people use habitually rather than out of necessity should be evaluated from a different perspective, calls for thinking in a philosophical context in order to emphasise the phenomenon of reason, which can be shaped by insignificant factors in his paintings. Magritte, who was greatly influenced by existentialist philosophy, refers to one of Foucault's most important works and analyses the relationship between things and words through representation. Su, states that poststructuralism, which largely constituted French thought after the 1960s, adopted Saussure's idea of the link between signifier and signified, based on language. In Saussure's linguistics, the regularity between language and reality is the product of its own discourse; this means that language is composed entirely of metaphor and that language does not represent reality since reality is a metaphorical discourse. In "This is not a pipe" (1928-1929), Magritte takes this idea to the artistic realm, inverts the meaning of script and thus cleverly uses language to do away with the traditional representation that abstract artists seek to do. In Magritte's painting, since the signified and the signifier negate each other, the relation of representation disappears, leaving only the painting itself. According to Su, although artists mainly chose abstraction for this purpose, Magritte, on the contrary, uses representation itself to destroy representation (Su, 2013, p.140- 142).

What the Dadaists, who said "we" against the "I" understanding of the expressionists, wanted to create was not a collective artistic form but a way of thinking. It can be said that the rejectionist attitude of Dada, which wanted to destroy the understanding of art rather than change it, was the expression of a deep concern about the course of the world but in the core of it was the negation of the idealized subject self and the art object seen as its reflection. Duchamp and his ready-made objects, who experimented many approaches followed in

contemporary art at the beginning of the 20th century, are the most prominent expression of this anti-art understanding of Dada and the term anti-art.

With his use of readymades and his philosophical questioning of what art is, Duchamp became one of the few most influential figures of 20th century art. By directly proposing an ordinary object as a work of art, he transforms art from an act of artistic skill and talent into an act of thinking. This understanding, which takes the object out of the representational framework and glorifies the ordinary elements of life, pushes the boundaries between art and life, leading to a brandnew aesthetic vision and since Duchamp, the displacements or interweavings between the artistic and the everyday are seen as a natural orientation of contemporary art.

Su says that Duchamp's urinal and Magritte's pipe, which were put forward with ideas completely opposed to the aesthetic understanding, intellectually initiated the deconstruction developed by Derrida (Su, 2013, p.139). According to Farago, Duchamp believes that art is a bridge connecting what corresponds to infinite absence and what exists at the present moment (Farago, 2006: p.227). In "The Fountain" (1917), by turning the urinal upside down and emptying it of its function, Duchamp transforms the ready-made object into an art object and with the use of such readymades, he wants to blur the difference between what is art and what is not, like a deconstructive act that forms the basis of contemporary art. With Duchamp's readymade object, the subject self makes itself an object and confronts the viewer with the object self where the idealized subject self is negated. Thus, it can be concluded that the constructed individual self and the world itself becomes an object, a world of beings that refers entirely to itself and glorifies itself.

Defining the transition to conceptual abstraction as the end of a system of representation, Baudrillard says that he sees it as both a comprehensive renewal and a deviation. Since modernism in general and abstraction in particular, seeks a reality behind appearances, an analytical truth and wants to show it, abstraction is problematic and dangerous for art. Because Baudrillard thinks that art is not a problem of reality but a problem of illusion and since this illusion is produced by subtracting one side of reality, there is a danger that the illusion created by art disrupts the understanding of social reality. The object of the truth, which is thought to be revealed, changes over time but the search or the

attempt to show itself continues. The major turning point comes with Duchamp, who signalled the suspension of subjectivity and the ready-made object evolves into aesthetics that transforms the whole world into a ready-made object. For Baudrillard, the transformation of the whole world into aesthetics marks the end of aesthetics in the traditional sense and turns everything that follows, including the reappearance of past art forms, into a ready-made object (Baudrillard, 2005, p.86-70).

It is observed that art forms such as Conceptual Art or the New Avant-Garde have their intellectual foundations in the readymade-object phenomenon and the questions raised by Duchamp. This early deconstructive attitude against the formalist modernist tradition, which was becoming more and more abstract, influenced almost all the movements of the 1950s and 60s and led to the gaining importance of intellectual experience in art and the conceptualisation over form. In other words, as art proved its adequacy from a philosophical point of view, visuality, which was thought to have little to do with the essence of art, as in the concept of beauty, lost its importance and the material existence and form of the work lost its influence to a great extent. Thus, the essence of art is transformed from sensory experience to thought.

The first conceptualists follow a solely conceptual approach regarding perception, combining the idea of "art as idea" put forward by Duchamp with philosophy, language and sometimes mathematics. Kosuth, who defines art as "art as idea as idea" and suggests that the state of "being art" is already a conceptual status, divides art into two as pre-Duchamp and post-Duchamp. He argues that the definition of art in the traditional sense ended with Duchamp, that all art became conceptual after him, therefore the artist must start not from art, but from the theory of art (Antmen, 2009, p.195). According to Farago, there is an aestheticisation of the elementary structures of the mind in the sense of making them meaningful and visible. Conceptual art refers to the mental field that is not a priori (based on experience) and brings together the concept, which is the product of the individual functional mind, which is disconnected from all kinds of imagery and where sensory knowledge becomes mental knowledge, in the physical realm. Farago emphasises that, paradoxically, conceptual art abandons the idea of the idea mentioned by Hegel, that the idea no longer passes through the formal concept and that man becomes a spectator in a sense of alienation.

The intellectual character of art is not an absolute novelty, what is new here is that the mental sphere has become the sole subject of creation and has been awakened especially by the idea of scientificity. In conceptual art, which does not want to reveal the existence of objects in time and space, the object is swallowed up by the concept and disappears, so the artwork becomes concerned with phenomena beyond direct perceptual experience. According to Farago, this attempt to eliminate the imagery in the name of a positivist and scientific reason is the price that art pays for the sake of self-discovery (Farago, 2006, p.242-247). Kosuth claims that the most important quality of the artist of his time is that questioning the nature of art. This claim is similar to Hegel's line about the end of art: "Art invites us to intellectual reflection, the purpose of which is... to know philosophically what art is" (Danto, 2010: p.38).

Various interventions after the photographic image is transferred to the canvas as it is, or the use of mechanical reproduction methods such as serigraphy technique, also have a meaning that determines the philosophy and content of art. It can be argued that this meaning, as in the example of the ready-made object, shows the world of objects, which ontologically refer to itself through existing images and the representations of the objective self. The former ritual or beauty value of art is replaced by the value of display and consumption in the copy under capitalist and mechanized production. This differentiation of values can be related to the perception of the man from his existence as a "subject" or spontaneity to his gradual perception as an individual personality or a being of identity. This transformation also changes the way the work of art is perceived; the old works of art, which required a deep contemplation or concentrated viewing, are replaced by products that are suitable to be seen massively and habitually.

It can be argued that the world reflected by the photorealists, who in a way eliminate the subjective aspects of the act of painting, is objectified twice ontologically as the world reflected in photography. This formal attitude, which leads to the perception of ordinary images of daily life in a kind of artificiality, can also be read as a counter-comment to the photographic images that surround us. The image in such a description, which shows a break with traditional depiction, disappears due to the excess in the reality of what is given. Conceptualization or, on the contrary, hyperfiguration and the production of countless art

objects can be considered as the manifestations of the philosophical understanding of the period. Art refuses to depict the world and to rely on mimesis in order to be grasped in itself but in doing so it imposes the world of objects and an objective, individual self through functional reason. It is no longer the subject that presents its own depiction to the world, the power of the object has overcome the subject, imposing its own existence and random forms (Baudrillard, 2010, p.39). In the absence of a transcendent signifier where reality can be seen to be unreal, only signifiers reign. This is the difference between it and the understanding of art that sets out to represent a reality and rejects mimesis by becoming abstract for this very purpose.

In some works, something that can be depicted is placed directly on the painting or voluminous objects that blur the distinction between painting and sculpture are pasted on the canvas. While in some works it is not the product but the process that is important, coincidence takes the place of intention in order to show well that art is not a goal but a cross-section. The artistic dimension, determined according to the view, emerges as a result of a second relativisation of the work, so that pebbles, plant roots, torn posters, sardine cans bearing the signature of the owner are displayed in exhibitions (Farago, 2006, p.220- 229). In these works, where there is no objective criteria, all that can be seen is the subjective orientation of the individual self that brings it into being. The images are fed by the work that serves the formation and the rejection of aesthetic materialisation is materialised.

In the same period, understandings that question the production of art as an object and at the same time the concepts of existence and nothingness, such as exhibiting empty galleries or, on the contrary, filling the gallery with found objects, or aiming to realize a pure experience on monochrome white canvases, presenting silence to the audience as an artwork, seem to be the expression of an individual mind as well as the adoption of a minimal silence. Because minimalism puts symmetry and order together as indicators of an impersonal silence and a rational style against the emotional meanings attributed to each brush stroke. The "specific object" of the minimalists, who announce the search for an artistic statement beyond the usual methods of expression, refer to Malevich with their attitude towards the perception of the art object only in itself in the historical process and reveal that they follow the path of the Russian Constructivists with the discourse "function determines form" (Antmen, 2009, p.181- 182). Attaching importance to a formality abstracted from individual

expression, the minimalists, with their mass-produced objects, reduce the process of creation to the stage of design-conceptualisation based on individual and analytical reasoning.

With the emergence of the question "why am I a work of art?" or "what is art?", where any object can become a work of art by being given the freedom to be considered art, philosophy is separated from form and the era of manifestos of Modernism comes to an end. According to Danto, the philosophical question about the nature of art arises from art itself and the possibility of thinking philosophically about art, of a true general philosophy of art, becomes possible only when it is clear that everything can be art (Danto, 2010, p.38).

The modernist view today implies that traditional representation and the narrative structure of modernist art later has been eroded because it does not play an active role in the production of contemporary art. The variability of the perspectives on reality and the pluralistic understandings of Postmodern and Contemporary philosophy and art reflect an understanding that the grand story is over. Today, art is produced in an art world that is not structured by any dominant narrative.

2.4. Postmodern and Contemporary Period

Postmodern and Poststructuralist thinkers, who agree that the subject is constructed within the culture and that the self is fiction, state that Western philosophy since Descartes has understood the fundamental nature of man's interaction with the world in terms of a stable, coherent being that is identical with himself, called the self. They argue that the selection of this metaphysical subjectivity as the transcendent truth of human life has led to the neglect of more fundamental issues such as the problem of existence and that Heidegger declared the end of the age of this metaphysics of subjectivity. However, whereas Existentialist thought and Heidegger's conception of existence is dependent on tree-shaped thought that excludes multiplicity, movement, formation or differences and subjugates them to the one, Postmodern thought, in Deleuze's view, for example, has to get out of the established universals of philosophy and become stateless (Su, 2013, p.202). Poststructuralist philosophy and interactionists based on pragmatism overlook the fact that Existentialism, by treating the self in conjunction with the problem of existence, reveals the individuality and constitutedness of the self as nothingness and that the metaphysical

subjectivity in question is clarified in this context. For this reason, they describe the concept of the self only as an artificial and changeable phenomenon of social interaction that is in the process of constant creation (Hewitt/ Shulman, 2019, p.53- 57).

The problem of the fictionality of individual selves, which is emphasised in mentioned definitions, is clarified by Lacanian psychoanalysis. Lacan assumes an omnipotent completeness or a solipsistic period at the beginning of life, then, grounds the separation of oneself from others in the "mirror phase" and states that the separation of the self and the non-self is essentially due to the symbol that comes between the subject and the object (Tura, 1989, p.44). According to Giddens, the main existential problem in the infant's first period is the discovery of the ontological framework of external reality in relation to existence itself (Giddens, 2010, p.68). In this case, the function of the self consists of imaginary identifications, and these identifications are conditioned by the symbolic (oedipal) order, transforming a biological being into a cultural subject. While the human being, who progresses towards becoming a member of the society, assumes a summary of the whole human culture and history; oedipus is a symbolic expression of the desire to return to the mother at the origin of life, to reintegrate, to regain omnipotence. Lacan says that man takes every step to return to omnipotence, to that initial completeness and purity but each time he moves further away from it because what is sought in the metaphors of culture is already lost by entering there (Tura, p.59, 127). It is this incompleteness that establishes the unconscious desire, that is encoded in the structure of the unconscious and such a world is a place where the metaphysical self-reality is symbolised by covering it up.

Sanders Peirce, who proposes an alternative systematic approach to the problem of the self, argues that all knowledge of the inner world is derived by hypothetical reasoning arising from our knowledge of external facts, that each cognition is logically determined by previous cognitions and that we do not have an indicator-free thinking capacity. Peirce thinks that the self is not intuited, that such knowledge is reached through external inference and assumption (established by trial and error) and that the truth can only be known through signs. The notion of the relation of exteriority to the interior quality of the self, created by Peirce and developed by Saussure, gradually develops into many poststructuralist discourses about inside and outside. Peirce's idea of the self and his invention of semiotics had a great

influence on Saussure and Saussure's linguistics forms the basis of 20th century criticism, formalism, structuralism and poststructuralism (Dunning, 1991, p.332-333).

Postmodern and contemporary philosophy is generally sceptical of the authoritative role attributed to the subject by classical Western philosophy. Instead of a universal mind, the postmodern world of understanding is a world of objects, a self-referential, self-exalting world, with a pluralistic model of society and relative worldviews specialized according to cultures, where the self is deconstructed. The power of the object has overcome the subject, imposing its own existence and random forms. Baudrillard states that the role of the subject as the mirror in which the world is reflected has now been transferred to the object and due to the "subjective" absence of the subject, the critical mirror reflecting the uncertainty and irrationality of the world has become the object. Therefore, the criticising function of the subject is taken over by the ironic function of the object; this objective irony is that products, signs, commodities, etc. already have an artificial and ironic function at the moment of their production and by their mere existence (Baudrillard, 2010, p.38). This objective concept of life, which stands in opposition to the idea of unity and the idealized subject self, which is said to be used for power control in modernism, becomes an indicator of an individualization based on egoistic mind and of man who is isolated, alienated from himself and drowned in materialism.

Postmodernism, whether it is considered as a state or a phase, problematizes the great value that modernity places on rationality; it opposes the phenomenon of single and purposeful formation, fixed structures, grand narratives, individualist ethics, holistic and global views. The theory proposed by postmodernity is a model of heterogeneity, a system that does not have an essence, centre or unity and can spread in any direction, in infinite ways (Mansfield, 2005: p.210). The abstract artists of modernism argued, as Plato did, that what is real is invisible to the eye and believed that it is only abstraction that will bring us closer to essences or to reality. This understanding, which remained valid for most of the 20th century, loses its influence with Postmodernism and this time the main impetus for change becomes the idea that nothing, no matter how invisible, has a real essence. In the process of destroying Modernism's belief in absolutes, Postmodernism paradoxically holds on to Plato's understanding that everything we see is simply an imitation of an imitation and

assumes that realism is no more or less realistic than abstraction, that they are all representations of a reality that already exists in our minds (Heartney, 2008: P.96).

According to Danto, since modern art, consciously or not, was directed towards a philosophical understanding and it was thought that artists should produce works that embodied the philosophical essence of art, modernist artists strongly believed that their works reflected this essence. In the postmodern period, it is not possible to say that one style is better than another, nor does the artist, who is free from the prejudice that places a historically preferred form against a form of the past, have to believe that there is a genuine form. In this sense, it can be stated that the postmodern philosophical discovery is that art does not have to take on any single form (Danto, 2010: p.61- 62).

Jameson uses the Bonaventura Hotel in Los Angeles to describe the Postmodern world, labelling Postmodernism as a cultural dominance that shows the nature of late 20th century life and the changes that created it. The lost subject in Bonaventura is the symbol of the postmodern subject who wanders aimlessly in a world he cannot fully conceptualize, having lost the cognitive maps that allow him to know where he is and where he is in this world, not only in urban space but also within national cultures, economic systems and classes (Mansfield, 2005, p.202).

The materialist ontology of Deleuze, who proposes individuality rather than subjectivity as a way of transcending Western metaphysics, describes the subject not as a totality or a substance but as a bundle of lines. Subject and object, which are not in a relationship of oppositions but in a relationship of alternation, carry subjectivity, as a process or formation, from the holistic or collective to the anonymous, to multiplicity. For Deleuze, who endeavours to disrupt the philosophical constructs of modernity such as unity, hierarchy, identity, representation and the subject while investigating the possibilities of difference and multiplicity, what philosophy needs is a conceptual creativity that cannot be reduced to notions of identity and design, a kind of transcendental empiricism that directly exhibits concepts that are not captive to the principles of logic. This orientation towards thought, which is emotional rather than rational, corresponds to an endeavour to overcome the tension between perception and reason. Since perception believes that reality should be observed and reason believes that it should be spoken, reason is fond of objectivity as

perception is fond of the object. The unification of reason and perception in the image of thinking and the endeavour to transcend the concept with the non-concept, which forms the basis of Deleuze's philosophical approach, also disrupts the relationship between subject and object. Since the representations that constitute the world are not produced by a metaphysical subject, philosophy does not deal with transcendental truth. The truth does not wait for its veil to be lifted but rather is grasped as something constructed and as an effect of the movement of thought; and being, which is the object of ontology, becomes not substance but formation, not form but movement, not identity but difference (Su, p.205- 235).

These debates in the field of philosophy also emerge in the field of aesthetic theory with a problematization that marks a break with the rules and methods of modernist art. In the period described as postmodern, artistic approaches, as in thought, reveal the variability of perspectives; opposition to integrative and universalizing methods, difference, plurality, randomness and action determines the theoretical characteristics. Mansfield states that the opposition, which rejects all holistic understandings in art until then, tries to exist by destroying principles, norms and rules, and even intends to eliminate itself by including itself in this life, is completed with Postmodernism after Dada and Pop-Art (Mansfield, 2005, p.210). According to Su, Postmodern art, by acting in areas compatible with consumer culture, blurs the lines between high culture and popular culture, invalidates aesthetic standards thus extends the boundaries of art towards advertising and graphic design. Instead of the academic rigour of Modernism, Postmodernism emphasises irony, pastiche, commercialism and nihilism; in contrast to the fine craftsmanship and aesthetic demandingness of modern art, installations, video footage, performances, ready-made products reflect an understanding that does not conform to any aesthetic criteria. The works, each of which revolves around a concept, inviting the viewer to think about the concepts from different angles and offering a mental rather than a plastic pleasure, show that contemporary art is completely detached from its aesthetic context (Su, 2013, p.177, 178). In postmodern art, monovalence and polyvalence, purity and impurity, uniqueness of the work and intertextuality are confronted. In contrast to modernism's emphasis on the artistic subject and individual formalism, postmodernism opposes basic modernist principles such as authenticity and uniqueness. It can be stated that the artistic approaches of this period led to the emergence of a new conceptualist understanding of art with its changing forms of

expression and ending the dominance of painting, focusing on social meaning rather than the art object with an interdisciplinary and pluralist understanding (Antmen, 2009, p.277).

According to Mansfield, the modern age is an age of the subject and in the last few centuries the theory of the self does not deal with "subjectivity per se" but only with the politics that determine "personality" and "identity". One of the reasons for this is the rise of capitalist individualism and the need of the free market economy for an autonomous individual, free from communal and familial determinations (Mansfield, 2005, p.213). The individualism of free thought aimed at achieving human rights in the democratisation processes of the past centuries, has lost its meaning and has evolved into an individualism that pushes oneself into loneliness in today's social structure and weakens social ties and humanistic feelings (Tezcan, 2018, p.151). For Giddens, capitalism creates consumers with differentiated needs and realizes this through the idea of "personality" and "identity". The design of the self and the idea of the self-sufficient individual, realized under the commodification that determines the formation of lifestyles, emerges as a reaction to the evolving institutions of the contemporary world and the drive for control orientates the self towards the outside world in unprecedented ways. The increasing idea of individualism thus expands to include the sphere of consumption and the fulfilment of individual needs becomes the basis for the continuity of the system (Giddens, 2010, p.190, 216, 246, 247). As Hewitt/ Shulman put it, people, surrounded by modern technologies, mass communications transformed into daily life and the exaggerated development of cultural consumption, have become dependent on a kind of addiction to consumption in order to secure their reality and social values (Hewitt/ Shulman, 2019, p.53-57). In order to give a material form to the narrative of individual identity, Giddens argues that in high modern conditions, the individual is not only forced to lead a certain way of life but also to behave in such a way. Individuals are confronted with a plural world of choices in a post-traditional order and in this situation, which is called the multiplicity of life worlds, the influence of mass media is not only in the direction of fragmentation and diversification. It also, increasingly makes society, direct audiences of performances taking place elsewhere (Giddens, 2010: p.110-115).

Baudrillard argues that in the advanced stages of capitalist society, art is only an object of consumption that cannot resist and in the world of information, with images

replacing reality, the signifier replaces the signified, the copy replaces the original and the representation replaces the real. The economic and social structure, which focuses on marketing strategies rather than production, has turned into a kind of hyperreality. None of the artworks claim to be permanent and the concept glorified in all of them is impermanence, ephemerality and consumerism. This situation of contemporary art is analyzed by critics such as Baudrillard and D. Kuspit. For these critics, who draw attention to an important transformation in art, this change is a harbinger of a pessimistic process regarding the future of art. Baudrillard says, "We are among those who produce an excess of images in which there is nothing to see". In this abundance of images, one can only feel that behind each of them something is disappearing (Su, 2013, p.179).

According to Baudrillard, there is a hyperreality in which the capacity to distinguish the difference between reality and illusion is lost. Postmodernism sees what is active for the individual as an illusion, not as a reality to be handled theoretically and the concept of the individual disappears automatically. The postmodern world is a virtual reality in which a twin of reality is created and it is more about the exchange of symbols, that is, images, than about real needs. To keep what one has, is to refer it to existence. Simulation, on the other hand, is to pretend to have something that one does not have, thus referring to nothingness. The simulator produces symptoms of real life, in other words, it tries to eliminate the difference between reality and fake or imaginary (Baudrillard, 1998, p.16). Today, the principle of reality has been replaced by simulation and everything is nothing but simulation and its rapidly multiplying simulacra. The object is devoid of all its secrets, illusions, origins, all connotations of meaning and value, because it is removed both from the orbit of the subject and from the vision that is part of the aesthetic definition of the world. Such an object is in a sense a pure object. For Baudrillard, all these artificial objects have such an artificial effect on us (Baudrillard, 2010, p.38-40). This makes it impossible to access and comprehend reality. At the extreme level of hyperreality, where something is more real than reality, people lose the criterion by which they can recognise this reality as unreal. Thus, in this hyperreality, in the absence of a transcendental signifier through which we can recognise the unreality of reality, only signifiers prevail.

In the age of simulation or screen, even if the virtual images are images of physical reality, the fact that the viewer is looking through a virtual plane manipulates the image by

making it hyperreal and the viewed remains objectless and discourse-less in the duplicate of what is actually occurring. Artworks are now simulacra. For Baudrillard, the logic of self-reproduction in art means detachment from the aesthetic context and when everything is aesthetic, the spirit of art is destroyed through the dissolution of value. In the history of art, it can be observed that all movements emerged due to the sensitivity of the artists involved in these movements to reject the current situation and create something new. Today, however, since all art movements and trends coexist in indistinguishability, the eclectic structure that these characteristics create, brings about a devaluation. Art is no longer a transcendental and ideal phenomenon and is dispersed in the general aestheticisation of everyday life. Baudrillard identifies the symptoms of the postmodern condition as the abandonment of critical consciousness, the exhaustion of creativity, a sense of boredom or ironic apathy towards the new with the feeling of following the endless cycle of the same. In this period, when there is no time for deep contemplation, the possibilities for emotional fulfilment have diminished and the belief in eternal form has become a self-deception (Su, 2013, p.180-189). The norm that drives art is no longer eternity and art that is indifferent to itself as an illusion more powerful than reality no longer questions reality (Baudrillard, 2010, p. 32- 36). Baudrillard's ideas found visual expression in the works of many artists who emerged in the 1980s and the artists of this period produced works that revealed the strategies of social order hidden by the abundance of images disseminated by mass media.

The subject, deterritorialized, alienated and in tension due to migration, urbanization and exploitation, finds its theoretical reflection in subjective or psychological theories such as incompleteness and desire (in Lacanian psychoanalysis) and impotence and compulsory rationality (in Foucault). Foucault, who calls the practices that the subject performs in order to constitute itself "the practice of the self", states that the individual invents himself with the moulds proposed and imposed by culture and society, and that this can only be effectively overcome through the practice of the self (Foucault, 2021, p. 234-235). The subject has to realize new forms of subjectivity by rejecting this kind of individuality, a state of being that has been forcibly imposed for centuries (Foucault, s. 68).

The starting point of this examination, which Foucault, who thinks that the self can be moulded, defines as self-care, is Plato and Socrates. Self-care is the use of wisdom to discipline the self and discover the truth about oneself; to discover who one really is and

how to be one's best self. On the basis of this definition, he identifies a relationship between Socrates' aim and the aim stated by Kant. Both define enlightenment as the liberation of man from his self-created immaturity by having the courage to use his intellect. Foucault, emphasising the critical aspect of the Enlightenment, invents a philosophical tradition from Socrates to Kant, of which he considers himself a part, and, guided by psychoanalysis, develops a new insight- a method of enquiry used to discover the true self. By doing this, man thinks that he is perfected and liberated. In reality, man subjectivizes and subordinates himself to the norms developed by society and the disciplinary authorities who enforce them. Questioning no longer has to be a process of discovering one's own self and trying to normalize by submitting to the dominant system of order; in other words, questioning must become a concern for the self. For the sake of self-discipline, Foucault proposes not to deny pleasure, like the old ascetics, or, on the contrary, to be dominated by pleasure, but not to let it control you, to become the master of pleasure and therefore the master of yourself. In the same way that great artists enrich our understanding of what art can achieve, he tries to develop our understanding of what a subject can be (Su, 2013, p.241- 253).

A prominent perspective in analyses of the self and postmodernity, in discussions theoretically related to poststructuralism is that individual selves like society, are divided, dispersed, contextual and fragile. According to poststructuralist thinking, the subject self, which has virtually disappeared, is replaced by a decentred subject that finds its identity in the fragments of language or expression. According to Giddens, narcissistic personality disorders, which emerge as a reaction to the vulnerability experienced in modern society where dependency has become a lifestyle, are discussed in connection with the gradual disappearance of the public sphere and the end of social life. Narcissism in the sense of an obsession, social loneliness and alienation that prevents the individual from creating boundaries between the self and the external world is suppressed by consumption, which claims to offer a solution to the alienated characteristics of modern life, to the desires of individuals who seek in their personal lives what is avoided in social life. Therefore, this search of the individual, who lives in modern conditions surrounded by mirrors and seeks a socially valuable self-image, turns into a useless endeavour other than strengthening the ego-self, and the culture of narcissism gradually becomes a culture of survival (Giddens, 2010, p.214- 219). According to this me-centred culture, which emphasizes the importance of the

concepts of I and mine, the individual's experiences, emotions and happiness become one's focus of attention, truth and value.

For Arthur and Marilouise Kroker, panic is another psychological state of postmodern culture. According to Brian Massumi, the defining state of mind of postmodernism is a state of fear that numbs us into an irrepressible frenzy of consumption. This fear is the objectification of subjectivity under late capitalism. The act of purchasing defines the persona of the Postmodern subject and "I buy my self" becomes one of the present signs. According to Massumi, if the identity of the subject consists of consumption, this means that it is external to the subject and not an expression of his inner reality. Man experiences the postmodern absence of a consistent meaning that gives him a sense of place in the world. In the face of this lack of foundation, it can be argued that the construction of individual identity takes on repetitive forms of purchasing wherever an attempt is made to create a recognisable character. Desire and authority, infinitely vast opportunities according to postmodern cultural dominance, are, for Massumi, the forces that characterize the 80s (Mansfield, 1993, p.7, 15 207, 211).

Postmodern and Contemporary art is too multidimensional in terms of intention and recognition to be understood in terms of a single aspect; so there is no typical exemplary work of art to represent contemporary art. Despite the power of the image, it can be said that all images are equalized. The collage, which creates a new whole from fragments, appears as a visual representation of a fragmented consciousness. Pictorial blotches and objects, which are arbitrarily brought together without showing their externalities and internal relations, without being obliged to each other, express this difference and pluralism.

One of the main features of painting in the period in which it defines itself within modernism is the emphasis on the inevitable flatness of the canvas. The two-dimensional flatness, which is unique to painting, is recognised before, not after, what is seen in it. Since the old masters created the illusion of a space in which we can imagine ourselves walking, one who looks at one of their paintings tends to see what is in it before seeing it as a painting. What the modernists created is an illusion that can only be looked at and observed; the increased sensitivity to the picture plane no longer allows for a three-dimensional illusion (Antmen, 2009, p.149). Leo Steinberg, who introduced the term "horizontal picture plane"

in 1972, claims that this is the condition of the picture plane after the 1950s. This implies a fragmented pluralistic orientation to the pictorial field, which may be a characteristic of the postmodern painter. Steinberg argues that traditional paintings are inspired by nature and that the viewer normally experiences the painting in a vertical stance, parallel to the picture plane. Even modern painters such as Kooning, Kline, Pollock and Newman, although they wanted to get rid of the Renaissance perspective, worked on a vertical plane and their paintings pointed to the form that was necessitated by the structure of the vertical viewer, that is, from top to bottom. Steinberg states that abstract expressionists are often referred to as nature painters for this reason, and that when Postmodern painters changed their references from the vertical plane to the horizontal plane of painting, their paintings began to express the culture they lived in, not the gradually disappearing world of nature. He argues that our world has been destroyed by human civilization and that in this world dominated by man-made object, artworks and self-perception are shaped not according to nature, but according to today's self-centered environment and culture. Steinberg presents a new and important approach to the artist's self becoming visible in the pictorial field and on the picture plane. He argues, for example, that cubist and abstract expressionist painters assumed that painting represented a Cartesian world, but postmodern painters use multiple perspectives to create what he calls a "horizontal picture plane", a fragmented horizontal picture plane with an abundance of perspectives that refuses to place the viewer in any particular position or identity. Braudy says that today's viewers are collage personalities. Many artists create their images in multiple perspectives in order to prevent the viewer's gaze from being directed to the pictorial field by any pictorial method: The horizontal picture plane frees postmodern painting and allows it to continue on a more unpredictable path. Postmodern painting does not have to contain a single form of expression or provide a single point of view (Dunning, 1991, p. 333, 335).

individual metaphysical essence. In this way, it opposes the Cartesian view and a number of idealist views that underlie Western philosophy, which, by defining two different spheres of existence, sees consciousness and matter or soul and body as separate phenomena that arise on their own, in other words, by setting the physical world against the mental world and asserting that the mind does not depend on matter for its existence.

Quantum reality states that consciousness, the common source of mind and matter, defines a fundamental reality and that consciousness is a property of matter, or that consciousness and matter arise from the same common source. That means, consciousness belongs to the state of nature and can be investigated empirically. The integrity of consciousness constitutes the sense of the self, the sense of being an individual, and the sense of the world. Quantum memory provides the mechanism of "personal identity" that makes the self constant over time, thus the individual self appears as fictionalized, consisting of certain processes of connection and continuity. Thus, the individual can re-create himself as long as he lives, every relationship changes and partly redefines his self (Zohar, 2007, p.30-191). In the neurobiological and neurophilosophical framework, the spatial continuity of the body, the continuity of memory, the continuity of personality and the harmonious co-existence of physical change constitute our understanding of the self. Thus the self as an essence independent of the brain cannot be mentioned and the concept of the individual self appears as a formal feature of the field of consciousness (Searle, 2015, p. 87). In other words, individual selves, a living and resilient element of conscious experience, which philosophers call the phenomenal self, are a physical process determined by local processes that are present in the brain at all times, and appear as an inevitable illusion, consisting of mental outputs such as thoughts, emotions and memories, as a model of the external world that we construct for living (Metzinger, 2012).

It is seen that quantum philosophy and contemporary neuroscience, in general, emphasize that the concept of the self is not independent of the brain but is a feature of consciousness and that individual selves are fictitious illusions. This understanding can be traced in contemporary art, for example in Antony Gormley's sculptures, where the human figure, often anonymous, tries to erase individuality, searching for the connection between the subjective and the collective. Gormley says that each of his works comes from the lived moment of a particular body, at a particular time, in a particular position, while the

subjectivity comes from beneath the skin, from the ontological origin. His sculptures, which reaffirm the experience of the subject as the point of reality in human life, do not have a face. Because he says: "What I am trying to give form to is the subjective experience of what lives behind our faces. I think our faces belong to others more than to ourselves" (Tekin, 2016, p.81-95). According to the understanding of the self of quantum philosophy, which can also be observed in Gormley's sculptures, it is not possible to say that the self remains the same, constant, certain, undivided, and unchanging over time because the quantum self appears to have an individual unity in terms of its particle aspect, but with its wave aspect it is in simultaneous relation with all other selves. Under quantum memory conditions, the self, the past and the future are connected to all mankind (Zohar, p. 126, 173).



Figure 16: Antony Gormley "Between You and Me", Kunsthall Rotterdam, Holland, 2008

G. Zukav also says that existence is an indivisible unity that reveals itself to us as a network of relations, and that individual beings are correlations that we idealize (Zukav, 1979, s.96). For Gormley, since art is about affirming the body as the starting point of a shared experience, he does not represent the body in its corporeality, or he tries to find a way of presenting it only as an object which is why he is not interested in a perfect body representation. The immobile nude body forms reveal the tension between singularity and similarity, insisting on a non-universal measure. In "Field", the viewer is stopped in front of a space completely occupied by representations of small bodies. The human condition is to live in a body shared by many bodies. Facing a common future, collective bodies all look in

the same direction. A key work for Gormley, *Critical Mass 2* combines a compressed moment in time with the idea of mechanical production. The artist says that each of his sculptures is a means of carrying a nothing that is nothing but a void, shadow or darkness. They contain a state that we know only as instruments carrying the form of embodiment-materialisation. The condition for the existence of the body form is a void consisting of energy. *Critical Mass* is the materialization, the embodiment of this void inside the lead skin. The artist, who wants to witness the experiences of the human condition in a participatory and experimental way, thinks that the specificity of experience allows one to investigate a common situation and that using his own body as a laboratory is the best way to do this. Therefore, the artist often uses his body for the moulds of his sculptures, his work titled "Sense" is seen as a work about the non-existent body. The idea of the non-existent body is also the main theme of the series "Freefall" and "Quantum Clouds". Instead of reversing the dialectic of mass (fullness) and space (emptiness) or trying to reconcile it with condensation-agglomeration, the artist thinks that turning the body into a void and transforming it into a solid mass is a more timely way close to Bohm and Bohr physics. According to the artist, the idea of the absolute individual with an eternal soul should be changed to the idea that the individual is temporary, changeable and mortal so that the viewers become conscious of their existence or non-existence in space (Tekin, 2016, p. 81-95).

The work "I am" by the artist Salvatore Garau does not physically exist, there is no physical representation in printed or digital form. The only way to verify its existence is through the certificate of authenticity issued to the buyer. Garau's work, which was supposed to be exhibited in an area of 150x150 cm in a special room, can be said to represent today's theories of virtual reality. The artist says that since the void is a field full of energy, even if it is left empty, according to the principle of uncertainty (the principle put forward in 1927 by Heisenberg, who made great contributions to the formation of quantum physics), nothingness has a weight and the void has an energy that condenses and transforms itself into particles. By exhibiting a sculpture that has no physical presence, the exhibition space will concentrate a certain amount and intensity of thought at a precise point and create a sculpture that will take on various forms.

Although not explicitly spiritual, Olafur Eliasson's work can be seen as a reflection of a generalized interest in consciousness and a kind of perceptually nourished spirituality

within the relationship between neurobiology and art. For the installation "Your Now is My Surroundings" (2000) in a New York gallery, the artist removed the glass from the skylights, built a ramp underneath them, and reflected mirrors from eye level to other skylights; in the resulting space, the disembodied heads of the visitors are intertwined with the reflected and real images of the sky. In one of his most assertive works, "The Weather Project" (2003-2004), the artist transformed the Turbine Hall at London's Tate Gallery by illuminating it with an artificial sun powered by hundreds of yellow single-filament bulbs. With their perception-altering effects, such works, on the one hand, remove the direct connection with traditional spiritualities or belief systems, and on the other hand, expand the field of today's search for different forms of consciousness (Heartney, 2008, p.287). Susan May notes that "Weather Project" was initially reminiscent of the spiritual and emotional sensibilities of Romanticism, but that the implication of the transcendental experience at the core of the tradition was distorted by the deliberate display of the equipment used to create this phenomenal object. The clear view of the pumps, pipes and lamps drew attention to a very important aspect of the work -the suppression of the Romantic Sublime reaction due to the material that the artist deliberately displayed- so that the process behind the representation could be seen, thus making the viewer conscious of the perception of being caught in the moment of awareness. May argues that the revelation of the construction or of the material allows the viewer to "see himself seeing" and that this revelation by the artist challenges the philosophy of perception that makes us aware of the space in which the world is constituted (May, 2003 p.17). Eliasson, who explains the ultimate goal of his art as creating a state of self-awareness and reflection that encourages the perception of the self, examines perception, movement, and experience through his large-scale installations and sculptures using ethereal materials such as light, air, and water. The artist's work "Your Compound Delight" (1998) is a reminder of the fact that human perception is formed by culture and environment. In "Reality Machines", by enabling the viewer to be fixed in the present, in the moment of perceiving while perceiving or seeing while seeing, he changes the perspective of perception and carries it to a moment of conscious awareness. While enabling you to see that perception is not static and constant, this introspective vision can be explained as a way of perceiving yourself seeing while seeing what you are looking at. (Studio Olafur Eliasson <https://olafureliasson.net>).

Focusing on the ephemeral from his earliest works, Eliasson offers the potential to explore the concepts of transformation, movement and atmosphere, suggesting that one's sense of self is not fixed and static, but evolves through exchange within society and culture. According to Francisco Varela, our sense of self is the interface between us and the world. When I am caught in interaction, in relationships and contexts, the me-self is somehow a collection of the ephemeral and cannot be delimited and spatialized. Avoiding the traditional expectations of behaviour and opinion about museums, the artist takes away surface-related knowledge through the emptiness of the landscape. There is nothing on the walls and there is no expected way of moving through or experiencing a space that allows for reflection, thought, freedom of sensory experience and self-perception.

It can be concluded that contemporary art, which is more than just the art of now, refers to a style of using forms rather than a period or a form of art production, despite the use of unprecedented styles, and that a period of experimental productivity has become established as the norm. Its reflection of deep multiplism, its lack of formal unity, or at least the kind of stylistic unity that would create the capacity to be recognised by reaching the level of a criterion, and finally the inability of the narrative aspect are the characteristics that have left its mark on the history of art.

3. THE ARTIST WHO REFLECTS THE SELF

3.1. The imagery of the self as features of consciousness in the work of art

The relationship between the concept of self and consciousness and the idea that the features of consciousness in this framework gain visibility in the work of art constitute the basis of this section. The subject is constructed around the ideas that consciousness has both a transcendental dimension, defined as absolute consciousness, and a capability feature (faculties), which includes all cognitive and mental processes such as thought, intuition, awareness, emotion, perception, cognition, unconscious, memory, etc., and that the individual self, which is constituted as the object of consciousness, possesses absolute consciousness.

Describing the self that becomes visible in the work of art can only be possible by analyzing how the artist establishes consciousness in the process of creativity. The reason for this is that the concept of self is discussed in connection with consciousness, and the representation of the artist's perception of reality in the work of art is also discussed around the characteristics of consciousness. When the individual creative process that appears in a work of art is approached independently of aesthetic judgement, the relationship between the artist's consciousness (characteristics pertaining to consciousness) and the design process begins to emerge.

To analyze consciousness is to examine a deep mystery of our own existence, to investigate the true nature of our subjective being. According to Revonsuo, a conscious being who lives mentally and introspectively has a mental life that includes subjective experiences in which consciousness flows. Consciousness is the inner stream of subjective experience that presents itself directly and constantly reveals itself (Revonsuo, 2017, p.21). The concept of consciousness is defined in many scientific references as the source of cognitive, sensory, emotional, intellectual and intuitive abilities within the scope of "awareness", while the mind, which is the stream of consciousness, is described as the structure that covers the collective aspects of consciousness and includes all conscious processes. It seems that analyzing the mind and the consciousness known through introspection, in which the mind

is aware of its own contents, is of central importance in gaining some understanding of the artist's creative process.

What consciousness is, which is the centre of all cognitive approaches, and with which other cognitive and mental processes it works together is the main subject of the philosophy of consciousness and the self. Philosophical theories of consciousness, in general, approach the concept within the framework of dualist (Cartesian) theories, in which mind and body are considered separate, and monist (idealist) theories, which accept that all existence consists only of mental substance. In addition to philosophical theories of consciousness, experimental and scientific approaches such as neuroscience and neurobiology examine consciousness in terms of biological-phenomenological processes. It should be emphasized here that the common point which the two approaches must unite on scientific grounds is that the mental substance exists as a special form of matter or that "consciousness cannot be considered separately from the body" (Dennett, 2020, p.48). According to neuroscientists, the spatial continuity of the body, the harmonious coexistence of physical change, and the continuity of personality and memory, in the neurobiological framework, constitute self-perception as a physical and natural feature of the brain. The individual past as autobiographical or recollective memory consists of conceptual, generalizing autobiographical knowledge. These autobiographical memories, which constitute the content of the self, define the self by positioning the individual in social history and society (Boyer, Wertsch, 2015).

Consciousness, which is formed by the brain generating a qualitative conscious field capable of continuing, consists of faculties, and all these conscious states exist only when experienced by a subject. According to Searle, it is a categorical mistake to assume that we have both a field of consciousness and a self (Searle, 2015, p.87). According to current philosophical theories of consciousness, the concept of the self appears as a physical process determined by local processes present in the brain at all times, as a formal feature of the field of consciousness, as a model of the objective world created to sustain life, and the idea of an individual self appears as an illusion. Many neurophilosophers who propose the theory of virtual reality say that the individual is made up of interconnected feelings, experiences, memories, desires, beliefs, knowledge, etc., but that it is not us at the centre of all these

experiences (Baggini, 2011). This not only defines the self in relation to consciousness, but also reveals the fact that consciousness is adopted by individual selves.

When the problem is analyzed from a philosophical point of view, it is seen that when a self is mentioned, an implicit assumption is made that there is a conscious self that performs the act of thinking, but when the thinking self is tried to be focused on or captured, it disappears before it can be caught. Tura determines the basic characteristics of consciousness as self-perception and the elimination of subject-object duality (Tura, 1989, p.67). According to Mead, since self-consciousness provides the basic foundation of the self, the essence of the self is cognitive; therefore, it is necessary to emphasize the central position of thinking rather than sensory experience and the accompanying motor elements (Mead, 2017, p.166-196). From an ontological point of view, self-consciousness elevates the man to the level of the knowing subject and turns him into an ethical subject who constructs his own self with what he does not choose and what he rejects as well as what he chooses. According to Hançerlioğlu, who defines cognition as the mental process of the subject, the cognitive source of knowledge includes other sources of knowledge (Hançerlioğlu, 1976).

Existentialist philosophy argues that the consciousness, which is conditioned and constituted by objects, falls into the mistake of assuming possessions to be its real self, since the objective side of the self, conceals the infinite transcendental or the essential self in oneself, and shows possessions. The transcendental field, which does not belong to a subject, is nothing, since the "passive self", liberated from the individual self, ceases to participate in it, but this transcendental consciousness, which is also nothing, or impersonal spontaneity, since it is the consciousness of all objects, is at the same time defined as the source of all and absolute existence. Since the individual self or ego is the object or a formation of consciousness, states and actions are created as products of it (Sartre, 2002, p. 89, 92). Consciousness is necessarily externalized as the consciousness of a physiological organism, which means that the self is realized as a corporeal being. However, the real existence of the man depends on establishing himself as a subject (Çüçen, 2018, p.252).

Absolute consciousness, which is the base where the meaning of the world and the self is constituted in metaphysical and ontological terms, is grasped through the intuitive fact of consciousness, and man creates his own essence and significances with his absolute

consciousness. Thus the basis of man's ontological freedom appears as the exclusion and objectification of the individual self by this absolute consciousness, so that consciousness, rising above the individual self, is able to choose the essential self (Tura, 1989, p.70- 74). Freedom for Fichte, who defines his system, which takes the self as its basis, as the first system of freedom and an analysis of the concept of freedom, as for other German idealists and existentialist thinkers, is the absence of the individual self and the presence of absolute consciousness, the absolute source of existence, which is all and nothing at the same time (Fichte, 2006, p.11). In traditional Eastern wisdom, the absolute consciousness is called the "kull mind" and the consciousness dependent on the individual self is called the "jüz mind". The concept of kull, in addition to the meaning of wholeness, includes the metaphors of "burning to ashes with divine love"; the concept of jüz, in addition to the meaning of part, includes the metaphors of "being impotent or being nothing".

From the perspective of idealism, tin, which expresses absolute consciousness, is objectified in order to become conscious of itself and gain reality. Since consciousness forms the subject-object relationship according to the perception of reality, knowledge becomes relative; in other words, the artist creates experiences, ideas and concepts in accordance with the qualitative features of consciousness when confronted with the object in the process of creativity. The artist encounters his inner world, which is created according to his perception of reality in the process of creativity through the information obtained from the object. The subject's transfer of the abstract object to the real sphere of existence through thinking, indicates the objectification of an existing thing, its transformation to the state of being the object of consciousness. The most obvious characteristic of a real being is that it is an object of knowledge. However, a work of art is an objectification, a creation of the non-existent (Tunalı, 2012, p.53). It is clear that the activity of knowing, described by Hartmann as the subject leaving his sphere, objectifying something that exists, and then returning to himself, is a triadic formation. Since the subject encounters his own world, in other words, the qualities of consciousness at the moment of self-return, he can create a new image of the object in his mind in a completely different way. In this case, the transmission of the object to the subject, which takes place in the third stage, is the reappearance of the subject's consciousness qualities in the imagery of the object (Hartmann, 1998, p.8- 9).

Existentialist psychologist, R. May, says that the encounter of the self with the objective world is a meeting between two poles, and describes the subjective pole as the conscious person in the creative act and the objective pole as the artist's encounter with his world again. In other words, there is a dialectical relationship between the object and the self, and each is a sign of the existence of the other. In this framework, he also states that it is not the objective existence that makes a difference in artworks, but the artist's encounter with himself, and that visible neurological differences are experienced in these moments of confrontation. In terms of idealism, it is obvious that the process of creativity and interpretation of the object depends entirely on the artist's mental processes, and that the artists' encounters with their worlds of consciousness appears in their works (May, 2007, p. 68-73).

In this context, when the features of consciousness that become visible in the work of art are analyzed, it can be argued that there are different forms of consciousness as- the features of absolute consciousness, the features of ability and the features of consciousness created by the individual self; in other words, it can be suggested that there is both a transcendental aspect as the manifestation of absolute consciousness and the aspects belonging to ability features and the individual self in the artwork. These distinctions are based on the idea that although all states of consciousness, whether intellectual, perceptual, emotional or intuitive, originate from a single center, there is a degree of semantic difference between them.

Absolute consciousness, which gives ultimate knowledge of the absolute, is conceived together with the features of intuitive consciousness. When Fichte's ideas on this subject are analyzed, it is observed that the consciousness of a transcendental pure self, which resists being the object of consciousness, can only be reached through momentary intuition, or more precisely, that it makes itself known to thought (Cevizci, 2009, p.804). Fichte, who considers it necessary to realize what the absolute self is in idealism, says that in consciousness with mental intuition, there is always a self left. Describing this self as a transcendental self that transcends objectivity and becomes the premise of the unity of consciousness, he defines it as a metaphysical intuition by calling it the "original intuition of the self" (Fichte, 2006, p.212-213). Cevizci defines intuition as the unmediated perception of the object or the inner knowledge in which the rational intellect is not activated and

approaches it in two structural expressions, sensory and intellectual. He explains the situation in which an object is grasped directly through the senses with sensory intuition, while he sees intellectual intuition, which is specific to a certain level of consciousness, as the direct perception of logical and causal relations. Intuition, which is defined as metaphysical, emerges in intellectual intuition as a state of knowledge that can be described as higher than other forms of knowledge, and informs the holistic reality unmediated, without the use of senses and conceptions (Cevizci, 2014). From this perspective when evaluated within the framework of Idealism, it is clear that the process of creativity requires firstly to be discussed within intuitionism in terms of the representation of absolute consciousness.

According to Hegel, intuition, which is the source of art, is a means of understanding the absolute since it is a holistic perception. Since only art will show the idea within the scope of intuitive existence, its dependence on this intuitiveness emerges as its power in terms of reality (Hegel, 2012). According to Fichte, artistic creativity is an intuition of the self grasped in its objectification (Cevizci, 2009, p. 805). Although metaphysical intuition is related to the processes of consciousness, it could be said that it is not an analytical, logical, conceptual, sequential, or reasoned thinking process, but an inner state of awareness that can be defined in connection with the heart. It is a new scientific discovery that there are emotional nerve cells in the heart that function like cells in the brain, creating a state of intuition and metacognition. Intuition or intuitive intelligence, which is associated with states such as introspection, awareness, centredness, the ability to live in the moment, observation, a higher sense of empathy, the capture of something alive or something enlightening, is described as the highest type of intelligence. Arguing that art is a spiritual activity that emerges not through logic but through intuition, Croce says that without intuition, no concept is possible, and that spiritual intuition is a higher type of knowledge that helps to externalize and express impressions, sensations and emotions, thus freeing them from matter and inertia. He adds that this externalization reaches its most perfect form in artworks. In this respect, form is a substance that gives form, and giving form is knowing by intuition, therefore, since the practice of art is spiritual, the artwork cannot be reduced to any objective context or instrument that enables it to be formed (Croce, 2019, p.39, 41). According to Hegel, the artist's finding of the being of spiritual or transcendental meaning in himself with its holistic characteristics is the transcendence of the spirit beyond the visible and its absolute and

infinite materialization in the artwork. It is a form of consciousness, that is totally different from the mimesis of what is seen through the senses, as it is, or through the reason, as it is intended to be (Hegel, 2012).

The relationship between intuitivism and art is not based on external forms, but on the comprehension of immanent meaning, and the power of the artist is based on the fact of grasping this meaning with intuition and perceiving the fragments of that whole. According to Fichte, who says that the encounter of the self with the objective world is an encounter with its own world again, the conscious subject's comprehension of the world of objects is explained by his intuition of it, and the phenomenon of comprehension is explained by the fact that it is a reflection on pre-existing intuition. In Fichte, transcendental thinking can be distinguished by an immanent understanding. When the absolute self reflects on sense, which is the first limitation of its unlimited activity, it arrives at limiting intuition as the second stage, and when that intuition is reflected upon, an image is formed (Fichte, 2006, p.214- 217, 11). In other words, this indicates that the intuitive dimension of consciousness is complemented by the intellectual dimension and that the state of introspective understanding is also the cause of intuition.

Tunalı states that the balance of form in abstract art is a balance of intuition and reason (Tunalı, 2003, p.159). To put it another way, according to idealist thought, abstraction in art can be formed not through sensory or rational knowledge, but through intuition and intuitive reason as its conceptualiser. The analytical thinking of the mind fragments the holistic perception of the image by disintegrating the entirety of intuition, which is a holistic perception, while reason functions as a conceptually reconstructed form of intuition, since it synthesizes them again as an integrant. That is because intuition is the only field of consciousness that can lead the subject to the point where the separate forms in existence disappear in unity. The metaphysical intuition, which involves the perception of wholeness, directs the artist towards abstraction or symbolization, which allows the artist to transcend to higher ontological planes in terms of meaning levels in art. It is because the reality that can be grasped by intuition is an incorporeal, non-existent mentality. In geometrical abstractions, conceiving objects as geometric forms, is the artist building an abstract world by eliminating sensory appearances in order to reach the essence and absolute consciousness through intuition and is the artist's conceptual reconstruction of intuitiveness in the second

stage, where objects are constituted as structural forms within the framework of analytical reason and rational rules.

In the state of pure absolute consciousness, which can be described as above metaphysical intuition, one can no longer speak of the imagery of any art object. When the opposite is the case, the individual reason and its object view, which excludes metaphysical reality and absolute consciousness, imposes in the artwork the features of consciousness regarding the individual self. In the second part of the study, the ontological foundations of perspective in the context of the imagery of rationalist self and analytical reason in artworks throughout the history of art, are comprehensively explained. When the creativity process in conceptual art is analyzed in terms of consciousness, it is observed that sensory or emotional knowledge becomes intellectual knowledge by referring to the non-transcendental mental field, and the concept, which is the product of the individual functional mind, is assembled in the physical realm. Farago emphasizes that conceptual art paradoxically abandons the Hegelian concept of the idea and that the idea is no longer understood in terms of the formal concept that allows creation (Farago, 2006, p.242- 247).

What is new in conceptual art in terms of the features of consciousness is that intellectuality has become the primary subject of creation and that it has been inspired especially by scientificity. Such a state of consciousness does not assume the characteristics of an idealized self or absolute consciousness. For example, with the ready-made object, the subject wants to confront the viewer with the object self by making itself an object to itself. Thus, the constructed individual self and its world becomes an object, a world of being that refers only to itself and glorifies itself. In other words, a functional reason belonging to the individual self is projected; thus, the self and the world belonging to it are objectified. It is necessary that the work of art, regardless of its form, starts from an idea. However, for the conceptual artist who plans his work and takes the necessary decisions in advance, the implementation is usually not so important. The idea itself is the process of conceptualization and its implementation as the most important instrument that makes art possible. The artwork, which the artist brings into objectivity, becomes ready for the objective understanding of this idea and then for both individual and subjective interpretation.

It can be argued that there are situations in which the consciousness that becomes visible in the work of art is both active and passive. The concept of pathos, in the meaning of affection, is, according to idealist thought, a field of the divine consciousness. Soykan defines this concept as a state of consciousness, inner excitement, or inspiration that the artist encounters, and describes the experienced state as the artist's self-transcendence under the influence of pathos as the divine power of creation (Soykan, 2015, p. 152). Since pathos, which refers to the passivity of the artist in all impressions, affections, and experiences in the creation process, is thought to be something that comes to the subject from outside the individual mind, it suggests that creativity is divine or metaphysical. Kant, who was hesitant to use the term God in his analyses, associated the artist's creative power with nature, but since he also emphasized that this concept of nature was not empirical, the German Idealists who followed him, explicitly used the term God. According to Plotinus, it is not possible to intuit the absolute without love (Farago, 2006, p.59). According to traditional Eastern wisdom, it is through love that creation and the hidden become visible. Therefore, besides intuition and holistic understanding, seeing beyond the visible in creativity process could be possible through love and contemplation. According to Hegel, in terms of the objectivity of the artwork, an attitude in which the subject brings himself individually to the fore is extremely weak. However, there may be a connection between inspiration or pathos and the individual characteristics of the artist (Hegel, 2012, p. 235). From this perspective, it is observed that the work of art reflects active and passive characteristics, in other words, both individual and absolute consciousness features, and in representing the absolute consciousness features in artwork, the concept of pathos, which is a passive state of consciousness with the meanings of love and divine experience, gains importance.

When the states in which consciousness is passive continue to be analyzed, the definition of the unconscious and concepts such as dream, imagination, impulse, and desire, which are shaped according to the individual characteristics of the person, are encountered. The artist can consciously create an object form out of different objects, or he can be confronted with an abstracted object form coming from the unconscious. In analyses of the connection between consciousness and the unconscious, it can be stated that after Freud, attention was generally directed towards the unconscious, and the concept of consciousness was not addressed. Sartre by underlining that the unconscious is a category of consciousness, emphasizes that man, as a being, brings with him what does not yet exist in his mental being,

and that this non-existence holds a potential in terms of creativity in art. R. May also defines the unconscious as the non-conscious dimensions of experience and the source of the latent powers of action, awareness and free creativity that the individual cannot realize (May, 2012, p.77). Within the scope of existentialist thought, it is observed that consciousness and the unconscious are actually in a unity and continuity, and that the potential in man's mental being that has not yet emerged in the individual is called the unconscious. Schelling, who reconceived the idea of the self in Fichte as a reciprocal interaction, the product of two opposing activities, describes the unconscious as the infinite absolute self, saying that the first of these opposing activities is an activity that enables the initially unlimited and unconscious self to reveal itself, and the other is an activity that cannot be limited but limits the first to create consciousness or thought, which is art. Art brings these opposites together in an objective synthesis that includes both dimensions of the infinite and the finite (Cevizci, 2009, p. 804).

According to Lacan, the function of the individual self is to identify with the image, to encounter oneself as a cultural image. The subject's self-consciousness as an objective self is the same as being included in the social symbol system. The world is a phenomenon symbolized by the inclusion of symbols in the essential and primordial reality, in other words composed of transcendence, and the order of the symbolism brings about the individual's thinking of his reality as a distance and his subjectivity as independent of this subjectivity. The individual, who is placed in his position vis-a-vis other members of society by the order of the symbolic field organized before the subject, gains his cultural position and becomes differentiated within the order of culture; by entering this order consisting of many dimensions, he is shaped by it without even being aware of it. Then, the subject, who defines himself within socio-cultural symbolization, a kind of programming, loses his real or essential self in the meantime and gradually becomes alienated from his reality. Lacan states that it is this alienation resulting from the symbolic order that causes the unconscious. Also for Saussure, since man perceives the phenomenon of existence and his reality only within the scope of what the social structure teaches him, and since all concepts are conceived by associating them first with the declarations of the family and then with the declarations of cultural institutions, he renders his original reality unconscious. Since socio-cultural symbolism completely eliminates the essential self and no life experience remains unsymbolised in the individual, only symbolized realities about man can be analyzed by

becoming the object of research. Lacan argues that, the eternal desire and endeavour of the incomplete subject, who misses the state of wholeness- absoluteness (omnipotence) and infinite fulfilment, which is lost by breaking away from the mother, in the mirror phase and then in the cultural order entered with Oedipus, is to recapture this absoluteness. He emphasizes that it is this lack that establishes unconscious desire or is programmed into the structure of the unconscious (Tura, p.101- 127).

Surrealists turn to the subconscious, fantasy, and dreams, which they see beyond consciousness, to overcome the reality of rational reason and logic presented as absolute facts in life. They want to reach beyond the individual mind, to get to the real source of desires and anxieties in a kind of state of trance, to be able to destroy them, and to free the image from this oppressive yoke. The surrealists' search for something beyond the apparent phenomenal reality and the individual reason is about transcending the limits of the cultural and social order, which consists of individual selves constructed with symbols, which they see as an element of oppression. It can be said that they apply a creative process based on spontaneity to shake the audience with a visuality beyond the usual and to liberate them from the control of reason and logic (Antmen, 2009, p.132- 137). Dreams, which occur passively, in the sense that the subject passively watches the objects that he has encountered before by bringing them from the subconscious, are an important part of the artist's creativity. Creativity is also seen as the act of imagination, which is the act of recalling the images stored in memory obtained through the senses when we move away from them and giving new forms to these images (Akkach, 2021, p.81).

It is analyzed in detail in the section of “The artist's understanding of reality” in the study, that the external world is seen through a lens formed by the mental model, shaped by life experience and the filter of individual perception. This filter, which determines the way the artist perceives existence, is formed in the realm of the self, and that this realm is formed by the concealment of the consciousness, which is connected to existence by individual, social, and cultural values, with the individual self. The way the subject processes the sensory data, his tendencies, the conditions he expects to see have an effect on his perception. The objective realities created by different perceptions according to the nature of the sensory state and their reflections in the intellect are important in the creative process, in other words, the realization of objects in a work of art also depends on the perceptual characteristics of

the subject, which is one of the faculties of consciousness. In terms of creativity, individuals' different ways of experiencing and the ability to shape these experiences with different methods become important, therefore, in the process of interpreting sensory data, it is seen that biological processes, as well as perception processes, are also important (Townsend, 2002, p.182- 183).

Impressionist painting is a naturalistic-analytical way of seeing, based on experimental thought and senses, presenting a world of appearance determined by the subject. Tunalı defines perception as the comprehension of a whole and concludes that perception shows us objects and these objects give us reality. He says that what is implied by the whole is that the impressions provided by the senses find support in memory. Perception gives sensations related to the objective world and a world of meaning is constructed based on them (Tunalı, 2003, p.37, 44). Berkeley states that the existence of objects is dependent on being perceived and that only our ideas are being thought to understand their existence. In this case, the subject goes beyond himself within the scope of the filter of individual perception, encounters the object and forms his individual design. Any object that exists for the subject and is based on sensations is always a combination of two elements: Sensible data and the cognitive activity of the subject, i.e. the perceived object is provided with a spiritual and emotional quality only by the cogniser (Tunalı, 2012, p. 41, 42).

For Hegel, to make the intertwining objective form with the rational possible, the artist must call upon the faculties of consciousness, emotions and reason, together. Erinç states that man tries to analyze himself and everything he is related to, in basically three ways; the first way is to use the senses and emotions, the second way is to use reason, and the third way is to use reason and emotions together (Erinç, 2004, p.11). According to scientific research, emotions are included in cognitive states that are formed as a result of acquired knowledge. Therefore, emotions are an important element of the behaviour that accompanies and supports cognition, and the attitude of the artist is both cognitive and emotional. What is grasped in objects within the scope of idealist thought is the emotional characteristics of the artist-subject, his emotional interaction with the object as a result of these characteristics, and his own emotions that he returns to the object during this interaction. Tunalı says that what leads a subject to aesthetic pleasure is creative activity and

a sense of freedom and that the interaction between subject and object in the phenomenon of identification is framed by the desire for creativity and aesthetic pleasure (Tunalı, 2012 p.43). Neurological states such as pleasure, happiness, and excitement can occur with a stimulus object, as well as with a fictionalisation. In this context, feeling is defined as the conscious awareness of universal emotions that are shaped by personality and experience, and emotions are defined as feelings over which one should have control. Feelings are generated from the thoughts about emotions, in other words they are the learned response to an emotion. Since emotions are both related to physical sensations and physiological responses to situations, they are given names and these names determine how they are experienced. For example, in order to experience the feeling of fear, it is not enough to have sensations related to fear, but one must also label these emotions as fear. This is the experience of the emotion with self-consciousness. All emotions have their roots in social life, and they are regulated as people interact by the same general processes that order our behaviour, arising naturally as we try to complete individual and social activities. Although physical sensations are an important part of emotions, it is the meaning attributed to these sensations that allows for emotional experience. It is clear that this attribution of meaning requires the objectification of the self through the process of role-taking. In this case, experiencing our emotions appears as the experience of the self (Hewitt/Shulman, 2019, p.106- 109).

The Expressionist approach to art, which is seen as the strongest representation of the emotional side of the subject and is also evaluated within the processes of psychology, is the expression of the transition of the artist as an emotional being instead of a rational being of reason, reflecting his emotional and instinctive consciousness features. It can be said that the creative process in expressionism is the transfer of emotions to the medium, so that the medium becomes an instrument for transferring emotions to the viewer, and this transfer becomes the basic creative activity that transforms the medium into an artwork. Su says that the work of art expresses a session in which the artist encounters himself, experiences, and reshapes his emotions through the medium (Su, 2013, p.146). Sometimes art can also appear in the form of a lyrical intuition, presenting emotional content in an intuitive way, in other words, in a way that emotions feed on intuition to produce images, where the two are identical.

3.2. The imagery of the artist's understanding of reality in the work of art

Understanding how reality is perceived in the process of artistic creativity or where it is positioned according to the artist, emerges as another important issue in terms of explaining the imagery of the concept of self in art. The way the subject comprehends the object according to philosophical and metaphysical approaches corresponding to different conceptions of reality throughout history and the idea that artworks gain visibility with this effect is included in the second part of the study. The aim of this part is to investigate, how the individual artist's perception of reality is represented in the work of art, in the context of the philosophical and metaphysical ideas that can determine artistic forms.

In general, the objective materialist approach in philosophy and art limits subjective qualities to the object, in other words, the object is not expected to go beyond the visible reality; therefore, artworks created by different artists may not differ in terms of the ontological determination of the object. Geiger said, "Our eyes are blind to the essence. The artist must first open them" (Geiger, 1985, p.99). According to the idealist view, the external world, which has no reality, is a reflection of the mind; in other words, existence is based on the construction of the human mind. This means that to exist is to be the object of a thinking, perceiving mind (Cevizci, 2014, p. 345). Therefore, it can be argued that the external world is seen through a lens formed by the mental model shaped by life experience and the filter of individual perception.

It can be suggested that the individual perception filter that determines the way the artist perceives existence is formed in the realm of the self consisting states such as thought, emotion, desire, experience, memory, belief value, assumption, prejudice and their traces in the consciousness, and that this personal world is formed by the concealment of the consciousness, which is connected to existence by individual, social and cultural values, with the individual self. As a result, it can be mentioned that the artist shapes his understanding of reality according to these facts. In a vicious circle, the individual reality connected to the self constructs the perception filter, and the perception filter constructs the individual reality. In this case, the diversity of artworks designed by artists with different perception filters within their own mental processes can be evaluated in the context of this theory.

What Husserl defines as "returning to things themselves" is the phenomena of pure consciousness, and by this he means accessing the essence in consciousness, by liberating oneself from this filter (Husserl, 2003, p. 16). According to Jung, who said, "The one who looks externally dreams, the one who looks internally wakes up", external reality is an obstacle to reaching reality, which means that meaning is behind the observed reality (Jung, 2016). Man's need to connect with something immanent that he intuitively and searches for, inevitably leads him to metaphysical description in terms of the recollection of the essence of existence and reality. When the artist aims to show this inner reality, the transcendent meaning or the metaphysical essence of existence in the production of art, he uses various forms of abstraction and symbols that transcend the boundaries of time and space and give form to objects not as they are, but in terms of their meaning.

According to existentialist thinking, in the process of creativity between reality and truth, the artist can approach these concepts mostly at the design stage (Heidegger, 2018, p.21). In his interpretation of reality based solely on the man as a being of meaning, Heidegger states that man must recognize his individual self and be liberated from it to become the founder of his own existential structure plan. He states that truth is derived from nothingness, and therefore the encounter with nothingness in the work of art shatters the understanding of the existence of the modern worldview in which subjects try to dominate external objects and the objective explicitness accepted as natural by the theoretical framework. Thus, he accepts a level of existence in the artwork where the subject and the object do not differentiate. In "The Origin of the Work of Art", he reveals the limits of Western philosophy's metaphysical conceptions of what being is, and describes his critical-phenomenological view with Van Gogh's painting "A Pair of Shoes" (Picture 12). He argues that this painting, which he considers to be the first example of a true work of art, allows us to encounter the essence of art, and suggests that independence from man's designs is fundamental in understanding what existence essentially is. He thus puts forward his own concept of reality as which both informs and resists conceptualization (Heidegger, 2007, p.25-31).

Heidegger in his ontology, mentions a pure self that is scattered in everyone and has to find itself. When this pure self reveals its original being to itself, this revelation is the elimination of concealment, in other words, the removal of the individual self. In

existentialist philosophy, it is mentioned that the ontological gap separating the original self from the constructed individual self causes anxiety and boredom. However, to be a pure being is actually to be the being of the "in-between". Realizing this fact is the end of the individual self, and the beginning of one's real existence or the existence of absolute consciousness in oneself. Since this pure self or absolute consciousness exists as far as one's ontic possibility is concerned, it can be mentioned that existence is neither existent nor non-existent. This, then, means that its existence is nothing (Heidegger, 2018, p.22- 412). Therefore, at the core of Heidegger's understanding of art, one encounters nothingness that is simply nothing but points to possible meanings that are concealed.

In art in terms of existence, a new realm is opened each time, and the explicitness of existence, the determination of truth as a form, is directed towards existence itself, because the artwork always has to show objectivity, albeit in different ways. This understanding is based on the idea of defining the meaning of existence and revealing the truth in the artwork (Su, 2014, p.115).

Abstract thinking is the ability to discover essence by starting from objects but transcending them. Erinç says that the artist's capacity to abstract his subject gives him a sense of superiority over the thing from which he detaches himself. The artist creates symbols in order to distance or detach the self from objects. For S. Langer, mental distance is the experience of comprehending through symbols something that has not been expressed before (Erinç, 2004, p.113). Since the existential state of objects can change according to the different perceptual capacities of the subjects, the artist can create new object images through abstractions and symbolisations. Thus, within the framework of idealism, the process of creativity is approached in terms of the way the object is dealt with, in the respect to its reflection of reality. When the concept of the self and the object are analyzed together, it is realized that the object requires to be dealt with in terms of the characteristics of the subject, that is, to comprehend the mindset of the subject, rather than the characteristics of the object itself. According to Çelikkan, the artist's individual perception of reality and the presentation of this perception in the artwork is directly related to the subject's self-reference, intuition, inner time and experiences (Çelikkan, 2010, p.130).

Croce, influenced by Hegel's philosophy, argues in his "Aesthetics" that, contrary to classical theorists, art emerges through intuition (Croce, 2019, p.39). In Kant's transcendental idealism, the intellect or reason can never know the being itself thus its limits are questioned. In his transcendental aesthetics, on the other hand, by questioning whether there are a priori concepts in sensory knowledge, a metaphysical idealism is put forward with the concept of "thing in itself" and the knowledge of reality is limited to sensory experience. Abstraction, which can be described as the endeavour to reach the simplest form of the image in the artwork with the desire to purify the object from its characteristics and to descend into its essence, is the search for this "thing in itself" under the sensory image of the object. In the problem of whether art is an illusion or an appearance, Hegel, who says that appearance is necessary for essence: "Truth would not be truth, if it did not manifest itself or appear, if it did not exist for tin, as it exists for itself and for anyone else," he says. According to Hegel, since there is no other reality than that "which is in itself", reality must be sought beyond clearly perceived objects. Truth is that which continues to exist in and for itself, and art reveals the truth from the illusionary and distorted forms of the world, from mere appearances (Bozkurt, 2005, p.162). It is seen that this sensory experience (the sensory knowledge seen above reason, as in the differentiation in Plato's ontology) is based on intuition and an inner awareness. In the "Critique of Pure Reason", it is explained that without perception and awareness, it is not possible to establish the relationships between sensory information or to think, and that the data from the senses are related to each other by a single self-consciousness, otherwise there is no experience or knowledge of objects in the subject (Kant, 2010). According to Bergson, intuition, which is the source and basis of knowledge, shows us beings the way they are, as the ability to comprehend reality directly, and saves us from the filter of perception. Metaphysical or conscious intuition, can be described as using a heart-centered inner awareness that is not based on analytical reason, focusing through emotional intelligence, understanding the moment better, catching something alive-enlightening. According to traditional Eastern wisdom, true knowledge is heart-centred and the forms that reveal essences are the forms that are intuited and intellected in heart. Burckhardt says that although a form is limited and time-bound, it can express something timeless, and that any intuitive form is attributed a transcendent significance in order to reach this deeper meaning (Burckhardt, 2020). Symbolism, which is in relation to the holistic principles of existence as the language of the metaphysical mindset, is a way of thinking that transcends physical reality that represents the ontologically immaterial and can

embody abstract concepts. The symbol, which appears as a form of abstraction with the idea of replacing a reality or the reality underlying the visible being, refers to a form that does not reveal its meaning at first glance. Symbolism often pursues esoteric knowledge in the objectification of the invisible or the representation of meaning.

Timeless universal symbols, like geometric or numerical symbols, which are accepted to reveal the properties of infinity and absoluteness, to demonstrate the essence of the universe and the transcendent truth, are instruments that help to reflect metaphysical thought and show the layers of existence. The transformation of a physical object into a symbol means that it is enriched with layers of meaning. The Eastern artist, avoiding imitation, has tended to find forms of expression that do not represent any phenomenon, and therefore to abstraction. In Islamic art, geometric forms such as point, line, and circle are used to show metaphysical realities. The point, which contains profound mystical dimensions, is the manifestation of the absolute "one" and shares the same ontological meaning. Just as the numeral 1 constitutes the main principle of all numbers, the point, which has no dimension in itself, is seen as the smallest spatial part that gives the main principle of all dimensions, the most abstract principle that determines existence. The circle, which shows the paradox of unity and multiplicity, is the symbol of the first comprehensible form as the expression of unity, oneness and uniqueness. Since it reflects the order of unity and multiplicity, centrality and circularity are considered to define the transcendent, while the triangle and quadrilateral, are accepted to define the physical existence of human. And color white and numeral 0 appear as the symbols of the unmanifested unity (Akkach, 2021, p.46-160).

In the West, geometric abstraction, especially neoplasticism and suprematism, share this understanding of art that is free of objects and has the language of universal reality. For example, in Malevich's "White on White", this unmanifested unity in man is symbolized, and in the black square on the white plane, which he named "Zero Form", the ascent from nothingness to existence or unity is symbolized (Figure 11). There is silence here towards the zero form, which Plotinus describes as absolute ineffable. For Malevich, absolute reality is incorporeal mentality, infinity that cannot be shown as a form (Farago, 2006, p.194- 201). He argues that in contrast to the scientifically relative and ephemeral realities in the world of practical reality, the suprematic world reflects a complete reality in the sense of absolute

unity and absolute nothingness, and that this reality is the reality of man (Tunalı, 2003, p.185).

According to Tunalı, only in abstract art, metaphysical reality can gain formalization (Tunalı, 2003, p.150). Çelikkan says that abstraction is the concrete appearance of the mental state; in this sense, it is not merely a more abstract adaptation of the objective world in which formality is relegated to the background. Because abstraction, which allows the transition to superior ontological levels, directs the artist towards a holistic intuition. As the only approach that can reveal self-consciousness or the essence of the object, abstraction, which emerges as a result of man's orientation towards his own self and reveals the inner reality, transforms life into an internal time flow and prepares the ground for intuitiveness to become a way of life. At the point of feeling this insight and interpreting the universe and existence shaped by it, everything is no longer veiled (Çelikkan, 2010, p.5, 16).

Abstract artists endeavour to reach a purification that questions what is hidden behind the objective world and allows it to reveal itself in the layers of the work of art. Çelikkan says that this is an inner seeing, an inner eye opening itself to the external world, as if observing the universe, and that the view of the object by this inner eye announces the possibility of an introspective intuition independent of the demands of representation. It is not known whether each artist realizes this inner reality, whether they want to realize it or how much they are aware of it, but a true work of art should be more than what the artist represents with colours, forms and expressions (Çelikkan, 2010, p.46).

When the conception of reality, which determines the formal characteristics of abstract painting, is based on the unity of being, selves or objects do not exist within this single being. Miniature painting, which is not dependent on any subjectivity, is therefore based on two-dimensional superficial space. With suprematic symbols formed by metaphysical forms based on esoteric knowledge and intuition, and pure abstraction in which the object is completely removed, Malevich tried not to represent anything individual, but only to show the pure reality he perceived. However, no matter how much abstraction and refinement are attempted, there is always an individual attitude, a characteristic related to the self in the art object.

Kandinsky, who says that every artist should search for his inner reality and try and find the most suitable medium and form for this purpose, does not completely ignore the object and interprets it with his lyrical abstract richness. In his works, his tendency towards mysticism -the belief that art is the perception and expression of an infinite spirit, a universal consciousness- and the abstraction and geometric symbols he uses to show metaphysical realities are represented together with an emotional expression that can be interpreted as the manifestation of an individual self that preserves its existence at the same time. According to Mondrian, although the manifestation of the unity in existence is found as a seed in our consciousness, which is a specification of the one universal consciousness, this unity cannot be observed because of our individual selves. In art, an individuality, or rather the self, which will reflect emotions to the disadvantage of universality, should be left out. In order not to express emotions with this perception of reality, he advances the form and natural colour features that he realizes suggestingIn the self that conceals pure reality, towards the means that allow him to create a painting of immutability, to straight lines and clear primary colours. In his understanding of painting, which he grounded in an analytical and geometrical discipline based on rational reason, he reflects an individual attitude while trying to reach the essence above appearances, to develop the formal language that will reflect this essence, and to express pure reality. According to Farago, Neoplasticism, which is dualist in its formation, is an expression of the universal because of the real plasticity in formal relations and of the individuality of the artist because of the material reality in its plastic structure. While revealing the universality, it preserves the human dimension (Farago, 2006, p.177, 183). In this sense, Antmen states that pictorial expression, which is realized by abstracting from the object, should be distinguished from abstract works, which, in Kant's words, are formed as "things in themselves" without any relation to external reality (Antmen, 2009, p.80).

Monochrome art, which is assumed to have originated with the ancient teachings of the Far East and tries to remove the form from the painting or minimize it considering the object as an obstacle to reflect the essence, is a form of abstraction that reflects the metaphysical reality perceived by the artist, transcends the boundaries of time and space, and gives form to objects in terms of meaning. Since there is an effort in monochrome painting both to emphasize the material existence of the object as a physical reality and to show the metaphysical reality that constitutes the abstract experience, it can be stated that

the distinction between these two is tried to be represented. For this reason, monochrome, in its attempt to show the abstract and the material together, contains profound meanings behind its simple appearance expressed in a single or minimal number of colours. It is impossible to try to categorize monochrome art into a certain movement, artist or period in order to make sense of it since it covers a very wide period. Although there are points where it contradicts today's art as it is an understanding of art nourished from an old tradition, its relation with various disciplines and its aim to express multiplicity with one or minimal colours is a view in parallel with the contemporary understanding of art.

3.3. Evaluation of self-representations that become visible in artwork according to the ontological approach

It can be suggested that the artist's self reflected in the work of art gains visibility as layers of meaning, and that these different layers are similar to the layers of existence, which are found in the ontological approach to art. Whether as a representation of the artist's consciousness features or his understanding of reality, the evaluation of the self-representations that become visible in the work of art according to the ontological approach requires the determination of the layers in which these representations are visible. In this context, the ontology of art and the analyses of aesthetic objects appear as disciplines that examine the type of existence of artworks. In the history of philosophy, the question of where the works of art, which have been included in the world of existence are situated in reality has brought along the necessity of determining what kind of existence they have.

N. Hartmann, who is considered the founder of the New Ontology by emphasizing that all philosophical problems are based on ontological structure, tries to explain existence rather than defining it. In this direction, he analyses the manifestations and layered structures of real existence, which is opposite to the subject, the concrete existents that exist autonomously from man (Mengüşoğlu, 2021, p.116). Although he seems to have departed from idealist philosophy by proposing the logic of solid body based on what exists, like Aristotle, and by trying to stand above the opposition between materialism and idealism, he also says that with the positivist view, it cannot be seen that the existence of the object is the appearance of a limit of knowability, that it is in no way related to the physical formation of

the object, but only to its comprehensibility through known ways of objectification (Hartmann, 1998, p.3).

According to Hartmann's definition of aesthetic object, a work of art is an objectification, the transference of an unreal sense to a real object, the manifestation of something that does not exist. Tunalı also states that the work of art is an objectified spiritual being (Tunalı, 2012, p. 66-72). In that case, this objectification includes two layers as real existence and unreal (irreel- ideal) existence and living "tin". In other words, painting finds its basis of existence as a work of art in the material- objective painting like the frame, canvas cloth, paint stains, that determine and grounds it on the one hand, on the other hand in the layers of meaning formed within this physical structure, and finally in the comprehension process of the viewer. Since the living tin (consciousness) can comprehend in certain periods of maturity, artworks have often remained incomprehensible due to the fact that they cannot be perceived aesthetically by being related with its closed meaning content and being extracted the spiritual content from the objective structure of the work.

The two spheres of existence in the modal analysis of modern ontology are the real world and the reality on canvas. The aesthetic object is both a being of meaning (spiritual being) and expression and a real object based on reality. Since what is depicted transcends existence, works of art are transcendent existences in terms of meaning. According to Hartmann, the type of existence of the artwork, which can be analyzed in terms of layers of existence by examining it as an object of knowledge, is complex, as it cannot be taken back completely, although it participates in reality and takes a share from it, and the painting consists of layers as a heterogeneous structure (Hartmann, 1998). Since the purpose of creation is the fore-structure- material existence, while creation follows a descent from the spiritual layer to the material layer, the viewer first encounters the fore-structure, then the irreel- abstract layers of existence that deepen gradually from the front to the back. This ontological analysis brings forth an order of ontic layers that may vary according to the genres of the painting.

R. Ingarden divides painting into two as figurative painting and pure (abstract) painting. In a painting with literary content, there are three different layers: The reconstructed seeing; the event depicted, and the literary theme, which shows the beginning

and end of the story (Tunalı, 2014 p.123-135). In this type of painting, the third layer is important because to understand a painting depicting a historical event, the event must be known. However in the second layer, while the event is described with lines and colour surfaces, a number of figures, objects and people are formed and these constitute the object layer of the work. When both irreel layers are compared, it is clear that the object layer, that is, the figures, appears to be more important than the literary content layer. Figures are also important in portraits and landscapes without literary content. The first layer, the layer of reconstructed seeing, is the most important layer not only in literary painting, but in all figurative painting styles in general. According to Ingarden, seeing means phenomenal object, seeing in perspective. Painting is directly related to objects in a three-dimensional order and this order can be transferred to the two-dimensional surface of a canvas within certain rules. In this framework, perspective, which is the most basic knowledge and way of seeing for painting, reflects the objects seen on the canvas within certain rules and organization. The researches made for centuries to find these laws of order can be traced in the history of painting.

Perspective is an ontological principle for painting in the sense that it gives objectivity to the depicted objects. It is not only an ontological principle of the depicted objects, but also related to the whole ontic structure of the painting. Ingarden accepts perspective as an ontological universal principle that gives order to other layers and variables of the painting by determining it as a layer. However, according to Tunalı, who says that being an ontic layer and such an ontological function is incompatible with each other, it is more appropriate to accept perspective as the principle of ontological order. Because the artist searches for and finds the most aesthetic one by comparing various perspective views of the object he sees, and does not put them into perspective rules randomly. As a result of this perspective view, the selection and organisation of appropriate paint stains, the painting obtains forms such as triangle and diagonal; thus, it provides compositional and aesthetic features by being a form element (Tunalı, 2014 p.123-135).

The features of intellectual consciousness -analytical reasoning, rational features- are represented in figurative painting by the form of perspective seeing. A painting created using perspective, the basic form of seeing in figurative painting as the ontological universal principle, is not only a work based on mimesis, but a will to order the world in an individual

self-centred way. This attitude, which is the representation of a world of existence that remains unchanged and independent on its own, is an approach that comprehends the object through rational reason, interprets it as an entity and transfers it to canvas with strong rational forms. A world of objects, which is thought to express the external reality precisely, is represented, the objectification of the subjective and the dualist, individual existence of the self are highlighted.

According to Hartmann's theory of ontic layers, which states that painting consists of two heterogeneous structures as a real fore structure and an irreal back structure, the basic layers proposed are: 1. the front structure formed by the real surface with visible paint stains 2. space, objects and light 3. the movement of the figures 4. the vitality of the figure in movement 5. the field of immaterial existence - the spiritual attitude, expression and character of the figures depicted 6. the general and ideal human layer and 7. the ideal general meaning that appears at the end. These layers do not appear in the same way in every painting, they emerge in different ways. In the layer of space, light and object; light gains particular importance and has two major features in terms of the structure of the painting. The first is that it reveals the plasticity of the figures in the painting and the second is that it determines the space. An irreal, idealized light, often coming from an unknown source, forming the space and illuminating the figure or figures, is a fundamental value of the painting.

The vividness of the figures is ensured by vitalizing them with an irreal and structural light. The objects or figures depicted can be real beings or unreal beings placed in an irreal space. Tunalı states that when the space in the painting is not real, the viewer is not a part of that space, but gradually experiences that irreal space up to the foreground through the light source (Tunalı, 2014 p.123-135). In other words, light emphasizes and highlights the elements and principles of arrangement in the painting.

In painting, irreal light is used as a symbol of divinity, inner enlightenment and eternity, creating a mystical-metaphysical expression. In Western painting, light is attributed sublimity and used as a mysterious, spiritual symbol in various belief systems. It is stated in religions that God reflects himself as light, and from the point of view of religious symbolism, "nur" meaning light is seen to signify consciousness and purification as a

concept that makes it possible to perceive and intuit the truth. In Renaissance painting, light arises from an unknown source, whereas in Enlightenment and Baroque painting, it is realized that it begins to have instrumental value with an effect that secretly disperses the darkness. It can be stated that after the Renaissance, painting in general tended to seek its own light, and in Impressionism, it became an objective value (Türker, 1992, p. 5).

The layer of the sphere of spiritual existence in painting is related to the spiritual attitude, expression and character of the figures depicted. This layer manifests itself mostly in portraits. The final layers, the general and ideal human layers, are the main thought that finds expression in the figures and the ideality that appears through this main thought. This style of analysis, which is an ontological examination, reveals the unity character of the artwork and that it is an ontic structure. The multiplicity of layers ensures the depth of a work of art. This method can be applied in the style of painting based on mimesis, which includes layers of meaning, so that the abstract-irreal elements of the painting also reach the view and new relationships and new artistic functions develop between them.

The spiritual characteristics of the artist manifest in the layer of spiritual meaning, the sphere of irreal being, that forms the background structure of the artwork, which is a transcendent being in its meaning. The layers of light, space and objects, and the ideality that find expression in figures, which are the layers of spiritual meaning in figurative painting, can be associated with the representation of the artist's spiritual characteristics and understanding of reality. It can be argued that the emotional characteristics of the individual self, such as spontaneous strokes on the canvas surface, gestural inventions, paint stains created by the reflected excitement, where the act of painting itself gains visibility, manifest in the real sphere of existence of the artwork, in the front structure. In that case, these real structures that can be observed on the canvas surface can be associated with the individual self and emotional consciousness. Because, when Hartmann's principle of founding the order of existence rising from the bottom to the top in the lower layer, is applied to the artwork, it is seen that different layers of existence, which are based on each other and rise above each other, emerge, and that each upper layer forms a more profound representation sphere in terms of spiritual meaning than the lower layer. Images that appear in the form of layers in the artwork depend on the appearance in the lower layer for their existence on the one hand, but they also form a separate, independent layer with a new appearance that emerges in its

own layer (Hartmann, 1998). Accordingly, it can be said that the layers of existence that deepen from the front to the back structure in the artwork are the representation of the artist's spiritual features and individual features of the self that manifest as layers of meaning.

In abstract painting, when the feature of reflecting the external reality, the layers of meaning in ontological terms disappear, it can be assumed that painting is conceived only as a relationship between colour and form, and that the non-figurative understanding of form reaches a result such as depicting colour blotches. In terms of the theory of layers, in an abstract painting, the layers of existence as objects and psychic characters or metaphysical layers depicted in figurative painting are not seen, in other words, since the figures are outside the painting, the intermediate layers of existence disappear. The ontological layers of existence in abstract painting consist of two layers: a real material structure and an unreal form created by colour stains. Such a painting, which expresses what it wants to tell not indirectly by depicting certain figures, but directly in the relations of colour and form, is an absolute painting. What is expressed in this absoluteness is no longer the depicted objects, but their essence, which manifests itself only in the form (Tunalı, 2014 p.123-135).

The artist's finding the existence of spiritual meaning in himself with its holistic characteristics is the transcendence of the visible and its objectification as absolute and infinite in the artwork. This is a mode of consciousness according to Hegel, different from the mimesis of the visible as it is through the senses or as it is intended to be through the reason (Hegel, 2012). When the artist aims to show this inner reality that he perceives in his artistic practices, he has to use forms of abstraction and symbolization that transcend the boundaries of time and space and give form to objects not as they are, but in their metaphysical aspect. Abstract painting does not become an art devoid of ontic layers with the elimination of the intermediate layers of existence found in figurative painting; on the contrary, it exhibits an ontological aspect that is essentially oriented towards spirituality, that has no reference outside itself, that avoids imitation, ordinary object appearances and illusory forms of the sensory. Tunalı states that abstract painting shows an ontic unity in which the intermediate layers of existence disappear, but the layer of depth- of essence is reflected and objectified as pure forms. Since what is depicted in abstract painting is not the objects themselves, but their essences, there is not shallowness, but a metaphysical depth, and absoluteness is based on the direct presentation of this metaphysical layer (Tunalı, 2014,

p.135). In his thesis, Özderin states that in abstract contemporary art practices from expressionist approach to conceptual experiments, ontological concepts are layered in a method; all metaphysically abstracted contents visually reflect the idea formed by the synthesis of meaning, concept, symbol and image. Depending on such factors, abstract tendencies, which are ontologically deepened and layered with metaphysical influences, also have a phenomenological content. The scope of discussion of the metaphysics of art expands in direct correlation with the ontological and phenomenological changes in abstract formations that have been intellectualized through philosophy (Özderin, 2011).



4. THE ARTIST WHO TAKES HIMSELF AS THE SUBJECT

Due to the interdisciplinary dimensions of the concept of self, it is explained first from an ontological perspective and then in connection with consciousness and after determining the visibility of these phenomena in artworks, it becomes necessary to define the concept within the framework of Psychology, and Sociology in order to better understand it. In this part of the study, the relationship of the artist self, which takes itself as the subject, with the plastic arts is mentioned briefly, first in the context of Psychology and self-portrait, then in the context of Sociology and identity art. This discussion stems from the idea of distinguishing the concepts of personality and identity as two different aspects of the subject self from the ontological self. Both concepts are based on the idea that people are objects of themselves, accordingly, when the self as an object is examined, the concept of "social self" or identity appears as a sociological formation, and the concept of personality appears as related to both subjective and sociological processes (Hewitt/ Shulman, 2019, p.85- 127). In this context, it can be stated that both the artist's personality features and social-cultural identity are represented in the work of art.

When we look at the literature on the self as a subject of Psychology and Sociology, it is seen that the studies are often based on W. James and G. H. Mead, and that symbolic interactionists proceed through the classification and types of self that they have made by making use of Mead's basic understanding of the concept of self. The main argument of this theory is to oppose essentialist understandings of the individual self and to place sociological and psychoanalytical emphasis on the created and constructed character of identity.

According to Mead, since self-consciousness provides the basic foundation of the self, the essence of the self is cognitive rather than sensory. Therefore, it is necessary to emphasise the central position of thinking rather than sensory experience and accompanying motor elements. The self is not a physiological organism, but a physiological organism is necessary for the self. Psychology generally treats the self as an independent and isolated entity. Mead argues that the self can be experienced when the state of consciousness and emotional consciousness are identified in a physical body. The ability of the individual to see himself as an object is the basic psychological problem of the self or self-consciousness. Since the self has the ability to look at itself as an object, this feature distinguishes it from

other objects and the physical body. By seeing itself as an object like others, it affects its own experience, in other words, when it takes an objective attitude towards itself, it rises above self-consciousness as a self-observer (Mead, 2017, p.166- 196).

According to J. P. Hewitt/ D. Shulman, symbolic interactionists use the concept of self to describe both an object created while interacting with people and the process that produces this object. When the self is analyzed as a process, G. H. Mead and W. James use the personal pronouns I (individual self) and me (social self) to describe the two phases of the process by which the self is created. The "I" self is the subject who realises, acts and is the source of impulse. The realization of one's own first reaction to a stimulus marks the beginning of the "me" stage of the self (Hewitt/ Shulman, 2019, p. 88).

According to Mead, the self as something that develops is not innate, but is the result of the individual's social experience as a whole and of his relations with other individuals who participate in this process. Personality is formed in this process. Therefore, the self is basically a social structure and process; its integrity reflects the structure of the social process. The institutions of the community in which a person lives are imposed on his own behaviour. The language of the community to which one belongs becomes a mean for the formation of the personality, and by taking on the different roles offered by others, one attains the behaviour of the members of the community. By adopting these behaviours, one creates the social self and reacts to the social self as the individual self. The individual self is the organism's reaction to the behaviour of others, and the social self is the individual's attitudes towards others, which he also adopts. The two together form a "personality" that takes part in social experience. Social patterns of action are transferred to the organism's mind and thus become social behaviour, becoming an "individual mind". Factors such as the birth of an individual into a nation with specific political and family relations in a particular geographical location represent a context in which the "social self" is formed (Mead, 2017, p.165- 203)

According to Hewitt/ Shulman, when the self as an object is analyzed, the essence of the concept is based on the idea that people are objects of themselves. Man both represents and interacts with a world of social objects of which he is a part, and develops the individual sense of self by evaluating the reactions of others. Thought (inner speech) occurs when

people treat themselves as social objects, while the ability to treat one's self as an external object requires the acquisition of language. The symbolic interactionist perspective emphasizes the social nature of the self, is sceptical of the view that individuals have a "unique, immaterial" individual self. According to Hewitt/ Shulman, the human mind constructs the self as an object, and the Western cultural tradition favours an individualistic view of the person, separating him from others (Hewitt/ Shulman, 2019, p.85- 127).

The "social self" seems to be a definition of the self that is close to sociological analysis. But how is it related to knowledge about the self? According to Hewitt/ Shulman, identity is the self as a social object; it is a matter of establishing and maintaining a coherent, situational relationship between self, roles and position. The three forms of identity, "situational", "social" and "personal", are interrelated. In every context of interaction in which situational identities are created, which are indicators of where one stands in relation to other people, there is also a process that additionally produces what is called the "biographical self". The "personal identity" and the "social identity", which provide integration and continuity, constitute the basic components of this biographical self. "Social identity", which depends on identification with a social category, situates the individual in a social field that is longer lasting and larger than any particular situation and tells him where he is positioned in the social world. "Personal identity", which depends on the construction and maintenance of a personal autobiography, focuses on the individual's life story, positioning him in a wider and longer-lasting social field than a specific situation, and providing the basis for knowing oneself as a person with a life story that has different goals and qualities and distinguishes him from other people. Personal identity is seen as something that one creates, owns and has the right to change as one wishes, and includes a kind of ownership of the self, the belief that one has rights to one's own body and mind that should not be given to other people (Hewitt/ Shulman, 2019, p. 135-155).

According to Giddens, since the self is, to a certain extent, an amorphous phenomenon, "individual identity" cannot refer to the continuity of the self over time, but requires "cyclical awareness". Cyclical awareness is the cognitive component of the individual's "self-awareness". Individual identity is the objective self that the individual captures cyclically based on his biography and which is not only the result of the continuity of the individual's system of action but must be created and maintained mechanically in the

cyclical process. Man with a stable sense of individual identity has a "sense of biographical continuity in time and space" that he can cyclically grasp and communicate to others in different dimensions.

According to Giddens, the presence of the physical body in the interactions of everyday life is the fundamental principle for maintaining a coherent sense of individual identity, while appearance is the central element of cyclical self-design. New mechanisms of individual identity are shaped by the institutions of the modern age and contrast with traditional relations of community and self. Giddens, seeing the roots of the "quest for individual identity" in western individualism, argues that in the supermodern age the physical body is directly involved in the construction of the self and that there is a growing link between globalising influences and trends in personal needs. Certain types of bodily appearance and patterns of behaviour seem to have become particularly important with the onset of modernity, with appearance becoming a marker of social rather than personal identity (Giddens, 2010, p.50- 146). While individuality and the development of individual potentials are valued to varying degrees in every culture, the idea of consciously glorifying individuality today is unfamiliar to cultures prior to the capitalist system and the modern era. In traditional cultures all the characteristics associated with individual and social identity are relatively fixed and regulated by institutionalized processes.

According to the literature review carried out within the scope of Psychology and Sociology, it is seen that the concept of self is analyzed in a dual structure as "subject self" and "object-social self" and the combination of subject self and social self is also defined as personality. As definitions used in the same sense, object-social self or individual identity is constructed by the person himself and the society. There is no "individual, autonomous self" as a fixed unchanging structure, but it is constantly recreated in human thoughts and actions. The object self in the sense of "individual and social identity" is formed as something that is produced from the moment a person is born into an existing social process that he cannot choose, and individuals categorize and differentiate themselves with their object selves and are categorized by others.

4.1. Self-portrait in relation to the concept of the self and psychology

Artistic creativity is the artist's realization of himself within his subjective history, his ability to read his existence with an inner sensitivity and to make it readable with aesthetic formal competence. How should the "self" in this definition be understood related to Psychology? What psychologically controls man's artistic creativity? In this context, portraits stand out as important artistic expressions since they can reflect the personality and spirituality as well as the physical appearance in the most effective and clear way. From another perspective, it is seen that the artist transfers the subject to the portrait by filtering it through his own mental state and consciousness. In portraits, which aim to visualize and objectively embody personality and identity, the physical body should be used as the only surface on which the essence beyond the visible is reflected and the transcendent gains visibility.

The self affects its own experience by seeing itself as an object like others, in other words, when it takes an objective attitude towards itself, it rises above self-consciousness as a self-observer (Hewitt/ Shulman, 2019, p.85- 127). When the approach to art from a psychoanalytic perspective is analysed, it is seen that the first examples were initiated by Freud. Freud uses the word "ego" (I) for the individual self and emphasizes the importance of the unconscious rather than the conscious when explaining mental processes. He proposes a three-tier model as "id", "ego" and "superego" to explain the self. The "id" is the primitive structure of the mind that wants desires to be fulfilled immediately. It is the rational "ego" that provides the adaptation of the person to the external environment and decides whether or not or under what conditions the desires of the id can be fulfilled, and the "super ego" that tries to control the ego and manages the correct thought and behaviour models. According to Freud, we should look for the real cause of our behaviour not in our consciousness but in our unconscious (Freud, 2020, p.15-40).

Ö. Terbaş states that psychoanalysis is an experience that creates depth regarding the perception of time, and when unconscious material is encountered during the analysis, one experiences both a sense of being an entity in time and a sense of timelessness exempt from time. According to Terbaş, the psychoanalytic analysis of a work is defined in two ways: Objective and subjective reading. Objective reading approaches the work of art in the light

of the information provided by the theory and practice of psychoanalysis and treats it as a part or whole, while subjective reading focuses on the emotional effect of the work on the viewer. Psychoanalysis is a completely creative activity in the sense of the subject's self-analysis and restructuring, and a process that opens the way for the individual's creativity (Terbaş, 2016, p. 4-6). With psychoanalytic sensitivity, a holistic approach that is creative subject-centred but also takes the subject's dialectical relationship with the object into consideration is possible. The inner life of the individual, the intersection points of subjective and objective and examples of their dialectical interactions are presented through artistic creativity (Sunat, 2000, p.6).

Erinç states that if the creative process of an artist is to be analyzed, the reasons behind his attitudes and behaviours should be examined. According to Freud, the reason for artistic creation is that the superego is affected by social criticism and prohibitions and tries to suppress desires and impulses, while the artist tries to fulfill them through fantasy and imagination. Thus, consciously or unconsciously, he sublimates what he hides. Today's sociocultural structure and humanistic approach invalidate Freud's ideas that see man only as an impulsive being of instinct. According to Erinç, psychologists who think differently from Freud's psychoanalytic method, with the influence of the theories and methods of existentialist and phenomenological schools, argue that the most important impulse driving the artist is "self-realization". This impulse is inevitable for the sake of self-realization and then transcendence. For Adler, creativity, which is one of the most effective ways of self-realization, emerges as the "creative self" at the age of 4-5. Since the self is always in search of experiences that can give a feeling of happiness, if it cannot find these sources in outside world, it tends to create itself. According to R. May, the artist has to fight with the gods of society that are accepted as real. To prove this courage is to find and reveal the personality. Many discussions on the subject, which continue today, are based on Freud, Adler or Jung. When the man is placed at the centre of art, many different ideas are put forward (Erinç, 2004, p.101- 111).

The artist's endeavour for existence, directly affects his art. Jung calls the line of resistance, which he assumes to be above the subconscious, the self, and defines it as the individual understanding that forms the personality and excludes others and carries itself to the subject position (Jung, 2016). According to psychoanalyst Otto Rank, the idea of the

artist creating himself is based on the romantic understanding that sees the artist as a genius. The artist can be in the work he creates, he can increase the brilliance of his work through his extraordinary personal qualities, this can even attract more attention than other works he creates, or the artist can directly use himself as an art object (Zolberg, 2013, p. 118).

When it is questioned whether human consciousness as well as attitudes and behaviours and the emotional processes that cause them can be a subject in a creation, it is seen that the self is extremely important for the objectification of creative ability (Erinç, 2004, p.15-16). According to Tezcan, the work of art emerges through the hidden or unconscious interaction of the subject self, determined by the artist's innate qualities and the social self, formed in the socialization process of the society in which he lives (Tezcan, 2018, p.67). However, for Mead, in art, the emphasis on the subject self, what is not found in the structure of the social self, is increased as much as possible (Mead, 2017, P.225). Self-portrait as self-expression or reflection includes this subject self, which is the moment of the artist's direct encounter with himself; therefore, it also contains an abstract, spiritual structure. Since the subject of the self-portrait is directly related to the self, it is seen that the artist seeks answers to questions about his own existence. On the other hand, one of the most important elements in the creation process is nature, and the main subject of art is the knowledge of existence that the artist perceives, understands and defines as reality. Being the basic psychological problem of self or self-consciousness, which Mead mentions, that the individual can look at himself as an object, finds expression in art through self-portraiture (Mead, 2017, P.166- 196). Because in the self-portrait, in which the self is reflected in the best and clearest way from a psychological aspect, the artist determines himself as both subject and object self.

The most distinctive features of a man's physical appearance are found on the head, especially on the face. Therefore, in the portrait, which is a type of painting that is made by resembling the person chosen as the subject to a great extent and covers mostly the head and shoulders, the face is the area that best reflects the physical, mental and spiritual state of the model. Temporary physiological changes occur on the face in different emotional states. The artist, as a subject, can reflect the spiritual effects he receives from the object in the portrait precisely, or he can strengthen the expression by interpreting it. In the late 18th century, J. Evans says the following about the portrait in "On the Utility of Paintings":

“The portrait is the best instrument designed by the genius of art to ground the transient, to perpetuate the momentary existence. O painting, you keep alive what is rotting in the grave! Portraiture is useful. It reminds us of great people who can no longer be observed” (Leppert, 1996: p.200).

The expressive power of the portrait, the universal meaning and value it represents, transforms into self-portraiture over time as the artist's gaze returns to his own face. In the history of painting, almost every artist has studied self-portraiture. Even painters working on different subjects have examined themselves at different stages of their lives and painted self-portraits. The place of portrait and self-portrait in the history of art dates back to Ancient Egypt. In the history of art, there are self-portraits that get attention only with formal features, as well as self-portraits with strong spiritual meanings that are still not understood today. When portraiture is considered as a historical phenomenon, it is seen that certain purposes come to the fore in different periods.

As the medieval concept of art, which was limited to religious subjects, evolved into a human-centred understanding with the Renaissance, the importance given to the individual and individuality begins to show itself from the early Renaissance onwards, and especially from Giotto onwards, portraits are made in which mimesis is the main purpose. With the change in the position of the Renaissance artist in society, self-portraits become more and more visible. When the historical process of art is analyzed, it is seen that artists depict self-portraits for very different reasons, and that there are self-portraits with different approaches belonging to artists who want to reflect their inner world or who want to document themselves. In this sense, it can be said that self-portraits are the unfolding or continuation of a search and support the emergence of the concepts of "I" and "self". Between the 14th and 17th centuries, it is observed in portraits and self-portraits that there is a tendency to move away from the physical atmosphere and to include the spiritual sphere as well. In addition to physical features, emotions, character and personality traits, which are indicators of the psychological state of the figure, and the endeavour to depict the spiritual structure behind all these features draw attention. It can be said that the artists question their existence and deal with themselves as a problem in their self-portraits reflecting their inner worlds (Turani, 1983, p.363).

Among the self-portraits of A. Dürer, in which the relationship of the self with psychology can be clearly traced in his works, who analysed his own image within the framework of many different concepts, sometimes reflecting a temporary state of melancholy, in which he emerged as a self-confident, young and well-dressed man in the following years, there are also examples in which he added his own portrait to religious compositions. In his self-portrait of 1500, which resembles the images of Christ in terms of arrangement from today's point of view, wanders on the borders of mockery of religious themes, and has highly stylised features; with its reference to the image of Christ, it also signals a change in the approach to the subject in portraiture. It is still controversial whether he was referring to his own creative-artist position with this self-portrait or whether he was aiming to attack religion. However, it is observed that Dürer, who does not reflect himself as he is in his self-portraits and whose desire to be more or to surpass himself is seen in the foreground, portrays himself with idealised features and in a glorified way with this self-portrait (Kayahan, Çevik, 2020, p. 191-213). R. Steiner states that Dürer wanted to construct his self- his personality through his self-portraits, but on the other hand, regardless of the pose and the meaning of the face in his depictions, his image reaches the viewer as the artist himself. In other words, he emphasises that the artist's examination of his self (such as Jesus, jester, hero or victim) in various roles does not mean the denial of the individual's singular and indivisible self in the spiritual sense. This shows, according to Steiner, even under conditions where the game of assuming different roles is taken to its most unrecognizable limits, the essence of the self is never so far removed from itself as to become divided (Steiner, 1997, p. 8).



Figure 17: Albrecht Dürer, 1500, Self Portrait, oil on lime

The mirror is a basic element used by the artist to reflect his image to the painting while depicting his self-portrait, and it is understood that he utilized the mirror to transfer his image to the painting and to create a visual resume. Looking at Dürer's self-portraits, it is seen that the artist used the mirror in a way that initiated a fundamental development, the results of which can be seen even today. The mirror, which is the pioneer of self-discovery, also reflects the self-confidence of Renaissance artists. In self-portraits, which serve as a kind of mirror, one usually looks not at the painter but at his reflection in the mirror, in other words, the person looking at the self-portrait is not looking to see the portrait, but to see what the portrait shows (Özkanlı, 2006, p.49). It can be stated that self-portraits in front of the mirror are metaphors that make one think about how one's self is seen by himself and how others see it, in a way questioning the reality. This is a multidimensional point of view about the apparent reality, the subjective reality of people or the reflected reality, including a paradox about what is the truth. In this context, the work questions the concept of self and makes us think about whether the self belongs to that person or not.

In self-portraits, the artist's choice of himself as the subject may be due to personal approaches that go beyond this reason, as well as to make his existence meaningful.

According to Du Bussierre, the aim and insistence of Rembrandt, who intensively analyzed his self in dozens of self-portraits he painted in different periods, is similar to that of Montaigne, who made himself the subject of his book. Based on the fact that every man has all the states of humanity, for Rembrandt, knowing oneself is like a key to understanding others. Indeed, the objective attitude in his self-portraits, which have gained a universal meaning, cannot be explained by the fact that he always found a model that can be used for himself or by adopting an egotistical behaviour (Du Bussierre, 1999, p.40).

It is necessary to mention that a major break in portrait-self-portrait painting in the historical process was experienced with the invention of the camera. Because the purpose of the portrait, which was previously a method of immortalizing the artist's self, documentary quality in the sense of showing status or the priority method of capturing the moment, has largely disappeared, and art is given tasks such as the examination of psychological worlds and reflection of spirituality, which a camera cannot do, and as a result, original forms of expression and plastic language differences come into play. Thus, it can be stated that 20th-century self-portraiture is characterized by an attitude in which artists aim to reflect their psychological worlds rather than form. Van Gogh's most striking self-portrait, "Self-Portrait with Bandaged Ear", which can be given as an example in this context, takes place after he cuts off his left ear due to an emotional crisis. The painting, in which the artist's left ear is cut off but his right ear is bandaged, shows the artist working by looking in the mirror, and his documented psychological disorders form the basis for later interpretations of the work (Kayahan, Çevik, 2020, p. 191-213). Looking at E. Schiele's morbidly weak, distorted, pathetic and bizarre expressionist figures, which are far beyond a reflection in the mirror, between 1910 and 1913, which can almost contradict that they are the same person, it can be stated that he constantly tries to avoid staying within the boundaries of a certain personality, and in this way, he points to the divided self structure of modern man.

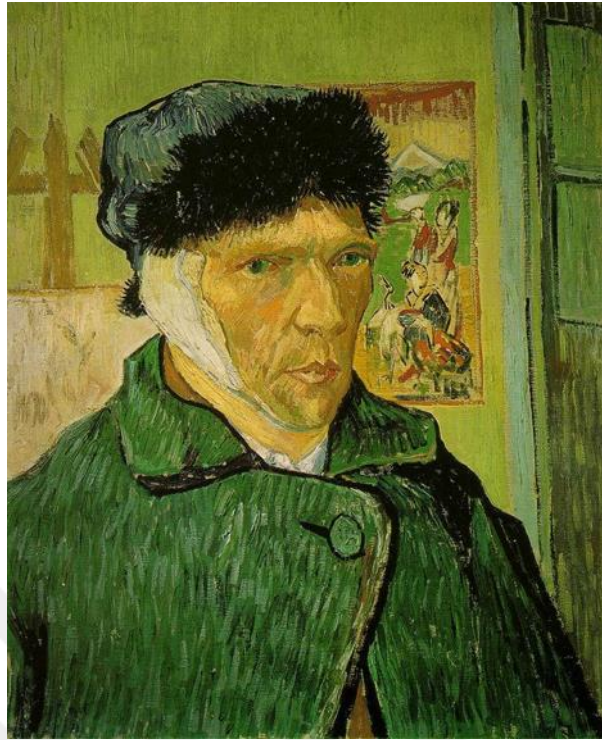


Figure 18: Vincent Van Gogh, Self-Portrait with Bandaged Ears, Easel and Japanese Print, January 1889 Courtauld Institute Galleries, London

Apart from the many portraits and self-portraits of E. Munch, whose life was characterised by deep fears and loneliness, and whose works have a highly spiritual and emotional dimension, which can be given as examples in the context of the relationship between the self and psychology; his work "Melancholia" (Laura) dated 1899 can be shown as a special example of the influence of psychology and even neurology on artistic creation. Through this painting, it would not be wrong to say that works of art are a source of psychological data collection. According to Kirk Varnedou, the tablecloth on the lower left in this painting resembles brain tissue because it is modelled on the painted coronal brain sections used to show neurological abnormalities in medical publications of the time. This neuroanatomical reference is a clear referential to Laura's psychological state and largely reflects Munch's symbolist interest in psychological portraiture (Anker, 2011, P.29).

Within the scope of the relationship between psychology and the self, it is possible to give hundreds or even more examples of self-portraits and make analyses. Within the limited framework of this section of the study, Marc Quinn's "Self" sculpture series made with his blood can be given as an example of self-portrait in contemporary art. This self-portrait, which questions the biographical self and accordingly the sense of biographical

continuity in time and space, and which can also be associated with psychological processes, was created by pouring the artist's own blood, which he had accumulated over a period of time, into a mould taken from his head, far beyond the traditional medium, and made it necessary to freeze and store it. In this way, Quinn fulfils the symbolic and real function of the concept of self and selfhood at the same time. Since this series of works is repeated in certain phases, it can be seen as a record of biological change or a sequence of changing states of self that can be read together (Quinn, 1991).

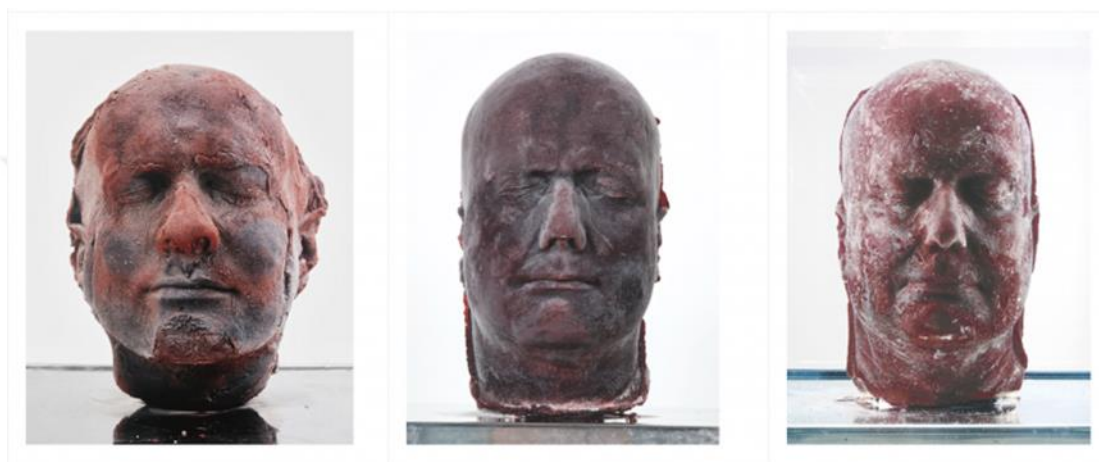


Figure 19: Marc Quinn, 'Self' series, 1991, 2001, 2006, Blood (artist's), stainless steel, Perspex and refrigeration equipment.

In terms of understanding the relationship between the concept of self and psychology, the ways of looking in portraits and self-portraits gain particular importance and stand out as a context that needs to be addressed. When Ayan's thesis on the subject is analyzed, it is seen that she deals with three major forms of gaze and associates them with the self (Ayan, 1991, p.5). The frontal gaze is the type of gaze in which the face is turned towards the viewer from the front or three quarters of the face, creating a mutual watching and being watched situation. This gaze, which is most preferred in self-portraits, where the "I" aspect is strongly felt, is directed towards the viewer's face or even eyes, and the viewer feels controlled, turned into an immobile object, or even reduced to nothing under this questioning gaze. The three-quarters sideways gaze is a gaze in which the head, shoulders and body rotate off-axis, the pupils of the eyes have gained compulsory mobility according to the body axis, and the place where the gaze is directed is not exactly clear. In this gaze, the questioning authority of the "I" is not seen; therefore, the self does not disturb the viewer, on the contrary, it brings the viewer to the position of "you". In this respect, it imposes expressions such as humility, modesty, delicacy, sometimes timidity, distraction, distance,

indifference, boredom or rejection. In the profile view, the relationship between the artist in the self-portrait and the viewer is completely broken. Profile means to be looked at. Since the certainty of the direct gaze or the double meaning of the moving gaze is replaced by complete strangeness, all confusion of meaning disappears. In profile self-portraits, in which the artist appears not as a subjective "I", but on the contrary with all his objectivity, because he does not look directly at the viewer by breaking all ties with the viewer, other fixed elements of the face such as nose, cheeks, chin and temples are emphasized instead of the expressive and sharp eyes of the figure who presents himself to the viewer. Thus, the subject loses all the personal emphasis of an individual self. These three ways of looking are not just postures, they are states that suggest a reality that is intended to be conveyed behind the posture, closed meanings related to the self.

4.2. Identity art in relation to the concept of the self and sociology

It has been explained that the concept of self in sociological terms is defined as social self or identity. According to Hewitt/ Shulman, "identity" is the self as a social object; it is a matter of establishing and maintaining a consistent, situational relationship between self and roles and position. The three forms of identity, "situational", "social" and "individual", are interrelated. "Individual identity" and "social identity", which provide the person with integration and continuity, constitute the basic components of the biographical self. "Social identity", which depends on identification with a social category, situates the person in a larger social sphere, longer lasting than any particular situation, and tells him where he is positioned in the social world. "Individual identity", which depends on the construction and maintenance of a personal autobiography, focuses on one's life story, situating it in a wider and longer lasting social field than a particular situation, providing the basis for knowing oneself as a human with different goals and qualities and a life story that distinguishes one from others. Individual identity is seen as something that one creates, owns and has the right to change as one sees fit, and includes a kind of ownership of the self, the belief that one has rights to one's own body and mind that should not be given to others (Hewitt/ Shulman, 2019, p. 135-155).

In Lacan's psychoanalytic explanation of the self, it is shown how the subject is symbolically constructed and an identity is formed during the so-called identification or

mirror phase. Giddens emphasises that the individual perceives his self only in relation to a cognitively constructed world of individuals and objects, that the reality of the external world is formed by learning as a result of the emotional acceptance of behavioural patterns and socially related forms of dominance acquired in the first period of human life, and that this emotional acceptance is also the source of the acquisition of individual identity (Giddens, p.62, 65). It is seen that the concepts of "object-social self" and "individual identity" have emerged as definitions used in the same sense. The object self is formed in the sense of "individual" and "social" identity as something produced from the moment the person is born into the existing social process, and individuals classify and separate themselves with these object selves and are positioned into categories by others.

In order to give a concrete form to the narrative of individual identity, the individual in the metamodern condition is not only required to lead a prescribed set of lifestyles, but is forced to behave in such a way. According to Mansfield, the modern age is an age of the subject, and in the last few centuries the theory of the self has not dealt with "spontaneous subjectivity" but only with the politics that determine personality and identity (Mansfield, 2005, p.213). Giddens argues that in contemporary social lifestyles, the body is not only taken on the basis of traditional rituals, but has also become a central part of cyclical self-design. Being in the situation of making a decision between options has become an important part of the creation of an individual identity. The risks faced by the individual in modern living conditions make him dependent on increasing bodily attractiveness and personal glamour as a mechanism to control these dangers of life. Giddens also states that extreme and variable narcissistic emotions such as perfection and worthlessness are actually reactions of a fragile individual self (Giddens, p.224-225).

Baudrillard argues that in the advanced stage of capitalist society, art has become an object of consumption that cannot resist, and that in a society where reality is replaced by images, the social and economic structure that favours marketing tactics instead of production has turned into a kind of hyperreality by preferring the signifier to the signified, the copy to the original, and the representation to the real. It can be stated that these ideas found visual expression in the works of many artists after the 1980s. The artists of the period produce works in which identity is seen in the foreground in order to reveal this social order

hidden by the bombardment of images reflected from media instruments, but at the same time to give an objective form to the narrative of individual identity.

Within the framework of questioning individual and social identity, Cindy Sherman, who photographs herself in different identities and roles, analyzes the social position of women and the processes of shaping cultural roles for women, also chooses the influence of consumption and show culture in determining gender roles as a subject by saying "we are the children of the media". In her self-portrait film poses, in which she uses her own image, she questions the concept of identity with different and clichéd female images while hiding her real image. According to Antmen, Sherman's images, which are between reality and fiction and can be read as a reconstruction of fiction, are based on the idea that identity is shaped by social codes. In the photographs in which she deconstructs herself in terms of identity, where she is the subject and the object at the same time, she appears to be both herself and not; she also inverts the roles of the viewer and the viewed. While revealing the nature of photography, which can be said to have become the general form of expression of postmodern and contemporary art, to hide the truth, she also refers to the artificial identities shaped by the culture of spectacle (Antmen, 2009, p.280).

Antmen states that an important transformation in the art scene from the 1980s onwards was the emergence in Western art, of works focusing on the concept of identity belonging to social segments that had not previously had the opportunity to represent themselves. The most important characteristic of identity art, which continues the traits of conceptual art and can be read as an extension of multiculturalism, is that it presents art as an instrument of identity politics. In addition to individual experiences, it also reveals the idea of othering in Western culture, which is structured as opposite concepts such as male-female, white-black, and so on, by addressing class, race, culture, and sexual identity discrimination in society. Thus, while the 1990s signaled the beginning of a process in which exhibitions entirely made up of white, Western male artists were not considered politically correct, different cultural identities began to be represented more and more, and the geography of the art field expanded to a great extent. It is also seen that this expansion is a conscious extension of the increasingly globalized economic system. Many contemporary artists working in the context of identity politics produce works that, on the one hand, make visible the explicit or implicit discriminatory policies of the West, and, on the other hand,

explore the psychological reflections of the ideologically internalized concept of "the other" (Antmen, 2009, P.296).

Some artists approach the problem of identity from a more abstract perspective, utilizing theory and psychology to subvert the fictional notion of fixed identity. Whether their subject matter is consumerism or interpersonal relations, the view that our identities are nothing more than the raw material for forces beyond our control suggests that all these distinctions represent arbitrary categories, that everything stems from learned prejudices. In this sense, various identificational and categorical distinctions are arbitrarily used to separate groups with different cultures, belief systems and economic interests, and once categorization is institutionalized, it becomes a fiction. Theories of gender follow a pattern of acceptance, rejection and, finally, a more emphatic reception of the phenomenon of identity. Sometimes the artist's choice not to belong to a particular group suggests that he aims to challenge and change the pre-existing structure of the art world rather than to adapt to it, pointing to a major problem with identity-based art. This contradiction in theory is seen as a conflict between "essentialists" who seek a permanent definition of self (in terms of identity) and deconstructionists who see identity as a construct that can be manipulated for political and social purposes. It can be said that the indiscriminate adoption of identity art by curators and critics in the mid-1990s caused a backlash, and that difference and otherness were used by curators and critics for their own professional purposes and were attacked as being transformed into a commodity and sacrificial art, and that otherness created a false dichotomy (Heartney, 2008, P.242- 252).

5. THE IMAGERY OF THE SELF IN ELVAN GÜNGÖR'S WORKS

The self as a mental entity is both a fictional formation and the origin of the truth and is created within society from birth, generated by giving presence, and lived in like a shell or cocoon throughout life. Therefore, man is a two-sided being. Perceptions, thoughts, emotions, values, creative behaviour etc are shaped according to this fictional self. Since everyone sees through their own self, the reality cannot be seen, and although we think we are free in our choices, we are actually enslaved to our selves. We all live in these worlds of selves that none of them are alike, in other words, we all wander around in a dream. Existentialist thought talks about the change, transformation and emancipation of man, but it does not say much about how this can be achieved. It is not possible for individual characteristics, which are genetically inherited and imposed through the fictional formation of the self, to change on their own. The only thing that can change and transform man is the love for truth. This love can remove the limits of the individual mind and makes one realize that the individual self is a mental formation, and it first transcends and then liberates man.

Man's creation is an extension of him, a reflection of his fictional self. Since the situation of the individual is also the case for the society that creates the individual, societies also live through the general spirit of their time. According to Hegel's idealist understanding, "a human being", who progresses from a biological being to being a cultural subject, also assumes a meaning that carries the essence of the entire human culture and history. The greatest desire of man is to understand himself. The essence of philosophy and religions is to reveal what is hidden in man. Plato's *philosophia* aims to open what is hidden, to remember what is forgotten. Realizing his fictional self, man comprehends that his existence in the sense of "his own" is nothing. This "nothing" is the symbol of a deep philosophical ideology. In the history of Western thought, it is seen that there are metaphysical understandings that approach the existential unity and nothingness views of Eastern wisdom through intuition, and various artists have expressed these concepts in their works. Heidegger says in "The Origin of the Work of Art": "Through the artist, the work must let itself stand in itself. The artist is like a process that erases itself at the moment of creation for the emergence of the work" (Heidegger, 2007). The artist dissolves in the work during the creative process, in other words, the cognitive, intellectual, emotional, sensory characteristics that constitute the self are now in the work, they exist there. While revealing

and making visible what is hidden in himself, he experiences absence to the extent that he can convey it. According to Lacan, in the work of art, not only the perceptions, feelings and thoughts of the man, but also the reality that is thrown into the unconscious from childhood is defined (Tura, 1989, P.104). Then, what is the truth that remains in the unconscious since childhood? The subject, who thinks of himself through the socio-cultural code, gradually becomes alienated from himself, from his own reality; it is this alienation that leads to the unconscious. In other words, the reality of man has been thrown into the unconscious, made to be forgotten. Self-recognition means being able to perceive clearly and distinctly the difference between the appearance of a thing and the thing itself. In self-recognition, art functions both as a tool and as evidence. In "Art Psychology", Erinç writes: "The first and fundamental goal of humanity must be to find oneself. To find oneself and to recognise oneself... All our endeavours, consciously or unconsciously, are directed towards this goal".

Empedocles was already saying "know yourself" in the 5th century BC. One of the most concrete tools for self-knowledge is art, because in order to perceive an aesthetic object as aesthetic, an active participation of consciousness is required. Self-knowledge means knowing our intellectual, cognitive and emotional structure well. Self-recognition is followed by the stage of self-transcendence. Abstract thinking and the ability to organize these parts of thought constitute the first signs of self-transcendence. Abstract thinking is the ability to find the truth by starting from objects but going beyond them (Erinç, 2004, P.124).

R.M. Rilke says: "To see as it is necessary is first and foremost to die; to see is to bring into the seeing this change that is constituted by ecstasy and death". Choosing the dangerous knowingly and willingly may appear before us as a necessity of our existence (Erinç, 2004, P.154-155). As Foucault says, the transformation of oneself with one's knowledge is very close to aesthetic experience because why would a painter work if he is not transformed by his own painting (Foucault, p.136).

In Elvan Güngör's autobiographical paintings and self-portraits, the figure, as something that dissolves and fades away within the surface, describes on the one hand the dissolution of the human being from the existence that he thinks he has, and his going towards nothingness; on the other hand, it depicts a human being trying to emancipate from nothingness to existence, to reality, with body parts sticking out as if tearing the surface of

the canvas. In this sense, her portraits try to describe a two-dimensional life. As an ontologically two-dimensional being, man is "nothing" as the one who understands that his existence -his fictional self- is nothing; and "everything" and "all" as the one who understands the real existent, and constitutes its being. For this reason, man is constantly dying and being reborn in himself; in other words, the subject brings nothingness into existence and then denies it. Accordingly, in her paintings, nothingness is accepted as a concept that both makes existence conditional and paradoxically created and at the same time ignored by existence. This double reading is realized by the person himself because no one else can do it for him. Does he or she go to nothingness as a being or does he or she come into existence as that which has never existed. The viewer decides this for himself. Because the vision of truth does not impose anything, it only wants to liberate the other.

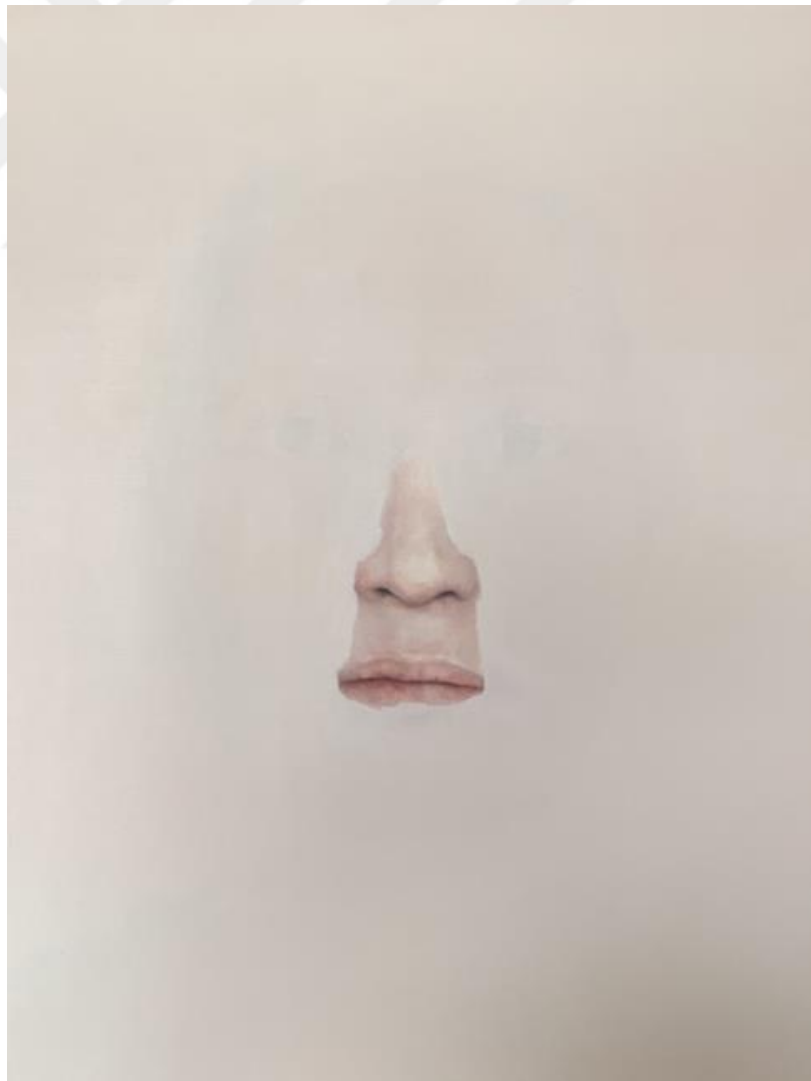


Figure 20: The Self, Elvan Güngör, 2023, Oil on Canvas, 60x80 cm

Güngör seems to have been inspired by Giacometti and his sculptures, in which the entire narrative and metaphysical dimension of existentialism can be traced, in her works in which she tries to express existentialist concepts such as "being", "self", "existence", "nothingness", "reality". In the works of Giacometti, glorified by Sartre as the highest expression of existentialist thought in art, Güngör reads not the psychological reflections of states such as alienation, anxiety, loneliness, despair and helplessness, which are identified with existentialist art, but purely existential ontological meanings and wants to express these concepts in her works. In a period when the avant-garde artists of his time were turning towards Cubism and Surrealism with their efforts to move away from the reality of the rational mind-self, Giacometti, who worked to reveal his own concept of "reality", which he said he saw as an unachievable goal, extremely skilfully expresses both the existence and nothingness of man as the expression of this existentialist reality.

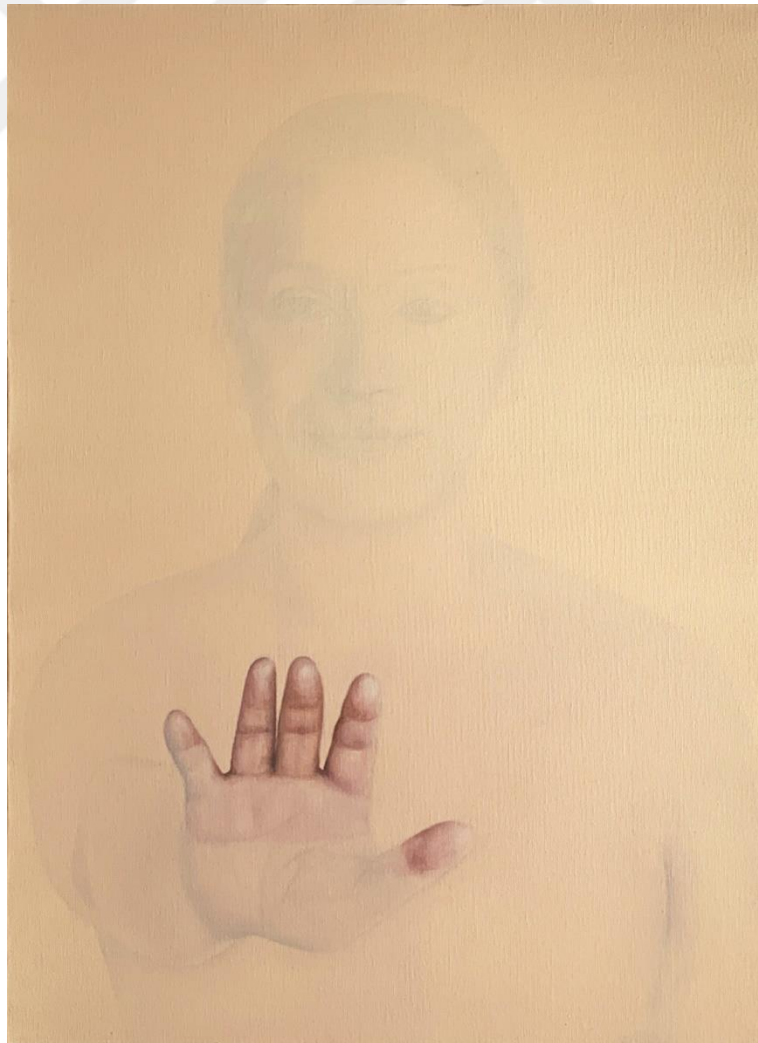


Figure 21: The Veil of Illusion, Elvan Güngör, 2023, Oil on Canvas, 50x70 cm

Thin long bodies, small bodies, narrow long faces, sometimes tiny heads, sometimes large pedestals, sometimes sculptures left in the void; are all related to the way he sees the world at the time he passes through. But the common aspect of these sculptures is that they all appear as figures that seem to melt. This is a strong emphasis on "extinction". As the sculpture becomes thinner, its meaning increases for Giacometti. On the one hand, the figure is slowly melting and disappearing with its body, but on the other hand, the figure, which is gradually extended in space, exists more than ever with its divinity and says "I exist" as a real being.



Figure 22: Alberto Giacometti, "Hand, 1947, Bronze, 57 x 72 x 3.5 cm

In Giacometti's "Falling Man", the sculpture is shaped in such a way that only the toes touch the pedestal, otherwise the figure appears to have left itself completely in the void. The viewer is left alone with a frozen intermediate "moment". This "moment" is precisely that liberating moment of realization where existence and non-existence intersect. Experiencing that moment transforms one from existence to non-existence... In a letter to Pierre Matisse dated 1950, he wrote that he wanted to "eliminate the pedestal" about the problem of how to exhibit his works. After a while, the pedestal approaches invisibility in his sculptures and becomes one with the sculpture. The reason for this appears to be his will not to bind the human being to a place, to an entity, and to liberate him completely.



Figure 23: Alberto Giacometti, Falling Man, 1945, Bronze

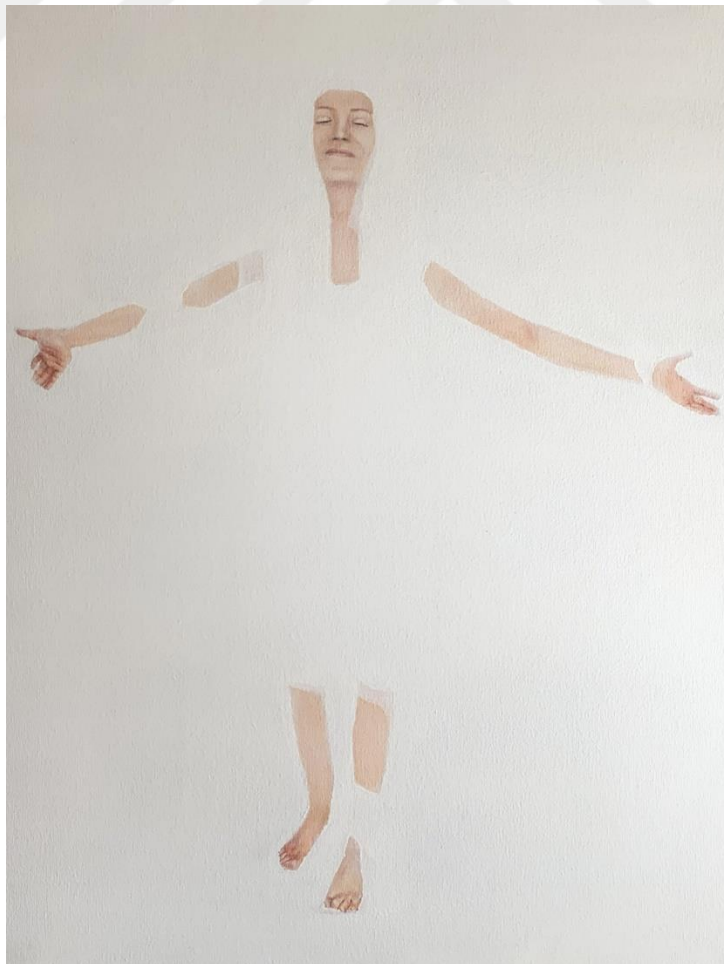


Figure 24: Reality, Elvan Güngör, 2023, Oil on Canvas, 60x80 cm

Monochrome abstraction, whose historical process is assumed to have begun with the teachings of the Far East, which removes or minimizes form from painting by considering the object as an obstacle to reflect the essence, is considered a metaphysical, mystical approach, as it transcends the boundaries of time and space and gives form to objects in terms of meaning. Since there is an effort in monochrome painting both to emphasize the material existence of the object as a concrete reality and to show the metaphysical aspect that constitutes the abstract experience, it can be concluded that the distinction between these two is attempted to be represented. Monochrome, which does not mean that complexity is eliminated, brings multidimensionality alongside monochromaticity. Thus, monochrome, in its desire to show the abstract and the concrete together, contains many deep meanings behind its simple appearance expressed in a single or few colours. Regarding the monochrome approach in the exhibition "Nothing to Seeness", Olafur Eliasson says that some artworks speak to the viewer as a subject, inviting them to be active and live their own experience, and that monochrome belongs to this category and allows us to define who we are and become the author of our own experience. The paintings of Qiu Shihua, another artist in the exhibition, appear to be monochrome, flat canvases. On closer inspection, however, depending on where the viewer stands, they reveal vast landscapes, revealing details or disappearing before the viewer's eyes. Qiu Shihua's monochrome landscapes alternate between Western ideas of abstraction and reduction on the one hand, and Far Eastern notions of "repetition", "void" and "non-existence" on the other.

In Elvan Güngör's paintings, monochromacy functions as an expression of the existential understanding of reality in the sense of both abstraction from existence and revelation. She achieves this low colourfulness with layers of monochrome paint, which she sees as a representation of the layers of the self. In some of her paintings, the colour "skin" and its tones refer to the body that contains the two-dimensional life. Man is a whole in the same body with his fictional self and reality. As much as he undresses from this fictional self, the reality is revealed in him.

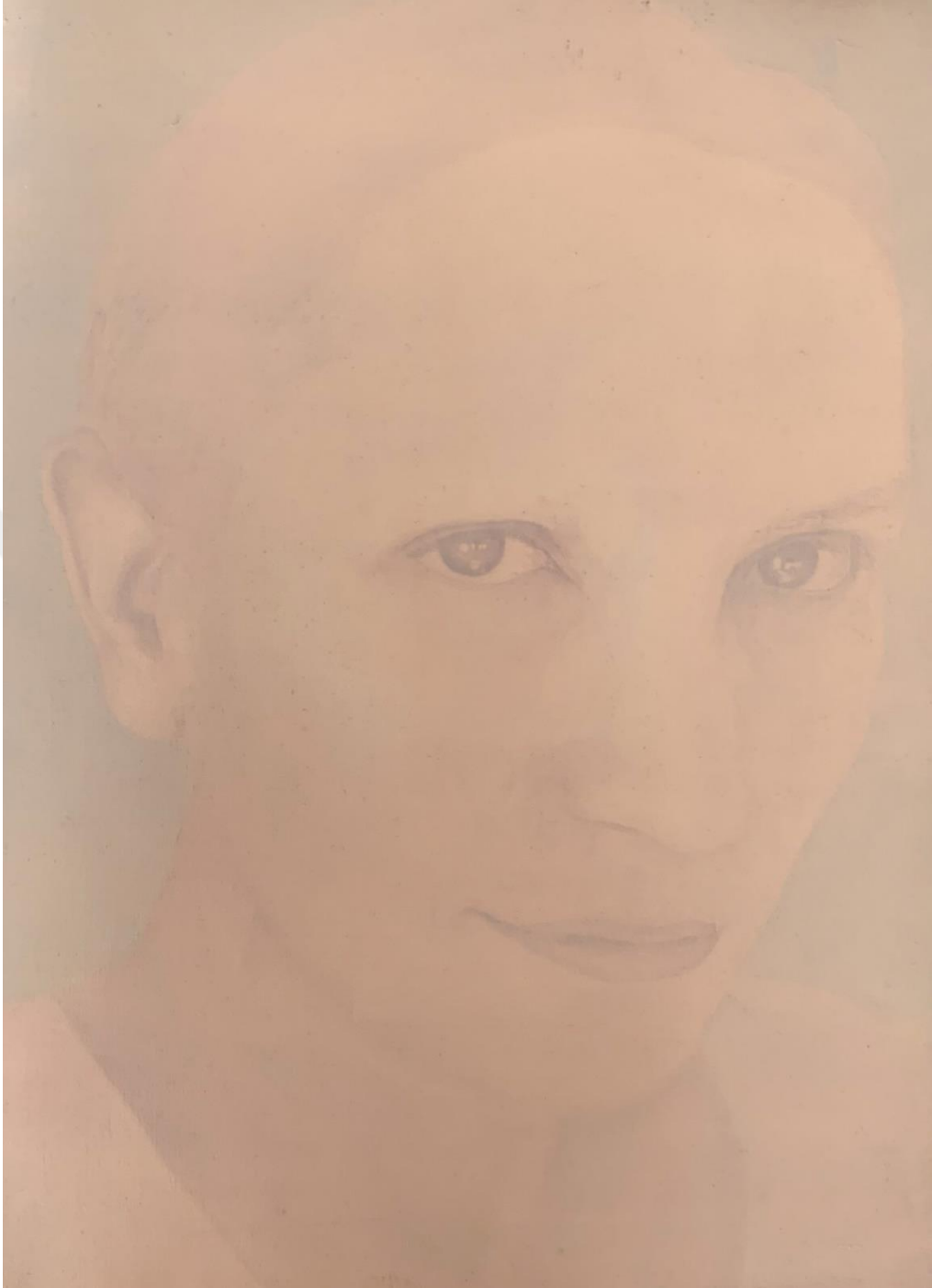


Figure 25: The Self 2, Elvan Güngör, 2023, Oil on Paper, 35x50 cm

In terms of this mystical, introspective content in her art, similarities can be observed with the works of Balkan Naci İslimyeli. For İslimyeli, the mirror object is an area of battle between fictional reality and spiritual reality, in other words, an encounter between the West and the East, as well as an area of confrontation and questioning. Everyone is a centre. Art is our own story and is actually a state of being seen naked. İslimyeli, who defines himself

as a portrait artist, invites all people to wake up, to realize, to remember and to question themselves through his own self. "Ever since I remembered myself, it was as if I had been tasked with a secret job that I didn't even know about," he says, and in his works, in which he sometimes suffers and most of the time tries to understand himself, it is seen that a seeking effort is at the forefront. His use of his own face and body can be read as an expression of mystical and spiritual searches as well as the pains of the creation process with his artist identity. It can be stated that his art is shaped by an inner principle of necessity that confirms that all arts gradually approach their goals towards the "abstract", "essence" and "simplicity". This simplicity has a mystical aspect. The meaning of existence, which is reflected by existence at the ontological level, but still unspoken, unspeakable, takes place in his works in the sensory field and establishes a bond with the viewer at the level of consciousness (Çuhadaroglu, 2019).



Figure 26: Balkan Naci İslimyeli, Suret (It is the painting of the artist's three hundred years of sleep), Mixed Media on Canvas, 1998

Kıymet Giray, who curated the artist's retrospective exhibition, says that she searched for a deeply human theme for the exhibition concept and finally chose the word "I" (Giray, 2023, p.6). According to Giray, "I" is the only word that can define the artist in terms of representing the human being, the reality of the human being, the state of maintaining the representation of human existence in the universe, the imagination power of the depth of philosophy, existence and formation, and the limits of the essence.



Figure 27: Balkan Naci İslimyeli, Suret (A picture of the artist maturing through self-torture), Mixed Media on Canvas, 1998

İslimyeli emphasizes that the Sufi understanding of mysticism has a contemporary and conceptual aspect, and establishes a relationship between the artist and the dervish in terms of self-search and questioning; he transforms the values and images of the East and Sufism and expresses them in a Western language. "Steps" and its sequel "Suret" series reflect this period of self-search.



Figure 28: Balkan Naci İslimyeli, Steps, 1996, Mixed Media on Canvas



Figure 29: Balkan Naci İslimyeli, Suret, (It is the picture of art being the true face of the artist), 1998, Mixed Media on Canvas



Figure 30: Balkan Naci İslimyeli, Suret, (It is a picture of the artist learning by listening to the earth), Mixed Media on Canvas, 1998

"Nothing is Everything" is the expression of the artist's inner journey and loneliness. It can be stated that the concept of "nothing" in his works refers to the dervishes' philosophy of nothingness. Each part of the work, which consists of seven pieces, are photographs of the dervishes' spiritual journey and their efforts to find themselves. The staff in his hand and the coarse fabric ihram he wears also support this metaphorical narrative. When the dimension of nothingness he wants to reach is reflected to the viewer, the artist is there, but he is absent. In his work "Nothing", burnt matchsticks are scattered on his naked body as symbols of human life and the body, which is transient in this journey and carried like a kind of clothing. The body and the mind, which are born forgetting, need to remember what they have forgotten, to watch the reality in their own existence. This is exactly what the artist is looking for.

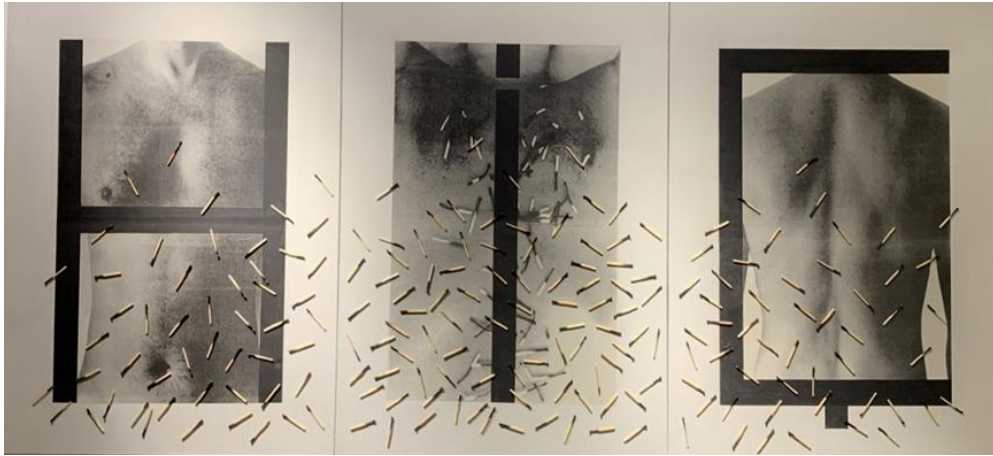


Figure 31: Balkan.Naci İslimyeli, Hiç 1, 1985, Mixed Technique, 173x77 cm



Figure 32: Existence, Elvan Güngör, 2023, Oil on Canvas, 60x80 cm

Similarities can be drawn between Elvan Güngör's self-portraits on paper and Luc Tuymans' portraits in terms of the use of pure, ephemeral light and the vague, undetailed forms of the figures. The simplicity of Tuymans' compositions, pale, muted colours, indistinct and undetailed figures create an atmosphere of spirituality and memory, while referring to an uninterrupted world order.



Figure 33: Luc Tuymans, Issei Sagawa, Oil on canvas, 2012,



Figure 34: Luc Tuymans, The Walley, 2007

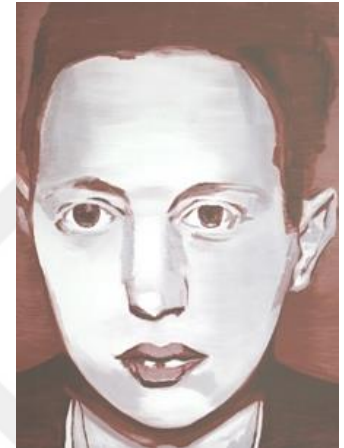


Figure 35: Luc Tuymans, "Der Diagnostische Blick V," 1992.

He presents to the viewer the indescribable, the sublime, as an indication of the great helplessness he feels in the face of the fact that neither words nor pictures can ever express the horror of life. In both of their images, painted in the faded language of nostalgia and depicting deformed memories, they sometimes seem to be over-illuminated or resemble a photographic negative. The dull, silent scenes appear vaguely familiar, distant, unforgettable memories. The use of monochrome colour schemes creates almost sacred, enigmatic portraits, while the ephemeral light makes the image an epic object of metaphysical and spiritual contemplation.



Figure 36: Analysis of an Artist, Elvan GÜNGÖR, 2022, Mixed Technique on Paper, 60x 60 cm



Figure 37: Identity, Elvan GÜNGÖR, 2023, Mixed Technique on Paper, 40x 40 cm

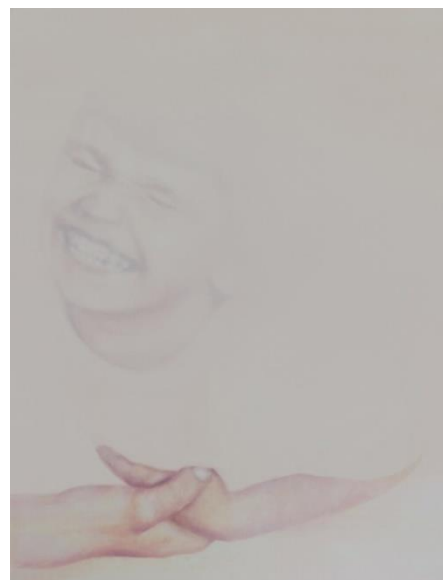


Figure 38: Reality, Elvan GÜNGÖR, Oil on Canvas, 2023, 35x 40 cm



Figure 39: Being, Elvan Güngör, Oil on Canvas, 2022, 60x 60 cm

In terms of dealing with the painting surface, Güngör's paintings can be referred to the works of Mehmet Ali Uysal. Uysal's form of expression, which means pushing and piercing the canvas surface and coming out, is also strongly felt in these paintings. His paintings, which oscillate between existence and non-existence, are invisible but claim to exist. Uysal's paintings, which play with the viewer's perception and are embedded in the wall, almost provoke and force them to create in the mind. "I felt the courage to tear something," the artist says of his work "Shell". Sometimes breaking and destroying things makes them more special. Their destruction contributes greatly to their existence.



Figure 40: Mehmet Ali Uysal, Untitled.



Figure 41: Shadow of Nothing, Elvan Güngör, 2023, Oil on Canvas, 25x 35 cm

CONCLUSION

In this study, it is aimed to raise awareness about the interdisciplinary dimensions of the concept of self as an alternative perspective in approaching the artist-artwork relationship. The connection of plastic arts with ontology and metaphysics is reflected in artworks by the artist with consciously or through unconscious drives, and the questioning of existence seems to be the most fundamental problem of art.

Based on the idea that philosophical and artistic views emerge from the same conception of existence according to the idealist approach, it is observed that the interpretation of the object in the context of the subject-object or self-entity relationship and through the knowledge acquired by the subject from the object is important in emergence of the artwork. The changing ontological meanings of the concept of self within the history of philosophy, the different ways of perceiving the world of beings by the self, and object interpretations belonging to philosophical and metaphysical approaches corresponding to different conceptions of reality in this sense are represented in artworks.

The relationship between the concept of self and consciousness, the perception of reality of consciousness and the fact that the features of consciousness within the framework of this relationship gain visibility as layers of meaning in the artwork as a representation have been investigated. While determining these interdisciplinary relations, it is based on the idea that according to the Existentialist thought of the West and the traditional Eastern wisdom, individual selves are fictional as an object or a structure of consciousness and that situations and actions are created as the productions of this individual self. *Tin*, which represents absolute consciousness in terms of idealism, becomes externalized since it seeks to gain reality in order to attain its own consciousness. It is observed that there is both the spiritual aspect of consciousness (the absolute consciousness), as well as the faculty characteristics including all cognitive and mental processes and the consciousness features belonging to the individual self which is constituted as the object of consciousness, and that all these aspects are represented in the work of art. When the individual creativity process that appears in an artwork is approached independently of aesthetic judgement, the artist's consciousness characteristics and creativity and the relationship between these two begin to be revealed. In the process

of artistic creativity according to the knowledge acquired by the artist from the object, the artist encounters his own world that is formed according to his perception of reality, in other words, the consciousness within the creative act constitutes the objective perception. Since consciousness creates a subject-object relationship according to the perception of reality, knowledge appears to become relative. When the artist encounters the object in the creativity process, he builds experiences, evaluations and concepts in accordance with his perceptual and cognitive process. In other words, he sees the existence through a lens formed by the mental model and individual perception filter shaped by his own life experience. Accordingly, understanding how reality is perceived in the process of artistic creation and where it is positioned according to the artist gains importance in explaining the connection between the self and art. When the representation of the individual artist's perception of reality in the artwork and the philosophical and metaphysical ideas that can determine artistic forms in this context are analyzed; it is seen that the representation of spiritual meanings or metaphysical reality is through different forms of abstraction and symbols that shape the object in terms of meaning.

The self that the artist reflects on the work of art as a representation of the artist's consciousness characteristics or understanding of reality gains visibility as layers of meaning, and these different layers are similar to the layers of being that reside in the ontological approach to art. It is observed that spiritual properties and individual self characteristics are represented in the layers that deepen from the front to the back structure in terms of meaning in the artwork. The spiritual characteristics of the artist are visible in the layer of spiritual meaning in the field of irreal existence, which forms the back structure of the artwork, which is a transcendent being in terms of meaning. The layers of spiritual meaning in figurative painting are the layers of light, space and ideality expressed in figures. The spiritual characteristics of the artist and his understanding of metaphysical reality are represented in these layers while the characteristics of the individual self emerge in the real field of existence that forms the front structure of the artwork. According to Hartmann's theory of layers, each upper layer creates a deeper representation area than the lower layer. With the disappearance of the intermediate layers of existence in figurative painting, abstract painting, where the depth-essence layer reaches the appearance, exhibits an ontological appearance that includes the concept of absoluteness with the direct presentation of the metaphysical layer.

In order to distinguish the concepts of personality and identity, which appear as two different aspects of the individual self, from the ontological self, the concepts have been defined within Psychology and Sociology; the relationship of these interdisciplinary definitions with plastic arts has been discussed first in the context of Psychology and self-portraiture, and then in the context of Sociology and identity art. Accordingly, it is seen that the concept of self is analyzed in a dual structure as "subject-self" and "object-social self" and the combination of subject-self and social self is defined as personality. Personality is formed by the individual's attribution of different roles offered by others to his behaviour in the process of social experience and in his relations with other individuals participating in this process, while identity or object-social self is constructed by the individual and society from the moment he is born into the social process. It is seen that there is no self as a permanent, unchanging entity or as an immaterial substance belonging to an individual, but each self that contains absolute consciousness within its own nature, is constantly recreated in human thoughts and actions. Individuals categorise and separate themselves with their object selves and are positioned in categories by others. Both personality and identity concepts gain visibility in plastic arts.

REFERENCES

- Akarsu, B. (1987). *Çağdaş Felsefe Kant'tan Günümüze Felsefe Akımları*. İstanbul, İnkılap Yayınevi.
- Akkach, S. (2021). *Kozmoloji ve Mimari*. (Çev: E. Tümer). İstanbul, Nefes Yayınları,
- Altar, M. C. (1996). *Sanat Felsefesi Üzerine*. İstanbul, Yapı Kredi Yayınları.
- Anker, S. (2011). Temelde İnsan: Çağdaş Sanat ve Nörobilim. *Pera Müzesi Yayını*, p.29. İstanbul.
- Antmen, A. (2009). *20. Yüzyıl Batı Sanatında Akımlar*. İstanbul, Sel Yayıncılık.
- Atakay, K. (2005). *Rönesans'ın Serüveni*. İstanbul, Yapı Kredi Yayınları.
- Ateşoğlu, G. (2020). *Varoluşçuluk, Fenomenoloji, Ontoloji*. İstanbul, Ayrıntı Yayınları.
- Ayan, M. C. (1991). *Çağdaş Sanatçının Kendine Yaklaşımı "Otoportre"*. (Yayımlanmamış Tez). Mimar Sinan Üniversitesi, İstanbul.
- Baggini, J. (2011). *Ego Aldatmacası*. İstanbul, Pegasus Yayınları.
- Batur, E. (2007). *Modernizmin Serüveni*. İstanbul, Alkım Yayınevi.
- Baudrillard, J. (2010). *Sanat Komplosu*. (Çev. E. Gen, I. Ergüden). İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları.
- Baudrillard, J. (1998). *Simulakrlar ve Simülasyon*. (Çev: O. Adanır). Ankara, Doğu Batı Yayınları.
- Baumgarten, A. G. *Aesthetica*.
- Bochenski, J. M. (1983). *Çağdaş Avrupa Felsefesi*. (Çev: S. R. Kırkoğlu). İstanbul, Yazko Yayınevi.
- Boorstin, D. (1992). *Yaratıcı Ruhun Evrimi*. (Çev. G. Şen). İstanbul, Sabah Yayınları.
- Boyer, P. & Wertsch J. V. (2015). *Zihinde ve Kültürde Bellek*. (Çev: Y. A. Dalar). İstanbul, Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları.
- Bozkurt, N. (1995). *Sanat ve Estetik Kuramları*. İstanbul, Sarmal Yayınevi.
- Bozkurt, N. (2005). *Hegel*, İstanbul, Say Yayınları.
- Burckhardt, T. (2020). *Aklın Aynası*. (Çev: V. Ersoy). İstanbul, İnsan Yayınları.
- Cassirer, E. (2018). *Rönesans Felsefesinde Birey ve Evren*. (Çev: E. C. Ercan). Bursa, Verka Yayınları.
- Cevizci, A. (2009). *Felsefe Tarihi*. İstanbul, Say Yayınları.
- Cevizci, A. (2014). *Felsefe Sözlüğü*. İstanbul, Say Yayınları.

- Collingwood, R.G. (2011). *Kısaca Sanat Felsefesi*. (Çev. T. Kabadayı). Ankara, Bilgesu Yayıncılık.
- Croce, B. (2019). *Estetik*. (Çev: İ. Tunalı). Ankara, Fol Yayınları.
- Çaycı, A. (2016). İslam Mimarisinde Anlam Meselesi. *Sosyoloji Divanı*, 7, 1-6
- Çelikkan, G. Ş. (2018). *Modern ve Postmodern Dönemlerde Soyut Sanat Felsefesi*. İzmir, Mungan Kavram Yayınevi.
- Çelikkan, G. Ş. (2010). *Modern ve Postmodern Dönemde Sanatta Soyutun Felsefi Temelleri*. (Yayımlanmış Tez). Ankara Üniversitesi, Ankara.
- Çuhadaroglu, F. G. (2019). *Doğu Batı İkilemi Bağlamında Özgün Bir Duruş Olarak Balkan Naci İslimyeli'nin Sanatı*. (Yayımlanmamış Tez). Işık Üniversitesi, İstanbul.
- Çüçen, A. K. (2018). *Metafizik Kavram ve Problemleriyle Varlık Felsefesi*. Bursa, Sentez Yayıncılık.
- Danto, A. C. (2010). *Sanatın Sonundan Sonra, Çağdaş Sanat ve Tarihin Sınır Çizgisi*. (Çev: Z. Demirsü). İstanbul, Ayrıntı Yayınları.
- Dennett, D. (2020). *Bilinç Açıklanıyor*. İstanbul, Alfa/ Bilim Yayınları.
- Denkel, A. (2021). *Bilginin Temelleri*. Ankara, Doğubatı yayınları.
- Du Bussierre, S. (1999). Rembrandt: Gravür Portreler. (Çev. S. Rifat). *Kültür ve Sanat Dergisi*, İstanbul, Portakal Yayınları. 40.
- Dunning, V. W. (1991). The Concept of Self and Postmodern Painting: Constructing a Post-Cartesian Viewer. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*. 49:4, 331-337.
- Ergüven, M. (2002). *Yoruma Doğru*. İstanbul, Yapı Kredi Yayınları.
- Erinç, M. S. (2004). *Sanat Psikolojisine Giriş*. Ankara, Ütopya Yayınları Sanat Dizisi.
- Erinç, M. S. (2013). *Sanat Sosyolojisine Giriş*. Ankara, Ütopya Yayınları Sanat Dizisi.
- Ertan, G., & Sansarcı, E. (2016). *Görsel Sanatlarda Anlam ve Algı*, İstanbul, Alternatif Yayıncılık.
- Farago, F. (2006). *Sanat*. (Çev: Ö. Doğan). Ankara, Doğu Batı Yayınları.
- Fichte, J. (2006). *Alman İdealizmi 1*. (Çev E. A. Kılıçaslan, G. Ateşoğlu). Ankara, Doğu Batı Yayınları.
- Foucault, M. (2021). *Özne ve İktidar*. (Çev: I. Ergüden, O. Akınhay). İstanbul, Ayrıntı Yayınları.
- Freud, S. (2020). *Ego ve ID*. (Çev. S. C. Gülsay). İstanbul, Roman Yayınları.
- Geiger, M. (1985). *Estetik Anlayış*. (Çev. T. Mengüşoğlu), İstanbul, Remzi Kitabevi Yayınları.

- Gezgin, Ü. (2006). Mekân Yaratan Bir Bilinç Gerçekliği Olarak Sanat. *Anadolu Üniversitesi Güzel Sanatlar Fakültesi Süreli Sanat ve Kültür Dergisi*.17, 77-79.
- Giacometti, A. (2015). *Yazılar*. (Çev: A. Derman) İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları.
- Giddens, A. (2010), *Modernite ve Bireysel Kimlik*. (Çev. Ü. Tatlıcan). İstanbul, Say Yayınları.
- Giray, K. (2023). Balkan Naci İslimyeli “Ben” Retrospektif Sergi Kataloğu, Muğla, Bodrum Belediyesi Şevket Sabancı Kültür ve Sanat Merkezi, 6-9.
- Gombrich, E. H. (2007). *Sanatın Öyküsü*. İstanbul, Remzi Kitapevi.
- Hadot, P. (2020). *Plotinos ya da Bakışın Saflığı*. (Çev: Ö. Doğan). Ankara, Doğu Batı Yayınları.
- Hançerlioğlu, O. (1976). *Felsefe Ansiklopedisi, “Kavramlar ve Akımlar”*. İstanbul, Remzi Kitabevi.
- Hançerlioğlu, O. (2010). *Düşünce Tarihi*. İstanbul, Remzi Kitapevi.
- Hartman, H. G. (1962). Romanticism and “Anti-Self-Consciousness”. *The Centennial Review*. No. 4, (pp. 553-565).
- Hartmann, N. (1998). *Ontolojinin Işığında Bilgi*. (Çev. H. Tepe). Ankara, Türkiye Felsefe Kurumu.
- Heartney, E. (2008). *Art and Today*. London, Phaidon Press.
- Hegel, F. W. G. (2012). *Estetik Güzel Sanat Üzerine Dersler*. (Çev: T. Altuğ, H. Hünler). İstanbul.
- Heidegger, M. (2007). *Sanat Yapıtının Kökeni*. (Çev. F. Tepebaşılı). Ankara, De Ki Basım Yayım.
- Heidegger, M. (2018). *Varlık ve Zaman*. (Çev. K. Ökten). İstanbul, Alfa Basım Yayım.
- Heimsoeth, H. (2014). *Kant'ın Felsefesi*. (Çev: T. Mengüşoğlu). Ankara, Doğu Batı Yayınları.
- Hewitt, J. P., & Shulman, D. (2019). *Benlik ve Toplum*. (Çev. B. Aktaş). İstanbul, Bilge Kültür Sanat.
- Hobsbawm, E. (2006). *Kısa 20. Yüzyıl, 1914-1991 Aşırılıklar Çağı*. (Çev: Y. Alogan). İstanbul, Everest Yayınları.
- Holly, M. A. (2012). *Panofsky ve Sanat Tarihinin Kökleri*. (Cev: O. Düz). İstanbul, Dedalus Yayınları.
- Hood, B. (2012). *Benlik Yanılsaması*. İstanbul, Ayrıntı Yayınları.

- İçden, M. K. (2015). *Günümüz Sanatında Otoportre*. (Yayımlanmamış Tez). Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Ankara.
- Husserl, E. (2003). *Fenomenoloji Üzerine Beş Ders*. (Çev: H. Tepe). Ankara, Bilim ve Sanat Yayınları.
- İpşiroğlu, N., & İpşiroğlu, M. (2011). *Oluşum Süreci İçinde Sanatın Tarihi*. İstanbul, Hayalperest Yayınevi.
- Jhon, E. (2005) “*Art and Knowledge*” *The Routledge Companion To Aesthetics*. (Berys Gaut & Dominic McIver Lopes Edts.). London, Routledge.
- Jung, C.G. (2016). *Keşfedilmemiş Benlik*. (Çev: M. H. Ergül). İstanbul, Olympia Yayınları.
- Kant, I. (2010). *Arı Usun Eleştirisi*. (Çev: A. Yardımlı). İstanbul, İdea Yayınevi.
- Kavuran, T. (2003). Sanat ve Bilimde Gerçek Kavramı. *Erciyes Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*. 15, 225-237.
- Kayahan, Z., & Çevik N. (2020). Çağdaş Sanatta Bir Yansıma/Yansıtma Sorunsalı Olarak Otoportre ve Ben Kavramı Üzerine Bireysel Söylemler. *Sanat Tarihi Dergisi*. Haziran, 191-213.
- Kellner, D. (2001). Popüler Kültür ve Postmodern Kimliklerin İnşası. (Çev: Gülcan Seçkin). *Doğu-Batı Dergisi*. 15, 187-219.
- Konak, R. (2014). Minyatür Sanatında Boşluk ve Mekân Anlayışı. *Akdeniz Sanat Dergisi*. 7, 14, 34
- Kömeçoğlu, U. (2002). Küreselleşme, Modernleşme, Modernlik. *Doğu-Batı Dergisi*. 18, 11-27
- Krauss, R. (2009). *Sanatın Felsefesi, Felsefenin Sanatı*. (Edtr: M. Yılmaz). (Çev: N. Özüaydın). Ankara, Ütopya Yayınevi.
- Krausse, A. C. (2005). *Rönesanstan Günümüze Resim Sanatının Öyküsü*. (Çev: Dilek Zaptçioğlu). Almanya, Literatür Yayıncılık.
- Kuspit, D. (1993). *Signs of Psyche in Modern and Postmodern Art*. Newyork, Phaidon Press.
- Lacan, J. (2018). *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Substantive revision Tue Jul 10.
- Leppert, R. (1996). *Sanatta Anlamların Görüntüsü İmgelerin Toplumsal İşlevi*. (Çev: İ. Türkmen). İstanbul, Ayrıntı Yayınları.
- Mahcupyan, E. (2000). Modern Bireyin ve Bölünmüş Aklın Binyılı. *Doğu Batı Dergisi*. Şubat-Mart-Nisan,10, 15-33.

- Mansfield, N. (2005). *Öznellik, Freud'dan Haraway'e Kendilik Kuramları*. İzmir, Ara-lık Yayınları.
- Marshall, G. (2009). *Sosyoloji Sözlüğü*, (çev. O. Akınbay, D. Kömürcü). Ankara, Bilim ve Sanat Yayınları.
- Massignon, L. (1962). *İslam Sanatlarının Felsefesi, Din ve Sanat*. (Çev. B. Toprak). İstanbul.
- May, Rollo. (2007) *Yaratma Cesareti*. (Çev. A. Oysal). İstanbul, Metis Yayınları.
- Mead, G. H. (2017). *Zihin, Benlik ve Toplum*. (Çev. Y. Erdem). Ankara, Heretik.
- Mengüşoğlu, T. (2021). *İnsan Felsefesi*. Ankara, Doğu Batı Yayınları.
- Metzinger, T. (2004). *Being No One: The Self-Model Theory of Subjectivity*. Bradford Books
- Metzinger, Thomas, (2009). *The Ego Tunnel: The Science of the Mind and the Myth of the Self*. Basic Books.
- Oto, F. (2016). *Estetik ve Sanatın Felsefi Kökenleri (İlkçağdan Postmodernizme)*. Ankara, Kurgu Kültür Merkezi Yayınları.
- Ölçener, D. (2015). *Öznel İdealizm Açısından Sanatta ve Sanat Felsefesinde Yaratıcılık*. (Yayımlanmamış Tez). Maltepe Üniversitesi, İstanbul.
- Özderin, S. (2011). *Çağdaş Soyut Sanatta Ontolojik Temeller*. (Yayımlanmamış Tez). Gazi Üniversitesi, Ankara.
- Özkanlı, Ü. (2006). *Sanat ve Sanatçı Bağlamında Otoportre ve Portre*. (Yayımlanmamış Tez). Sakarya Üniversitesi, Sakarya.
- Panofsky, E. (2017). *Perspektif: Simgesel Bir Biçim*. İstanbul, Metis Yayınları.
- Rancière, J. (2010). *Özgürleşen Seyirci (Le Spectateur Émancipé)*. (Çev. E. B. Şaman). İstanbul, Metis Yayınları.
- Revonsuo, A. (2017). *Bilinç/ Özneliğin Bilimi*. İstanbul, Küre Yayınları.
- Sağlık, E. (2010). *Yaratıcı Süreçte İmge Oluşturma ve Kişisel Masallar*. (Yayımlanmamış Tez). Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Ankara.
- Sartre, J. P. (1998). *Estetik Üzerine Denemeler*. (Çev. M. Yılmaz). Ankara, Doruk Yayınevi.
- Sartre, J. P. (2002). *Ego'nun Aşknlığı*. (Çev. S. R. Kırkoğlu). İstanbul, Hil Yayınları.
- Sartre, J. P. (2011). *Varlık ve Hiçlik, (Fenomenolojik Ontoloji Denemesi)*. (Çev. T. Ilgaz, G. Ç. Eksen). İstanbul, İthaki Yayınları.

- Schelling, F.W.J. (2017). *Sanat Felsefesi*. (Çev. M. Ertene, S. Arslan). Ankara, Tarcan Matbaacılık.
- Searle, J. R. (2015). Felsefe ve Nörobiyolojide Bir Problem Olarak Benlik, The Self as a Problem in Philosophy and Neurobiology. (Çev: N. Çetin). *Felsefe ve Toplumsal Bilimlerde diyaloglar*. 7.
- Selmanpakoğlu, C. (2013). *Ajansal Sanat Hiçliğin Özgürlüğü*. (Yayımlanmamış Tez), Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Ankara.
- Shiner, L. (2010). *Sanatın İcadı: Bir Kültür Tarihi*. (Çev: İ. Türkmen). İstanbul, Ayrıntı Yayınları.
- Soykan, N. Ö. (2015). *Estetik ve Sanat Felsefesi*, İstanbul, Pinhan Yayıncılık.
- Sözer, Ö. (2009). *Felsefenin ABC'si*. İstanbul, Say Yayınları.
- Steiner, R. (1997). *Egon Schiele- Ressamın Karanlık Ruhu*. (Çev. A. Antmen). Taschen, İstanbul ABC Kitabevi Yayın ve Dağıtım.
- Stirner, M. (1993). *The Ego and Its Own*. London, Rebel Press.
- Su, S. (2013). *Çağdaş Sanatın Felsefi Söylemi*. İstanbul, Profil Yayıncılık.
- Sunar, C. 1966. *Mistisizmin ana hatları*. Ankara, Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Yayınları.
- Sunar, C. (1977). *Varlık hakkında ana düşünceler*. Ankara, Ankara Üniversitesi İlâhiyat Fakültesi Yayınları.
- Sunat, H. (2000). Psikanaliz ve Yaratma Süreçleri. *Milliyet Sanat*, 479, S. 4- 6.
- Taftalı, O. (2005). Zamanın Tin'i ve Bilgi Teorisi. *Kutadgubilig Felsefe- Bilim Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Sayı: 7, s. 53-63.
- Taşdelen, V. (2004). *Benlik ve Varoluş: Kierkegaard Felsefesi Üzerine Bir İnceleme*. Ankara, Hece Yayınları.
- Tekin, O. (2016). Antony Gormley'e Yakınlaşabilmek. *Medeniyet Sanat, İMÜ Sanat, Tasarım ve Mimarlık Fakültesi Dergisi*. Cilt:2, Sayı:1, s. 81-95.
- Terbaş, Ö. (2016). *Rüyalardan Gerçekliğe Psikanaliz ve Sanat*. İstanbul, İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları.
- Tezcan, M. (2018). *Sanat Sosyolojisi Giriş*. Ankara, Anı Yayıncılık.
- Townsend, D. (2002). *Estetiğe Giriş*. (Çev. S. Büyükdüvenci). Ankara, İmge Yayınları.
- Tunalı, İ. (2003). *Felsefenin Işığında Modern Resim*. İstanbul, Remzi Kitabevi.
- Tunalı, İ. (2008). *Felsefenin Işığında Modern Resimden Avangard Resme*. İstanbul, Remzi Kitabevi.

- Tunalı, İ. (2012). *Estetik*. İstanbul, Remzi Kitabevi.
- Tunalı, İ. (2014). *Sanat Ontolojisi*. İstanbul, İnkılap Kitapevi.
- Tura, S. M. (1989). *Freud'dan Lacan'a Psikanaliz*. İstanbul, Ayrıntı Yayınevi.
- Türker, İ. H. (1992). *Işıksal Elemanın Pentür Sanatına Kazandırdığı İfade Zenginliği*. (Yayımlanmamış Tez). Mimarşinan Üniversitesi, İstanbul.
- Urgancı, N. (2020). Varlık ve Hiçlik Bağlamında Jean-Paul Sartre'ın Estetik Teorisi. *İstanbul Üniversitesi Yayınları Felsefe Arkivi*, Sayı: 52.
- Yalçın, Ş. (2009). *Modern Felsefede Benlik*. İstanbul, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi.
- Yıldırım, Ö. (2015). Alberto Giacometti'nin Olgunluk Dönemi Yapıtları Üzerine. *Bosphorus Art Magazine*, Mayıs, Sayı: 96.
- Yılmaz, M. (2004). *Sanatın Felsefesi, Felsefenin Sanatı*, Ankara, Ütopya Yayınları.
- Yücel, B. (2017). *Sanatta Monokrom Uygulamalar*. (Yayımlanmamış Tez). Gazi Üniversitesi, Ankara.
- Zohar, D. (2007). *Kuantum Benlik*. (Çev. S. Kervanoğlu). İstanbul, Doruk Yayımcılık.
- Zolberg, V. L. (2013). *Bir Sanat Sosyolojisi Oluşturmak*. (Çev: B. O. Özbay). İstanbul, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi.
- Zukav, G. (1979). *The Dancing Wu Li Masters: An Overview of the New Physics*. Newyork, Phaidon.