

LIVED EXPERIENCE: DEWEY'S NATURALISTIC CONCEPTION

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

AYSUN AYDIN

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

JANUARY 2015

Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

Prof. Dr. Meliha Altunışık
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Prof. Dr. Ş. Halil Turan
Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Prof. Dr. Ahmet İnam
Supervisor

Examining Committee Members

Assoc. Prof. Barış Parkan	(METU, Phil.)	_____
Prof. Dr. Ahmet İnam	(METU, Phil.)	_____
Assoc. Prof. Elif Çırakman	(METU, Phil.)	_____
Prof. Dr. Hasan Ünder	(ANKARA U., Edu. Sci.)	_____
Assoc. Prof. Ertuğrul R. Turan	(ANKARA U.,Phil.)	_____

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last name: Aysun Aydın

Signature :

ABSTRACT

LIVED EXPERIENCE: DEWEY’S NATURALISTIC CONCEPTION

Aydın, Aysun

Ph.D., Department of Philosophy

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Ahmet İnam

January 2015, 166 pages

The concept of experience is one of the fundamental subjects in the history of philosophy. In general, this significant concept is treated and presented in terms of the epistemological problems. Especially in modern philosophy, the concept of experience is limited by considering it only as ‘sense experience’. It is argued in this study, this limitation is caused by a conceptual distortion of modern philosophy, such as subjectivization and idealization. On the other hand, the naturalistic account presents another conception of experience as ‘lived experience’, which includes culture, nature and history as well as ‘sense experience’. John Dewey’s naturalist approach and his naturalistic metaphysics of experience present the concept of ‘lived experience’ as the main subject of philosophy. This study aims to present and evaluate naturalistic conception of lived experience through John Dewey’s philosophy of experience.

Keywords: Experience, Subjectivism, Idealism, Naturalism, John Dewey.

ÖZ

CANLI YAŞANTI: DEWEY’NİN NATÜRALİST KAVRAMSALLAŞTIRMASI

Aydın, Aysun

Doktora, Felsefe Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Prof. Dr. Ahmet İnam

Ocak 2015, 166 sayfa

Deneyim kavramı, felsefe tarihinin en temel konularından biridir. Bu önemli kavram, genellikle, bilgi felsefesinin bir problem olarak ele alınmaktadır. Özellikle modern felsefe içinde, deneyim kavramı yalnızca ‘duyu deneyimi’ olarak düşünülüp sınırlandırılmıştır. Bu çalışmada, bu sınırlandırmanın modern felsefenin özneleştirme ve idealleştirme gibi kavramsal bozukluklarından kaynaklandığı iddia edilmektedir. Öte yandan, natüralist görüş ‘canlı yaşantı’ kavramı ile, duyu deneyimini olduğu kadar kültürü, doğayı ve tarihi de içeren, başka bir deneyim kavramsallaştırması sunmaktadır. John Dewey’nin natüralist görüşü ve natüralist deneyim metafiziği ‘canlı yaşantı’ kavramını felsefenin temel konusu olarak sunmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, natüralist ‘canlı yaşantı’ kavramını John Dewey’nin deneyim felsefesi bağlamında sunmak ve değerlendirmektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Deneyim, Sübjektivizm, İdealizm, Natüralizm, John Dewey.

To the Memory of Ahmet Çelikadam

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Dr. Ahmet İnam. I would like to thank him very much for his support, guidance, advice and criticism throughout the process and I am grateful to catch the chance working with him for ten years in Department of Philosophy at Middle East Technical University.

I would also like to show gratitude to my committee, including Assoc. Prof. Dr. Barış Parkan, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elif Çırakman, Prof. Dr. Hasan Ünder and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ertuğrul R. Turan for their valuable suggestions and comments. I have special thanks to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Parkan and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Çırakman; without their assistance and dedicated involvement in the final step of the process, this study would have never been accomplished.

I also express my deepest appreciation to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Çetin Balanuye, who introduced me with John Dewey's philosophy. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Balanuye's philosophical guidance, comments and support throughout this study, and his life guidance, his influences on my life are invaluable.

In 2011, I went to Center for Dewey Studies at Southern Illinois University Carbondale to study with Prof. Dr. Larry Hickman. My time at Center for Dewey Studies has been highly productive and working with Prof. Dr. Hickman was an extraordinary experience. I would like to thank and express my deep appreciation to him.

Fortunately, I was privileged to meet Prof. Dr. Thomas Alexander, at Department of Philosophy in Southern Illinois University. I express my deepest gratitude to Prof. Dr. Alexander for his guidance, comments and invaluable support. I would also like to thank and express my appreciation to Felicia Kruse Alexander. I will not forget their invaluable interest and friendship.

I would also like to thank and express my gratitude to the staff of Center for Dewey Studies; James Downhour, Barbara Levine, Michael McNally, Paula J. A. McNally, Jean Ohms and Harriet Furst Simon. I will not forget their support and hospitality. Likewise, I am indebted to Ning Sun and his inestimable friendship in my Carbondale days.

One of my special thanks goes to Assist. Prof. Dr. Pakize Arıkan Sandıkçiođlu. I very appreciate her valuable support, assistance, important comments and her precious friendship. Another special thank goes to Selma Aydın Bayram, she played a crucial role in every step throughout the process. I appreciate her assistance, patience and precious friendship. Likewise, I have a special thanks to Argun Abrek Canbolat, for his valuable support to this process from afar.

I am thankful for the support and friendship of members of Department of Philosophy at Middle East Technical University and members of Department of Philosophy at Yeditepe University.

Getting through my dissertation required more than academic support, and I have many people to thank for listening to and having to tolerate me over the past three years. The process had also an Istanbul phase and I made many friends, who never left me alone. I am very grateful to Őükrü Özyurt for his valuable support, and to friendship of Őencan TaŐkale, YaŐar Murat TaŐkale and all members of Kedi ve Diđer Őeyler.

Most importantly, none of this could have happened without my family. I am forever grateful to my mother Ayşe Aydın, my father Kazım Aydın, my brother Kasım Aydın and my sister Emel Aydın for their support, unconditional love and encouragement. Likewise, I very appreciate Birsen Demirbağ, who is my one and only sister in law, for her valuable support in the process.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM.....	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ÖZ.....	v
DEDICATION.....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	x
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xii
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. AN OVERVIEW ON THE MODERN CONCEPTION OF EXPERIENCE	8
2.1. Historical and Etymological Background of the Concept of Experience	8
2.2. Modern Conceptions of Experience	15
2.2.1. Descartes: “Experience of the Subject”	15
2.2.2. British Empiricism: “Experience of the Object”	18
2.2.3. Kant: “The Limits of the Subject’s Experience”	25
2.3. The Problem of Subjectivization and Idealization.....	29
2.3.1. Subjectivist and Idealist Accounts of Experience	29
2.3.2. Subjectivization and Idealization: Non-Naturalistic Conception	

of Experience	35
2.4. Dewey's Criticism of Modern Conception of Experience	39
3. DEWEY'S CONCEPTION OF EXPERIENCE	56
3.1. Experience in Dewey's Idealist Period.....	59
3.2. Experience in Dewey's Experimentalist Period	66
3.3. Experience in Dewey's Naturalist Period.....	81
4. RECONSTRUCTION OF THE CONCEPT OF EXPERIENCE: LIVED EXPERIENCE.....	92
4.1. Naturalistic Conception of Experience.....	93
4.2. Dewey's Metaphysics of Experience	98
4.3. The Debate between Dewey and Santayana.....	109
5. CONCLUSION	126
REFERENCES	134
APPENDICES	
A. CURRICULUM VITAE.....	140
B. TURKISH SUMMARY	144
C. TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU.....	166

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

In 1987, Southern Illinois University Press published *The Collected Works of John Dewey* (1882-1953) under the editorship of Jo Ann Boydston. As this will constitute the standard edition of Dewey, I have cross-cited references to these volumes.

EW The Early Works (1882-1898)

MW The Middle Works (1899-1924)

LW The Later Works (1925-1953)

Abbreviations for Dewey's Texts:

AE Art as Experience (1934)

EN Experience and Nature (1925)

RP Reconstruction in Philosophy (1920)

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

One of the most controversial subjects in the history of philosophy is the relationship between human beings and the world. Accordingly, many different attempts have been made to come up with a prudent conception of the relationship between the world and the human beings that reside within it, and the conceptual framework of this relationship is one of the constitutive aspects of philosophical positions.

One of the main philosophical approaches, which aims at providing natural and scientific explanation for this relationship, is naturalism. Naturalist assumptions or descriptions are encountered regularly in the history of philosophy, but the first systematic presentation of this view occurred only in the twentieth century. The reason for this late appearance or improvement can be attributed to the parallelism that exists between naturalism and science, in that naturalism suggests a philosophical perspective that is informed by scientific improvement on the nature in which human beings reside. In this regard, naturalism focuses on the human both as a part of nature, and as an organism that lives by means of nature.

Naturalism has many variations, all of which make different assumptions for the different conceptual aspects of philosophy. For the purpose of this study, I will deal with the naturalist conception of experience by limiting my search to one of the important figures of the American naturalist tradition, John Dewey.

It is argued here that one of the most important figures in American naturalistic tradition, John Dewey merits a special attention within this context. Dewey provides a natural ground for the notion of experience and presents his position through naturalistic assumptions. I argue that his view of naturalism is successful in its attempt to compete with philosophical subjectivism, idealism and dualism, and that Dewey presents a plausible philosophical means of reconstructing the notion of experience. Dewey's conception of experience can be understood as an occurrence that comprehends nature as a whole, and should be read as a plausible philosophical account of experience. An account of experience as 'lived experience' understood from a naturalistic perspective.

The aim of this dissertation is to question the possibility of a naturalistic conception of lived experience. In this regard, another tradition in philosophy, which takes 'lived experience' as central, is phenomenology. However, it is beyond the scope of this study to investigate phenomenological approach to 'lived experience'. This study aims to introduce the naturalistic approach to 'lived experience' as an alternative way to understand our way of being human with reference to a field of experience, which is inclusive of nature, culture and history.

It can be said that the meaning and understanding of the 'lived experience', which includes all elements of the relationship that exists between human beings, nature and life, is not treated as the main philosophical concept in traditional thought, which is a result, primarily, of the subjectivist perspectives. Traditional thought considers 'experience' to be an act of subject, and only in terms of the 'sense experience'. The second reason can be attributed to the fact that the problem of experience is always considered as a problem of epistemology in a narrow sense, not as a field, in a broad

sense that includes all of the possibilities in the relationship between human beings and nature.

The main tendency in modern philosophy reflects two extremities, in which the role of experience is either understated or overemphasized as a special non-natural gift given to the human subject. With the arrival of the modern era, in particular, 'experience' came to be regarded as a distinctive faculty that only rational human subjects were able to exercise. For example, while Descartes focused on 'experience of subject', Kant mostly sought to explore 'the limits of the subject's experience'. In addition, constitution of the objective world through the cognitive abilities of the subject results in subjectivization and idealization of experience.

In modern philosophy, there is a turn to the human subject, who is the central agent and the factor in all experience. However, this modern turn to the subject conceives our relation to the world primarily in cognitive terms. The subject and its experience of the world are construed with reference to the problem of knowledge. This problem is formulated as how a subject can know an object other than itself. How the gap between mind and the world can be overcome in cognition? This formulation assumes a duality at the beginning, a duality between the ego and the world, the mind and nature.

This study questions the possibility of avoiding dualism, idealism and subjectivism, which are operative in modern philosophy of subject, through a more enhanced account of experience provided from a naturalistic perspective.

It is the intention of this study to put forward a conception of experience from a naturalistic perspective that does not allow any kind of transcendent, subjectivist or anthropomorphic assumptions. Accordingly, the main purpose

of this study is to present and evaluate the analysis of the notion of experience in terms of a fully naturalistic program. To this end, first, it aims to re-read the notion of experience and to criticize the subjectivist, dualist and idealist ways of understanding it: and second, it aims to rediscover and redefine the notion of experience through the use of a naturalistic perspective by investigating Dewey's approach.

The definition of the word 'experience' in the Latin language and its usage in German reflect in the first instance the distinction between 'sense experience' and 'lived experience'. It can be said that while the Latin word *Experientia*, which means 'knowledge due trial', refers to the 'sense-experience', the word *Pathos*, which means "being in suffers or endures" (Jay 2005:11) refers to the 'lived experience'. On the other hand, the German language contains two words related to the concept of experience: *Erlebnis* and *Erfahrung*; with *Erlebnis* defined as 'lived experience' and referring to the everyday world, while *Erfahrung* is defined as 'outer sense impressions' and is the German word for danger, with associations also with Kantian tradition. These two words for the concept of experience in language represent the fundamental difference in the philosophical notion of experience.

In modern thought, the problem of knowledge is considered the central dilemma in philosophy. Attempts to explain the source of knowledge, the relationship between subject and object and the process of knowledge by philosophers, have been made by philosophers ranging from the British Empiricists to Kant, whose main objective has been to understand the role and relative importance of 'experience' in our knowledge. That said, this role of experience is only considered in terms of sense data or sensory experience. We meet the representative role of experience in Locke, as an act of 'thinking I' in Descartes, and the act of subject, which is constituted by concepts, in Kant. In other words, the notion of experience could not be conceived

independently from the cognitive abilities of the subject, independently of the relationship between the body and mind, and so, independently from an epistemological point of view.

I argue that Dewey's 'philosophy of experience' or his 'naturalistic metaphysics of experience' deserve special attention in terms of the fundamental questions raised about the notion of experience in this study. Throughout his entire philosophical thought, Dewey tries to constitute a different perspective of experience that he refers to as a 'reconstruction of experience'. His perspective refers to the notion of the 'lived experience', which may be considered as the naturalistic explanation of the concept of experience. On the other hand, Dewey provides an ontological conception of experience that, it could be argued, is more necessary than an epistemological conception of it. If we accept such a conception as the main field of philosophy, I believe we can dispense with both the subjectivist and the idealist accounts, and that this naturalist point of view provides us with a wide field that includes all elements of both human thought and human life.

In Chapter 2, I will present the operative conception of experience in modern philosophy and Dewey's criticism of it. I will refer to the accounts of Descartes, Locke, Hume and Kant as representing this modern conception of experience as 'sense-experience'. I shall evaluate their accounts in terms of the tension between empiricist and rationalist epistemology. And finally, I will present and evaluate Dewey's main rejection of the modern conception of experience, by exploring the possibility of introducing 'lived experience' as a more enhanced conception, which can provide us the opportunity to consider 'experience' as natural, historical, cultural and a more intimate affair for human life. I believe that to consider 'experience' as a starting point of philosophical thought changes our vision of human beings in nature.

The philosophical career of Dewey is handled in three periods, in which all his works are classified. Accordingly, in Chapter 3, I will present Dewey's conception of experience, alongside his criticisms of traditional philosophy, following these different periods. There is an 'Idealist' Dewey in early period, 'Experimentalist' Dewey in the middle period and a 'Naturalistic' Dewey in later period. Although there is no well-defined boundary between these three periods, a distinct analysis of the concept of experience within them could give us a better understanding of Dewey's reasons for requiring a reconstruction of experience.

In Chapter 4, I will present naturalistic conception of experience and Dewey's reconstruction of experience. Dewey's philosophy can be seen as a reconstruction of traditional philosophy, in that it was his desire to re-read the traditional thought and analyze all concepts of it, within which the concept of experience is the most important part. Dewey's naturalistic metaphysics comes to light in his later works, and this view represents the 'metaphysics of experience' that I will refer to as the 'ontological conception of experience'. I shall argue that Dewey's notion of experience refers to nature, history, culture, organic interaction and transaction of all connected natural things, the relation of generic traits, feeling, doing, suffering and knowing. Experience includes everything about human beings and their world and nature. Within this inclusive conception of experience, Dewey does not appeal to any kind of subjectivism and idealism.

Accordingly, in Section 4.2., I will clarify Dewey's metaphysics of experience by explaining his leading principles of experience, being in interaction, continuity and immediacy. According to Dewey, all things in the existential world interact, and this interaction and the existences in nature follow a continuous unbroken line. On the other hand, according to the principle of immediacy, knowledge is immediate having or feeling in this

continuous interaction process in nature, and these principles allow us to conceive Dewey's conception of experience, which is described as nature, history and culture.

Finally, in Section 4.3., I will raise an alternative approach in American naturalist tradition, which can be found in George Santayana's philosophy, given that his challenging Dewey's naturalism. These two philosophers' can be seen as founders of American naturalistic tradition. It can be said that the definition of the term 'naturalist' is shaped by them. On the other hand, there is an important debate on naturalistic postulates between Dewey and Santayana. I will focus on the differences between Dewey and Santayana's naturalistic arguments and compare their explanations of main concepts such as; immediacy, continuity and interaction.

CHAPTER 2

AN OVERVIEW ON THE MODERN CONCEPTION OF EXPERIENCE

2.1. Historical and Etymological Background of the Concept of Experience:

Experience is one of the most elusive concepts in philosophy. In Tony Bennett's *New Keywords* (2005) a comprehensive compilation of cultural, social and philosophical terms, Michael Berube explains the importance of the notion of experience as follows;

More generally, "experience" signifies a realm of rocky solidity and certainty, over against the airy abstractions of philosophy and social theory. It often confers authority when it is associated with the direct experience of life as opposed to "book learning," and it often serves as a common-sense, eyewitness guarantee of truth: "I know because I was there". (Bennett 2005:122)

Etymologically, the word 'experience' is based on the Latin word *experientia*. This Latin word refers to "trial, proof, experiment, experience" (Klein 1966:562). The main meaning of the word can be explained as "knowledge due to trial" (Skeat 1956:175). The word *experiential* refers to "based on experience" and the word *experiment* refers to "trial and proof" (Klein 1966:562). "The Greek antecedent to the Latin is *empeiria*, which also serves as the root for the English word "empirical". (Jay 2005:10)

In *Songs of Experience*¹ (2005), Martin Jay gives us a detailed analysis of the etymological roots of the concept of experience in various languages. He points out that in addition to *empeiria*, the Greek word *pathos* is also seen as the antecedent to the modern concept of experience. Although there is no etymological link between the two words, the meaning of ‘pathos’ as “something that happens”, which refers to suffering or enduring, evokes the word ‘experience’. (Jay 2005:11)

On the other hand, the word ‘experience’ refers to the word *peril* by evoking “risk, danger”. Jay says that “insofar as ‘to try’ (*expereri*) contains the same root as *periculum*, or “danger,” there is also a convert association between experience and peril, which suggests that it comes from having survived risks and learned something from the encounter” (Ibid, 10).

In German language, the two words: *Erlebnis* and *Erfahrung* are the equivalents of ‘experience’ and I think these two words deserve special attention for philosophical conception. These two words refer to different meanings of ‘experience’. This difference also refers to different philosophical usage and philosophical meaning of the word.

Jay explains the difference between *Erlebnis* and *Erfahrung* by pointing out that *Erlebnis* “connotes a more immediate, pre-reflective, and personal variant of experience than *Erfahrung*” (Ibid, 11). The German word *Erlebnis* is explained by the notion of ‘lived experience’ and refers to the ‘everyday world’ (the *Lebenswelt*). *Erfahrung* on the other hand is a more cognitive notion; it identifies experience with sense impressions and our judgments about them. This may be misleading since, as Jay observes, *erleben* is also a transitive verb (i.e. it “implies an experience of something”) (Ibid.) but

¹ Martin Jay’s *Songs of Experience* (2005) is one of the most important books, which presents the concept of experience in the history of thought. For this reason, in this section, I will follow Jay’s treatment of this concept.

Erlebnis in fact does not imply any conceptual categorization within experience as *Erfahrung* does. Identifying *Erlebnis* too much with everyday experience can also be misleading. While *Erlebnis* is based on the *Lebenswelt*, it can also imply an “intense and vital rupture” (Ibid.) within it.

An interesting point the note about the word *Erfahrung* is that like the Greek root of the word ‘experience’ (*peril*), *Erfahrung* also associated with the word danger in German (*Gefahr*). As Jay observes, it “connotes a progressive, if not always smooth, movement over time” and is, in that sense “a dialectical notion” (Ibid).

That said, to define the concept of experience and its meaning from one perspective has been a difficult task for philosophers. In the history of philosophy, we can see different usages and meanings of ‘experience’. The different etymological roots reflect one of the most important sources for philosophical differentiation on this notion. For the purpose of this study, having the double meaning of experience, that we encounter in both Greek and German usages, is very significant. Moreover, the second meanings of the word ‘experience’, the word *peril* in Greek and the word *Erfahrung* in German, reflect the basis of some main philosophical views, which will be criticized in later chapters of this study.

Martin Jay presents Hans-Georg Gadamer’s saying for ‘experience’ as “one of the most obscure that we have” (Ibid, 2). An important philosophical reason for this obscurity and the heterogeneity that we confront in the meaning of the notion of experience can be found in the difference in approaches to the place of the subject in philosophical theories. Since experience always belongs to a subject, how experience is understood and described will depend on different notions of the subject that are held in the history of thought.

‘Experience’ is perceived as an act of the subject. So, in general, the subject is seen as the bearer of ‘experience’. For this reason, the understanding of subject and its priority in the history of philosophy determine the definitions of ‘experience’.

It can be said that different etymological roots reflect different philosophical understandings of ‘experience’. Especially, its two meanings in German language show us its understanding in German philosophy. I think the difference between *Erlebnis* as ‘lived experience’ and *Erfahrung* as ‘experience’ is one of the most important points of the criticisms on traditional understanding of ‘experience’. I argue that the subjectivist and dualist perspectives related to the notion of ‘experience’ in modern philosophy can be explained by considering this fundamental distinction.

Before presenting the main conception of the notion of experience in the history of philosophy, some important points should be clarified. It can be said that, in general, the notion of experience appears in opposition with some main concepts of philosophy. The understanding of ‘experience’ as opposed to ‘reason’ is one of the most important dilemmas in philosophy. Thus, epistemologically, ‘experience’ is considered to be related to the outer part and non-reliable source of knowledge.

The other main problem about the understanding of ‘experience’ is the distinction between the ‘experienced things’ and the ‘experiencing subject’. This distinction is one of the important sources for the main critical arguments in this study. It is argued that the notion of experience cannot be understood or presented without the distinction between the subject and the object, in the history of thought. ‘Experience’ is described as a thing that belongs to the subject, who is always distinct from its external world.

In Ancient Greek Philosophy, different meanings of the notion of experience reflect different philosophical perceptions of it. Etymologically, the word *empeiria* corresponds to the classical meaning of experience. However, experience is here already distinguished from and even set in opposition to reason, theory or speculation; “a crucial link between experience and raw, unreflected sensation or unmediated observation [...] is already evident” (Ibid, 10). For example; while one of the Greek schools of medicine, which is based on observation, is called as *Empiriki*, the others, which represent the opposed side and used theory, is known as the *Dogmatiki* and the *Methodiki*. (Ibid.)

On the other hand, the word *pathos* as ‘suffering and enduring’ represents the passive moment, which means “the acknowledgment that experiences can befall one without being sought or desired” (Ibid, 11). At this point, patience appears as a virtue for the encountering with ‘experience’. Moreover, the word *peril* also reflects the notion of experience in negative meaning; ‘risk and danger’.

Accordingly, we meet the negative meaning of experience in Greek philosophy. By using the word ‘negative’, I mean the unreliable and neglected characters of ‘experience’, which is isolated by philosophers. One of these negative meanings of ‘experience’ can be explained through its reference to the external object and its limits. ‘Experience’ is limited by the limit of sense organs. ‘Experience’ is represented by uncertain everyday life, so it is spurned by the conception of the rationalist view. (Ibid, 13)

In his philosophy, Plato handled the notion of experience as a non-reliable source of knowledge. According to him, experience refers to custom and habit, so it is not a reliable source for true knowledge. In fact, by opposing

the mathematical necessary truths, experience is an obstacle to true knowledge. (Ibid.)

Plato presents his theory of knowledge as “recollection” and the relationship between ‘experience’ and knowledge in the dialogue of *Meno*. In *Meno*, Socrates indicates that we have innate ideas that precede our knowledge gained from ‘experience’. We have innate ideas or a priori knowledge and experience of the physical world only reveals our innate knowledge. According to this, the soul existed in past and knowledge is transferred from past to present. Innate ideas or knowledge in past are recalled in the relation to sensible things. Therefore, one has knowledge before gaining any experience. Knowledge or ideas belong to the former state of existence and they are recollected in the relation to sensible things.

Plato’s philosophy defines two distinct realms; the perceived world and the world of ideas. According to him, our physical world consists of images of the world of ideas, which refers to reality. The physical world represents the real world in a limited way, so we cannot grasp reality within the experience of the physical world. “The Myth of the Cave” presents Plato’s cosmology and the non-natural world of reality.

In the myth, the birth of a supernatural realm is conceived; dualism born. The universe is split in two, as is the individual. Reality, according to Plato, did not exist in the physical world of nature as experienced through sense perception. Reality, for Plato, existed in the supernatural realm of the eternal, the objective world of forms... The individual was also subjected to assuming a dualistic nature: body and psyche. Whereas the body is bound to the temporal realm (subject to mortality), the psyche’s home is the realm of the eternal-immortality was born. (Bancroft, 1998)

Rationalist approach of epistemology argues that knowledge is possible only if it is based on an absolutely certain principles. These principles are not

learned through ‘experience’; instead, they are implicit in the notion of reasoning itself. Sense experience cannot provide the certainty, which we need to know ‘true’. To sum up, Plato’s philosophy prioritizes innate ideas before ‘experience’ and thus puts a gap between knowledge and experience.

On the other hand, Aristotle enables the substantial place for ‘experience’ in practical category. For him, to conceive by means of experience is as valuable as to conceive by reason or proven ideas. Jay states the meaning of experience in philosophy of Aristotle; “developed habit in the human soul that makes a person capable of good judgment in an area of familiarity, i.e., where one has sufficiently developed memories” (Jay 2005:16).

Aristotle’s objectivism in knowledge is important in order to understand the meaning of ‘experience’ in Greek thought. According to this, knowing objects is “a direct way of having experience, enjoying or suffering in a qualitative world” (Chambliss 1994:16). However, experience is still a second and non-reliable source in this view.

On the other hand, in Greek philosophy, ‘experience’ has an important role in the view of Cynics and Sophists. Diogenes puts the world and body as the opposite of the idealist-rationalist mind. According to this view, ‘experience’ can be seen as an important source of knowledge in relation to the material world. In the same way, Sophists argue that sense-experience must be taken as a tool for knowledge. They also put ‘experience’ as the opposite of the Platonic forms. Sophists want to explain ‘experience’ in a holistic view, which is independent from irrational skepticism. (Jay 2005:16)

In modern philosophy, the new understanding of the human subject appears as the central concern of philosophy. Correspondingly, the conception of ‘experience’ is formed by this new perception of the human subject. I will

limit the main conception of experience to important figures from modern philosophy assuming that Descartes, Locke, Hume, and Kant represent the main interests of modern philosophy on the notion of experience.

2.2. Modern Conceptions of Experience

In 17th century, scientific improvements and the empirical and mathematical aspects of scientific method effect philosophers, and they focus on the nature of knowledge by considering these two elements of scientific method. According to this consideration, while rationalist philosophers tended to emphasize mathematical elements, as certain ideals, empiricist philosophers tended to emphasize sense perception for accessing knowledge of the world. The main struggle between rationalism and empiricism can be briefly drawn as the opposition on the source of knowledge and the possibility to reach absolute certainty.

For the purpose of this study, it can be said that the concept of experience is considered in the tension between rationalism and empiricism in modern era. Moreover, depending on this opposition, ‘experience’ turns out to be the main subject of epistemology. Accordingly, ‘experience’ is understood as sense experience of the human subject.

2.2.1. Descartes: “Experience of the Subject”

Modern philosophy has started with Descartes and his method of skepticism. It can be said that the main understanding of human subject is inherited from Descartes’ conception of rationalism and his expression of the mind-body problem in philosophy. On the other hand, to reduce the notion of experience to the epistemological question as a part of the problem of secure knowledge of metaphysics is also based on Descartes’ understanding of knowledge.

Descartes argues that we have innate ideas, which give the forms of our mind and our concepts correspond to the world, so we can know the world in terms of these ideas. According to this argument, ‘experience’ is reduced to the notion of ‘subject’s experience’ in Descartes philosophy. ‘Experience’ cannot be considered independently from the concept of mind.

Descartes’ method involves a test to determine our preconceived beliefs in order to find a ground for true knowledge. In *Meditations*, he examines all preconceptions that he has had before. Then, he tries to build his knowledge by accepting only indubitable knowledge as true. First, he rejects all his knowledge from sense data, which is not a reliable source for true knowledge. After a long elimination process by the method of doubt, he achieves one certain thing, the thinking self that provides the ground for all knowledge. This is a very radical subject oriented point of view and “Descartes reconstructs knowledge ‘from the inside outwards’ – from awareness of self to knowledge of the external world” (Dancy & Sosa 2006:95).

Descartes’ approach to knowledge states that grasping the existence of the physical world is not based on our senses. According to him, the secure way to achieve the existence of external reality is to rely on the existence of God. According to this view, the role of senses or experience in knowledge is excluded.

There are many criticisms on Descartes’ method. However, the main dilemma in his philosophy is based on the existence of two different substances; mind and body. Descartes gives a specific place to the human subject as ‘thinking I’. According to this, the human subject is an existence, which differs from all other things in the world. Descartes distinguishes the human subject from its external world and gives it an independent ontological

place. His mind-body dualism refers this distinct place of the human subject. However, Descartes cannot explain the interaction of this thinking subject with the physical body.

In Descartes' systematic rationalist approach, the role of experience is reduced to perception, opposite to cognition, and he treats 'perception' in a less serious way. (Jones 1969:183)

He inevitably concluded that the objects of sense perception are less than real. Indeed, in his view, "objects of sense perception" as they have just been called, are only adventitious ideas in us – products of the action on our sense organs of the material bodies of Galilean physics. (Ibid, 184)

Accordingly, perception does not give us any knowledge about the reality of external bodies, so it is far from perfect. Experience is, as an adventitious idea, the motion of external body that acts on our bodies. He distinguishes ordinary experience and scientific experiments and claims that ordinary experience has priority only if it provides empirical evidence. This explanation is interpreted as an ambiguity and the function of experience as a scientific evidence is not seen as a sufficient explanation for knowledge. (Clarke 1976:157)

Descartes' notion of experience should be understood within his very central notion of the human subject. The idea of 'thinking thing' as the definition of the subject, whose ability of thinking is a ground for all knowledge very radically refers to the subjectivist point of view. In this respect, Since Descartes conceives reason as the source of knowledge; 'experience' is not a reliable source of knowledge. He does not conceive of 'experience' as a leading element of the process of knowledge. According to him, all elements of knowledge depend on the thinking subject. On the other hand, the ambiguity of the notion of experience in his philosophy originates from his

mind-body dualism. 'Experience' as the notion of 'sensory experience' belongs to the sense organs of body, so it is always handled as a side of this dualism. As said above, Descartes considers 'sense experience' only significant for giving evidence for science.

2.2.2. British Empiricism: "Experience of the Object"

The empiricist view emphasizes the experimental verification and our understanding of object in its epistemological assumptions. The first figure of British empiricism is John Locke. Locke's theory of knowledge can be seen as an answer to rationalism. Although Locke is an empiricist philosopher, W. T. Jones argues that his conception of the process of knowledge is very similar to the main conception of the rationalist philosophers. According to this interpretation, he could not get rid of the powerful role of reason, and also the body-mind dualism of Cartesian tradition. (Jones 1969:242)

In the case of the notion of experience, the main aspect of Locke's epistemology is the representative character of 'idea' that is the 'object of thinking' that comes from experience of the object. In *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1998), Locke explained his theory of knowledge based on simple and the complex ideas that are generated by the experience of object. According to him, the origin of all ideas is 'experience' and the mind contains a range of ideas. Sensation and reflection are the two forms of experience and "all ideas come from sensation and reflection" (Ibid, 49).

In Locke's epistemology, sensation enables us to perceive and conceive the external object and it is the source of most of our ideas. On the other hand, reflection is the activity of mind that provides the combination of our ideas in

our mind. In other words, it is the “operation of mind” (Ibid, 50). Locke explains reflection as follows;

This source of ideas every man has wholly in himself: and though it be not sense, as having nothing to do with external object, yet it is very like it, and might properly enough be called internal sense. I called this reflection, the ideas it affords being such only as the mind gets by reflecting on its own operations within itself. (Ibid, 51)

According to this distinction, Locke defines two types of ideas; simple and complex. Simple ideas originate from sensation and they refer to passive perception of the object’s qualities. The operation of mind transforms simple ideas of sensation to the simple ideas of reflection. On the other hand, complex ideas are the mind’s activity. In this active state, mind combines the simple ideas by the way of bringing them together. (Ibid, 61)

Locke focuses on the relationship between the object, which produces the ideas, and ideas, based on the qualities of object. The qualities of objects have the power to produce ideas in our mind. He distinguishes two types of qualities; the first is ‘primary qualities’ those really exist in the object. They exist independently from our perception but they depend on the objects themselves. In other words, primary qualities belong to the object, and they are mathematical qualities such as occupying space, being in motion, solidity and texture. (Ibid, 78)

On the other hand, Locke describes ‘secondary qualities,’ which are “nothing in the objects themselves, but powers to produce various sensations in us by their primary qualities” (Ibid, 79). In other words, the secondary qualities are caused by the interaction of our ‘particular perceptual apparatus’ with the primary qualities of the object.

The description of ideas in Locke's epistemology as "whatsoever the Mind perceives in itself, or is the immediate object of Perception, Thought, or Understanding" (Chappell 1994:26) reflects that an idea exists in mind and it is the intellectual part of the mind. It can be said that Locke's theory of ideas includes some effects from Descartes' description of ideas. However, Locke does not distinguish perception and thought. Both perception and thought refer to "an instance of being conscious or aware of something" (Ibid, 28). "It follows that very Lockean idea, there is an act or operation of perception or thought, conversely. Neither does or can occur without the other." (Ibid.)

On the other hand, there is an uncertainty in the usage of the concepts; 'perception', 'sensation' and 'thought' in Locke's epistemological terminology. These concepts represent both the act and the object of sensation. However, ideas are both objects of mind and objects of perception or thought. Vere Chappell points out this uncertainty as follows;

But the words "perception" and "sensation", like "thought" but unlike "idea", are systematically ambiguous: they have reference both to acts and to objects of perceiving or sensing. When Locke says that ideas are perceptions he means perceptions in the object-sense of the word. And when he wants to speak of perception in the act-sense, he uses not "idea" but "having an idea". (Ibid.)

It can be said that this uncertainty originates from Locke's attempt to find an empiricist explanation of knowledge, i.e. an epistemological position opposite to that of rationalism, while still remaining under the influence of certain Cartesian conceptions. Locke's attempt can be understood as an answer to Descartes' notion of innate ideas, but it seems that he has not been able to extricate himself from some aspects of rationalism. For example, his distinction between primary qualities and secondary qualities betrays the influence of Descartes' conception of material substance as *res extensa*.

Although Locke underlies the importance of experience by asserting that “all our knowledge is founded” in it and that all knowledge “ultimately derives itself” from it (Locke 1998:49), there is an ambiguity in his notion of experience, which raises difficulties in understanding his empiricism. Accordingly, this difficult understanding of ‘experience’ in Locke’s epistemology gives rise to an interpretation that Locke is not a consistent empiricist—a label which is generally and more fittingly used to refer to Hume.

The important place of ideas in knowledge and the representative characters of them provide the description of experience as ‘experience of external object’ or ‘experience of senses’. This refers to Locke’s saying that “all the materials of Reason and Knowledge” (Ibid.) are provided by experience. Roger Woolhouse (1994) argues that “but this view, that knowledge is “founded in” and “ultimately derives from” experience, presupposes a distinction between knowledge as such and the ideas that are “the materials of knowledge” (Ibid, 148). This description can be considered as a reflection of Cartesian dualism in Locke’s theory. Jay expresses this reflection by saying that “Locke’s empiricism was always balanced by a residual rationalism, insofar as concepts are made by the mind rather than inductively generated” (Jay 2005:54). Jay also cites Locke’s conceding this situation with his words; “For general ideas come not into the mind by sensation or reflection, but are the creatures or inventions of the understanding” (Ibid.) Jay states the rationalist influences on the epistemology of Locke and Berkeley as follows;

Locke and Berkeley had maintained a traditional Cartesian sense of the existence of the conscious subject – a thinking, rather than extended substance – who had experiences, even if they deprived it of innate ideas. Their “tabula” was thus never completely “rasa”, as shown by the mind’s reflective capacities to turn simple impressions into complex ideas. (Ibid, 59)

Locke's theory of knowledge reflects the classical view of sensory experience that is understood as a mediatory thing between the mind and the object. The theory of ideas is based on the representation of the qualities of the object and 'experience' refers to this representation. As argued in this study, 'experience' is only considered in referring to the meaning of sense-experience.

The other important figure of British Empiricism is David Hume. Hume can be identified as consistent empiricist since he is characterized as a pure sensationalist. However, Hume's notion of experience refers only to sense experience. Although Hume is considered as a naturalist empiricist philosopher, his notion of experience does not reflect the notion of 'lived experience' that is argued as a plausible conception of experience in this study.

Hume's theory of knowledge can be seen as a re-conception of Locke's theory of ideas. In *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (2000), Hume emphasizes a distinction between 'impressions' and 'ideas' and removes Locke's distinction between 'ideas of sensation' and 'ideas of reflection'. This change in the conception of ideas enables him to avoid metaphysics. For Hume, 'sense experience' is necessary for the knowledge of external world and "only what is directly present to the senses at a given moment is known by perception alone" (Dancy & Sosa 2006:182). Hume's reconceptualization of experience influences both later empiricists and Kant.

Hume shares Locke's rejection of innate ideas and Berkeley's rejection of material objects that is beyond our experience. According to Hume, the immediate objects of thought and relations of these objects in the 'mental world' are elements of knowledge, and these elements are 'perception' that is

divided in two kinds; 'impressions' and 'ideas'. (Hume 2000:14-15) Although perceptions are objects of the mind as being in Locke's theory, they are not representations of external object in Hume's theory of knowledge. Ideas and impressions differ only in terms of their liveliness and all ideas are copied from impressions.

On the other hand, the function of 'reason' or 'mind' emerges in the process of producing ideas. For Hume, ideas are produced in two ways; 'memory' and 'imagination'. Imaginative ideas come from the faculty of understanding that combines ideas according to three principles of associations; 'resemblance', 'contiguity' and 'cause and effect'. (Ibid, 17)

The principle of relations of 'cause and effect' is an important part of Hume's skepticism. According to him, the relation of cause-effect has three principles or three main ideas; 'priority in time', 'proximity in space', and 'necessary connection'. While the first two of them can be achieved by experience, they are not sufficient to explain causality. On the other hand, to conceive 'necessary connection' is necessary for causality but experience does not give us this idea. (Ibid, 50-52) For him, the idea of necessary connection is formed by the mind, so necessity does not reside within the objects. Accordingly, the belief that "the sun will rise tomorrow" is only a habitual disposition.

In Hume's theory of knowledge, there are certain principles that enable the receiving of ideas under certain conditions. These principles belong to the imagination and so, making empirical inferences is the function of imagination not of reason. Accordingly, it can be said that "we have no reason to draw any inference concerning any object beyond those of which we have had experience" (Dancy & Sosa 2006: 183). Furthermore, human beings discover the principle of imagination without going beyond experience. Thus, Hume rejects the object in itself, which is going beyond

experience and is conceived by reason. According to this explanation, the role of reason in the process of knowledge is significantly attenuated in Hume's philosophy and because of this reason, Hume is described as a sceptic in the traditional understanding of epistemology.

Hume explains knowledge with the notion of belief. Accordingly, our inferences from experience are based on the belief that there is an external world that exists without our perception, and that we can achieve knowledge of its principles. Hume's skepticism is based on his argument that this belief is only a natural supposition and it is not based on any kind of reasoning. This belief cannot be supported by any reasoning. He explains this belief with the notion of sentiment. Sentiment is produced by habit, which attends regular lively conception of experience. Thus, our knowledge or belief in the existence of the external world, even if it is not perceived, is only a habit. (Fogelin 1993:92)

For the purpose of this study, the notion of habit is very significant because it shows that custom, repetition and cultural conditions are parts of experience in a very broad sense. This conception shows a similarity with Dewey's conception of experience. This similarity can be said to be inevitable, as Hume was also seen as an empiricist naturalist. However, Hume's aim is to show the difference between belief and knowledge. Custom and repetition can only provide grounds of belief, not firm knowledge. (Jay 2005:62). While Dewey considers these parts of experience as continuous with a naturalistic ground for his entire philosophy, Hume presents them as only grounds for belief in the epistemological sense. For this reason, Hume's conception of experience has not really freed itself from epistemological biases of the traditional modern conception of experience.

It can be said that two distinct traditions; rationalism and empiricism shared the same attitude toward experience, resulting in the reduction of experience to an epistemological question. The empiricists and the rationalists are in the same position that accepts distinctions between experience and being, self and outer world, inner and outer experience. It can be said that the empiricist approach presents a passive idea of experience. Both the empiricist and the rationalist adopt the position that everything is given as contents of consciousness, which is seen as the foreground of experience. This position leads to a conception of experience as only a counterpart to reason, within a certain formulation of an epistemological question. In this formulation, ‘experience’ is mainly an epistemological term and its inclusion in epistemology indicates the limitations of human beings. The criticism of this position will be analyzed in detail in later chapter of this study.

2.2.3. Kant: “The Limits of the Subject’s Experience”

Against this rationalist-empiricist debate, Kant develops the system of “transcendental idealism” as the possibility for metaphysics. Kant is influenced by Newtonian science and Hume’s argument of ‘groundlessness of causality’ and he focuses on the relationship between science and metaphysics.

In *Critique of Pure Reason* (1965), Kant presents his system, which is based on the possibility of a priori synthesis. The postulate that “all knowledge begins with experience, it does not follow that it all arises out of experience” (Ibid, 41) expresses that ‘experience’ is the first instruction of knowledge. The starting point of Kant, as an answer to Hume, is ‘causality’. Kant argues that although the necessary connection in the relation of cause and effect cannot be received from experience, we know a priori that every change has a

cause. Causality is a priori knowledge originated and employed by the very nature of our reason, not by habitual tendency as Hume states. (Ibid, 43)

Kant's synthesis depends on the explanations of the distinction between analytic and synthetic judgments, and the distinction between a priori and a posteriori knowledge.² 'The Kantian revolution' refers to the possibility of 'synthetic a priori' knowledge. According to him, the judgment "every change has a cause" is a synthetic a priori judgment. It is a priori because it contains necessity and universality and it is synthetic, because it gives us new knowledge. (Ibid, 42-52)

Kant reverses the relationship between mind and its object. He argues that in this relationship mind must not conform to its object, but the object must conform to the operations of mind. This is to say that experience occurs in and by the forms of the concepts of our mind. Experience of the object is possible in and by lenses of our mind. In that case, the possibility of synthetic a priori cognition rests on knowledge of what our concepts contribute to experience. This is the transcendental philosophy of Kant, which inquires the possibility of experience.

On the other hand, sensations do not provide the concepts. Conceptualizing and judging are required for combination of representations, which is made by active cognitive faculties. This is the understanding, which forms concepts of objects and makes judgment about them. Understanding and sensibility

² The first distinction concerns the relationship between subject and predicate. In analytic judgments, the concept of predicate is contained in the concept of the subject. These judgments do not give us any new knowledge about the concept of subject. On the other hand, in synthetic judgments, the predicate is not contained in the concept of subject and these judgments give us something new about the subject. The second distinction is about the judgments' appealing to experience. According to this, a priori judgments are independent from experience and they are universal and necessary. On the other hand, a posteriori judgments are depending on experience. (Kant 1965:42-52)

cannot be reduced to each other; both of them must work together. The understanding cannot intuit anything and the senses cannot think anything. This cooperation is expressed “Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind” (Ibid, 93)

Mind relates to an individual object that is given to cognition by ‘intuition’. Intuition refers to mind’s state of being in contact with the object. All our intuitions come through the senses, thus objects are given to us in intuition through sensation. Kant gives certain forms and necessary conditions of intuition as space and time, which are not derived from experience or concepts. They are necessary and a priori forms of intuition of mind and they are prior to our experience. Space and time do not belong to the object. They make possible a system of a priori knowledge that applies necessarily and universally to all objects that can be intuited. (Ibid, 67-77)

In addition to space and time, there are certain categories of thought, as concepts, which are the a priori conditions of understanding. These categories are “Quantity (unity, plurality, totality), Quality (reality, negation, limitation), Relation (of inherence and subsistence, of causality and dependence, of community) and Modality (possibility-impossibility, existence-non-existence, necessity-contingency)” (Ibid, 113). The mind uses these a priori concepts, when it synthesizes of experience in order to achieve judgment. These concepts, as an act of understanding, necessarily apply to any objects that are given through our senses. (Ibid, 111-113)

Intuitions and categories are necessary conditions of experience and understanding. Intuition and categories are a priori conditions of the possibility of experience. In other words, they are the conditions of objective knowledge, or they are the conditions of the consciousness of the object.

Kant's statement of "thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind" (Ibid, 93) shows their necessity for knowledge.

Kant's expression of the idea of "possibility of experience" has an important role in his transcendental idealism. As said before, Kant reverses the old view on the relationship between the mind and its object. That is, it is not the object that determines the possibility of experience, but intuition and categories of subject's mind determine experience. This is the idea of 'the limit of the subject's experience' as argued.

Accordingly, Kant's constitutive subject forms the object of experience. Jay states that "Kant's reconstruction of the concept of experience involved the setting of limits, which many of his successors – and arguably Kant himself in his later works – would attempt to overcome" (Ibid, 70). According to Jay, with these limits, we meet the traditional understanding of power of reason in Kant's epistemology. On the other hand, in Kant's view, 'experience' "involved questions of reliable knowledge, not the entire range of human encounters with the world" (Ibid.)

It can be said that Kant's notion of experience developed as the idea of 'possibility of experience', which refers to the necessary conditions of cognition. Accordingly, his notion of experience "involved internal limits within knowledge itself" (Ibid, 71). These internal limits or principles are prior to 'experience' and they "underlie" experience. Kant explains this place of experience with the transcendental method. He defines the term transcendental as "the universal and necessary conditions that underlie all possible experience" (Ibid, 73).

It can be said that the understanding of experience in the *Critique of Pure Reason* shows us Kant's transcendentalization of cognitive experience. That is Kant reduced 'experience' to cognitive terms and epistemological function.

In briefly, in Descartes' epistemology, the subject is main creator of knowledge and it is the limit of the knowledge of objects. For this reason, Descartes' conception of experience cannot understood independently from his subjectivist point of view. In addition, his subjectivism creates a dualism between subject and object, mind and body, reason and experience, and the concept of experience is explained by his subjectivist dualist perspective. On the other hand, British Empiricism's sensationalism presents representational relation with the object of knowledge, in other words; it reduces experience to instrument for knowledge and to a mental content. Empiricist account cannot solve the problem of continuity and not give an answer to the question that how experience and cognition are thought together. Finally, Kant presents intuition and categories as a priori conditions of possibility of experience. These conditions are nor experienced, but they are the necessary conditions of objective knowledge.

2.3. The Problem of Subjectivization and Idealization

2.3.1. Subjectivist and Idealist Accounts of Experience

The history of philosophical thinking shows that most of the philosophers postulate a separation of what is called 'experience' from what is called 'nature'. When this postulation is made, 'experience' is taken to be subjective and 'nature' is taken to be objective. The most obvious example of this kind of philosophical dichotomy is Descartes. With Descartes' "Cogito Ergo Sum", a new and different understanding of the subject arises from the idea of subjectivity.

In the history of modern philosophy following Descartes, the concept of experience is defined almost exclusively in relation to the problem of knowledge. It refers to the sensible, empirical source of human knowledge. From this point of view, the notion of experience is explained within the distinction of the self and world or subject-object dualism. According to this, three terms; the experiencing subject, the experienced object and knowledge are assumed as involved in experience. In this sense, knowledge is an intermediary term that refers both to the subject's knowledge and to the knowledge of the object. Knowledge refers to the relationship between the experiencing subject and the experienced physical world, which is conceived as distinct from the subject.

Accordingly, with the emphasis on the problem of epistemology in modern philosophy, rationalist and empiricist accounts consider the notion of experience from a subjectivist and dualistic point of view. Subjectivism can be defined as a philosophical account that the human subject and the acts of the human subject are the main basis of the principles of the world. In other words, the subjective experience has priority for the determination of fundamental laws of the world. There are radical versions of subjectivism that argue the existences in the world depend on subjective perception or awareness of the human subject. Wittgenstein's statement in *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* as "the subject does not belong to the world, but it is a limit of the world" (Wittgenstein 2002:30) is a very specific example of subjectivist point of view.

In *Subjectivity* (2000), Nick Mansfield enables a broad investigation on the notion of subjectivism. According to him, this subjectivist approach treats "the subject [as] located at the centre of truth, morality and meaning". (Mansfield 2000:4). The human subject who this point of view refers to is

mainly conceived as distinct from the world while also constituting the limit of the world, in so far as it is taken to be “the ground of truth and knowledge” (Ibid). Thus a serious tension arises when such a subject is tried to be handled as an object of analysis.

This tension can be presented in two steps. First, this account of subjectivity creates a dualism by separating the subject, who acts in the world, and the object as the physical world. Second, it does not consider ‘experience’ as independent of the prior characteristics or faculties of the subject. These faculties of the subject can be called freedom, rationality and autonomy. In addition, the experience of the subject is always seen as a non-natural act of the subject, which is isolated from the world, or as a thing that is given to subject in a non-natural way. It implies or states that knowledge arises from this free and rational subject’s acts, feelings, thoughts and perceptions.

As stated before, this new and different understanding of the subjectivity arises with Descartes’ “Cogito Ergo Sum”, which forms the basis of a certain idea of the subject. All experience and all knowledge are considered in terms of this subject. In this respect, two main principles, which define this subject, are the origins of Enlightenment thought;

[F]irstly, the image of the self as the ground of all knowledge and experience of the world (before I am anything, I am I) and secondly, the self as defined by the rational faculties it can use to order the world (I make sense). (Ibid, 15)

As a rationalist, like Plato, Descartes does not accept knowledge derived from sense experience as true or reliable knowledge. Descartes thinks that knowledge must be based on certain principles and experience cannot give us these unchanging principles. In brief, a posteriori knowledge, which is the result of unreliable sense experience, cannot be a reliable ground for knowledge.

Descartes' emphasis on the subject, its relation with the world and the priority of its rationality, provides the subject with a new place in the world. On the other hand, Kant presents a version of this idea of the subject in *The Critique of Pure Reason*. In Kant's theory, experience is defined in terms of the finite subject's acts. He defines experience as "the sum of all cognition wherein objects may be given to us, they are even the source of all truth, i.e., the source of our cognition's agreement with objects." (Kant, 1965:258)

According to Kant, the subject acts in the world. However, the world goes beyond the limits of the subject's experience. He presents the distinction between reason and experience as follows;

Experience tells us, indeed, what is, but not that it must necessarily be so, and not otherwise. It therefore gives us no true universality; and reason, which is so insistent upon this kind of knowledge, is therefore more stimulated by it than satisfied. Such universal modes of knowledge, which at the same time possess the character of inner necessity, must in themselves, independently of experience, be clear and certain. (Ibid, 42)

According to Kant, experience occurs in accordance with the faculties of the subject. For this reason, the experience of the subject depends on the function of the subject's mind. In other words, the relation with the world and the occurrence of experience depend on the a priori faculties of the subject's mind. All experiences of the subject are grounded in the perceiving and thinking 'I'. Mansfield states Kant's argument as follows;

Before we do anything, we must make at least some simple observation or impression of the world around us. We turn these observations into representations as they enter our minds and become things to think about. They circulate in our minds as images. (Mansfield 2000:19)

Accordingly, for Kant, every relationship between the subject and the world must be grounded in the thinking 'I'. The thinking 'I' thinks itself before its relations with the world, before all experiences, impressions and representations.

The understanding of the subject in modern thought can be defined as the ground of the possibility of experience. In addition, the world can be defined as depending on the thinking subject. Modern thought does not consider the fundamental question about the place or the presence of the subject in the world. The subject is defined by its separation from the physical world. (Ibid, 22-23)

In addition, since modern thought considers the characteristics of the subject in a transcendent way, so experience of subject is presented as an unknowable, suspicious thing. Thus, experience does not belong to the world and is not a natural thing.

Traditional thought considers experience as the content of the mind and as a private characteristic of the subject. In this sense, experience is considered as the thing given to the subject in a non-natural way. At this point, it is argued that like rationalist accounts of experience, classical empiricism also falls into a kind of subjectivist dualism.

The classical empiricists also consider the occurrence of experience as the relationship of two distinct things; subject and object. Although they claim that all knowledge is derived from sense experience, they consider the occurrence of experience in terms of the experiencing subject's movements in the physical world. In addition, they consider experience as the private characteristic of the subject.

On the other hand, transcendental idealism and Cartesian rationalism are the other problematic views of 'experience'. While Kant's transcendental idealism puts the noumenal reality as the barrier to the experiencing subject, Descartes' "Cogito Ergo Sum" puts the priority of reason or a priori knowledge as the same barrier. For these views, to make an analysis of experience is not possible without prior and non-natural assumptions. Accordingly, for these views, experience is seen as the subject's act in the world that only exposes empirical knowledge of the physical world.

Kant's transcendental idealism puts limits to the subject's experience. Experience is possible through only by non-empirical conditions that of space and time. The non-empirical conditions provide all possibility of experience. These conditions cannot be experienced and so, knowledge is limited by conditions and categories.

On the other hand, the dualism of modern thinking creates a separation between experience and the world. George Geiger state that the "separation of experience from the 'outside' physical world is not a popular idea of modern philosophy. The root of this separation springs from Greek dualism. According to Geiger, this separation consolidated by both rationalist and empiricist accounts in modern philosophy. Modern philosophy brought this dualism into human culture and language, so experience is considered only "as a synthetic joining of paired opposites". (Geiger 1958:7-9) He presents this separation as follow;

The classic separation of appearance from reality keeps cropping up as the problem of knowledge or as the equally insoluble relation of mind to body; but the assumed discontinuity remains. Experience is somehow cut off, unnatural, not entirely trustworthy; it becomes an anomaly, a kind of general predicament. (Geiger 1958:8)

In brief, subjectivism and idealism begin with the rational human subject and then they explain ‘experience’ in terms of the relationship between thinking ‘I’ and the world. Accordingly, ‘experience’ cannot be something other than the sensory act of human being.

2.3.2. Subjectivization and Idealization: Non-Naturalistic Conception of Experience

The notion of subjectivity and subjectivization of all phenomena of the world or the relations of the world is a very significant problem in philosophy. As said before, the problem originates from modern thinking, but I argue, this subjectivization is not sustainable for our current philosophical thinking. Today, we have many philosophical approaches that provide new understanding of philosophy or philosophical investigation within the conception of science. These new approaches and the scientific conception of the nature enable us a different perception of the world. Our treatment of nature is very important to constitute a moral relation with our environment. Social, moral, cultural life of human being includes all aspects of nature. In order to achieve more peaceful and sustainable relation with natural environment, our view should be nature-centered rather than subject-centered.

The problem of knowledge starts within the separated thinking ‘I’, which is the central notion of philosophy. On the other hand, the description of faculties and rational powers of this thinking ‘I’ causes the idealization of the all the elements of its thought. This view distinguishes first the actual object in the world and object of thought, which brings “internal limits within knowledge itself” (Jay 2005:71).

Accordingly, for our current purpose, the notion of experience is considered as an element of knowledge, which refers to ‘sense experience’ and it is reduced to empirical cognition or perception, in other words, ‘experience’ is understood as a cognitive term.

However, the other view, which is constituted on the basis of the conception of whole nature and of human being as an organism in this nature is possible. The starting point of this view is the whole changeable nature, which is described in Darwinian biology. Accordingly, in this perspective, all human activities and constitutions can be seen as a part of nature and as reflections of ‘experience’. According to this naturalist perspective, experience is an interaction process that includes all aspects of the relationship between the organism and its nature. The notion of ‘lived experience’ is representer of this view against the traditional notion of ‘sense experience’.

If we adopt such naturalist perspective, the starting point of subjectivist and idealist perspectives, their limited and non-natural conception of experience can be considered as conceptual distortion. The notion of conceptual distortion can be explained by referring to the isolation of one aspects of experience. Subjectivist and idealist perspectives present an abstraction of the one aspect of experience, which turns out to the limitation of experience. If we adopt naturalist perspective, the notion of ‘lived experience’ would provide a more acceptable worldview that can overcome present problems of the human being in the world.

Accordingly, this study argues that the subject of modern thought, as the subject of experience, causes the dissimulation of experience in a transcendent way. However, “the human being is a total and inclusive phenomenon, a sort of massive and dynamic unity” (Mansfield 2000:17) and the ‘lived experience’ enables this unity. The human subject belongs to the

world and its experience unites it within the world. For this reason, experience should be considered as something that belongs to and that is involved in this natural world.

From this naturalist perspective, experience is suggested as “something that has to be undergone or suffered rather than acquired vicariously” (Jay 2005:7). Accordingly, the main aim of this study is to analysis of the naturalistic substitution of ‘lived experience’ in the place of ‘sense experience’. The naturalistic conception of experience in John Dewey’s philosophy supports this idea and the criticism that subjectivization and idealization are conceptual distortion or philosophical limitation, in this sense.

We need the reconstruction of experience, which provides the understanding of the human being and its dimensions such as; society, culture, history in a whole nature. Accordingly, Dewey’s notion of experience presents us such conception of experience. Dewey argues that subjectivism is a mistake of traditional accounts of experience, because they conceptualize ‘experience’ only as a private character. But for Dewey, ‘experience’ refers not only to private but also social field.

For Dewey, the problem of modern philosophy is to be “connection-and-distinction” of human side and natural side. However, for Dewey, “experience”, as a method of philosophy, gives a unity of human and nature and it provides to overcome the separation of human and nature. For Dewey, ‘experience’ should be regarded “as a name that is especially suited to apply to the human phase of philosophic subject-matter in its relation to the natural phase in a particular cultural period and age entails the recognition of philosophy’s variability in different cultural eras and areas” (LW 1:332). However, the traditional philosophy could not recognize this point of view.

For him, traditional philosophy did not regard changes in human events, cultures and conditions. (Ibid.)

According to Dewey, past philosophy introduces “unbridgeable dualisms between subject and object, the real and the apparent, the physical and the mental, man and nature, things of experience and things in themselves, the individual and the society” (LW 1:x) in our language. These dualisms make “man a stranger in the world and the operation of human intelligence a mystery” (Ibid.).

Accordingly, Dewey’s main emphasis is to show the necessity of turning actual problems of human subject from abstract traditional questions of philosophy, and to define ‘experience’ as doing and undergoing rather than as something primarily cognitive. He defines “knowledge as an affair of a sentient organism interacting with its environment as opposed to a subject seeking to know an alien external world as its object” (MW 10:x).

According to this view, this study argues that the naturalistic conception of experience, which refers to both the ‘sense experience’ in an epistemological sense and the ‘lived experience’ in an ontological sense, can overcome the non-natural assumptions and dualistic limitations of subjectivism and idealism. As said, this view provides a more plausible perspective, which shows the natural relationship between the human being and the world. Accordingly, as a reconstruction of experience, Dewey’s conception of ‘naturalistic metaphysics of experience’ can be considered as the way of this overcoming. For this reason, in the next section, Dewey’s main criticism of modern conception of experience will be presented.

2.4. Dewey's Criticism of Modern Conception of Experience

John Dewey is one of the important figures from the American naturalistic tradition. He is also known as a psychologist, educationist and politician. Dewey is one of the founders of American Pragmatism, with William James, G. Herbert Mead and C. Sanders Pierce. These three philosophers influenced Dewey's perspective in his all life, especially in his early period.

It is difficult to define Dewey's philosophy by using one philosophical theory or one 'ism'. I think to call him only as a pragmatist or to define his philosophy by one 'ism' is not a fair interpretation. In his all life, Dewey has tried to avoid such labeling. The reason why Dewey should not be read in this way underlies his view of philosophy. Dewey defines philosophy as "to put the new wine into the old bottles". According to this view or this description of philosophy, we can say that Dewey's philosophy is a re-reading of history of philosophy and conceptual analysis of it. For his entire philosophical career, Dewey did not choose the way that creates a new terminology, but he prefers to use the same philosophical concepts in a new way.

Of course, Dewey's philosophy was based on pragmatist tradition and he adopted some main principles of pragmatism. On the other hand, for his late period Dewey's philosophy is constituted as 'philosophy of experience' or 'metaphysics of experience', as contemporary thinkers called. His philosophy can be defined as 'Pragmatic Naturalism', in which he gave the leading principles of 'experience'.

The important part of Dewey's thoughts and works reflects his critics of traditional views and its concepts in philosophy. Reconstruction in Philosophy is his main work in which Dewey states his slating of western philosophy. Accordingly, he criticizes Kant's revolution, rationalism,

sensationalism, classical empiricism and their all dualities. He focuses on the sharp division between doing and knowing and the separation of theory and practice in traditional philosophy. By using the term 'reconstruction', Dewey tries to show and to change the negative effects of these separations in philosophy. For Dewey, "philosophy was always being redefined" (MW 12:xii) "Because he [Dewey] did not see it as an attempt to know reality or to contemplate existence, but as a vital and functional part of man's struggle to understand himself and his conditions in order to better his situation" (MW 12:xii).

Dewey's main problem with traditional philosophy is based on its treatment of the world and the place of human beings in this world. In other words, the problem is its perception of the nature of philosophy. According to Dewey, traditional philosophy did not deal with the human beings and its culture, custom and social institutions. It only deals with the existence and the rational justification of things from a mental point. It did not show an interest in the act of human beings as human beings in nature. It cuts philosophy from the other fields of social life such as; anthropology, sociology, politics, science and social institutions of human beings.

Dewey argues that it should be noted that "to regard "experience" as a name that is especially suited to apply to the human phase of philosophic subject-matter in its relation to the natural phase in a particular cultural period and age entails the recognition of philosophy's variability in different cultural eras and areas" (LW 1:332). However, traditional philosophy could not recognize this point of view. For him, traditional philosophy did not regard changes in human events, cultures and conditions. (Ibid.)

Dewey argues "all philosophies of the classic type have made a fixed and fundamental distinction between two realms of existence" (MW 12:92). The

first is the world of popular tradition, which refers to religious and non-natural world. Dewey thinks that, this world of tradition found the rules of community life, social institutions and individual behavior in superior religious beliefs.

Dewey rejects this non-natural perception of popular philosophies and he emphasizes a philosophical view that enables “the ordinary empirical, relatively real, phenomenal world of everyday experience” (Ibid.). For him, in the world of everyday experience “the practical affairs and utilities of men were connected” (Ibid.). For Dewey, this view is the main aspect that determines the classical view about the nature of philosophy. In the classical view, philosophy is understood to be a very special kind of activity which is dedicated to “demonstrating the existence of” and examining a higher kind of reality that lies beyond our day to day existence. In this respect, philosophy claims to distinguish itself even from positive sciences and its methods, which are still largely based on empirical earthly undertakings. (Ibid, 93)

Dewey claims that another view on the nature of philosophy is possible and can change the view of traditional philosophies. He suggests “the idea that philosophy originated not out of intellectual material, but out of social and emotional material” (Ibid.). For Dewey, this new perspective should see the history of philosophy “not as an isolated thing but as a chapter in the development of civilization and culture; connect the story of philosophy with a study of anthropology, primitive life, the history of religion, literature and social institutions” (Ibid.). This new perspective reflects what Dewey tries to constitute as the non-dualist nature of philosophy.

In *Reconstruction in Philosophy*, Dewey summarizes the main differences between his perspective and the other perspective as follows. The traditional view is bent on transcending experience since it believes “Reality” to lie

somewhere beyond experience. Since it believes “Reality” to lie beyond experience, the traditional approach needs to rely on methods such as speculation and intuition. For Dewey, on the other hand, the nature of reality is to be sought in a social human field and human struggles. Reality is not something to be arrived at by trying to leave this human field behind but by identifying “the things of experience to which [humans] are most deeply and passionately attached”. The purpose is not to look at these endeavors and struggles from the outside, but to stay connected to the inner dynamics of what happens within that field. Dewey thus believes that philosophy should present “a living picture of the choice of thoughtful men about what they would have life to be, and to what ends they would have men shape their intelligent activities”. (Ibid, 94)

For Dewey, the main problem of modern philosophy comes from idealism or idealist epistemology. He argues that modern philosophy follows the older tradition of Reason. As explained in Section 2.1., according to Dewey, all the major figures of the modern tradition, namely; Descartes, Locke, Berkeley and Hume, retain this idealist element whether they be empiricist or rationalist. Kant, who is known as the philosopher who combined the two approaches empiricism and rationalism, can be argued to have put an end to metaphysics, but this has not at all put an end to idealism. “Idealism ceased to be metaphysical and cosmic in order to become epistemological and personal.”(Ibid, 108) Reason is seen as the creator and constituter of the world.

On the other hand, the other main problem of the traditional view is its dualisms or divisions and its taking ‘experience’ as a side of these dualisms. For this reason, Dewey’s theory of experience can be seen as an attempt to save ‘experience’ from these dualisms. In this respect, the reconstruction of

philosophy is the only possibility to show ‘experience’ without all dualisms of modern epistemology.

According to Dewey, past philosophy introduces “unbridgeable dualisms between subject and object, the real and the apparent, the physical and the mental, man and nature, things of experience and things in themselves, the individual and the society” (LW 1:x) in our language. These dualisms make “man a stranger in the world and the operation of human intelligence a mystery” (Ibid.). As explained above, this perspective has led to “the idea that knowledge is contemplative in nature” as opposed to being “accessible to sense-observation”. This long-standing dualism and its attendant methodology signify a split between theory and practice, as a result of which, philosophy has become completely divorced from practice. (MW 12:149)

Dewey criticizes the view of non-empirical traditional methods in philosophy. He argues that non-empirical methods’ view of ‘perception’ assumes an inner-outer model, in which there are an external cause, a passive mind and mental state. He thinks that these three elements cannot describe perception because he rejects the subject-object dualism and he wants to explain this process as interaction with the world.

The traditional method ends up with two kinds of knowledge: the knowledge that we have with respect to the objects in immediate experience and the knowledge that we have regarding the relation between the representations in our mind and the reality that those representations correspond to. Dewey has a problem with the way in which traditional epistemology severs the contents of our minds from real objects, which then have to be reconciled again.

For Dewey, this problem is unreal because, he argues that these “two kinds of knowledge” are in fact merely “two dimensions of experience”. He calls

them 'immediate experience' and 'presentative experience'. In immediate experience, the experienced objects are directly 'had'; in presentative experience we present these objects to ourselves "so that we can again have them in more meaningful and secure ways". There is a reason why Dewey uses the word 'presentative' rather than 'representative'. The word representation suggests a gap between our experience of objects and the way they are represented in our minds. It is this gap that later creates the epistemological problem in traditional philosophy when the relation between the contents of our mind and their relation to reality are held up for contemplation in traditional philosophy. (LW 1:379)

Dewey criticizes traditional dualism and rejects this dualism as assumed starting point of knowledge. According to him, "first regarding simple, external causes, the traditional picture starts with a self or mind that is fundamentally different and separate from its world. The world is 'out there' and the mind is 'in here.'" (Hildebrand 2008:20-21)

"By rejecting the traditional notion that body and mind are ontologically separate, as matter and spirit, Dewey was also able to reject the traditional assumption that the determination of their relation constitutes an epistemological problem." (Hickman 2007:162) This point is very significant in order to understand Dewey's emphasis on the ontological conception of experience rather than epistemological conception of it. According to Dewey, traditional accounts consider 'experience' as an instrument for knowledge and as a problem of epistemology. Traditional accounts reduce it to the content of consciousness and they consider it as a private characteristic that is given to the subject. For this reason, according to Dewey; Plato, Descartes and Locke and also Hume did not get out of the dualistic conundrum.

Dewey's main emphasis is to show the necessity of turning away from abstract traditional questions of philosophy to the actual problems of the human subject and to define 'experience' as doing and undergoing rather than as something primarily cognitive. He defines "knowledge as an affair of a sentient organism interacting with its environment as opposed to a subject seeking to know an alien external world as its object" (MW: 10:x). According to his main emphasis and his definitions of experience and knowledge, Dewey criticizes British Empiricism, Continental Rationalism, Neo-Kantian Idealism, and certain forms of Realism.

If we look at the theory of knowledge in Greek philosophy, especially in Aristotle, we can see a non-subjectivist view of experience. Dewey called this view as objectivism and defined Greek conception of the mind as "a dependent expression of nature" (Chambliss 1994:15) Chambliss states Dewey's saying as follow;

Greek Philosophy starts with a fact... instead of with the individual. The world-nature-cosmos is there and [the] individual exists by sharing with it: he is of common stuff with nature and all his process [are] thereby derived. His mind itself must therefore be an expression of this objective, ontological world. (Ibid.)

This view underlines that "what is in mind is first, nature's, and then, the individual's, insofar as mind gives expression to that which is in the nature of things" (Ibid.). Dewey stated that there is no separation between mind and world, subject and object or reality and knowing mind in Aristotle's objectivism. For this reason, "knowing is an expression of a continuity with nature" (Ibid.).

According to Dewey, "the Greek conception of the nature and limitations of experience" (LW 11:69) is derived from the word "empirical". According to this, for Greek conception "while "experience" supplied fairly dependable

information, dependable for purposes of practical utility or of action, it did not involve or depend upon any insight into the cause or reason of the occurrence”. (Ibid, 70)

In Greek theory of experience, we meet the contrast of experience and reason as sources of knowledge. On the other hand, experience is linked to habit, which is a method of acquiring knowledge but it is not sufficient for arriving at the universals. However, rational knowledge is true knowledge and gives true principles and universals. Dewey states that for Greek theory of experience, habit and practice are not included in the stage of rational knowledge. For this reason, science needs something habit and practice do not attain to this stage, science requires something as reason, which transcending experience. Dewey argues that for Greek theory of knowledge, “rational knowledge is final, while empirical at the best is approximate, not necessary, and hence, in every case, true only “upon the whole”” (MW 6:446).

Dewey rightly observes that the underestimation of experience begins with Plato. (LW 11:70) He explains the reason for Plato’s disparagement of experience by reminding us of the historical and cultural factors that influenced Plato’s position.

According to Dewey, Plato’s problem with experience was in fact a problem he had with custom and tradition; as he notes that in Plato’s mind “custom and tradition were identified with experience” and in Ancient Greek culture custom and tradition determined what was to be accepted as true knowledge and right conduct. It was the authority of custom that Plato was actually waging war against when he declared the supremacy of reason against experience. Here, experience came to represent not only custom and tradition but also all other mindless ways of existing, such as relying on “habit,

appetite, impulse, and emotion” rather than reason. While reason represented “unity, order and law”, experience meant “multiplicity and discord, irrational fluctuations from one estate to another”. Consequently, Plato liked to underline the unreliable character of empirical knowledge as well as experience. (MW 9:271-272)

On the other hand, Dewey thinks that Aristotle has more systematic account of experience than Plato has. According to Aristotle;

Experience is not sensation nor perception, but rather the funded, practical, organized information about things that has come by the accumulation of experience and the sifting out of the successful elements in the past experience from the unsuccessful ones. (Ibid, 71)

However, for both Plato and Aristotle, there is a contrast “between experience and science”. In this contrast, the side of science refers to understanding that depends on reason (Ibid, 72). In addition, this contrast reflects a rational understanding of experience. For Dewey, Aristotle’s view is more empirical than Plato’s. Dewey argues that, Aristotle thinks, “reason can function only as the outcome of a series of graded steps up from sensation” (Ibid, 73). Accordingly, for Dewey, Aristotle rejects the existence of “separate and independent rational intuition” (Ibid.).

On the other hand, Dewey thinks, there is no separation between “the cognitive or intellectual from the active” as in the modern thought. Dewey focuses on the distinction between practical activity and rational activity. According to this distinction, experience is seen as the identical with the practical activity, which is lower and limited. According to this distinction, Dewey states that

The supreme activity is that of the pure intellect, and therefore it must be distinguished from every kind of practical doing and making. Subsequent philosophy inherited this depreciation of “experience” as being connected with lower and practical activity in contrast with the superior worth of purely rational activity. (Ibid, 74).

Dewey sums up Ancient philosophy’s conception of experience by identifying three ways in which the Ancients conceived experience as limited. Firstly, as explained above, empirical knowledge, which is based on experience, was conceived to be a limited kind of knowledge in comparison to true science. Secondly, practice was conceived to be inferior to theory. Thirdly, the realm of the senses was conceived to be a lower type of reality. (Ibid, 75)

There is in philosophy, however, another conception of experience, which connects experience with beliefs and skills. According to this conception, ““experience” suggested something fresh and personal, while “reason” signified dogmas and doctrines that owed their power to convention and tradition”(Ibid, 76). For Dewey, the first representer of this view is John Locke, who defines “experience as consisting essentially of observation, a view which implies that it is a direct, first-hand, personal contact with nature” (Ibid, 77).

According to Dewey, Locke’s method explains our knowledge on the basis of “certain unknowable substance, called by the name of matter, making impressions on an unknowable substance, called mind” (EW 1:125), but it does not refer to an account of knowledge which determines the nature of objects of experience. In this respect, for Dewey, Locke’s method explains the nature of unknowable aspects of knowledge, as ideas and consciousness, but it should explain the nature of matter and mind. On the other hand, for Dewey, “Locke adhered to the classical tradition in holding that experience

cannot supply universal knowledge, and drew the conclusion that there is no exact science of natural phenomena, but only probability sufficient for the conduct of life” (LW 11:77).

After Locke, Dewey focuses on the empirical method of Hume and claims that Hume’s gives “the truly empirical contribution”. For Dewey, Hume’s renewal of the notions of habit and custom and their important role in his philosophy provide this successful empirical contribution. According to Dewey, by his empirical doctrine, Hume shows that “with the dialectic development of Locke's simple ideas, the result was complete skepticism as to the existence of an external world and a self”. (Ibid, 80)

However, Dewey accepts that Hume’s method has psychological standpoint and he explains Hume’s psychological standpoint by saying that “nothing shall be admitted into philosophy which does not show itself in experience, and its nature, that is, its place in experience shall be fixed by an account of the process of knowledge - by Psychology. Hume reversed this.” (EW 1:125).

Hume’s starting point is nature of reality and sensations as the only reality. According to this, knowledge or experience comes from these sensations. However, the existence of original sensations is one of the important problems in the process of knowledge. Sensations priority of knowledge and the existence of sensation in-itself are main topics of this discussion. In order to explain the existence of sensations before our knowledge, Dewey gives an example and argues that if we back to the infant stage, we can find “a point where knowledge has not yet begun, but where sensations must be supposed to exist.” (Ibid, 128)

On the other hand, for Dewey, we cannot mention about the idea of thing-in-itself. For him, sensation is a “definite relation” between the known baby and

known world, who are in an action and reaction on each other. However, “sensation is not prior to consciousness or knowledge. It is but an element in the world of conscious experience”. (Ibid, 129) Experience is not an affair of sensations and ideas. Dewey presents the relationship between sensation and experience as follow;

Such a sensation, which exists only within and for experience, is not one which can be used to account for experience. It is but one element in an organic whole, and can no more account for the whole, than a given digestive act can account for the existence of a living body, although this digestive act and others similar to it may no doubt be shown to be all important in the formation of a given living body. (Ibid.)

Dewey objects to the view that explains experience with sensations or only as the way of knowledge of object. Moreover, at the same time Dewey objects to the view of Subjective Idealism that separates subject and object. This view defines subject as mind or ego and the object as external world. For him, our conscious experience includes both subject and object. In this respect, Dewey argues that psychological standpoint shows us that subject and object exist as one thing within our whole consciousness. Dewey states “it shows therefore that there cannot be “two kinds” of consciousness, one subject, the other object, but that all consciousness whether of “Mind” or of “Matter” is, since consciousness, the unity of subject and object”. (Ibid, 138)

Dewey’s *Leibniz’s New Essays Concerning the Human Understanding* (EW 1:1888) is important in order to understand Dewey’s opposition to dualistic views and sensational empiricist’s account of experience. Dewey focuses on the idea of unity of the world and the idea of continuity as the roots of Leibniz’s philosophy. Dewey praises Leibniz because of his focus on the unity of experience and his opposition to all types of dualisms. According to him, the only problem of philosophy is the unity of experience.

He presents Leibniz's view of unity by presenting the views of Leibniz's century. First, he presents Descartes' dualism by saying that "He presented the opposition as between mind and matter. The essence of the former is thought; of the latter, extension. The conceptions are disparate and opposed. No interaction is possible". (Ibid, 287)

According to Dewey, Leibniz recognized the dualistic character of Descartes' philosophy and rejected this dualism. On the other hand, Leibniz also did not accept Spinoza's solution. Dewey argues that, Spinoza "does not allow the conceptions of individuality and of activity. He presents a unity in which all distinction of individuals is lost, and in which there is no room for change". (Ibid, 289) Thus, Spinoza does not satisfy Leibniz. The problem of unity is important for Leibniz and his answer to the question of "What is this unity?" is the monad. (Ibid.)

The importance of Leibniz, for Dewey, is his recognition of the reality as an organic whole rather than two separate parts. Leibniz's organic conception and his notion of unity are what Dewey wants to define as the reality. Dewey says that "against Descartes, therefore, Leibniz stands for the principle of unity: against Spinoza, he upholds the doctrine of individuality, of diversity, of multiplicity" (Ibid, 291). Leibniz presents this as the pre-established harmony, which provides "the unity of the individual and the universe" (Ibid, 296), In other words, it is "the organic unity of the monads" (Ibid, 422). For Dewey, this is the difficulty in other theories of knowledge, especially in Locke's theory of knowledge, just because they do not "admit an organic unity of the knowing mind and the known universe" (Ibid, 395).

For Dewey, the main difference between Leibniz and himself lies in their conception of intelligence in experience. While for Locke, the mind is passive holder, Leibniz and Dewey himself recognize that "pure passivity of

any kind is a myth, as scholastic fiction" (Ibid, 319). For Dewey, while Locke's theory of innate ideas depends on this passive conception of intelligence, for Leibniz, "an innate idea was a necessary activity of intelligence."(Ibid, xxxvi)

On the other hand, for Dewey, Kant "introduced a new conception of experience; namely, that of a synthesis of a passively given manifold of sense by means of a priori active functions of thought" (MW 6:446). In his criticism, Dewey was very hard on Kant. He criticizes the Kantian revolution and he calls it a mistaken revolution. For him, "Kant had made knowledge dependent on the human mind...it found the experienced world inchoate, unless compressed into the categories of mind" (MW 12:xi). But Dewey adopts the opposite direction that is James's radical empiricism;

Experience was comprehensible in itself and all things a philosopher could consider were definable in terms drawn from experience; further, the relations between things were matters of direct particular experience, as much as things themselves.(Ibid.)

In his early period, Dewey presents a Hegelian criticism of Kant's method in his article "Kant and Philosophical Method" (1884). Dewey states Kant's contribution to method by examining two sides of Kant's theory. According to this, the first part is synthetic function or categories. While the categories are provided by the understanding, they also have to relate to objects, as their real function is to enable Kant to show how experience is possible. Thus, the categories are derived and systematically presented in relation to Kant's Transcendental Logic. Kant tries to answer Hume's skeptic challenge with respect to the universal and objective validity of experience by way of the categories. However, in doing so, he turns experience into a system and compresses it into the system of categories. (EW 1:37)

However, according to Dewey there is a ‘circle’ with Kant’s method. On the one hand, the categories are ‘deduced’ from a transcendental basis that is supposed to constitute the possibility of experience. On the other hand, experience is not possible without the synthesis of the categories. The synthesis provided by categories is also the synthesis of the empirical and rational sides of knowledge. However, here there is circularity, because the categories cannot serve this function without experience; yet experience is not possible without the categories. Dewey acknowledges that Kant would insist that this is just the nature of knowledge. Nevertheless, he rightly point out that Kant has thus ended up with an account of experience and knowledge, which prioritizes the categories. (Ibid, 39)

For Dewey, there is a problem about the relationship between experience and its object in Kant’s method. Dewey argues that the method is false because in this method, we cannot determine the existence of external object independently from categories, and yet the relation of the categories to the object is purely external. Further, the universality ensured by the categories is not true universality; it applies only to “beings of like capacities of receptivity as ourselves”. Through such receptivity, all we get from the object is a “feeling of external matter”, but this material remains “foreign”. So we do not gain real knowledge in this way. (EW 1:40)

In “The Significance of the Problem of Knowledge” (EW 5, 1897) Dewey focuses on the problem of the possibility of knowledge and he argues that the problem of knowledge is not a problem as philosophers argue. He presents Kantian dictum, that “perception without conception is blind, while conception without perception is empty”, and he criticizes this remark. For him, the sensationalist and rationalist attitudes work together in this dictum. (Ibid, 4) Dewey states this Kantian explanation of knowledge and criticizes this explanation by calling it as “mystery”. He says that;

We can reduce knowledge neither to a set of associated sensations, nor yet to a purely rational system of relations of thought. Knowledge is judgment, and judgment requires both a material of sense perception and an ordering, regulating principle, reason; so much seems certain, but we do not get any further. Sensation and thought themselves seem to stand out more rigidly opposed to each other in their own natures than ever. Why both are necessary, and how two such opposed factors co-operate in bringing about the unified results of knowledge, becomes more and more of a mystery. (Ibid, 4-5)

Dewey sees the solution of Kant as inevitable and unsatisfactory. He argues that it is inevitable because he agrees with Kant that neither sensation nor reason can be left out of a proper account of the world and our experience of it. However, he finds Kant's solution unsatisfactory because it has really not in any way solved the traditional dualism between sense experience and reason; it has in fact exacerbated it. Sensation and reason are presented as "at war with each other"; their synthesis remains mysterious. (Ibid, 19)

Dewey's main problem with the traditional understanding of experience is its treatment only as an epistemological term and as a function of subject's mind. Accordingly, his criticisms are formed by his rejection of the subjectivism, dualism and idealism. He argues that idealism of modern philosophy considers Reason as the creator and constituter of the world and brings a dualism between Reason and Experience.

On the other hand, traditional philosophers introduce dualisms between subject and object, the physical and the mental, man and nature, things of experience and things in themselves. These dualisms lead to separation of human being and its world. Against this background, Dewey defines 'experience' as doing and undergoing rather than as something primarily cognitive and he describes "knowledge as an affair of a sentient organism

interacting with its environment as opposed to a subject seeking to know an alien external world as its object” (MW 10:x).

CHAPTER 3

DEWEY'S CONCEPTION OF EXPERIENCE

All of Dewey's works were published under the title of *The Collected Works of John Dewey*. There are three periods in Dewey's philosophy. The first period is "Early Works" (EW), which includes Dewey's writings in 1882-1898 and it has five volumes. The second period called as "Middle Works" (MW) contains his writings in 1899-1924 and it has fifteen volumes. The last period is "Later Works" (LW), which contains his writings in 1925-1953 and it has seventeen volumes. These three periods reflect different aspects and development of Dewey's thoughts on philosophy, psychology, politics and education, in general.

Dewey wrote many books and essays in different areas of social sciences. Psychology, philosophy, education and politics are major areas of his works. His main arguments and the priority of these areas have changed in times. However, it is possible to see one main direction in his thoughts, especially in his philosophy and educational system.

This study focuses on his philosophical writings, especially on the development of the idea of experience in his philosophy. Though the idea of experience remained the focus of his attention, he adopted different approaches in handling this subject matter in different periods of his life. At the beginning of his philosophical career, Dewey's thoughts were influenced by Hegel's idealism and William James's psychology. This early period can be named as 'the instrumentalist period'. In this period, he wrote on the

history of philosophy by adopting the perspective of instrumentalism and Hegelian absolutism. On the other hand, he also focused on the development of psychology. Dewey was influenced by the scientific character and empirical aspects of psychology, and he suggested psychology as a method to philosophy. The effects of Hegelian idealism and psychology on Dewey's thoughts did not last for a long time.

In the middle period, Dewey focused on empiricism, epistemology, logic and ethics. In this period, he wrote many essays on these subjects. This period can be called as 'experimentalist period' of Dewey. His emphasis on empiricism and experimental philosophy constitutes the basis of his original idea of experience. *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (1920) is the most important book of this period, which reflects Dewey's philosophy of experience. On the other hand, in the middle period, his popular writings on education and politics briefly interrupt his more philosophical studies.

On the other hand, Dewey's later period is important to understand both the development of his major philosophical arguments and the development of his original idea of experience. For the purpose of this study, the later period is very significant and it reflects Dewey's naturalism. In this period, the idea of experience is the central concept of his philosophy. He explained and presented all his philosophical analyses by the idea of experience. In this last period, *Experience and Nature* (1925), *The Quest for Certainty* (1929), *A Common Faith* (1934), and *Art as Experience* (1934) are the main books, on which we will focus to analyze his idea of experience.

The concept of experience is perhaps the most frequently visited theme in the entire corpus of Dewey's works. Taken even only of his collected works; the word 'experience' appears almost ten thousand times under one thousand topics. In this chapter, the main philosophical works of Dewey will be

sketched in terms of the development of the notion of experience. Some main articles and books, which directly show the development of the idea of experience in Dewey's philosophy, will be presented.

It can be said that there is no sharp change in the idea of experience in his whole philosophical career. While his philosophical system changed and evolved, it can be said that main aspects of the notion of experience are preserved in his thoughts. The notion of experience can be defined by using different concepts such as; nature, culture, relation and continuity; but it is always known what experience is not in Dewey's philosophy. For Dewey, experience is not a subjectivist notion, it is not in a dualistic relation and it is not an external relation between parts of nature. The idea of 'continuity of experience' and the idea of 'whole nature' can be seen as the main aspects of Dewey's idea of experience.

On the other hand, his criticism of the traditional accounts of experience is the other important and unchanging aspect of his idea of experience. He argues that one of the main problems of philosophy is the traditional view of experience, which is presented by depending on dualities. Dewey defends unification against the separations of traditional philosophy. These separations can be stated as between self and world, body and soul, matter and spirit, subject and object, nature and God.

The aim of this study is to present and evaluate Dewey's philosophy of experience. The important role of the notion of experience in philosophy is underlined. It is argued that Dewey's conceptual framework and his interpretation of traditional views of experience provide a different reading and support the main argument of this study. For this purpose, in this chapter, the study will follow his philosophical writings chronologically and will

focus on only his notion of experience, its definitions and its place in his philosophical improvement.

3.1. Experience in Dewey's Idealist Period

Dewey's philosophical career started with the influences by the philosophy of Hegel. Young Dewey tries to present his worldview with the Hegelian absolute idealism. Therefore, his early thoughts reflect his Hegelian perspective. In this period, we cannot mention a systematic theory of experience, but his idea of experience can be conceived by means of his experimental method. In this period, he wrote many essays on traditional philosophy and interpreted it from the view of Hegelian idealism. Dewey brings the notion of experience into discussion in relation to such notions as; intuitionism, absolutism, Hegelianism and experimental psychology. His critics of traditional western philosophy, especially critics of the view of experience in British empiricism, are other main aspects of his early thoughts.

The idea of "continuity of experience" against the idea of "separate sensations as experience" arises in this early period. Accordingly, in this period, Dewey's notion of experience can be characterized in two ways. First, it develops in terms of his Hegelian perspective on traditional understanding of experience. Second, the notion of experience is developed depending on Dewey's view of experimental psychology, which he suggests as the new method for philosophy.

In the first volume of *The Early Works* (1882-1888), we see the influence of Hegelian idealism on Dewey's thoughts, effectively. Dewey's main oppositions take form against the dualisms of Western culture. It can be said that Dewey tries to constitute an idea of experience without philosophical dualisms. Dewey rejects the separations, which are constituted by New

England culture as “between the self and the world, soul and body, nature and God, subject and object, matter and spirit, the divine and the human, and the finite and the infinite” (EW 1:xxvii). Against these dualisms, Dewey tries to constitute the unity of nature.

On the other hand, Dewey was influenced by Hegel's conceptions of human culture and social institutions. The conceptual framework of Hegelian idealism as; absolute organic unity, single reality and its parts as biological organism, universal consciousness and life effects Dewey's early thoughts (Ibid.). The Hegelian influence provides Dewey the single and whole worldview and enables him to seek for a single method for philosophy.

In the early period, the development of Dewey's idea of experience is related to his searching a completed method for philosophy. We meet with the idea of experience in his searching a completed philosophical method. Dewey suggests the new psychology as the only method for philosophy. According to Dewey, old psychology reflected the view of Enlightenment and it neglects “the unity and continuity of experience or the psychical life” (Ibid, 51). He insists that the old psychology shows us the isolated subject, whose relations are separated from psychical life. However, the new psychology and the physiological psychology constitute a method of experiment. (Ibid, xxxii)

In addition to psychology, the development of biology and its fundamental concepts ‘organism’ and ‘its environment’ provide us the new idea of experience. Dewey argues that “with these new concepts it became impossible to think of experience or the psychical life as ‘an individual, isolated thing developing in a vacuum’” (Ibid.). For these reasons, Dewey states “the nature of all objects of philosophical inquiry is to be fixed by finding out what experience says about them. And Psychology is the scientific and systematic account of this experience” (Ibid, 123). The new

psychology presents the human being as a social being, not as an isolated subject. He states the position of new psychology and the place of experience in this view as follows;

It believes that truth, that reality, not necessary beliefs about reality, is given in the living experience of the soul's development. Experience is realistic, not abstract. Psychical life is the fullest, deepest, and richest manifestation of this experience. (Ibid, 60)

The reason why Dewey suggests psychology as the philosophical method depends on his view of “whole conscious experience”. In “Psychology as Philosophical Method” (EW 1:1886), he defines psychology as the science of consciousness. He argues that psychology shows the elements and development of experience in a unity. For this reason it is “philosophic method” and “it is the ultimate science of reality, because it declares what experience in its totality is”. (Ibid, 145)

Dewey claims that the psychological standpoint is necessary for philosophy against the view of the ‘thing-in-itself’. He criticizes traditional view of the ‘thing-in-itself’ and argues the necessity of psychology as a philosophical method as follows;

It [Tradition] had a thing-in-itself, something whose very existence was to be opposed to consciousness, as in the unknowable “substances” of Locke, the transcendent Deity of Berkeley, the sensations or impressions of Hume and Mill, the “transfigured real” of Spencer; and it used this thing-in-itself as the cause and criterion of conscious experience. Thus it contradicted itself; for, if psychology as method of philosophy means anything, it means that nothing shall be assumed except just conscious experience itself, and that the nature of all shall be ascertained from and within this. (Ibid, 146)

In *Psychology* (EW 2:1887), Dewey focuses on the process of knowledge; the mind and its process of knowing, sensation and feeling. In this book, the

idea of experience is given on the basis of the idea of self and knowing process. Dewey describes 'knowing' as an intellectual process and as an "activity which the self-experiences" (EW 2:9). In addition, he states, "feeling or the fact of interest is therefore as wide as the whole realm of self, and self is as wide as the whole realm of experience" (Ibid, 216). Dewey defines the characteristic of self as 'existing for itself' or "knowing that it exist". (Ibid, 8) This is the difference between self and physical phenomena. Dewey gives this difference as follow;

A stick, a stone, exists and undergoes changes; that is, has experiences. But it is aware neither of its existence nor of these changes. It does not, in short, exist for itself. It exists only for some consciousness. Consequently, the stone has no self. But the soul not only is, and changes, but it knows that it is, and what these experiences are which it passes through. *It exists for itself*. That is to say, it is a self. What distinguishes the facts of psychology from the facts of every other science is, accordingly, that they are *conscious* facts. (Ibid.)

According to Dewey, "sensations are not knowledge" (Ibid, 75). Knowledge is a process "by which these sensations are elaborated, on the one hand, into the objects known, and on the other into the subject knowing" (Ibid.). According to this view, Dewey searches the nature of the known world and the nature of the knowing self. He defines the nature of the known world with the notions of 'connection' and 'relation'. According to him, "actual knowledge is concerned with relations" (Ibid, 76) and these relations provide the unity of object and events and hold them together. Dewey defines 'world of related object' as a "universe of things and events arranged in space and time". (Ibid, 75) In addition he defines object as "(1) something having a certain permanence, (2) existing, therefore, aside from the mere occurrence of a sensation, and (3) capable of being presented to any normal mind". (Ibid.)

On the other hand, all objects in this world are connected and related to each other. All objects are joined to each other in space and time. For this reason, “We never experience any breach of continuity”. (Ibid, 76) This natural continuity provides us to pass one connecting link to another. Accordingly, the world, which includes related objects and natural continuity, is not a chaos. This world is a well ordered and “harmonious world, or cosmos”. Dewey presents his understanding of such connected and related world by saying that “all objects and events are considered as members of one system; they constitute a *universe*, one world, in which order, connection, is the universal rule”. (Ibid.)

The known world, as the world of objects and relations, is the first step for the transformation of sensations. The other step for this transformation is “the self which knows and idealizes” (Ibid, 77). Dewey defines these two processes with the idea of apperception. The first is “the formation of the world of known objects and relations out of the elementary sensations” (Ibid, 78) and the other is the “the formation of the knowing self. To these two processes the names of apperception and retention may be given” (Ibid.). He defines apperception and the relation of these two processes as follow;

Apperception may be defined, at the outset, as the reaction of mind by means of its organized structure upon the sensuous material presented to it. Retention is the reaction of the apperceived content upon the organized structure of the mind. Apperception organizes the world of knowledge by bringing the self to bear upon it; retention organizes the self by bringing the things known to bear upon it. Each process, accordingly, involves the other. (EW 2:78)

According to Dewey, the process of knowledge is discovering fundamental unities. The unity of facts, events and relations provide the truths of perfectly harmonious system. The main goal of knowledge is to see the organic unity and dependence of all facts in nature. (Ibid, 127)

In “The Philosophy of Thomas Hill Green” (EW 3:1889), Dewey introduces two very important concepts to present his empirical theory of self-realization: the concept of ‘genericity’ and ‘the principle of continuity’. “There is a principle of continuity which runs through his treatment of fact and theory, of form and content, of ideal and real, of ideal self and actual self, and this principle of continuity he later called one of the leading ideas of his view of experience.” (EW 3:xxviii)

Dewey focuses on the continuity of the individual’s life or actions, and tries to show a unity of life. He argues that “ideals, principles, concepts which direct action are generic, that is, they have developed out of past experience.” (Ibid.) He shows genesis of activities as a source of this continuity and as a source of the harmony of activities. He says that “this action has found expression in history, in the institutions, the laws, the customs, and the expectations, the rights and duties that make our life what it is” (Ibid, 33). According to this, present experience includes the past experience and all relational aspects of it in a continuous line. The generic character of activities overcomes the separations of the dimensions of experience by providing continuity, relations and harmony of activities.

In the middle of this period, Dewey’s main conception of experience starts to take shape. He thinks that philosophy is a method of interpretation of experience. As he says in his later works, the main subject of philosophy is experience. In a syllabus of one of his courses, he defines philosophy as a science of “conscious inquiry into experience” and as “the realization of the meaning of experience”. According to Dewey, both science and philosophy deal with only ‘experience’ because only experience represents the actual condition of life. However, he states only one distinction between them. While philosophy “reports the more generic (the wider) features of life”, science reports some features that are more specific. (Ibid, 211-212)

Dewey states the relation of philosophy and practice as his main philosophical emphasis. Therefore, his aim arises as the unity of thought and action. In “The Significance of the Problem of Knowledge” (EW 5:1897), he argues that the problem of knowledge is not a problem as philosophers argue. Dewey presents the Kantian dictum that “perception without conception is blind, while conception without perception is empty” (Kant 1965:93), and he criticizes this remark. For him, the sensationalist and rationalist attitudes work together in this dictum. (EW 5:4) Dewey calls this Kantian explanation of process of knowledge as “mystery”.

It is argued that for Dewey, experience is not only an epistemological issue but is also related to all aspects of human life and thoughts. Dewey presents this point by asking that “what is its meaning, not simply for reflective philosophy or in terms of epistemology itself, but what is its meaning in the historical movement of humanity and as a part of larger and more comprehensive experience?” (Ibid, 5) According to him, the problem, knowledge, is not an abstract discussion, as philosophers argued, rather it is about social life, which is organized practice of mankind. At this point, Dewey argues that the distinctions between sensation and thought, subject and object, mind and matter are “practical conflicts having their source in the very nature of modern life” (Ibid, 6).

In this early period, Dewey’s philosophical perspective is constituted as the criticism and the re-reading of traditional philosophy. He prefers to use old philosophical concepts and he tries to analyze them in a new method. On the other hand, Dewey focuses on the conception of organic unity and the conception of reality as the organic whole. With these fundamental conceptions Dewey presents his idea of experience depending on the notion of organic unity. The effect of Hegel’s philosophy arises with this

conception. However, in the middle of this early period, Dewey leaves his Hegelian perspective and absolutism.

3.2 Experience in Dewey's Experimentalist Period

In The Middle Works (1899-1924), it can be said that while Dewey's writings on social philosophy, education and logic increases, the impression of idealistic philosophy and physiological psychology decreases in his writings. In this period, Dewey's idea of experience develops on the basis of empiricism and pragmatism. We can see the shift from idealism to experimentalism in his philosophy. His argument that 'the notion of experience is the main subject of philosophy' is very fundamental in this period.

On the other hand, Dewey focuses on education and politics in the late part of middle period. We can say that development of the idea of experience in his philosophy has significant responses in his thoughts on education and politics. His essays on 'educational system for childhood' show that his aim to constitute the perception of the unity of nature, as a field of experience, in education.

In this period, Dewey's thoughts on experimental psychology change negatively. He argues that psychologists assume human experience as a state of consciousness and they cut it off from "connected whole of experience". In "Consciousness and Experience" (MW 1:1899), Dewey focuses on the psychologists' treatment about human being in social life. He criticizes the view that conceives "psychology as an account of the consciousness of individual, considered as something in and by itself" (MW 1:114). According to him, if we assume that the psychology is an account of consciousness, we cannot mention about the suggested connection between psychology and

philosophy. But, he argues that if we conceive the social individual in social life, we can see the relation of these two areas.

He argues that the state of consciousness is something created by psychologists. He claims that experience is not a state of consciousness. The process of experience refers history, laws, relations and various typical forms. (Ibid, 117) He defines 'psychological fallacy' as "the confusion of experience as it is to the one experiencing with what the psychologist makes out of it with his reflective analysis" (Ibid, 118). According to him, to assume that states of consciousness exist by themselves as ready-made materials is the main problem of this fallacy. For him, "knowing, willing, feeling, name states of consciousness not in terms of themselves, but in terms of acts, attitudes, found in experience" (Ibid, 119).

Dewey wants to "reconstruct experience in its life-history" (Ibid, 126), not as a state of consciousness. Dewey states the problem of epistemologists as follow;

The epistemologist's problem is, indeed usually put as the question of how the subject can so far "transcend" itself as to get valid assurance of the objective world. The very phraseology in which the problem is put reveals the thoroughness of the psychologist's revenge. Just and only because experience has been reduced to "state of consciousness" as independent existences, does the question of self-transcendence have any meaning. (Ibid, 122)

The third volume of *The Middle Works* (MW 3, 1803-1806) is very considerable in order to observe the development of Dewey's idea of experience. In this volume, Dewey writes on the isolated individual, who is created by Continental European Tradition, and on the social man. For him, "the emergence of the isolated individual" prevents the understanding of the corporate world, in which social individual lives as a part of it. (MW 3:xi) He focuses on the importance of social individual and his relation with his

environment as a part of it. According to him, the real gap is not between man and world, rather the gap is within the scientific knowledge of man. He suggests the definition of science as “a mode of controlling our active relations with the world of experienced things” (Ibid, 14).

In this volume, the group of essays emphasizes the inclusiveness of Dewey’s conception of experience. He defines experience as reality and presents all activities and all epistemological notions as the modes of experience. He says that “the real is what is experienced, as it is experienced – emotionally, aesthetically, cognitively, morally” (Ibid, xx). Accordingly, knowledge and truth are “modes of experiencing” that refers to the experience of relations of real things. There are many “modes of experiencing” and knowledge is one of these modes. On the other hand, empirical reality does not include only human experience. Dewey says that, “nonhuman nature, either as it existed before there was human life or as it exists beyond the reach of our senses” (Ibid.) is included in empirical reality.

One of the important essays “Reality as Experience” (MW 3, 1906) reflects his argument that ‘the real is what is experienced’. In this essay, Dewey states the identification of experience and reality. He presents the identification of reality and experience as the ultimate field. He argues that if we accept substance, mind or consciousness that is prior to reality and experience, we cannot mention about this identification. (Ibid, 102)

Dewey argues that science focuses on a part of reality, so it cannot take hold of the whole reality. For this reason, science cannot see the continuity of experience, or the generic character of experience, which includes both the past and the future reality in it. For him, in philosophy, there is a transformation of experience from the past to future. Experience provides this transformation of reality by its generic character. In this respect, experience

does not refer only a state of things or events, or it does not refer present sensations of them. It refers or includes the transformation of reality from the past to future. (Ibid, 104) According to this, experience is a very broad and comprehensive field that covers all relations in reality.

In “The Experimental Theory of Knowledge” (MW 3, 1906), Dewey focuses on the problem of the possibility of knowledge. He asks “what sort of course must it be to constitute knowledge?” (Ibid, 107) He argues that the problem of epistemology is to assume that “knowledge is not a natural function or event, but a mystery” (Ibid, 120). Here, he uses the word “mystery” for the epistemological assumption of ‘the non-natural conditions of back of knowledge’. He states the problem of epistemology as a ‘mystery’ and presents two problems of epistemology those arise from this ‘mystery’ as follows;

The mystery would be great enough if knowledge were constituted by non-natural conditions back of knowledge, but the mystery is increased by the fact that the conditions are defined so as to be incompatible with knowledge. Hence the primary problem of epistemology is: How is knowledge, knowledge at large, possible? Because of the incompatibility between the concrete occurrence and function of knowledge and the conditions back of it to which it must conform, a second problem arises: How is knowledge in general, valid? (Ibid.)

From this point of view, Dewey advocates and evaluates the experimental-natural theory of knowledge against transcendental theory of knowledge. He argues that the reason why epistemology makes the possibility of knowledge a problem is its assumptions. It assumes “back of knowledge conditions incompatible with the obvious traits of knowledge as it empirically exists” (Ibid, 121). For Dewey, according to the assumptions of transcendental theory of knowledge, the object of knowledge is not a natural object, “but some ready-made state of mind or consciousness, something purely

“subjective”, a peculiar kind of existence which lives, moves, and has its being in a realm different from things to be known” (Ibid.)

Dewey criticizes subjectivist and dualistic epistemology of modern thought. According to him, “the region of the “unreal”, the source of opinion and error, was located exclusively in the individual” (Ibid, 122) by modern thought. According to this view, he argues, object was perceived as all real but the subject could conceive “the object only through his own subjective states, his “sensations” and “ideas” (Ibid.). Dewey argues that this view of modern thought retained “The Greek conception of two orders of existence”. However, Dewey argues that while the Greek conception of two orders “characterizing the universe itself”, modern conception states two orders as the universe and the individual mind. For this reason, Dewey says “The Greek problem of the possibility of error became the modern problem of the possibility of knowledge” (Ibid.).

Dewey compares the transcendentalist and empiricist views on their explanation of the process of knowledge. According to him, the separation between mental and non-mental creates the duality and because of this duality, the problem of possibility of knowledge arises. He again calls this separation as psychological fallacy. He states that

He [transcendentalist] begins by supposing that the smell of our illustration is a purely mental or psychical state, so that the question of logical reference or intention is the problem of how the merely mental can “know” the extra-mental. But from a strictly empirical point of view, the smell which knows is no more merely mental than is the rose known. We may say that the smell when involving conscious meaning or intention is “mental,” but this term “mental” does not denote some separate type of existence - existence as a state of consciousness. It denotes only the fact that the smell, a real and non-psychical object, now exercises an intellectual function. (Ibid, 124)

The other significant essay is “The Postulate of Immediate Empiricism” (MW 3, 1905) in this period. This essay reflects Dewey’s radical empiricism. In this essay, he gives his presupposition on “what experience is and means” (Ibid, 158) and he argues that the fundamental difference between pragmatism, humanism, empiricism and functionalism is their presuppositions on experience. He says that “if you wish to find out what subjective, objective, physical, mental, cosmic, psychic, cause, substance, purpose, activity, evil, being, quality – any philosophical term, in short – means, go to experience and see what the thing is experienced as” (Ibid, 164).

The postulate “what the thing is experienced as” arises as the postulate of immediate empiricism. He explains this as follow;

Immediate empiricism postulates that things – anything, everything, in the ordinary or non-technical use of the term “thing” - are what they are experienced as. Hence, if one wishes to describe anything truly, his task is to tell what it is experienced as being. (Ibid, 159)

As I said before, Dewey’s empiricism claims that things can be known immediately. Accordingly, immediate experience is possible and there is no condition of back of knowledge. This postulate can be translated as “things (or, ultimately, Reality, Being) are only and just what they are known to be or that things are, or Reality is, what is for a conscious knower” (Ibid.).

On the other hand, experiences change. For example; if I hear a noise, I assume there is a person behind the door and I am frightened. Afterwards, I realize that the reason of the noise is the wind. It is not change of reality or it is not change of truth. Dewey presents the change of experience as follows;

The experience has changed; that is the thing experienced has changed – not that an unreality has given place to a reality, nor that some transcendental (unexperienced) reality has changed, not that

truth has changed but just and only the concrete reality experienced has changed. This is a change of experienced existence affected through the medium of cognition. (Ibid.)

After that, he defines experience in terms of some distinctions. He says that the earlier experience is experience although it is not true. I heard a noise from the door and I was frightened, then I experienced it, true or not. Dewey asks what is this experienced and states that “in all probability the experience is simply and just of fright-at-the-noise. Later one may (or may not) have an experience describable as I-know-I-am (or-was) and improperly or properly frightened. (Ibid, 162)

For this postulate, the question arises as follow “If things are what they are experienced as being, how can the distinction be drawn between illusion and the true state of the case?” (Ibid, 163) Dewey says that “it is that experience which it is, and no other” and answers this question as follow;

The question of truth is not as to whether Being or Non-Being, Reality or mere Appearance, is experienced, but as to the worth of a certain concretely experienced thing. The only way of passing upon this question is by sticking in the most uncompromising fashion to that experience as real. (Ibid.)

This postulate does not claim that the existence of things depend on experience. In the final notes of this essay, Dewey shortly says that things exist in experience in continuity. The existence of thing is prior to the human experience. According to this, the world of objects has independent existence from human experience. (Ibid, 166)

This volume of middle period includes significant essays, in which the conceptual framework of Dewey’s theory of experience is constituted. First, he represents experience as reality. According to this, experience reflects all reality both earlier and later. It preserves both past and present with its

generic character and it reflects reality in continuity. Experience has a generic character, which means there is an uninterrupted line from the past to present. As I said before, the principle of continuity is one of the leading principle of theory of experience.

Second, Dewey does not accept any non-natural condition back of knowledge. For him, experience is natural thing and the field of experience is nature. In later, he will say, experience is possible “in-and-by nature”.

Third, the immediate experience is the other leading principles of his theory. According to this principle, feeling, knowing or thinking are modes of experience and the thing is immediately felt, known or thought. There is no mediation or condition of back of knowledge in experience. Immediate experience can be seen as a methodological strategy of Dewey’s theory of experience. On the other hand, it is very significant to understand the transition to the ontological conception of experience from empirical conception of experience. Dewey’s notion of immediate experience prevents the condition of back of knowledge.

The postulate that “what the thing is experienced as” does not refer to a type of subjectivism and does not mean dependent existence of a thing. Dewey argues that thing is immediately known or experienced with its own content, or its concrete thinghood, and its existence is prior to experience. These three definitions or explanations should also be saved for clear understanding of his later arguments on experience. This volume shows the relationship between knowledge and experience and also between experience and experienced things. Thus, we can see the constitution of the idea of experience in Dewey’s immediate empiricist theory of knowledge. His ‘naturalistic experimental approach’ arises against to the traditional supernatural approach.

In this period, with the effects of Darwinism, Dewey's naturalism arises. Dewey focuses on the unity of nature and on the objection to subjectivist dualism. *The Influence of Darwin in Philosophy* (MW 4, 1910) shows us Dewey's naturalistic view and it can be seen as the report of Darwinism with the pragmatic outlook. The Darwinian "emphasis on the changing, the multiple and heterogeneous and the specific" (MW4: xii) are the main aspects of Darwin's influence on Dewey. The notion of change enters Dewey's thoughts as an important part of his view of nature. He defines nature as "an infinite categories of changes" (Ibid, 47).

"The Influence of Darwinism on Philosophy" (MW 4, 1909) is one of the important essays, which shows the Darwinian effects on Dewey's pragmatic naturalism. In this essay, Dewey focuses on Darwinian conception of organism and environment. According to Dewey, the publication of *Origin of Species* provides a new mode of thinking, which transforms the idea of knowledge, morals and politics. He states that "the Origin of Species introduced a mode of thinking that in the end was bound to transform the logic of knowledge, and hence the treatment of morals, politics and religion". (Ibid, 4)

Dewey is influenced by the Darwinian conception of 'the flux of nature' and the change in life. Dewey also focuses on the progressive organization, which continues until "a completed, perfect end" (Ibid, 6) in nature. He states that

This formal activity which operates throughout a series of changes and holds them to a single course; which subordinates their aimless flux to its own perfect manifestation; which, leaping the boundaries of space and time, keeps individuals distant in space and remote in time to a uniform type of structure and function: this principle seemed to give insight into the very nature of reality itself. (Ibid.)

According to Dewey, The Darwinian principle of natural selection and its conceptions, as organic adaptation and struggle for existence, changes the philosophical thinking on living being, which assumes a designer as “a prior intelligent causal force to plan and preordain them” (Ibid, 10). Change is very central principle of nature. For Dewey, all scientific knowledge, which tries to present reality behind the nature, and philosophical knowledge are conducted by this principle. Dewey states that “human experience is in flux” (Ibid, 7), which is the flux of change in whole nature.

On the other hand, depending on this view, Dewey describes the word ‘metaphysics’ as “the description and analysis of the ultimate, irreducible, generic traits of existence” (MW 8:x). Dewey states “the generic traits of existence” as the subject-matter of metaphysical inquiry by the agency of the generic character of Darwinian theory. He presents the subject-matter of metaphysical inquiry with the Darwinian conceptual framework, as interaction, and change. For him, the world as a whole is the subject of this inquiry. According to this, metaphysics is “a study of such generic traits as specificity, interaction, and change in existences” (Ibid, xi).

From this point of view, he compares metaphysical inquiry with scientific one, especially with the biology, or theory of evolution. According to this, theory of evolution and its traits of diversity, interaction and change provide the ultimate origin for the scientific subject matter. For Dewey with the theory of evolution, we can see the interaction of the world and existences in their generic character.

In 1916, Dewey wrote one of his main books *Democracy and Education* and he defines education, depending on his definition of experience. Experience is not something that happens to a person, “it refers to a pattern of events in which the organism is deliberately or with some awareness attending or

acting upon something and undergoing or suffering the consequences of the action” (MW 9:x). This definition again shows that experience includes all acting, knowing and feeling. Dewey defines education according to this definition of experience. “Education is the process by which on the basis of present experiences we make future experiences more accessible, meaningful, or controllable” (Ibid.).

The definition of experience as an ‘undergoing or suffering’ is one of the important aspects of Dewey’s theory of experience. Dewey explains the idea of undergoing as the passive part of the nature of experience. For him, experience has a combination of active and passive elements. “On the active hand, experience is trying. On the passive, it is undergoing.” (Ibid, 146). He explains the connection of these two elements as follows;

The connection of these two phases of experience measures the fruitfulness or value of the experience. Mere activity does not constitute experience. It is dispersive, centrifugal, dissipating. Experience as trying involves change, but change is meaningless transition unless it is consciously connected with the return wave of consequences which flow from it. When an activity is continued into the undergoing of consequences, when the change made by action is reflected back into a change made in us, the mere flux is loaded with significance. (Ibid.)

Dewey wants to show that the idea of experience should take place in a continuous relations or interactions. According to this, experience does not involve two distinct things or two independent existences. He says that “in the original experience the state of mind has no independent existence, but it is a quality of the experienced situation. Actually, it has no independent existence in experience” (MW 7:xvii-xviii).

For my current purpose, another important book of Dewey, which reflects his notion of experience is *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (RP, MW 12, 1920). In

this book, we meet the full definition of experience, which will not change but will improve as his views mature. According to this, experience is different from sensation, “it occurs in the interaction of organism and environment, in which adaptation of the one or adjustment of the other” (MW 12:xv).

Fundamentally, experience is activity and an awareness of it, a doing, and creature acting on its surroundings. In the nature of things, changes result from action, and they in turn react upon the creature and its activities. Thus every creature undergoes, or suffers, the consequences of its acts. Experience is this close connection between doing and undergoing. (Ibid.)

Dewey accepts two kinds of experience in this sense. The first is “an experience which is just simple awareness, and is not vital or significant” (MW 12:xv), and the second “an experience in which doing and undergoing are closely connected, which is vital and significant” (Ibid.). The difference of these two types is ‘learning’. While there is no learning in the first, there is in the second. So, “experience in its full sense, then, includes learning, continuous observation shot through with thinking, and so is meaningful, and is constituted by a close connection between doing and undergoing” (Ibid).

The first and very impressive sentence of RP, is that of “Man differs from the lower animals because he preserves his past experiences” (Ibid, 80). Having the past experience is the characteristic element of human being. Human being remembers preserves and records his experiences and this is “the difference between bestiality and humanity” (Ibid.). On the other hand, by using this ability, human being creates a culture and changes the physical nature to culture.

For Dewey, the primary life of memory is emotional, not intellectual or practical. The reason of the priority of emotions is the priority of human

interests in preserving his past experience. Dewey thinks on the first human being in nature, not on intellectual modern man. For this reason, he suggests natural human being and his past experiences as imagination with his fancy and interests (Ibid.). For him, the natural human being acts and remembers depending on his emotions and interests. Because of this reason, to see his relation with his past experiences is valuable for Dewey. At this point, Dewey says that “memory is vicarious experience in which there are all the emotional values of actual experience without its strains, vicissitudes and troubles” (Ibid, 81).

In all sections of RP, Dewey offers the notion of ‘change’ for what he sees as the problem in classical philosophy. Accordingly, the title of third section is “Changed Conceptions of Experience and Reason”. He asks “what is experience and what is Reason, Mind? Is a Reason outside experience and above it needed to supply assured principles to science and conduct?” (Ibid, 124). He also focuses on the limits and scope of experience and its trustfulness in science and in behavior.

Dewey says that the well-known answer of traditional philosophy for the question of experience is “experience never rises above the level of the particular, the contingent, and the probable. Only a power transcending in origin and content any and all conceivable experience can attain to universal, necessary and certain authority and direction” (Ibid). Dewey argues that the classical empiricists also admitted this view and they could not make eligible argument for experience. So, Dewey wants to show the possibility to make claims which present experience as a guide in science and moral life. For him, with the social, scientific, and intellectual changes, the new conception of experience is possible.

Two factors can show the new conception of experience and the place of reason in experience. The first factor is 'change', which is in 'the actual nature of experience' and the second factor is "the development of a psychology based upon biology which makes possible a new scientific formulation of the nature of experience" (Ibid, 128).

According to Dewey, the development of biology provides us the new picture of world. Life is an activity and this activity is continuous and adapted to nature. This adaptation is not passive state but it is continuous transformation in environment. The organism is actively included in this state. So, this active transformation and inherent power of life shows us "what a change this point of view entails in the traditional notions of experience" (Ibid, 129). So, Dewey argues that;

Experience becomes an affair primarily of doing. The organism acts in accordance with its own structure, simple or complex, upon its surroundings. As a consequence the changes produced in the environment react upon the organism and its activities. The living creature undergoes, suffers, consequences of its own behavior. This close connection between doing and suffering or undergoing forms what we call experience. Disconnected doing and disconnected suffering are neither of them experiences. (Ibid.)

For Dewey, this claim of experience has certain implications for philosophy. First, the interaction of organism and environment as resulting in adaptation shows that knowledge is in a derived position or secondary in origin. "Knowledge is not something separate and self-sufficing, but is involved in the process by which life is sustained and evolved. The senses lose their place as gateways of knowing to take their rightful place as stimuli to action" (Ibid.). Dewey gives an example that the priority of an animal in nature "is not an idle piece of information about something indifferently going on in the world" (Ibid, 130), rather it is non-cognitive and adaptive action in life. So Dewey says that "the discussion of sensations belongs under the head of

immediate stimulus and response, not under the head of knowledge” (Ibid.). According to this saying, Dewey accepts that sensations are not true elements in knowledge, as rationalists argue. But the reason of Dewey and rationalists’ is different. For Dewey sensations are not parts of knowledge. He explains the place of sensations in knowledge as follows;

They are not ways of knowing things inferior in value to reflective ways, to the ways that require thought and inference, because they are not ways of knowing at all. They are stimuli to reflection and inference....Sensation is thus, as the sensationalist claimed, the beginning of knowledge, but only in the sense that the experienced shock of change is the necessary stimulus to the investigating and comparing which eventually produce knowledge. (Ibid, 131)

Dewey argues that if we can see the experience in the life-process, this kind of sensationalism, which claims the “atomism of sensations”, can be eliminated. For Dewey, “the true stuff of experience is adaptive courses of action, habits, active functions, connections of doing and undergoing; sensori-motor coordinations”. (Ibid, 132)

In his middle works, experience is handled from many perspectives, such as radical empiricism, Darwinism and pragmatism. However, we can see a progressive line in its handling. In every different essay, Dewey focuses on different aspects of experience and he preserves all its previous aspects. For this reason, as I said before, there is no sharp change in his notion of experience. The notion of experience has been improved with the new conceptual framework. In his later works, the notion of experience will find its central meaning in philosophy. The later period is important for both the main arguments of this study and understanding Dewey’s complete theory of experience.

3.3 Experience in Dewey's Naturalist Period

The Later Works (1925-1953) can be seen as the manifestation of Dewey's philosophy of experience and his naturalist view. Of course, there is an improved line from his early writings to the later, but in his later works we can see his thoughts in a unity. In this period, Dewey wrote many books, which directly reflect his theory of experience.

It is argued that before this period Dewey emphasizes the epistemological conception of experience. He tries to define his idea of experience by using the traditional epistemological conceptual framework. He uses traditional concepts and tries to change this conception of experience. As he said, traditional view considers the problem of experience and also the problem of philosophy as the epistemological problem. For this reason, Dewey struggles with this traditional perspective. So, he presents his idea of experience depending on this struggle or analyzing. However, in later period, we meet Dewey's own conception of experience.

It can be said that there is a little shift in his thought with this new conception. The shift in the idea of experience is from epistemology to ontology. From now on, Dewey presents his idea of experience as interaction relations, which is a field that includes nature, history and culture.

The first volume of *The Later Works* is also one of the most significant books of Dewey; *Experience and Nature* (EN, LW 1, 1925). EN gives us the systematic theory of experience. In EN, we conceive that experience is not sense data, not idea, not perception, not consciousness and not a mental state, but experience is culture, life and history.

As the starting point, Dewey defines things of ordinary experience that “contain within themselves a mixture of the perilous and uncertain with the settled and uniform” (LW 1:5). For him, “the world is precarious and perilous” (Ibid, 44) and the main struggle of man is to grasp regularity and to control uncertainty of the world. Accordingly, Dewey considers the attempt of traditional philosophy as “setting up a purely *theoretical* security and certainty” (Ibid, 5).

According to this attempt, traditional philosophy tried to find unity and permanence against plurality and change. So, it creates the notion of substance in order to provide this permanent world. However, the world is far from being secure. For Dewey “the world is a scene of risk; it is uncertain, unstable, uncannily unstable. Its dangers are irregular, inconstant, not to be counted upon as to their times and seasons” (Ibid, 43). Man living in an awful and fearful world and he finds himself in an uncertain, uncontrollable and unpredictable world of empirical things.

Dewey focuses on this precarious world and the place of man in this world. According to him, against this precarious aspect of the world, man creates religion, cults, myths, art, morals and law. (Ibid.) Accordingly, the cultural part of man’s life is the precarious and perilous world. Culture contains many things that emerge from this precarious world. This is the reason why Dewey suggests culture as experience. Culture includes all relations and all activities of man in such an uncertain world.

Dewey gives the definition of culture by Edward Burnett Tylor, as “complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, custom, and any other capabilities, acquired by a man as a member of society” (Ibid, 42). Culture is diversified in different aspects of society such as; politics, law, art, science,

philosophy, language and religion. Culture reflects all aspects of life and the relation of life and world or nature.

For Dewey, the notion of 'culture' reflects the historical and cultural characters of human nature, which differentiate human being from animal. Dewey emphasizes the human being as a historical and cultural as well as a biological being. He uses culture in the anthropological sense. On the other hand, Dewey wants to avoid misunderstanding about the notions of metaphysics and experience, and this is seen as another reason for his use of the term 'culture' for experience. Dewey does not want to use the word 'metaphysics' in the Aristotelian sense. For metaphysics, he says "the nature of the existential world in which we live" (Ibid, 45) or he says "metaphysics is cognizance of the generic traits of existence" (Ibid, 50).

As we saw before, the generic character of experience and the existence of generic traits in nature are very important part of the theory of experience. In addition, these traits are in all natural things, events and situations. Accordingly, for Dewey, natural existence has certain traits, those are not studied specific sciences, but they are recognized in some form because they can be found in some 'proportional union' in all situations. "The "doings and undergoing that constitute experience" are marked by a union of the precarious and the assured, the perilous and the safe, the novel and the familiar, or the irregular and the uniform." (Ibid, x) Dewey lists the union of polarities as follow;

Structure and process, substance and accident, matter and energy, permanence and flux, one and many, continuity and discreteness, order and progress, law and liberty, uniformity and growth, tradition and innovation, rational will and impelling desires, proof and discovery, the actual and the possible, are names given to various phases of their conjunction, and the issue of living depends upon the art with which these things are adjusted to each other. (Ibid, 67)

These traits such as; “qualities and relations, individualities and uniformities, finalities and efficacies, contingencies and necessities” (Ibid, 314) are also bound together in nature itself. These generic traits “are manifested by existences of all kinds without regard to their differentiation into physical and mental” (Ibid, 308). For Dewey, these traits and qualities indicate both the human condition and the condition of nature. As a part of nature, the nature of human being or the existential condition of human includes these traits. As an evolutionary naturalist for Dewey, “all the qualities that emerge in human culture or experience require as conditions for their existence objective extra organic natural traits. These traits are not given all together nor are they reducible to each other” (Ibid, xiv).

On the other hand, Dewey wants to redefine the role of man in culture or the role of human organism in nature. Moreover, he believes that the definition of relationship between human and its environment, as he states interaction or transaction, is very important parts of this reconstructive role of man. He wants to define experience according to this interactive relation and according to cultural role of man. For this reason, Dewey prefers to use the term ‘culture’ instead of experience in order to avoid the misunderstanding about private and subjective characters of experience.

Experience, in this sense, is a broad field that includes all relations of human and nature and culture. Dewey tries to avoid traditional identification of experience with the private, subjective and mentalistic. For this reason, Dewey prefers to ask ‘whose culture?’ instead of asking ‘whose experience?’ He thinks that “when that term [culture] is substituted, the qualities of culture in the anthropological sense cannot plausibly be considered as private and exclusive” (Ibid, xii).

In *Experience and Nature*, Dewey adopts the philosophical perspective of naturalistic empiricism or empirical naturalism. In the first chapter of *Experience and Nature*, Dewey focuses on traditional separation of “man and experience from nature” (Ibid, 10). Accordingly, he deals with the idea of nature and its perception or understanding in philosophy. He argues that traditional philosophy presents experience as something that belongs to human beings and presents nature, which is apart from experience. He criticizes traditional thinkers as follows;

Experience to them is not only something extraneous which is occasionally superimposed upon nature, but it forms a veil or screen which shuts us off from nature, unless in some way it can be “transcended.” So something non-natural by way of reason or intuition is introduced, something supra-empirical. According to an opposite school experience fares as badly, nature being thought to signify something wholly material and mechanistic; to frame a theory of experience in naturalistic terms is, accordingly, to degrade and deny the noble and ideal values that characterize experience. (Ibid.)

On the other hand, Dewey presents experience in different context, that states the relationship between nature and experience harmoniously, in which “experience presents itself as the method, and the only method, for getting at nature, penetrating its secrets, and wherein nature empirically disclosed deepens, enriches and directs the further development of experience” (Ibid, 11). Dewey thinks that philosophy can use the empirical method of natural science, in which nature and experience are seen as a union. Philosophy should take experience as a starting point and as a method of nature. According to him, if we see the union of experience and nature (in the sense of scientific empirical method), we say that “experience is of as well as in nature” (Ibid, 12).

Things interacting in certain ways are experience; they are what is experienced. Linked in certain other ways with another natural

object—the human organism—they are how things are experienced as well. Experience thus reaches down into nature; it has depth. (Ibid.)

Dewey calls this empirical method as “the denotative method” (Ibid, 16). According to this, “philosophy is a mode of reflection” (Ibid.). This explanation depends on his distinction between primary and secondary (reflective) experiences. According to this, while primary experience has crude, raw, gross and macroscopic objects, secondary experience is a refined system and it has derived objects of reflection.

According to Dewey, the objects of philosophy, and also of science, belong to the secondary experience. Reflection arises from the primary experience (Ibid, 15). “The experiential or denotative method tells us that we must go behind the refinements and elaborations of reflective experience to the compulsory things of our doings, enjoyments and sufferings.” (Ibid, 375)

According to Dewey, the notion of experience asserts “the method of pointing, finding, showing, and the necessity of seeing what is pointed to and accepting what is found in good faith and without discount” (Ibid, 372). This is the value of the notion of experience for philosophy. ‘Experience’ is denotative method of philosophy. In philosophy, for Dewey, “to define and envisage “reality” according to esthetic, moral or logical canons, we need the notion of experience to remind us that “reality” includes whatever is denotatively found. (Ibid.)

On the other hand, for Dewey, experience is a ‘double-barrelled’ word, as James called in *Essays in Radical Empiricism*. Dewey explains this character of experience as follows;

“Experience” denotes the planted field, the sowed seeds, the reaped harvests, the changes of night and day, spring and autumn, wet and

dry, heat and cold, that are observed, feared, longed for; it also denotes the one who plants and reaps, who works and rejoices, hopes, fears, plans, invokes magic or chemistry to aid him, who is downcast or triumphant. It is “double- barreled” in that it recognizes in its primary integrity no division between act and material, subject and object, but contains them both in an unanalyzed totality. (Ibid, 18-19)

Experience refers the world in which we live and all history of this world. History “includes the earth and the physical relatives of man” (Ibid, 370). Dewey argues that like experience, history is ‘double-baralled’ fact. Dewey explains the analysis of experience and history as follow;

History denotes both objective conditions, forces, events and also the human record and estimate of these events. Similarly experience denotes whatever is experienced, whatever is undergone and tried, and also processes of experiencing. As it is the essence of “history” to have meanings termed both subjective and objective, so with “experience.” (Ibid.)

According to double-baralled character of experience, for Dewey, only empirical method can show experience as such ‘integrated unity’. For him, the problem of the non-empirical method is that it starts “with a reflective product as if it were primary, as if it were the originally “given”” (Ibid, 19). Because of this starting point, the non-empirical method assumes the object and subject, mind and matter to be separate and independent. So, this separateness causes “the problem of how it is possible to know at all; how an outer world can affect an inner mind; how the acts of mind can reach out and lay hold of objects defined in antithesis to them” (Ibid, 19-20). For him, in the seventeenth century the concept of experience is considered as “equivalent of subjective private consciousness set over against nature”. For this reason, the unity nature and experience cannot be conceived in philosophy. (Ibid, 21)

As indicated, for the main argument of this study, the view, which argues experience is a private mental state, creates the main problem of philosophical

thinking of experience. Dewey thinks that this psychological-based argument became 'malicious', with Santayana's word, for philosophy. Dewey argues that, for this perspective, mental attitudes are considered "as self-sufficient and complete in themselves, as that which is primarily given, the sole original and therefore indubitable data" (Ibid, 24).

On the other hand, certain features of primary experience are considered "as not-given dubious things that could be reached only by endowing the only certain thing, the mental, with some miraculous power" (Ibid.). The main problem is "this identification of the mental as the sole "given" in a primary, original way, appeal to experience" (Ibid.) and this way necessarily goes to subjectivism.

On the other hand, the difference between cognitive and non-cognitive experience or the inclusiveness of cognitive experience is the other problem of non-empirical method. Dewey accepts that the object of experience will become the cognitive object but he argues that knowledge includes the object of non-cognitive experience. He explains this situation as follow;

It is not denied that any experienced subject-matter whatever may become an object of reflection and cognitive inspection. But the emphasis is upon "become"; the cognitive never is all-inclusive: that is, when the material of a prior non-cognitive experience is the object of knowledge, it and the act of knowing are themselves included within a new and wider non-cognitive experience—and this situation can never be transcended. (Ibid, 30)

The word experience is used as to be 'of' natural world. Experience refers to all aspects of nature with which man deals as a part of it. Dewey says that "experience is a word used to designate, in a summary fashion, the complex of all which is distinctively human" (Ibid, 331).

Experience, includes everything and anything, actual or potential, that we think of and talk about... And if what has been said is taken literally, “experience” denotes just this wide universe.... Experience includes dreams, insanity, illness, death, labor, war, confusion, ambiguity, lies and error; it includes transcendental systems as well as empirical ones; magic and superstition as well as science. (Ibid, 371)

For the philosophic reflection, experience denotes both the field and the man. This denotation is the value of the notion of experience. “Experience denotes what is experienced, the world of events and persons; and it denotes that world caught up into experiencing, the career and destiny of mankind” (Ibid, 384).

In addition Dewey’s “theory of experience does not include any existence beyond the reach of experience” (LW 16:383). For him, “experience is the foreground of nature” (Ibid, 384). He explains the meaning of italicized “of” saying that;

The italicized “of” means that experience is itself “natural” and as such is nature's own foreground. It thus denies that “experience” is something superadded from outside, whether by a supra-natural Being, or by an extra-natural Ego, Subject, Self, Mind, Consciousness, or whatever. (Ibid.)

One of the important books, in which Dewey presents the notion of experience in different perspective, is *Art as Experience* (AE, LW 10, 1934). In AE, Dewey’s idea of ‘experience as culture’ arises based on his notion of art. According to him, art is the central concern of philosophy and philosopher must recognize this concern. He says, “there is no test that so surely reveals the one-sidedness of a philosophy as its treatment of art and esthetic experience (LW 10:278).

In AE, Dewey explains his view of art within the notion of immediate experience. The relationship between experience and art is constituted based on the content of his esthetics. He says, “its actual content is simple: Knowledge is instrumental to the enrichment of immediate experience. That enrichment is in essence what art provides” (Ibid, 294). In the introduction of LW 10, Abraham Kaplan explains Dewey’s philosophy of art as follows;

The obverse encapsulates Dewey’s philosophy of art: whatever provides in some degree the enrichment of immediate experience is in that measure esthetic. The rest is commentary, in which Dewey explicates “experience”, “immediacy”, and “enrichment”. (Ibid, ix)

The esthetic experience of the human being is explained in terms of art, which is one of the important dimensions of human activity or human life. On the other hand, art reveals the values of human life within experience. Alexander (1987) presents the relationship between Dewey’s notions of art and experience as follows;

Art reveals that experience is capable of being intelligently and creatively appropriated and transformed. Through art man is able to realize the potentiality for meaning and value to be directly embodied in the world. The moral thought by the arts is that when the self-conscious attitude of the artist toward his material has been extended to all experience, to the whole range of human life, then life itself is capable of becoming an art. (Alexander 1987:185)

On the other hand, Dewey’s notion of art and its relation to the notion of experience are formed within his rejection of dualisms. Accordingly, Dewey argues that the separation of theory and practice causes the separation between esthetic experience and common-sense experience and also, the separation of philosophy and social institutions of the human being. These separations are originated from the dualism of the intellect in traditional philosophy. Dewey argues that these dualisms create the cultural dualisms in human life. Kaplan presents the notion of cultural dualism as follow;

In the perspective of cultural dualism, art is counterposed to science as subjective rather than objective, private rather than public, concrete rather than abstract, particular rather than general, sensory rather than intellectual. But we speak of understanding art, even such a non-representational art as music; and “intellectual”, applied to an experience, Dewey argues “simply names the fact that the experience has meaning”. (LW 10: xiii)

According to Dewey, the difference of esthetic experience, from experience of thinking, is originated from its materials. “The material of the fine arts consists of qualities; that of experience having intellectual conclusion are signs or symbols... The idea that the artist does not think as intently and penetratingly as a scientific inquirer... is absurd” (Ibid, 45)

Accordingly, Dewey considers art as experience, which refers to the continuous interaction of an organism and nature. That is, art is “clarified and intensified development of traits that belong to every normally complete experience”. (Ibid, 53)

As said before, Dewey’s notion of experience in his later period refers to his naturalism in full sense. In this naturalist perspective, Dewey presents ‘experience’ in sociological, anthropological, historical and cultural points of view. ‘Experience’ includes both intellectual and social dimensions of the human being. In this regard, ‘experience’ includes not only natural relations of the living organism in the world, but also includes its social and cultural elements including its moral and esthetic values.

CHAPTER 4

RECONSTRUCTION OF THE CONCEPT OF EXPERIENCE: LIVED EXPERIENCE

As said, in general, the notion of experience is considered as an instrument that provides the knowledge of the external world in epistemology. While this understanding assumes the separation of the human being and its world, it has some difficulties in explaining the place of ‘experience’ in the relationship between the human being and the world. Many philosophical approaches in traditional philosophy, especially rationalist approaches, present ‘experience’ as something, which transcends nature or natural events. This problem takes a special form in subjectivist accounts where experience is handled as something belonging to the subject, and yet the subject is still not conceived in naturalistic terms. Even in the philosophies of modern thinkers such as Descartes and Kant, experience appears, at the end of the day, to be something given by God. Therefore, according to this understanding ‘experience’ is seen as simply supernatural.

Subjectivist accounts’ and Kant’s understanding of ‘experience’ are two main attitudes in modern philosophy. This study argues that these two types of understanding include non-natural aspects in explaining both the place of the human being in the world and the concept of experience. It is argued that these non-natural aspects prevent a different conception of experience in a broad sense.

This study argues that if any faculty, disposition or possibility can no longer be explained by means of regular-natural events of the same nature then we can rightly start being suspicious about a kind of fallacy. By adopting this

naturalist starting point, it is argued that the conception of experience, which is not explained by regular and immanent aspects of nature, brings a sort of speculative philosophizing. Such conceptual distortion or limitation appears in all situations, in which we cannot provide natural explanation for ‘experience’.

One of the main purposes of this study is to criticize this subjectivist and idealist perspective on ‘experience’ by adopting naturally given explanations and a naturalist perspective. It is argued that the problems in our perceptions of the world can be explained by the facts that are provided to us by nature. Accordingly, in this chapter, first the naturalist conception of experience will be presented and second, subjectivist and idealist understanding of ‘experience’ will be analyzed and finally, the argument of subjectivization and idealization as philosophical fallacies will be analyzed by explaining their non-naturalist conception of experience.

4.1. Naturalistic Conception of Experience

Naturalism can be defined as an empirical method that tries to explain natural events without any reference to supernatural causes. In other words, “naturalism means sticking to the subject-matter and emphasizes the interconnectedness of phenomena; and it opposes all forms of supernaturalism and idealism” (Stroh & Callaway 2000:385). There are many thinkers in the history of thought that can be described as naturalist. However, it can be said that naturalism is formed as a philosophical method or approach in the twentieth century. On the other hand, the term ‘naturalist’ has different meanings and naturalism has many different versions.

Different versions of naturalism deal with different aspects of philosophy and science. In general, the view of naturalism is known within only its

suggestion of the scientific method for philosophy. However, the scientific emphasis changes in different times for different accounts of naturalism. For this reason the definition of the terms naturalism and naturalist are ambiguous in this sense.

Philosophically, there are three main versions of naturalism. The first is methodological naturalism, which claims that the empirical method of science can be used in philosophy. The second is ontological naturalism, which asserts “only the world of nature is real and that supernatural entities do not exist, at least there is insufficient evidence for a transcendental or spiritual realm”. (Shook & Kurtz 2009:8) The third is ethical naturalism, which argues that “ethical principles are relative to human experience”. (Ibid, 9) Other versions of naturalism can be given, but the main principles of naturalism, those that are shared by all versions, can be presented as naturalized epistemology, naturalized ethics, scientific ontology, and also the rejection of the mind-body dualism and the avoiding of a grounding subjectivity. (Ibid, 7-10)

The notion of ‘experience’ is considered as one of the main subjects of ontological or metaphysical naturalism. The notion of experience is considered as the main notion that provides an inclusive conception of the world. Naturalism argues that biological, cultural and social phenomena can be seen as dimensions of human experience and they are explained by the relationship between the human organism and its environment. Accordingly, ‘experience’ can be understood as referring both to an epistemological and ontological term. It can be argued, the better understanding of naturalism is possible by the notion of experience, which is explained by intertwined conception of ontological and epistemological naturalism. Hilary Kornblith (1994) explains the view of “unified naturalism” as follows;

The history of philosophy well illustrates the dangers of allowing either an apparently sensible epistemological view simply to dictate the categories of our metaphysics, or an apparently sensible metaphysics simply to dictate the themes our epistemology... Instead, we must allow for a more holistic approach, one which allows the influence between our metaphysical and epistemological views to travel both ways. The route to reasonable views in metaphysics and epistemology allows neither to have absolute priority over the other. (Ibid, 49)

As the other versions of naturalism, epistemological and ontological naturalism share the main principles and method of naturalism but their priority for philosophical explanations shows differences. However, as Kornblith argues, the “unified naturalism” provides a holistic approach, in which we can explain the notion of experience in a more plausible way.

On the other hand, the role of science in a naturalist perspective is one of the important aspects of differentiation in naturalist accounts. At this point, it is argued, naturalism should not be considered as a type of reductionism. In this respect, in this study, a naturalist approach that mainly refers to the Darwinian biology as the main scientific background, is adopted. This is important in order to understand the holistic view of naturalism and the notions of change, continuity and generic traits, which refer to the fundamental aspects of ‘experience’.

The view of naturalism and the term ‘naturalist’ arise from the debate between John Dewey, George Santayana and some other American thinkers. It can be said that the main arguments of American naturalism are based on the philosophies of Dewey and Santayana. “For Dewey humanity’s home is nature and all our experiences, including religious experience, are both of the natural world and in the natural world. For Santayana, every ideal or value has a natural or biological basis.” (Stroh & Callaway 2000:385)

Both Dewey and Santayana emphasize that all values have a biological origin, and that the attempt to locate their foundation in a transcendent, timeless or absolute framework confuses imagination and ideals with fact. Both Santayana and Dewey allow that imagination is an important element of human life, but imagination itself is a natural extension of our human powers of perception and thought. (Stroh & Callaway 2000:385)

Both Dewey and Santayana emphasize on the supposed distinction between the human being and the world and they reject this distinction. Accordingly, it is the notion of experience that overcomes the gap between naturalism and humanism. Dewey says that;

In truth, experience knows no distinction between human concerns and a purely mechanical world. Man's home is in nature; his purposes and aims are dependent for execution upon natural conditions. Separated from such conditions they become empty dreams and idle indulgences of fancy. This philosophy is vouched for by the doctrine of biological development which shows that man is continuous with nature, not an alien entering her processes from without. (MW 9:333)

The influence of Darwinian biology on naturalism provides the understanding of the human being as a living organism, which lives in accordance with the principles of biological nature. The human affairs and its constitutions are parts of the "thoroughgoing continuity" (Lavine 1959:183) of nature. Accordingly, the Darwinian principles of change and continuity provide the understanding of 'thoroughgoing naturalism' that is the postulate of Dewey's naturalistic philosophy. This postulate says that

"Continuity" means that rational operations grow out of organic activities, without being identical with that from which they emerge... The primary postulate of a naturalistic theory of logic is continuity of the lower (less complex) and the higher (more complex) activities and forms. (Ibid.)

According to this postulate, the principle of continuity includes all modes of human activity, in other words all modes of human activity are contained in continuous nature. Accordingly, 'experience' is to grasp this continuous interaction in nature. All types of connection between the human being and the world are included in this completely natural process. At this point 'experience' is defined as "an interaction of natural processes" (Randall 1959:373).

Experience became once again an interaction of natural processes. Conceived in biological terms, it was now taken as an interaction between an organism and its environment, an affair of responses to stimuli; conceived in social terms, it was construed as the complex interactions between the individual and his cultural setting, an affair of education and of social and cultural reconstruction in the broadest sense. (Ibid)

Accordingly, the naturalist conception of experience, which can be defined as an interaction process, is not considered only in terms of 'sense experience' and is not understood solely in an epistemological sense. The naturalist conception of experience removes the distinction between the types of human activities that also include 'knowing'. Accordingly, the naturalist view rejects the distinct epistemological concepts of tradition such as; knowledge, consciousness experience, cognition of object and understanding of subject. This approach presents these concepts and activities of human beings as natural affairs, without referring to any dualism. On the other hand, these affairs of human being and their interactions can be understood without appealing to any non-natural or idealist explanation.

4.2. Dewey's Metaphysics of Experience

Dewey's concept of experience should not be considered independently from his view of traditional philosophy. As I said before, he considers the notion of experience both as a method and the main subject of philosophy. For this reason, we can argue that wherever Dewey criticizes traditional philosophy, there is an expression of the notion of experience, or wherever we find the notion of experience, there is a conceptual analysis and criticism of traditional philosophy. For this reason, Dewey's philosophy as the conception of experience is considered as 'reconstruction', the term that is used by Dewey himself. Accordingly, I will focus on both Dewey's reconstruction of the traditional view and his expression of his own conception of experience.

In this section, I will present and evaluate Dewey's conception of experience by his pragmatic naturalism. This conception can be read as metaphysics of experience with the notion of 'lived experience'. I argue that the main struggle of Dewey is to put the ontological conception of experience by referring the notion of 'lived experience', 'nature', 'history', and 'culture' in place of traditional conception of sense experience.

Dewey uses the concept of ontology and the concept of metaphysics interchangeably and he defines metaphysics as "a statement of the generic traits manifested by existences of all kinds" (LW 1:308). In other word, metaphysics presents "the nature of the existential world in which we live" (LW1:45). For Dewey, this concern always depends on nature because the human situation "falls wholly within nature" and "reflects the traits of nature" (LW 1:314).

However, Dewey's conception of metaphysics should not be considered as a list of traits. Dewey always attaches the properties and explains these traits in nature. For Dewey, "the real work of metaphysics involves the examination

of how these traits are implicated in actual existent and events” (Boisvert 1988:4).

The other important misunderstanding about Dewey’s metaphysics is to compare it with other metaphysical systems or non-metaphysical systems, and to try to find static definition of existents in his metaphysics. However, Dewey’s main statements such as “every existence is an event” (LW 1:63), “interaction is the one unescapable trait of every human concern” (LW 1:324), “all natural existences are histories” (LW 1:129) are reflects his alternative metaphysical position. Boisvert defines this position as follows;

Once ontological assertions are established, the work of developing philosophical analysis in fields such as education, politics, aesthetics, or ethics will move in a certain direction. The real issue is, not that of metaphysics vs. no metaphysics, but that of alternative metaphysical positions. Dewey was keenly aware of his need to articulate a metaphysics consistent with the discoveries of modern science. (Boisvert 1988:5)

It is argued, the main thesis of this study underlies Dewey’s suggestion of this alternative metaphysical position. This suggestion is constituted on the notion of experience. For this reason, the term ‘metaphysics of experience’ is used for understanding of Dewey’s alternative metaphysical position.

Dewey uses the term experience by referring to ‘life’ or ‘history’. Accordingly, the notion of ‘lived experience’ should be considered as ‘ordinary experience’ in which there is no sharp boundary between subjective and objective. Dewey suggests the ‘lived experience’ as the starting point for philosophy. For him, the study of philosophy is “a study, by means of philosophy, of life-experience”. (Ibid, 17) Boisvert present this starting point as follow;

To begin properly, the philosopher must become once again an ordinary human being who lives, enjoys, undergoes, suffers, imagines, hopes, struggles, loves and plans for the future. On this level, 'experience' weaves together the environment, memory, reactions to physical conditions, interests, limitations and projects envisioned. The oppositions of "objective" conditions to "subjective feeling has no place in such a scheme. (Ibid, 16)

When we analyze carefully, we can conceive the shift in Dewey's thought from human subject oriented conception of experience to objective relational metaphysics, which makes experience independent from the human subject. This shift in emphasis in a sense shows us that there is more a 'human-ist' philosopher in his early writings, while there is more an 'im-personal' philosopher in his later writings. Accordingly, we should observe the parallel shift from an epistemological conception of experience to the ontological conception. This shift also underlies Dewey's presentation of the conception of 'lived experience' in opposition to the traditional epistemological conception. He tries to use this shift from epistemology to ontology in order to show the reconstructive character of his philosophy and his conception of experience. For this reason we meet the definition of his conception of experience as the analyses or critics of traditional conception of experience.

The term metaphysics does not refer to a hidden reality that is, for Dewey, behind appearances, rather it is identifying the generic traits of nature. Metaphysics refers to a world "which consists of a plurality of processes, developments, histories, which give rise over time to more complex and qualitatively distinct modes of interaction, and finally which gives rise to experience and inquiry itself" (Alexander 1986:44)

According to Dewey's im-personal conception, experience is not a solipsistic term. It covers and reflects anything and everything, which can be denoted in natural relations. In a broad sense, it covers all events, all knowledge and all values of life. "Experience includes feelings, sensations, concepts, psychical

events, physical things, relations, actualities, potentialities, the harmonies and disharmonies of life. Experience includes our memories and imaginations, our pasts and projected futures, our present awareness, our illusions and hallucinations.” (Eames 1977:27)

According to Dewey’s analysis of traditional thinking, some philosophers have selected only a part of experience, as sense experience. The rationalists are partial to conceptual forms, to abstract entities, to the purity of intellectual operations. On the other hand, traditional empiricists select sensory experiences as the “most real” experience, and they try to use this, as the vantage points from which all the other aspects of experience are viewed. (Ibid.)

A common habit of philosophers has been to treat functional activities as if they were antecedent realities, and Dewey calls this practice “the philosophical fallacy” (LW 1:34). Any philosophy that selects and hypostatizes certain aspects of experience, that makes these hypostatized entities into ultimate criteria by which the rest of experience is judged, is a philosophy of prejudice and bias, according to Dewey. (Ibid.)

For the entire philosophical career, Dewey argues that subject and object, self and world, cannot be considered independently of each other. His conception of organic interaction, and his later conception of transaction, reflects to the reciprocal implication of self and world in every experienced situation. To Dewey, the experiencing-experienced interaction or transaction was a single structure, not two separate discrete structures, which somehow causally “act” upon one another. (Kestenbaum 1977:1)

Dewey treats nature not as a thing, but as an affair of beginnings and endings: an affair of affairs. Humans are characterized as being within and a part of nature, not outside of and over against it. (Hickman 2004:162) For “Dewey, experience is more than a psychic event.” (Eldridge, 1998, p. 14) “Experience

is “a matter... of interaction of living creatures with their environments” (LW 14:15). On the other hand, “He believed that an individual, in interacting with others and with his or her physical surroundings as well as the past and future, both shapes and is shaped by these interactions. Experience is not static.” (Eldridge 1998:24)

According to Dewey, ‘experience’ is an interactive process that includes all relationships between human being and nature. The main character of ‘experience’ is being a interaction. Accordingly, “everything that is known or knowable exists in relation to other things” (Hickman 2004:62) and everything can be conceived in this interaction process.

The two important sentences clearly give us Dewey’s philosophical perspective, which depends on the notions of experience and nature. The first is that “Experience is of as well as in nature.” (LW 1:4); and the second is that “An organism does not live in an environment: it lives by means of an environment.”(Stuhr 2000:438) In this respect, experience and nature are not considered as separate things. Experience is an activity that actualizes only in and by nature. Experience is an occurrence that gets into nature without any restriction on it. John Stuhr presents Dewey’s definition of experience as follow;

Experience denotes what is experienced, the world of events and persons; and it denotes that world caught up into experiencing, the career and destiny of mankind.... For Dewey, experience is not to be understood in terms of the experiencing subject, or as the interaction of a subject and object that exist separate from their interaction. Instead, Dewey’s view is radically empirical: experience is an activity in which subject and object are unified and constituted as partial features and relations within this ongoing, unanalyzed unity. (Ibid, 437)

Dewey argues that experience can explain and show all interactions and relations in nature without any divisions between “subject and object, matter and spirit, the divine and the human... [He] believes that all kinds of human experience – bodily, psychical, imaginative, and practical – could be explained as integrated parts of whole, dynamic persons.” (Hildebrand 2008:10)

In 1951, in the reintroduction of EN, Dewey wrote on the title of books and he says that “Were I to write (or rewrite) *Experience and Nature* today I would entitle the book *Culture and Nature*.” (LW 1:361) This saying shows the change from the experience to culture in his thought. The term “culture” refers to the complex ways of the human beings’ living together in the world. Dewey describes ‘culture’, in an anthropological sense, as “designates the vast range of things experienced in an indefinite variety of ways” (LW 1:362). Alexander (1987) explains the relation of experience, culture and nature as follows;

“Culture” is the shared life of human beings upon the earth as it is appropriated in terms of meaning and value. “Experience” designates this relationship and “metaphysics” will attempt to describe it in its most general features. “Nature” will provide the material of “culture”, and “culture” (“experience”) will be an exploration of the possibilities of nature. Nature will not be something that is “hidden” by culture any more than the nature of clay will be “hidden” by the art of pottery. (Ibid, 71)

Dewey defines his theory of experience by explaining three leading principles of his pragmatic naturalism. “The first of these “leading ideas” (Eames 2003:21) of Dewey’s philosophy is “immediacy” (LW 12:26), or what we have called the non-cognitive element in Dewey’s thought. This principle plays important role in Dewey’s view of experience as both “had” and “known.” (Eames 1977:22)

Dewey holds, for instance, that the qualities and connections in experience are immediately felt; initially the indeterminate situation is immediately felt; the continuum of inquiry undergone by the organism is immediately felt; and the consummatory phase of this situation is immediately felt. Perceptual awareness is immediately felt, and as such, is undifferentiated; it is only when immediately felt qualities are related, either by causes or by consequences, that out of perceptual awareness emerges sensation, thought, emotion, and desire (Ibid, 31)

Immediate feeling is defined as “primary existential state of life in nature” and Dewey states “the existential starting point is immediate qualities. Even meanings taken not as meanings but as existentials are grounded in immediate qualities, in sentiences or “feelings”, of organic activities and receptivities” (LW 1:226). There is no cognition in this state and it does not refer knowing. This feeling state refers only ‘had’. In this level, there is no sensation, conception or emotion. This state is undifferentiated situation of organism.

Since these primal feeling-states are existences, they can only be pointed to or denoted; they cannot in this state of experience be described or defined. Borrowing a phrase from William James, but true to Dewey’s context, these feeling-states are “pure-that’s”; they are not yet “whats.” In this sense of the primordial, Dewey claims that existence precedes essence. (Eames 1977:31)

Immediate feeling is what Dewey calls the “non-cognitive” or the “precognitive” aspect of experience (LW 12:111). However, it cannot be considered as opposite or different state of cognitive aspects. “For Dewey there is no sharp line between the non-cognitive and cognitive; on the contrary, there is a line of continuity between them”. (Eames 1977:32)

According to Dewey, the process of experience is not a process internal to subjectivity and consciousness. In other words, experience is not an inner state of consciousness and it can conceive nature immediately. For this reason, according to him, “external physical objects are directly and immediately had in experience.” (Shook 2003:733)

The second principle is “interaction”, which is defined by using different terms in Dewey’s writings. Dewey uses the terms of ‘connection’, ‘relation’ and ‘transaction’ in order to explain this principle.

A quality “taken” as connected or related to another quality affords the basis for sign-signification, and here is where “meaning” emerges in experience. Furthermore, a quality found to be related to another quality is party to an inference and a clue to the understanding of the meaning of evidence; thus the inferential and evidential functions of qualities are founded upon the principle of connections or relations. (Eames 2003:33-34)

In his last book *Knowing and Known* (LW 15, 1949) Dewey uses the term ‘transaction’ instead of the term ‘interaction’. Geiger presents the notion of ‘transaction’ as follows;

‘Transaction... A term like ‘interaction’, on the other hand, already had begged the question of continuity, for it assumes that some things have indeed been set apart, the problem now being to put them together again. ‘Transaction’ implies a different kind of prejudgment, to the effect that there are units which can of course be broken apart for purposes of analysis but not for any other reason. (Geiger 1958:16)

Experience is a transaction. It refers all passes between living organism and its environment. “Experience is a special kind of existence, just as real and special as the organism involved and no more outside nature than is the organism. It is the relation of part to whole, but the part is part of the whole.” (Ibid.)

According to Dewey, experience conceives all external objects immediately because all natural things are related with each other. His theory of natural relations is based on the idea of the whole of nature and the notion of interaction. Accordingly, the third principle reflects the basis of this

immediate having of interactions in nature, which is called the principle of “continuity” or “the naturalistic postulate.” “The naturalistic postulate means that there is a line of continuity from the less complex to the more complex forms and functions of life.” (Eames 1977: 34-35)

The principle of continuity shows the impression of the Darwinian evolutionary theory on Dewey. According to this impression, Dewey argues that the behaviors of all organic systems and changes in them should be considered without any effect of supernatural agency. For him, a naturalistic theory requires that the “human behavior (including logical operations) must be shown to be “continuous with” the biological properties of lower organism” (LW 12:xiii). He states that “the growth and development of any living organism from seed to maturity illustrates the meaning of continuity” (LW 12:xiii).

The world of metaphysics or nature is operated by the principle of continuity. Continuity can be understood as “involves the traditional Aristotelian ideas of potentiality and actuality, which give rise to functionally unified whole. These wholes Dewey called “events” or “situations” (Alexander 1986:45)

Continuity clearly involves the notion of a unity and plurality, identity and difference, or, better, whole and parts... And the whole is a unity in the same way in which the continuous is a unity, whether by having been nailed or glued or mixed or having grown together. The whole is not constituted its elements, though such elements may be incorporated within it and potentially discriminated. (Ibid, 46)

On the other hand, the principle of continuity makes possible the generic traits of existence in nature. “The principle of continuity is found in the history of natural things, of things-in-process, things that have beginnings and termini.” (Eames 1977: 36) This principle lies in the history of natural things and individual life. Accordingly, the conception of experience in

metaphysical sense includes history of existence in nature and it refers generic traits of existence in natural world.

If Dewey has any metaphysical realities, one would have to say that these are qualities and relations. It is from this starting point that meanings arise in experience; early humans found that qualities are connected with other qualities, and once this discovery was made they were on their way to a development that made their survival possible and afforded the basis for the development of symbolic experience. (Eames 1977:39)

Dewey's aim is to explain 'experience' as an affair of 'having' as well as 'knowing'. Experience is a natural and transactional relationship between the parts of existence. It is an affair of continuity, so it does not divide parts of existence.

Dewey's aim is to present his social argument by saying that philosophy, science, art and religion are parts of human culture. Dewey tries to provide a world, which has no contrasted parts, in which the human being does not "found himself coming up against a world dark, uncertain, fraught with peril and mystery, a forbidding and unintelligible world that demanded propitiation" (Geiger, 1958:9-10).

Dewey's conception of philosophy can be described as "cultural naturalism" or "anthropology of philosophy".³ Dewey focuses on the dynamic character of the world and nature and defines philosophers as living creatures. So, for him, philosophers should be aware of this dynamic world.

³ The terms "cultural naturalism" and "anthropology of philosophy" were used by Thomas Alexander in "2012 Summer Institute in American Philosophy July 16-21, 2012, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, USA".

In his last book *Unmodern Philosophy and Modern Philosophy*⁴ (2012), Dewey presents a positive philosophy and focuses on the thinking both philosophically and ecologically. He explains the ecological thinking as a positive role of philosophy. In this last book, he uses the terms “*living* and *life-functions*” as synonymies of ‘experience’.

The first postulate to be set forth is that... *experience* is taken as synonym for *living* or occurrence of *life-functions*. The second of the postulate is that *living* and *life-functions*, as the words are here used, stand for events whose nature is most clearly and fully presented in *human living*, a fact which is equivalent in general, to recognition of the socio-cultural nature of the phenomenon deal with. The third postulate is that *psychological* theory or doctrine is concerned with the analysis and description of just these phenomena, which may also, taken collectively be named *behavior*. The fourth postulate, underlying and giving point to the discussion as a whole, is that a correct theory of *experience*...” (Ibid, 315)

These postulates can be understood as Dewey’s constitution of philosophy. The main character of this kind of philosophy, its main perspective to environment or world is social, which is effected by cultural conditions of the human being. Accordingly, the main subject matter of philosophy is social and philosophers should use fundamental words such as; belief, thought, mental, sensation, reason, experience, idea, within the description of the life-activities. In this regard, Dewey focuses on the social-cultural conditions of life and interacting parts in nature.

In conclusion, Dewey’s notion of experience, as ‘lived experience’, which includes all life activities, all social and cultural conditions and natural environment of the human being brings a very different conception in philosophy. As argued before, this study focuses on this different conception and its valuable character in order to constitute a different perception of the

⁴ In 1947, Dewey lost his last manuscript on modern philosophy in the back of a taxi cab. In 2012, Phillip Deen edited Dewey’s unfinished book on history and theory of knowledge.

world and the human subject. The necessity of this conception can be explained as providing natural ground for the relations of the human being with its nature, and disposing of the non-natural explanation of these relations. Accordingly, it is argued in this study, Dewey's conception of 'lived experience', which provides a more plausible worldview for our current problems in the world, should be re-read attentively.

4.3. The Debate between Dewey and Santayana

George Santayana is another important figure of the American naturalistic tradition. Actually, it is difficult to state his philosophy in only one philosophical perspective, because there is such a range of interpretations of his philosophy. T. N. Munson (1962) defines Santayana's philosophical view as a "philosophy of observation" and characterizes his philosophy by saying what it is not. Munson argues that "Santayana's philosophy is not: (1) an existential subjectivity; (2) an idealistic subjectivism; or (3) a system – like Platonic, Indian, or Christian philosophy – inspired by a traditional faith". (Ibid, 22)

On the other hand, especially in his later work, Santayana defines himself as a real naturalist. He argues that his naturalistic account is a genuine naturalism and it offers the best tool for the strife against philosophical dualism and subjectivism. However, this assertive claim of Santayana, on his own naturalism, has given rise to many debates in the American naturalistic tradition. However, I think that it is difficult to understand Santayana's naturalism and the notion of experience in his philosophy without his key concepts, namely essence, spirit and substance. For this reason I want to present his conceptual framework before presenting his version of naturalism.

In *Scepticism and Animal Faith* (1955), Santayana deals with the problem of knowledge and he presents an introduction to his philosophical system. He offers an analysis of skepticism and the limits of the relation to existence. According to him, existence is not given as immediate. However, when the animal mind realizes the essences, which are before its mind, it can discard the limits of the skeptical attitude. Santayana explains the process of knowledge in the relationship between animal and existence and in terms of the existence of essence.

Unlike Dewey, it can be said that Santayana does not want to leave behind the traditional notions of essence, spirit and substance. Santayana delineates two distinct realms, the realm of essence and the realm of matter. For him, “the forms or essences of things are eternal: their substance or matter is change itself.” (Cory 1950: 114)

According to Santayana, essences, as eternal objects, can be both simple and complex. In addition, the realm of essences has infinite possibilities. For him, essences provide us with a ground in order to overcome the problem of knowledge of the external world and in order to understand nature. He presents the central notion of essence and its occurrence in the relationship between animal and external object as follows;

Essences are not drawn out or abstracted from things; they are given before the thing clearly perceived, since they are the terms used in perception; but they are not given until attention is stretched upon the thing, which is posited blindly in action; and they come as revelations, or oracles, delivered by that thing to the mind, and symbolizing it there. (Santayana 1955:93-94)

Santayana states the relationship between the animal and external object with the notion of animal faith. An animal discovers its body and its environment and then it realizes the existence of external objects in animal faith and in

action. Then the essences appear as the symbols of the object. Thus, essences, as symbols, give meaning and knowledge of the object to the animal. (Ibid, 95-97) Essences are also defined as “free symbols” and “free development out of nature”. (Ibid, 98)

On the other hand, Santayana presents and defines the notion of ‘discourse’ or ‘mind thinking’ in order to explain the conditions and relations between animal faith, the external object and essence. He says that

I have found that even when no change is perceived in the image before me, my discourse changes its phases and makes progress in surveying it, so that in discourse I now admit a sphere of events in which real variations are occurring. (Ibid, 124)

He defines discourse as “a contingent survey of essence, partial, recurrent, and personal, with an arbitrary starting point and an arbitrary direction of progress”. (Ibid, 134) In addition, he presents the character of discourse by saying that

[M]y discourse as a whole is a sheer accident, initiated, if initiated at all, by some ambushed power, not only in its existence, but in its duration, direction and scope. (Ibid)

Discourse becomes an experience when it encounters with the force of “shock”. By the notion of “shock”, Santayana means man’s discovery of self, as an independent existence, and recognition of other selves and nature, which affect him. In other words, “shock” as brute experience, allows man to believe in his existence. Santayana says that

[T]he discourse is secretly an experience, maybe turn into knowledge, becomes particularly evident when it is interrupted by shocks... Shock contradicts nothing, but uproots the whole experience. The lights go out on the stage, and discourse loses its momentum. (Ibid, 139)

At this point, experience arises as a ground of knowledge. Santayana says that “I am a collector, not a poet; and what concerns me ... is not to explore essence, but to gather experience”. (Ibid, 138) Experience involves the recognition of the surrounding world and experience is a man’s guide in the world. In addition, experience reveals essences in reality and gives a uniform place to them, in the process of knowledge. Santayana defines experience as follows;

By experience I understand a fund of wisdom gathered by living. I call it a fund of wisdom... because experience accrues precisely when discrimination amongst given essences is keenest, when only the relevant is retained or perhaps noticed, and when the psyche sagaciously interprets data as omens favourable or unfavourable to her interests... Experience accordingly presupposes intent and intelligence, and it also implies, as will appear presently, a natural world in which it is possible to learn to live better by practicing the arts. (Ibid)

As a ground of knowledge experience can be seen as making possible both knowledge of the external world and any relation with nature. Santayana reaches an empiricist principle at the end of his long way and then he describes knowledge. He says that “knowledge is true belief grounded in experience, I mean, controlled by outer facts”. (Ibid, 180) He also reaches a naturalistic principle by showing the unity of experience and nature. According to him, all of reality is natural. He says that

[B]elief in experience is belief in nature, however vaguely nature may as yet be conceived, and every empiricist is a naturalist in principle, however hesitant his naturalism may be in practice. (Ibid, 142)

In *Realm of Matter*, Santayana defines the notion of substance and he criticizes modern philosophy for its attack on the notion of substance. According to him, the main mistake of modern philosophy is denying any

material substance. Santayana defines substance as “possibility for sensation” and says that “a possibility can hardly be said to exist, which is just what material things do independently of sense-experience”. (Santayana 1930:19)

Santayana explains the notion of ‘belief in substance’ as the necessary condition or background of human action. He says that “Experience brings belief in substance (as alertness) before it brings intuition of essences; it is appetite before it is description”. (Santayana 1955:188) In this respect, the notion of substance is presented as something operating in the human mind and as a permanent background of human action. In other words, substance is not an immediate object of experience, so it is not operated by experience. But it is a faith or the assumption of the animal mind in action. Substance appears in the human mind as something behind the external world.

At this point, I would like to emphasize that while the notion of essence is seen as the natural background of experience, the notion of substance is seen as the unnatural or supernatural background of human action. Essences are symbols for external material things, and thus we can see them as natural, but it is not possible to say the same thing about substance. I believe that the materiality or naturalness of substance is not clearly presented by Santayana.

In addition, spirit is another central concept of Santayana’s philosophy. He presents spirit as the possibility of happiness and understanding of the moral and esthetic conditions of human life. Spirit cannot be observed and cannot be encountered as a thing. Santayana states that the substantial self and spirit are identical and that they are the opposite poles of human being. For him, spirit is in a different realm of being and it requires substance and also nature to generate itself. He defines spirit as follows;

By spirit I understand the light of discrimination that marks in that pure Being differences of essence, of time, of place, of value: a

living light ready to fall upon things, as they are spread out in their weight and motion and variety, ready to be lighted up. (Ibid, 274)

As a result of the existence of spirit, the problem of the duality of nature and spirit, or spirit and body, appears in Santayana's philosophy. However, Santayana insists on the materiality of the spirit. The existence of spirit and the relation between spirit and body are explained in terms of a form of epiphenomenalism.

Epiphenomenalism is the theory that causation occurs only in the physical world.... Spirit, or consciousness, is only an intermittent light that plays over but does not intervene in the material process of the nature. (Cory 1950: 123)

In this respect, essence, substance and spirit should be considered as epiphenomenal existences in Santayana's philosophy. Santayana wants to find a natural basis for his ideal notions and presents spirit as a natural product. In *The Life of Reason* he says that;

Spiritual unity is a natural product. There are those who see a great mystery in the presence of eternal values and impersonal ideals in a moving and animal world, and think to solve that dualism, as they call it, by denying that nature can have spiritual functions or spirit a natural cause; but nothing can be simpler if we make, as we should, existence the test of possibility. (Santayana 1980:282)

Munson defines an epiphenomenal essence by saying that "it is a vital to his theory of origins, for essences are the immaterial flowers which blossom in the garden of materialism." (Munson 1962:22) In addition, Munson argues that

Santayana proposes a definite idea of man. He describes him as a material psyche accompanied by an epiphenomenal spirit. Since this immaterial counterpart is not an infused, supernatural soul, man's immortality and free will, as commonly understood, are meaningless. (Ibid, 126)

It can be said that both Santayana's naturalism and materialism are different from classical versions of these accounts. His naturalism differs from classical naturalism because of the central place of the notion of essence in his philosophy. On the other hand, his naturalistic and epiphenomenal materialism is different from classical materialism, because he does not reduce all reality to matter and he claims the existence of spirit. For this reason Santayana has a special place in traditional American naturalism.

According to him, all of reality is natural. Nature contains all existent things and all processes of human life. For him, the natural world is the real home of human being. Santayana considers naturalism as the "spontaneous and inevitable body of beliefs involved in all animal life... In short, it is that body of beliefs which covers the whole field of possible material action to its uttermost reaches". (Stuhr 1997:132)

According to Santayana, all philosophical systems are subject to the material framework or world of naturalism. For this reason, their notions, such as spirit, ideas, feelings or poetry should be considered in this material world. The natural place of these notions is epiphenomenal. In addition, Santayana characterizes naturalism as anti-metaphysical. He argues that to admit any metaphysical principle which asserts the priority of immaterial things means to abandon naturalism. (Ibid, 133)

According to Santayana, an animal lives with experience and reconstitutes its faith with experience. He says that

I am a collector, not a poet; and what concerns me, even in the purest dialectic or the most desultory dream, is not to explore essence, but to gather experience... By experience I understand a fund of wisdom gathered by living. (Santayana 1955:138)

He also argues that the notions of experience and nature are strictly connected. In addition, essences reveal this relationship between experience and nature. For this reason experience is the only way of attaining the essence. He says that

[B]elief in experience is belief in nature, however vaguely nature may as yet be conceived, and every empiricist is a naturalist in principle, however hesitant his naturalism may be in practice. (Ibid, 142)

Santayana without fail maintains his naturalistic position and he constantly rejects all forms of subjectivism. He sees nature as a whole and considers it as the only condition of human life. In this respect, human being - like an animal - lives in nature and is related to all other natural things. According to Santayana, to choose such life in nature and as a part of nature belongs to the animal's experience or faith.

He insists that common sense is right against all subjectivism in 'regarding nature as the condition of mind and not mind as the condition of nature.'... Nature is "a set of conditions" for the appearance of all sorts of happening, physical, mental, good and bad. He does not first denaturize nature and then (and as a consequence) mythologize mind. He so regards nature that all distinctions pertinent to existence fall within it... (Lambrecht 1933:564)

Santayana criticizes traditional accounts of experience and nature. Like Dewey, Santayana thinks that traditional accounts consider human experience and its nature as separate things or they see nature as the mind's creation. In this respect, Santayana's view of nature, as a whole and as the only condition of life, is compatible with Dewey's naturalism. However, the same thing cannot be said for their views of experience. Although Santayana protects the unity of experience and nature, and although he presents the necessary relation between empiricism and naturalism, he avoids the radical empiricism

of Dewey and also William James. The reason for this avoidance of radical empiricism, I think, lies in Santayana's traditional categories of substance, essence and spirit. I think that he wants to save these notions. He thinks of radical empiricism as the end of all meaning and also the end of philosophy.

John Dewey and George Santayana are the most central defenders of philosophical naturalism in the nineteenth century. Although both philosophers are naturalists, their disagreement on the main principles of naturalism is more important for a general discussion about naturalism. Dewey wrote *Experience and Nature* in 1925. After that, in 1925, Santayana wrote the article "Dewey's Naturalistic Metaphysics", in which he argues that Dewey's naturalism involves metaphysical assumptions. In this article he used the term "half-hearted naturalism" about Dewey's naturalism. In 1927, Dewey replied with his article "Half-Hearted Naturalism", in which he says that Santayana's naturalism is "broken-backed" and he accused Santayana of a dualism which breaks the unity between man and nature.

Both Dewey and Santayana adopt empiricist and naturalist principles and both of them oppose the subjectivist and dualistic perspectives of traditional philosophy. However, there are some disagreements between them on this issue. While Dewey argues that Santayana's realms of essence and spirit undermine the naturalist struggle against subjectivist and dualistic perspectives, Santayana claims that Dewey's perspectival empiricism does not agree with naturalism. For this reason, they do not admit each other's stance on naturalism and its contention with traditional assumptions.

Before discussing their disagreements and their comments on each other's views on naturalism, their agreements on the main principles of empiricist naturalism against Cartesian rationalism and dualism should be presented. They agree on the empiricist epistemological principle that all knowledge

arises from human experience. They agree on the realist metaphysical principle that “there is an external reality whose existence is not dependent on mind”. (Shook 2003:1) And they agree on the naturalist principle that “the study of human intelligence must start from the fact that human beings are organisms growing and surviving in a natural environment” (Ibid.).

On the other hand, Dewey and Santayana are in disagreement on the three answers to the three main philosophical questions for empirical naturalism. “First, can perceptual experience directly apprehend its external object? Second, could experience be in any sense natural? Third, are meanings in the natural world?” (Ibid, 2) Their disagreement on empiricist naturalism is based on their different answers to these three questions. They attack each other’s position with regard to these answers. However, some commentators have argued that the two philosophers misunderstood each other as regards these answers.

The first disagreement is about direct realism. According to Dewey, the process of experience is not a process internal to subjectivity and consciousness is not an ontological reality. In other words, experience is not an inner state of consciousness and it can conceive nature immediately. For this reason, according to him, “external physical objects are directly and immediately had in experience” (Ibid.). This position avoids any kind of phenomenalism and argues that “perspectival and relational qualities (like displayed color or apparent shape) are just as naturally real as intrinsic and non-relational qualities” (Ibid.). In this position, perspective and context come to prominence. According to Dewey, immediate empiricism is the only way to overcome rationalism and subjectivism.

On the other hand, Santayana insists on an indirect relation between experience and nature. For him, experience does not conceive nature

immediately, because immediate experience does not capture the real nature of essences. Experience is the result of the process of the intuition of essence. Santayana argues that Dewey presents this immediacy as real, and that he thus reduces it to natural objects. For him, Dewey's perspectival and contextual empiricism does not avoid subjectivism. For this reason, according to his phenomenological interpretation of experience, he argues that secondary qualities are not in the natural world. (Ibid, 3-4) Although Santayana objects to the concept of immediate experience, he presents the condition of experience of the animal faith as follows;

In the first place the substance in which I am proposing to believe is not metaphysical but physical substance. It is the varied stuff of the world which I meet in action – the wood of this tree that I am feeling, the wind that is stirring its branches, the flesh and bones of the man who is jumping out of the way. Belief in substance is not imported into animal perception by language or by philosophy, but is the soul of animal perception from the beginning and the perpetual deliverance of animal experience. (Santayana 1955:201)

Dewey and Santayana agree on the idea that perception is not a passive state and independent of the organism. However, Santayana adopts an indirect realism. He defines signs as non-natural and non-material entities. He argues that the animal faith accepts these signs and “animal faith authorizes the philosophical positions that signs are about material entities without also being material entities.” (Shook 2003:5) For him, signs are not substances. He presents this phenomenological interpretation of animal faith with signs and essence and says that signs are not elements of knowledge. For him they do not prevent animal experience because they belong to another realm. At this point, Dewey argues that the theory of signs and the intuitive knowledge of essences are not compatible with empiricism. For this reason, Dewey criticizes the phenomenology of animal faith or phenomenology of lived experience in this way. (Ibid, 5-6) Accordingly, they do not agree on the

second answer, and while Dewey says that experience is of natural things, Santayana does not agree with him.

The third main point of their debate is about the existence of meaning in nature. According to Dewey, experience conceives all external objects immediately because all natural things are related with each other. His theory of natural relations is based on the idea of the whole of nature and the notion of interaction. For Dewey, “meaning cannot attach the forever transcendent entities, and... natural objects have meaning, not just the experience of them.” (Ibid, 8) On the other hand, for Santayana, “natural entities are inherently meaningless, because only spirit can bind together intuitions into meanings” (Ibid.). Santayana defines the realm of meaning as the realm of spirit. His different realms provide him with distinct ontological realities. For this reason, he sees the humanly significant or meaningful things in the realm of spirit or essence.

According to Dewey, Santayana puts spirit and substance in the place of experience and nature. In addition, he puts animal faith in the place of reason. He describes animal faith as “inevitable”. Dewey argues that by putting natural philosophy of spirit and substance in the place of metaphysics of experience and nature, Santayana defends and falls into an alternative metaphysics. (Stuhr 1997:137) In addition, according to Dewey, the notion of “animal faith in natural things” is no different from direct relation and immediate experience of nature. (Shook 2003:4)

At this point, it can be said that while Dewey wants to consolidate mind and matter on a naturalistic basis, Santayana adheres to the separation of mind and matter. Dewey presents his main opposition to Santayana’s naturalism in his article “Half-Hearted Naturalism” as follows;

Since knowledge of nature is not the ground for Santayana's statements as to its character, their ground, I take it, is negative and antithetic; the traits denied are those which are characteristic of human life, of the scene as its figures in human activities... In short, his presupposition is a break between nature and man; man in the sense of anything more than a physically extended body, man as institutions, culture, "experience". The former is real, substantial; the latter specious, deceptive, since it has centers and perspectives. (Dewey 1927:58)

On the other hand, another criticism for Santayana is about the relationship between experience and nature. Stuhr argues that "this faith need not to be dogmatic. It must be courageous. It is also circular: It moves from experience as the source of a view of nature to nature as the source of evidence for that view of experience". (Stuhr 1997:142)

In addition, in the contemporary naturalistic view, Santayana's naturalism is considered as an ontological dualism. The distinction between body and epiphenomenal mind is seen as a dualistic perspective. Some naturalists agree on this dualism and they represent this argument as follows;

Santayana's brand of naturalism commits us to an ontological dualism of causally efficacious body and epiphenomenal mind, a dualism of objects and subjects, nature and consciousness, matter and spirit, torch and flame. Santayana presupposes this dichotomy: the active material world or background framework – the epiphenomenal foreground that binds, unifies, and makes meaningful the realm of active matter. (Ibid, 140)

The empiricist naturalistic account rejects the distinction between substance and form or substance and essence. In addition, according to this account, all elements of nature must be knowable and must have form. However, Santayana's naturalistic account gives us a matter and spirit which are unknowable and without a form. On the other hand, substance, as a combination of essence and matter, seems both as an active reality and a real background of all actions of human beings in the natural world. For this

reason, Santayana's naturalism has been called an "idolatry of matter". (Stuhr 2000:385)

Another important point on which they do not agree is the place of experience in nature. Santayana refers to the lack of a cosmology and the dominance of the foreground in Dewey's naturalism. According to Santayana, Dewey's definition of experience is the foreground of nature. Santayana accuses Dewey of accepting a foreground before the natural world and presents his thought as follows;

In nature, there is no foreground or background, no here, no now, no moral cathedral, no centre so really central as to reduce all other things to mere margins and mere perspectives. A foreground is by definition relative to the some chosen point of view to the station assumed in the midst of nature by some creature tethered by fortune to a particular time and place. If such a foreground becomes dominant in a philosophy naturalism is abandoned... This dominance of the foreground has always been the source of metaphysics. (Santayana 1925:678-679)

According to Santayana, Dewey's foreground obscures the essential background of nature. Santayana considers the foreground as perspectives on nature, but Dewey says that the foreground is the only way of thinking about the background of nature. Dewey says that

[b]ut I am sure that the foreground is itself a portion of nature, an integral portion, and that nature is not just the dark abysmal unknown postulated by religious faith in animality, especially since on such a view animality itself becomes a matter of faith. (Dewey 1927:60)

In this respect, while for Dewey experience is the only method and the only immediate reality in order to reach all parts and the background of nature, for Santayana experience is humanly unknowable and its way of foreground is a barrier for the essences of nature. For this reason, and according to this view

of experience, their empiricisms are different. Dewey calls Santayana's empiricism a naturalistic idealism and he sees Santayana's realms of essence and spirit as unnatural.

On the other hand, Santayana offers his epiphenomenal materialism as the only genuine naturalism and he defines this naturalism as a "circle of material events". (Stuhr 1997:134) In his material world, spirit is defined as a by-product of matter. He says that

if the realm of actual spirit had not been broached at this point, and as if the culminations recognized were only runs or notes discoverable in nature, as in the cycle of reproduction or in sentences in discourse. (Santayana 1925: 678)

Put briefly, I think that Dewey and Santayana represent different versions of naturalism. Michael Eldridge presents their fundamental contrast by saying that "Santayana took a more cosmic view, refusing to privilege the human or the social. Dewey was a pragmatist and took human interest as central. Yet he thought that he had successfully integrated mind, including collective intelligence or culture, and nature". (Eldridge 2004:56)

As can be seen from this, their philosophical emphases and their conceptual frameworks differ in many crucial respects. For this reason, it is difficult to compare them along the same lines. However, as I said before, the claims of both philosophers include an opposition to traditional subjectivisms and dualisms and also both of them claim that their own naturalism is the best way for the struggle against traditional philosophical assumptions. Because of these claims I think that there is a problem that demands a solution.

In conclusion, both Dewey and Santayana criticize each other's account of naturalism. Dewey argues that Santayana sees experience as the activity of the psyche for attaining essences and that he separates social man and nature.

However, for Dewey there is no bifurcation between the organism and its environment or nature. For Dewey, experience is an immediate reality and it is in and of nature. Therefore, for him, meaning has two sides; one is that meaning is about nature and the other is that meaning concerns changing nature.

Santayana focuses on the thought of common sense and the daily life of human beings. He maintains that philosophy should not leave the sphere of nature. For him, the realm of truth can be conceived only in nature. Moreover, his conceptual framework gives us a different philosophical approach to nature and also to the human being. He tries to propound and describe his idealistic concepts in-and-by nature. However, as I said before, this kind of naturalism is exposed to some objections.

I think that Santayana tries to constitute a different naturalistic account. For this reason, all those criticism I have sketched so far do not prevent Santayana's account from being a naturalistic one. We can call Santayana's naturalism an idealist naturalism. I think that he wants to establish a unity between the fundamental assumptions of idealism and those of naturalism. In addition, I believe that he tries to provide us with a unity of the realms of the ideal elements of human vision and nature. He wants to provide a natural ground and natural conditions to the ideal or imaginative notions of human vision. In other words, he seems to believe that the notions of essence and also spirit can be naturalized by way of naturalism and epiphenomenal materialism.

I argue that Santayana's naturalistic account is not adequate in order to revealing the notion of experience and also the relation between experience and nature. I argue that his special naturalism eliminates the role of experience and also its immediate relation to nature. The priority of his

epiphenomenal notions seems to prevent the priority of experience in the process of knowledge. He presents these epiphenomenal notions as the necessary background of all human activity in the natural world. For this reason, his naturalism cannot get out of idealistic assumptions. In addition, I think that his explanation concerning the materiality of spirit and matter is not clear or sufficient in order to achieve genuine naturalism. I think that, as a background of nature and natural activity, these notions must be natural, but they seem to invoke a kind of supra-natural existence. As Dewey argues, I think that although Santayana says that belief in experience is belief in nature, he obscures the relation of experience and nature by giving priority to essence.

From this point of view, I argue that Santayana's criticism of Dewey's arguments is not sustainable. Instead, I think that Dewey's conception of nature as a whole and of the organism in its environment provides us with the only truly valid naturalistic perspective. Dewey's notions of social convention, experience, nature and organism are compatible with both naturalism and empiricism and also with the principles of evolutionary biology. In this regard, I think that in the debate on naturalism Dewey's explanations are more convincing and more compatible with empiricism, and that they offer the best arguments for the justification of naturalistic philosophy.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In all dimensions of human intellectual activity, the place of the notion of the human being and the main attitudes in its description are fundamental subjects in the history of thought. In different times in the history of thought, it is the main position and description of human being that determines worldviews in the areas of philosophy, science, politics and the arts, in general. Accordingly, the perception and understanding of the world is formed by the idea of the human being in thought.

As one of the main human intellectual activities, philosophical investigations of both human nature and the world have a significant influence on other intellectual areas. Philosophical understandings, explanations and conceptions of the idea of the human being and the idea of the world effect many areas in different ways. Accordingly, the conception of the human being, the activities of the human being in the world, its relationship shared with other supposed existent things, the main suppositions related to existences in the world and the knowability of the world are the fundamental subjects of question in philosophy. Philosophers attempt to answer these questions through in the fields of epistemology, ontology and ethics.

The notion of 'experience' is an essential aspect in philosophy and is a fundamental notion in the conception of the relationship between the human being and the world. In the history of philosophy, in general, the notion of experience is conceived as an element of human knowledge, meaning that the

main explanations of experience are formed within the theories of knowledge. In this regard, a general understanding of 'experience' reflects it as a special ability of the human subject and its activity that provides to achieve to the knowledge of the world. Conceiving experience in this way, gives rise to different perceptions of the world, and raises some significant dilemmas in philosophy, especially in the field of epistemology.

Based on this perspective, this study has first attempted to understand and criticize the place of 'experience' in the history of Western philosophy, its treatment in epistemology, and some of the main fallacies that originate from its main conception. The study goes on to put forward John Dewey's notion of experience as a reconstruction of experience, which is argued constitutes a more plausible worldview.

The main argument in this study has been formed around the philosophical distinction between 'sense experience' and 'lived experience'. Accordingly, it is argued that the notion of experience in the history of philosophy, especially in modern philosophy, can be understood by reducing it to an element of human knowledge; in other words, reducing it to the concept of 'sense experience' in epistemology. That said, the notion of experience is not conceived as 'lived experience', which is argued in this study as a broad conception of experience.

Accordingly, in Chapter 2 the main conception of experience in Western philosophy is presented with particular focus on the notion of 'sense experience', after which Dewey's main criticism of the notion of experience in traditional philosophy is presented. This chapter begins with a presentation of the etymological definition of experience and the distinction between the notions of 'sense experience' and 'lived experience'. Secondly, it is argued that the main conception of experience is constituted by the Modern view,

depending on the scientific improvements, and the new understanding of subject arises as the central question related to the source of human knowledge.

The study limited the traditional understanding of experience within Locke, Hume, Descartes and Kant's epistemologies, which represent the main field of modern epistemology. Locke's notion of experience is presented, explained in terms of the representative role of 'ideas' in his theory of knowledge. It is argued that Locke's conception of knowledge does not do away with the concept of Cartesian thought, in that his conception of experience refers to the 'sense experience' in a very restrained way. On the other hand, Hume's empiricist naturalism tries to avoid the dualism between reason and experience, and to constitute a distinct conception of experience within the notions of custom, habit and sentiment. That said, Hume does not go out of the understanding of the idea of 'sense experience', in other words, sensationalism.

After empiricist notion of experience, the role of experience in Descartes' Cartesian rationalism is explained. It should be pointed out that the role of experience is very ambiguous in his philosophy, but is important to mention it, in order to understand the relationship between the new central idea of the human subject and the idea of experience in Modern thought. Accordingly, the notion of experience is conceived as an act of "thinking I" in Descartes' philosophy; while on the other hand, can be explained in terms of to being a possibility in order to achieve experimental evidences of scientific investigation. On the other hand, the conception of experience in Kant's transcendental idealism is presented based on the idea of "the limit of the subject's experience". In this regard, it is argued that although Kant tries to avoid the tension between rationalism and empiricism within the concept of 'synthetic a priori', and his prioritization of 'experience' in his epistemology,

‘experience’ is limited to ‘categories’, and Kant’s idealist conception forbids ‘experience’ from being conceived independently of the act of the human subject.

Based on these historical analyses of the notion of experience, it is argued that John Dewey’s conception of experience avoids the main dilemmas associated with the traditional understandings. In addition, Dewey provides naturalist conception of experience that is referred to as the ‘lived experience’ in this study. For this reason, before presenting Dewey’s conception of experience, the study expressed Dewey’s criticism of Western philosophy in Section 2.2. Dewey’s main analysis of traditional conception of experience is based on his rejection of subjectivism, idealism and dualism, and his rejection has parallels with the analyses and criticisms of the traditional ‘sense experience’ that is argued in this study.

In Chapter 3 it is argued that the main traditional conception of experience leads to the fallacies of subjectivization and idealization, and that the notion of the ‘sense experience’ in modern philosophy presents a non-natural perception of the human being and the world, explaining the relationship between the human being and its nature in a supernatural way. It is argued that subjectivization and idealization originate from the subjectivist and transcendental views of traditional philosophy, which conceives ‘experience’ as a non-natural gift that is given to the human subject. Accordingly, means of conception defines the human subject as a special existence that is distinct from its nature, and it has been argued that many dualities emerge out of this understanding. Accordingly, it is stated that the notion of experience is treated as a part of these dualities within the subjectivist and idealist perspectives.

It is further argued that the naturalist perspective provides a natural explanation of experience, which saves the understanding of experience from subjectivist, dualist and idealist assumptions. In addition, the naturalist view brings up the idea of the 'lived experience', which is essential for the main argument of this study, in which a naturalist perspective for the analysis of 'experience' is adopted. It is argued that from the naturalist point of view, 'experience' is considered a natural event and can be explained without reference to supernatural causes. Accordingly, the naturalist explanation of experience, it can be said, gives us a new conception of the human being and nature that provides a more plausible worldview for our philosophy and our life.

In Chapter 4 Dewey's empirical naturalism is presented as the basis of this study, with his naturalistic conception of experience, which is suggested as a plausible conception and optimum means for the philosophical reconstruction of experience. Dewey's notion of experience, as detailed in his *Collected Works*, was presented for three periods, and in all three periods, the place of the notion of experience was fundamental in his philosophy. That said there were some changes in his perspective, which can be seen as a line from his idealism to naturalism.

In this regard, Dewey's conception of experience from his early period is explained from his idealist perspective, which was influenced by Hegel. We encounter here early criticisms of traditional idealism and subjectivism, similar forms of which are seen in his later period. Dewey presents his idea of the human being as an organism that is a part of nature, without making any subjectivist assumptions in this early period. On the other hand, the radical empiricism of Dewey's middle and experimentalist period is presented, William James's influences on Dewey's notion of experience can be observed. Dewey's idea of the 'reconstruction of philosophy' and his

rejection of its traditional concepts took place in this period, and accordingly, Dewey's notion of experience is stated as a central method and as the main subject of philosophy.

The naturalist conception of experience is presented as a highly significant factor in the conception of the main argument of this study. Accordingly, through Dewey's naturalistic conception of experience we meet the notion of 'lived experience' as an ontological conception of experience. In this later period, Dewey constituted his 'naturalist metaphysics' by describing 'experience' as a 'continuous interaction process in nature', according to which the human being and its nature are presented in a changed harmony.

In the last chapter, Dewey's 'naturalist metaphysics' is presented and we are introduced in this chapter to the full conception of the 'lived experience'. Dewey's notion of experience is presented as a field for the interaction of all natural things or events. He presents an alternative metaphysics referring to the interactions of all existences in nature, explaining these existences as historical, cultural and natural events. From this perspective, nature is defined as affairs of affairs, while the human being is defined as an organism that is characterized and lived 'in and by nature'. 'Experience' denotes everything in nature, including all events and all interactions, and the all-doing and all-knowing of the human being. It is a highly inclusive concept that refers to nature, history and culture.

That stated, Dewey describes his theory of 'metaphysics of experience' through three leading principles. The first of these is 'immediacy', which can be explained as a non-cognitive element of experience. According to this principle, the qualities and connections of 'experience' are immediately felt, had and known, which is defined as a primary existential state of life. The second principle is 'interaction', which has different usages in Dewey's

writings, referring in places to ‘relation’, ‘connection’ and ‘transaction’. This principle is stated with the argument that “all existent things in nature interact with each other, and knowledge and meaning emerges from these interactions”. ‘Experience’, for Dewey, is transaction that refers to all that passes between the organism and its environment. It conceives all external things immediately, in that all natural things are related to each other. These natural relations follow a line of continuity that refers to the third principle of Dewey’s metaphysics of experience, which states that there is a line of continuity from the less complex to the more complex forms of life. These three principles are presented as grounds for the field of experience; in other words, the ontological conception of experience.

In the last section, an attempt is made to show some of the influences of Dewey’s conception of experience, beginning with the opposing standpoint of George Santayana. Santayana argues that Dewey’s naturalism assumes a foreground for nature. The answer of Dewey to this debate is presented in this section. This debate is very important for the conception of naturalism and naturalistic approach in American tradition.

In conclusion, first I searched the concept of experience in Dewey’s works. This search is made within the framework of ‘naturalistic lived experience’. I presented ‘lived experience’ in a broad perspective, which includes epistemological conception of experience in traditional philosophy. Second, I re-read the concept of experience in terms of ‘naturalistic lived experience’, which enables to get rid of the limited understanding of epistemological conception of ‘sense experience’. I presented ‘lived experience’ that includes nature, culture and history. Third, this study leaves open a question that what the relationship between the phenomenological conception of experience and naturalistic conception of experience is. This study presents a background for this question and it can be improved in a farther study. Finally, this study

gives a background to the relationship between environment, ecology and politics. I argue the naturalistic conception of 'lived experience' enables to different perception of nature and many ecological problems can be solved by adopting this conception. Today, philosophy and science present many new conceptions of the world and the relationships of the human beings within it. Accordingly, the naturalistic conception of 'lived experience' can be seen to provide a new and different worldview that is compatible with the current interests of human beings. In addition, to suggest 'experience' as an alternative metaphysical term gives us a different understanding of philosophy, while it can also be said that the perception of the human being as an organism in nature provides us with a more plausible worldview, which in turn has some consequences for our political and ecological thought.

REFERENCES

Alexander, Thomas M. (1986) "Dewey's Metaphysics and The Principle of Continuity". *Southwest Philosophical Studies*, 11: 39-51

Alexander, Thomas M. (1987) *John Dewey's Theory of Art, Experience & Nature, The Horizons of Feeling*, U.S.A.: State University of New York Press.

Bancroft, Mark (1998). "Plato's Cosmology & the Mystical Experience". EnSpire Publishing: <http://www.enspirepress.com>

Bennett, Tony (2005). *New Keywords, A Revised Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, (ed. by Grossberg, Lawrence. Morris, Meaghan), Australia: Blackwell Publishing.

Bernstein, Richard J. (Jan. 5, 1961). "John Dewey's Metaphysics of Experience". *The Journal of Philosophy* 58:1:5-14.

Blake, Ralph M. (Mar., 1929). "The Role of Experience in Descartes' Theory of Method (I)". *The Philosophical Review* 38:2:125-143.

Boisvert, Raymond D. (1988). *Dewey's Metaphysics*, U.S.A.: Fordham University.

Boisvert Raymond D. (1998) *John Dewey: Rethinking Our Time*, Albany: State University of New York Press.

Chappell, Vere. (1994). "Locke's Theory of Ideas". *The Cambridge Companion to Locke*, U.S.A.: Cambridge University Press: 26-56.

Clarke, Desmond M. (1976). "The Ambiguous Role of Experience in Cartesian Science". *Proceedings of the Biennial Meeting of the Philosophy of Science Association* 1: 151-164.

Cory, D. (Mar., 2, 1950). "Some Notes on the Deliberate Philosophy of Santayana". *The Journal of Philosophy*, 47:5.

Dancy, Jonathan & Sosa Ernest (ed.) (2006). *Blackwell Companions to Philosophy, A Companion to Epistemology*, U.S.A.: Blackwell Publishing.

Dewey, John. (Feb. 3, 1927). "Half-Hearted Naturalism", *The Journal of Philosophy*, 24:3:57-64.

Dewey, John. (2008). *The Early Works (1882-1898), Volume 1-5*, (ed. Jo Ann Boydston), USA: Southern Illinois University Press.

Dewey, John. (2008). *The Middle Works (1899-1924), Volume 1-17*, (ed. Jo Ann Boydston), USA: Southern Illinois University Press.

Dewey, John. (2008). *The Later Works (1925-1953), Volume 1-15*, (ed. Jo Ann Boydston), USA: Southern Illinois University Press.

Dewey, John. (2012). *Unmodern Philosophy and Modern Philosophy*, (ed. Phillip Deen), Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press.

Eames, S. Morris. (1977). *Pragmatic Naturalism: An Introduction*, Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press.

Feldman, W.T. (1968). *The Philosophy of John Dewey; A Critical Analysis*, New York: Greenwood Press, Publishers.

Fogelin, Robert J. (1993) "Hume's Scepticism" in *The Cambridge Companion to Hume*, New York: Cambridge University Press: 90-116.

Gale, Richard M. (Fall, 2002). "The Metaphysics of John Dewey". *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society: A Quarterly Journal in American Philosophy*, 38:4:477-519.

Gasser, George. (2007). *How Successful is Naturalism?*, Germany: Ontos Verlag: Publication of the Austrian Ludwig Wittgenstein Society. New Series:4.

Gardner, Thomas. (Summer, 2000). "The Subject Matter of Dewey's Metaphysics". *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society: A Quarterly Journal in American Philosophy*, 36:3:393-405.

Geiger, George R. (1958). *John Dewey in Perspective*, New York: Oxford University Press.

J.J. Chambliss. (2004). "Subject Matter in John Dewey: Making Object of Knowledge". *Curr. Issue in Education*, 11:14-24.

Hickman, Larry A. (2007). *Pragmatism As Post-Postmodernism: Lessons from John Dewey*, New York: Fordham University Press.

Hildebrand, David. (2008). *Dewey; A Beginner's Guide*, Oxford: Oneworld.

Hume, David. (2000) *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, (ed. Tom L. Beauchamp), Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Jay, Martin. (2005) *Songs of Experience*, California: University of California Press.

Jones, W.T. (1969). *A History of Western Philosophy, Hobbes to Hume*, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.

Kadlec, Alison. (2007) *Dewey's Critical Pragmatism*, USA: Lexington Books.

Kahn, Sholom J. (Dec., 1948). "Experience and Existence in Dewey's Naturalistic Metaphysics". *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 9:2: 316-321.

Kant, Immanuel. (1965). *Critique of Pure Reason*, (translated by Norman Kemp Smith), Boston: New York: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Kestenbaum, Victor. (1977). *The Phenomenological Sense of John Dewey: Habit and Meaning*, New Jersey: Humanities Press.

Klein, Ernest. (1966). *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of The English Language Volume I*, Amsterdam: London: New York: Elsevier Publishing Company.

Kornblith, Hilary. (1994). "Naturalism: Both Metaphysical and Epistemological". *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*: XIX.

Lavine, Thelma Z. (1959). "Naturalism and The Sociological Analysis of Knowledge" in *Naturalism and the Human Spirit*. (ed. Yervant H. Krikorian) New York: Columbia University Press:183-210.

Locke, John. (1998). *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Great Britain: Wordsworth Classical of World Literature.

Marsoobian, Armen T. & Ryder, John (Ed.). (2004). *The Blackwell Guide to American Philosophy*, USA: Blackwell Publishing.

McDermott, John J. (1973). *The Philosophy of John Dewey; Two Volumes In One; The Structure of Experience and The Lived Experience*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Munson, T. N. (1962) *The Essential Wisdom of George Santayana*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Norton, David Fate. (1993). "Introduction to Hume's Thought". *The Cambridge Companion to Hume*, U.S.A.: Cambridge University Press:1-32.

Papineau, David. (1993). *Philosophical Naturalism*, Oxford UK & Cambridge USA: Blackwell.

Randall, John Herman. (1959) "Epilogue: The Nature of Naturalism" in *Naturalism and the Human Spirit*, (ed. Yervant H. Krikorian), New York: Columbia University Press: 354-383.

Rehmke, Johannes. (Nov., 1897). "Experience", *The Philosophical Review*, 6:6: 608-625.

Rotenstreich, Nathan. (1972). *Experience and Its Systematization: Studies in Kant*, Netherlands: The Hague Martinus Nijhoff.

Santayana, George. (Dec. 3, 1925). "Dewey's Naturalistic Metaphysics". *The Journal of Philosophy*, 22:25:673-688.

Santayana, George. (1923). *Scepticism and Animal Faith; Introduction to a System of Philosophy*, New York: Dover Publications.

Santayana, George. (1930). *The Realm of Matter, Book Second of Realms of Being*, London: Constable of Company Ltd.

Shook, John R. (Fall, 2003). "The Possibility of an Empiricist Naturalism: Dewey and Santayana". *Overheard in Seville: Bulletin of the Santayana Society*, 21:1-7.

Shook, John R. (Fall, 2003). "Dewey's Empirical Naturalism and Pragmatic Metaphysics". *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society: A Quarterly Journal in American Philosophy*, 40:4:731-742.

Shook, John R. (2000). *Dewey's Empirical Theory of Knowledge and Reality*, USA: Vanderbilt University Press.

Shook, John R. & Paul Kurtz (Ed.). (2009). *The Future of Naturalism*, New York: Humanity Books.

Skeat, Walter W. A. (1956). *Concise Etymological Dictionary of The English Language*, Oxford: Oxford at the Clarendon Press.

Sprigge, Timothy L. S. (Oct., 1969). "The Privacy of Experience". *Mind*, New Series, 78:312:512-521.

Stroh G. W. & Callaway H. G. (2000). *American Ethics, A Source Book From Edwards to Dewey*, New York: University Press America.

Stuhr, John J. (2000). *Pragmatism and Classical American Philosophy*, New York: Oxford: Oxford University Press

Stuhr, John. (1997). *Genealogical Pragmatism; Philosophy, Experience and Community*, USA: State University of New York Press.

Walsh, W. H. (1991). *Reason and Experience*, England: Gregg Revivals.

Wittgenstein, Ludwig. (2002). *Tractatus - Logico Philosophicus*, The Project Gutenberg EBook of Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus

Wollhouse, Roger. (1994). "Locke's Theory of Knowledge". *The Cambridge Companion to Locke*, U.S.A.: Cambridge University Press:146-172.

CURRICULUM VITAE

AYSUN AYDIN

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

20014 - : Part time Instructor at Department of Philosophy, Yeditepe University, Istanbul, Turkey.

2004 – 2014: Research Assistant, Department of Philosophy, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey.

2010 - 2011: Visiting Scholar, Center for Dewey Studies at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, USA.

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Department of Philosophy, Middle East Technical University, Turkey, 2015.

M.A. Department of Philosophy, Middle East Technical University, Turkey, 2008.

B.A. Department of Philosophy, Ankara University, Turkey, 2003.

PUBLICATIONS

Published Works in English

Aydın, A., “The Concept of Pleasure: Plato versus Greek’s Manner of Life”, *Ethos: Dialogues in Philosophy and Social Sciences*, July, 2013.

Aydın, A., “An Analysis of Altruistic Behavior Practices in Terms of MacIntyre’s View of Virtue and Practice”, *Ethos: Dialogues in Philosophy and Social Sciences*, July, 2009.

Published Works in Turkish

Aydın, A., “Ahlakın Kökeni ve Evrimsel Etik”, The Bulletin of Geology Engineers Association, Special Edition of “Evolution”, 2007.

Aydın, A., Sol, A., “Olgu ve Değer Ayrımı Temelinde Farklı Bir Evrimsel Etik Yaklaşım”, II. Applied Ethics Conference, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, 2006.

Unpublished Works

Aydın, A. “Lived Experience: Dewey’s Naturalistic Conception”, Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of Philosophy, Middle East Technical University, Turkey, 2015.

Aydın, A., “A Different Approach to Evolutionary Ethics: From Biology to Society”, M.A. Dissertation, Department of Philosophy, Middle East Technical University, 2008.

Aydın, A., “Platon ve Aristoteles’de Güzellik Sorunsalı”, B. A. Dissertation, Department of Philosophy, Ankara University, 2003.

PAPERS PRESENTED in LOCAL and INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

Aydın, A., “Dewey or Santayana: on Experience”, 2012 Summer Institute in American Philosophy July 16-21, 2012, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, USA, 2012.

Aydın, A., “Deweyian Experience and Naturalistic Hopes for Philosophy”, 2011 Conference on Modernity, Critique, and Humanism, February 12-13, 2011, California State University, Los Angeles, USA, 2011.

Aydın, A., “Making Sense of Darwin through Lenses of Dewey”, John Dewey's 150th Birthday Celebration: An International Conference on Dewey's Impact on America and the World, October 21-24, 2009. Center for Inquiry, Amherst, New York, USA, 2009.

Aydın, A., Sol, A. “Olgu ve Değer Ayırımı Temelinde Farklı Bir Evrimsel Etik Yaklaşım”, II. Applied Ethics Conference, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, 2006.

LECTURE EXPERIENCES

Philosophy in 17th Century, Department of Philosophy, Yeditepe University (Spring 2015)

Introduction to Philosophy, Department of Philosophy, Yeditepe University (Fall 2014, Spring 2015)

Critical Thinking, Department of Philosophy, Yeditepe University (Fall 2014, Spring 2015)

Philosophy of Evolution, (Assistant to course instructor), Department of Philosophy, Middle East Technical University (Fall 2005)

ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES

Undergraduate Student Advisor at METU, 2005-2009.

Erasmus Student Advisor at METU, 2005-2009.

APPLIED QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

Member of organization committee of II. Applied Ethics Conference, Middle East Technical University, 2006.

Member of organization committee of METU Philosophy Days: Meaning Conference, Middle East Technical University, 2008.

Member of organization committee of Activities of 25. Foundation Year of Department of Philosophy, Middle East Technical University, 2008.

REFEREEING

Conference papers of II. Applied Ethics Conference, Middle East Technical University, 2006.

MEMBERSHIPS

Center for Inquiry, Amherst, New York, USA, since September, 2009.

Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy (SAAP), USA, since October, 2010.

Middle East Studies Association (MESA), USA, since January, 2014.

LANGUAGES in USE

Turkish Native Speaker

English Advanced

OTHER WORKS

2013 – 2014: Editor of Kedici – Journal of Cat and Culture.

2015 - : Editor of Kedi ve Diğer Şeyler – Journal of Cat and Culture.

POPULAR PUBLISHED PAPERS

Aydın, A. “Doğal Olmak ya da Olamamak”, Kedi ve Diğer Şeyler, vol.2, February, 2015.

Aydın, A. “Peçenin Arkasında Bir Sokak Kedisi”, Kedi ve Diğer Şeyler, vol.1, January, 2015.

Aydın, A. “Umut ve Yaşama Arzusu Üzerine”, Kedici, vol.24, May, 2014.

Aydın, A., “Sensin Nankör!”, Kedici, vol.21, November, 2013.

Aydın, A., “Bir Kedinin Sizi Kullandığını Düşündünüz mü Hiç?”, Kedici, vol.20, September, 2013.

TURKISH SUMMARY

Felsefe tarihinin en önemli konularından biri, insanın dünya ile ilişkisinin açıklanmasıdır. Birçok farklı yaklaşım, dünya ve bu dünyanın içinde olan insanın ilişkisini açıklamak için tutarlı kavramlar öne sürmüşlerdir. Öte yandan, insan ve dünya ilişkisini açıklayan kavramsal çerçeve, felsefi pozisyonumuzu oluşturan önemli etmenlerden biridir.

İnsan ve dünya arasındaki ilişkiye bilimsel ve doğal açıklama getirmeye çalışan önemli felsefi görüşlerden biri de natüralist görüş, yani doğalcılıktır. Natüralizm, varsayımları ve tanımlamaları ile felsefe tarihi boyunca karşılaştığımız bir görüş olsa da, sistematik bir felsefi yaklaşım olarak sunulması 20.yy'da olmuştur. Bu geç karşılaşmanın ya da gelişmenin nedeni, natüralist görüş ile bilimsel gelişmeler arasındaki paralellik ile açıklanabilir.

Natüralizm, bilimsel gelişmelerden ve bilimin, insanın da içinde yaşadığı dünya üzerine açıklamalarından haberi, ve bilim ile paralellik gösteren bir felsefi yaklaşımı savunur. Bu nedenle natüralist görüş, insanı hem doğanın bir parçası hem de doğanın içinde ve doğa aracılığı ile yaşayan bir organizma olarak ele alır.

Natüralizmin farklı kabulleri olan ve farklı felsefi kavramsal açıklamaları bulunan birçok çeşidi vardır. Bu çalışmanın amacına uygun olarak, natüralist deneyim kavramı ve ile ilgileneceğim ve bu kavramı Amerikan natüralist geleneğin önemli temsilcilerinden biri olan John Dewey'nin deneyim kavramsallaştırması ile sınırlandıracağım.

Bu çalışmada, natüralist geleneğin önemli temsilcilerinden biri olan John Dewey'nin natüralist deneyim kavramsallaştırması açısından özel bir ilgi sunduğu iddia edilmektedir. Dewey deneyim kavramına doğal bir zemin sağlamakta ve kendi felsefi pozisyonunu natüralist varsayımlarla sunmaktadır.

Bu çalışmada, Dewey'nin felsefe için bir 'yeniden kuruluş' olarak sunduğu natüralist deneyim kavramının, felsefi sübjektivizm, idealizm ve düalizm problemleri ile başa çıkmak açısından başarılı bir görüş olduğu iddia edilmektedir. Dewey'nin natüralist deneyim kavramı, doğayı bir bütün olarak kapsayan bir oluşum olarak ve makul bir deneyim felsefesi yaklaşımı olarak anlaşılmalıdır. Bu yaklaşım, deneyim kavramını 'canlı yaşantı' kavramı ile açıklayan bir natüralist yaklaşımdır.

Bu çalışmanın amacı, natüralist 'canlı yaşantı' kavramının olanaklılığını sorgulamaktır. Bu açıdan bakıldığında, 'canlı yaşantı' kavramını merkeze alan bir başka felsefi görüş ise fenomenolojidir. Ancak, fenomenolojinin 'canlı yaşantı' görüşü bu çalışmanın alanı dışında bırakılmıştır. Bu çalışma, natüralist 'canlı yaşantı' kavramına odaklanıp, insanın dünya ile ilişkisini doğayı, kültürü ve tarihi de içine alan deneyim alanı üzerinden sunmayı hedeflemektedir.

'Canlı yaşantı' kavramı insanın doğa ve yaşam ile tüm ilişki tarzlarını ve bu ilişkideki tüm faktörleri içeren bir kavramdır ve en geniş deneyim alanını göstermektedir. Ancak bu kavram bu geniş anlamı ile, geleneksel felsefe içinde yer almamıştır. Bunun nedeni de, öncelikli olarak geleneksel felsefenin sübjektif yaklaşımıdır. Geleneksel felsefe, deneyimi öznenin bir eylemi olarak ele almış ve sadece 'duyu deneyimi' kavramı bağlamında tanımlamıştır. İkinci olarak, geleneksel felsefenin deneyim kavramını sadece bir bilgi problemi olarak dar anlamda ele alması söz konusudur. Geleneksel

yaklaşım, deneyimi, Dewey'nin düşündüğü gibi, insan ve doğa ilişkisinin tüm olanaklarını içeren geniş bir alan olarak düşünmemiştir.

Modern felsefenin temel eğilimi, deneyimi insana doğal olmayan bir şekilde verilmiş bir armağan gibi açıklamak ve deneyime insana ait olması anlamında aşırı vurgu yapmak şeklinde olmuştur. Modern dönemde, deneyim sadece rasyonel öznenin yapabildiği özel bir yetenek ya da güç olarak sunulmuştur. Örneğin, Descartes öznenin deneyimine odaklanırken, Kant öznenin deneyiminin sınırlarına odaklanmıştır. Bunun yanı sıra, nesnel dünyanın kuruluşunun ya da varlığının öznenin bilişsel yetenekleri üzerinden açıklanması da, modern felsefenin deneyimi özneleştiren ve idealleştiren yaklaşımının bir sonucudur.

Modern felsefede, tüm deneyimlerin merkezi temsilcisi ve temel faktörü olan bir öznenin kabulü ve özneye dönüş söz konusudur. Ancak bu özneye dönüş, insanın dünya ile ilişkisini öncelikli olarak bilişsel bir kavram çerçevesinde kavramaktadır. Özne ve bu öznenin dünyadaki deneyimleri epistemolojik bir problem olarak açıklanır. Bu epistemolojik problem, özne kendisinden farklı olan bir nesneyi nasıl bilebilir? sorusu ile ortaya çıkar. Bilinç alanında, zihin ve dünya arasındaki boşluğun üstesinden nasıl gelinebilir? Bu sorularla şekillenen epistemolojik problem, en baştan bir düalizmi, ben ve dünya ya da zihin ve doğa şeklindeki bir düalizmi var saymaktadır.

Bu çalışma, bu şekildeki bir düalizmden, idealizmden ve sübjektivizmden kaçışın olanaklılığını sorgulamaktadır. Bu düalizm, sübjektivizm ve idealizm görüşleri, modern felsefenin özne felsefesi temeli bakış açısı içinde etkili bir biçimde sunulmaktadır. Bu çalışmada, natüralizmin deneyim felsefesi ile bu özne merkezli yaklaşımın üstesinden gelinebileceği iddia edilmektedir.

Bu çalışmanın bir diğer amacı, aşkın, sübjektivist ya da özne merkezci hiçbir var sayım içermeyen natüralist görüşün ‘canlı yaşantı deneyimi’ kavramsallaştırmasını ortaya koymaktır. Tamamen natüralist kabullerden oluşan bir deneyim kavramsallaştırmasının sunulması ve değerlendirilmesi, modern felsefenin adı geçen problemlerinden kurtulmak açısından önemlidir. Bu açıdan, bu çalışma deneyim kavramını yeniden okumuş, sübjektivist, düalist ve idealist kavrayışların temel argümanlarını analiz edip eleştirmiş ve ayrıca deneyim kavramını John Dewey’nin natüralist kavramsallaştırması çerçevesinde yeniden sunmuştur.

Deneyim sözcüğünün Latin ve Alman dillerinde iki anlama sahip olması, ‘duyu deneyimi’ ve ‘canlı yaşantı’, başka bir deyişle ‘yaşantı deneyimi’ kavramları arasındaki farka gönderme yapması açısından önemlidir. Latince deneyim anlamına gelen *Experientia* sözcüğü, “deneme yoluyla gelen bilgi” anlamına gelirken ve ‘duyu deneyimi’ne gönderme yaparken, yine deneyim anlamına gelen *Pathos* sözcüğü “dayanmak, katlanmak” anlamına gelmektedir ve ‘yaşantı deneyimi ya da canlı yaşantı’ kavramına karşılık gelmektedir. Bunun yanı sıra, Latince’de yine deneyim anlamına gelen ancak ‘risk ve tehlike’ sözcüklerini de karşılayan *Peril* sözcüğü de vardır.

Öte yandan, Almanca da deneyim kavramına karşılık gelen iki ayrı sözcük içermektedir. Birincisi gündelik deneyimlere karşılık gelen ve ‘canlı yaşantı’ kavramı ile tanımlanan *Erlebnis* sözcüğüdür. Diğeri ise, dışardan gelen duyu izlenimlerini temsil eden ve aynı zamanda ‘tehlike’ anlamına gelen, ‘duyu deneyimi’ anlamındaki *Erfahrung* sözcüğüdür. Bu ikinci sözcük aynı zamanda, Kantçı felsefe geleneği ile ilişkilendirilmektedir. Latin ve Alman dillerindeki bu iki farklı sözcük, felsefi deneyim kavramı açısından da temel olan bir ayrımı bize sunmaktadır.

Antik Yunan düşüncesinde, deneyim kavramı ile ‘duyu deneyimi’ olarak tanımlanması, duyu verileri ile ve dış dünya ile sınırlandırılması ve güvenilmeyen bilgi kaynağı olması açısından olumsuz anlamda karşılaşmaktayız. Deneyim, duyu organlarının sınırları ile sınırlandırılmış bir olanak olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Deneyim kesin olmayan ve güvenilir bilgi vermeyen gündelik yaşam ile temsil edilmektedir. Platon felsefesinde deneyim, güvenilir olmayan bilgi kaynağı olarak tanımlanmıştır. Platon’a göre, deneyim gelenek, görenek ve alışkanlıklara gönderme yapan ve doğru bilgi için güvenilir olmayan bir şeydir. Platon için deneyim, matematiğin kesin ve zorunlu doğruları karşısında, doğru bilgiye engel teşkil eden bir kavramdır.

Platon, bilgi felsefesini Meno Diyaloğu’nda “hatırlama” kavramı ile açıklar ve bu diyalogda deneyim kavramı ile bilgi arasındaki ilişkiyi gösterir. Bu diyalogda Sokrates, insanın deneyiminden önce “doğuştan ideler”e sahip olduğunu söyler. Dış dünyanın deneyimi, bu “doğuştan ideler”i ya da “önsel bilgi”yi ortaya çıkarır. Bu görüşe göre, ruh geçmişte var olmuştur ve bilgi geçmişten şimdiye aktarılan bir şeydir. Doğuştan gelen ideler, duyulur şeyler ile etkileşime girildikçe yani deneyimledikçe geçmişten hatırlanan şeylerdir. Dolayısıyla, bilgi deneyimden önce edinilmiş bir şeydir. Bilgi var oluşun önceki bir safhasına aittir ve duyulur şeylerin deneyimlenmesi yolu ile hatırlanır.

Öte yandan, Platon felsefesi algılanan dünya ve idealar dünyası şeklinde iki ayrı dünya tanımlar. Buna göre, algılanan fiziksel dünya, idealar dünyasının görüntüsüdür ve fiziksel dünya gerçekliği sınırlı bir şekilde temsil eder. Bu nedenle, deneyim fiziksel dünyaya ait olan bir şey olarak gerçekliği ve doğru bilgiyi yakalamamızı sağlayamaz. Görüldüğü gibi, Platon’un hem epistemoloji görüşü hem de iki ayrı dünya varsayan düalist varlık alanı

görüŖü, deneyime yer vermemektedir. DođuŖtan gelen idelerin deneyime öncel olması, deneyim ve bilgi arasına aŖılmaz bir boşluk koymaktadır.

Aristoteles için deneyim kavramının pratik olan kategorisinde daha olumlu bir anlamı vardır. Ona göre, deneyim yolu ile elde edilen bilgi akıl yolu ile ya da ideler yolu ile elde edilen bilgi kadar değerlidir. Aristoteles için deneyim, gelişmiş alışkanlıklara karşılık gelir ve insanın benzer durumlarda doğru yargılarda bulunabilmesini sağlar. Aristoteles'in bu görüşü, nesneyi doğrudan doğruya sahip olma ve nesneye katılma anlamındaki Antik Yunan deneyim kavramsallaştırmasını anlamamız açısından önemlidir. Ancak yine de, güvenilir doğru bilgi kaynağı olmak bakımından deneyim akıldan sonra ikinci sıradadır.

Öte yandan, Antik Yunan felsefesinde deneyim kavramı Kinikler ve Sofistler açısından önemlidir. Bu görüşlere göre, deneyim maddi dünya ile ilişkide en önemli bilgi kaynağıdır. Sofistlere göre, duyu deneyimi bilgi için temel araç olarak görülmelidir. Aynı zamanda, deneyimi Platoncu formların karşısına koyarlar. Sofistler deneyimi bütüncül bir çerçevede sunmaya çalışırlar.

Modern döneme geldiğimizde, yeni özne anlayışı felsefenin temel konusu olarak karşımıza çıkar. Buna paralel olarak, deneyim kavramı da bu yeni özne anlayışı çerçevesinde ele alınır. Buna göre, felsefenin temel problemi bilgi problemidir. Modern düşüncede, bilgi problemi merkezi bir çıkmaz olarak görülür. Filozoflar, bilginin kaynağını, özne ve nesne ilişkisini ve bunları bilgi sürecindeki yerini açıklamaya çalışırlar ve deneyimin rolü ve bilgi sürecindeki önemi de cevap bekleyen felsefi sorulardan biridir.

Modern düşüncede deneyimin rolü duyu verisi ya da duyu deneyimi olarak düşünölmektedir. Locke'un bilgi felsefesinde deneyimin temsilci rolü ile karşılaŖırken, Descartes'in bilgi felsefesinde deneyim düşünen öznenin bir

eylemi olarak karşımıza çıkar. Öte yandan, Kant'ın bilgi felsefesinde öznenin bir eylemidir ve önsel kavramlar tarafından kurulmuş ya da olanaklılığı önsel kavramlarla mümkün olan bir deneyim söz konusudur. Başka bir deyişle, deneyim kavramı, öznenin bilişsel yeteneklerinden bağımsız olarak, zihin beden ilişkisinden bağımsız olarak, özetle bilgi sürecinden bağımsız olarak düşünülmemiş ve ele alınmamıştır.

Bu çalışmada, modern felsefenin deneyim kavramsallaştırması Descartes, Locke, Hume ve Kant felsefeleri ile sınırlandırılmış, bu düşünürler modern düşüncenin deneyim kavramını ele alışı temsil eden düşünürler olarak açıklanmıştır. Bu düşünürlerin deneyim kavramını ele alışları rasyonalist ve deneyci gelenekler arasındaki gerilimle de ilişkilidir.

Modern felsefe, Descartes ve onun şüphe yöntemi ile başlar. Felsefe tarihinde kabul gören özne merkezci anlayışın Descartes'in rasyonalist anlayışından ve onun zihin-beden düalizminden miras kaldığını söyleyebiliriz. Öte yandan, deneyim nosyonunun epistemolojik bir sorunsala indirgenmesinin ve metafiziğin güvenilir bilgisi probleminin bir parçasına indirgenmesinin de Descartes'in bilgi anlayışına dayandığını söylemek mümkündür. Bir rasyonalist olarak, Descartes için de bilgimizin kaynağı doğuştan gelen idelerdir ve bu ideler bizim zihnimize dış dünyaya karşılık gelen form ve kavramları verirler. Dolayısıyla biz dünyayı bu ideler aracılığı ile bilebiliriz. Bu görüşe göre, deneyim "öznenin deneyimi" olarak tanımlanır ve öznenin bir eylemine indirgenmiş olur. Böylece, deneyim zihin kavramından bağımsız olarak düşünülemez.

Descartes Meditasyonlar'da şüphe yöntemi ile, önceki tüm kavramsallaştırmalarını yok sayarak, doğru ve şüphe edilemeyen bilgiyi yeniden inşa etmeye çalışır. Önce, duyu verileri aracılığı ile gelen tüm bilgisini, doğru ve güvenilir olmadığı için, reddeder. Şüphe yöntemi ile, uzun

bir elimine etme sürecinden sonra kesin olduğunu kabul ettiği tek bir şeye ulaşır; düşünen ben. Descartes'e göre "düşünen ben" tüm bilgiye temel olabilecek güvenilir bir kaynaktır. Bu oldukça radikal özne merkezci bir yaklaşımdır ve dış dünyanın bilgisini tamamen bu "düşünen ben" in farkındalığına bağlı kılmıştır. Buna göre, dış dünyanın bilgisini edinmek duyu verilerine ya da dış dünyanın deneyimine bağlı değildir. Dış dünyanın varlığına ulaşmanın güvenilir yolu, bize Tanrı tarafından verilmiş olan doğuştan gelen ideler ya da akıl yoluyla bilebildiğimiz, kesin olan önsel bilgidir. Dış dünyanın varlığı ve bilgisi Tanrı'nın garantisindedir. Bu yolla Descartes, duyuların ve deneyimin rolünü bilgi sürecinden dışlamış olur.

Descartes felsefesine yapılan pek çok eleştiri vardır. Ancak onun felsefesindeki en temel problem, iki farklı tözün varlığı yani zihin ve beden düalizmi olarak görülür. "Düşünen ben" in Descartes felsefesi içindeki merkezi rolü de bu düalizmi destekleyen bir faktördür. Düşünen ben, ya da düşünen özne, dünyadaki tüm diğer varlıklardan farklı olan bir varlıktır. Descartes bu düşünen özneye farklı ve bağımsız bir varlık statüsü atfeder. Zihin ve beden düalizmi de bu farklı statünün var sayılmasından kaynaklanan bir problemdir. Descartes, bu düşünen özne ile fiziksel bedenin ilişkisini açıklayamadığı için bu problemi aşamamıştır.

Descartes'in rasyonalist felsefesinde deneyim, bilişsel olanın karşısına konularak algıya indirgenmiştir ve Descartes bu algıyı bilgi süreci açısından ciddiye almaz. Deneyim, yani algı, bize dış dünyanın gerçekliği hakkında bir bilgi vermez. Deneyim tesadüfî bir idedir ve dışsal bedenlerin bizim bedenlerimiz etkileyen hareketidir. Descartes, deneyimin sadece bilimsel bilgiye kanıt oluşturması açısından önemli olduğunu söyler. Deneysel kanıt olan deneyim, sıradan deneyimden farklıdır. Ancak, Descartes'in bu yaklaşımı pek çok yorumcu tarafından belirsiz bulunur. Descartes'in deneyim kavramını ele alışı, hem düşünen öznenin merkezi rolünden dolayı

sübjektivist, hem de aklın karşısına konması ve zihin ve beden düalizminde deneyimin bedeni temsil eden tarafta olması açısından düalisttir.

Descartes'ten sonra, modern dönemin önemli temsilcileri İngiliz Deneycileridir. 17.yy'daki bilimsel gelişmeler ve bilimsel yöntemin öne çıkması filozofları da etkilemiştir. Filozoflar, bilginin doğası sorunsalına, bilimsel yöntemler ile yeniden eğilmişlerdir. Buna göre, rasyonalist düşünürler kesin ideler olarak matematiksel elementleri öne çıkarırlarken, deneyci düşünürler dünyanın bilgisine ulaşmak için duyum ve algıya odaklanmışlardır. Rasyonalist ve deneyci görüşler arasındaki kavga da bilginin kaynağı konusundaki bu karşıtlığa dayanmaktadır.

Deneyci görüş, epistemolojik problem olarak, deneysel doğrulama ve nesnenin kavranışına odaklanmaktadır. Deneyciliğin ilk temsilcisi John Locke'dur ve Locke'un felsefesi rasyonalizme bir cevap olarak ortaya çıkar. Her ne kadar, Locke deneyci bir düşünür olsa da, onun bilgi sürecini açıklayan kavramları rasyonalist düşünürlerin kavramları ile benzerlikler gösterir. Bazı yorumlara göre, Locke bilgi sürecinde aklın güçlü rolünden ve Descartes'in zihin ve beden düalizminden kurtulamamıştır.

Deneyim kavramı söz konusu olduğunda, Locke'un epistemolojisinin temel elementi olan idenin temsilci karakteridir. İde, nesnenin deneyiminden gelir ve düşüncenin nesnesi olarak tanımlanır. Bu açıdan bakıldığında, nesnenin deneyimi ideler tarafından temsil edilir. Locke'un epistemoloji teorisi, nesnenin deneyimi ile üretilen basit ve karmaşık idelere dayanır. Locke'a göre tüm idelerin kaynağı deneyimdir ve zihin çok sayıda ide içerir. Deneyimin iki formu da duyum ve yansımadır ve tüm ideler bu iki formdan kaynaklanır. Duyum dışsal nesneyi algılamamızı ve kavramamızı sağlar ve çoğu idenin kaynağıdır. Yansıma ise zihnin eylemidir ve idelerin zihinde birleştirilmelerini sağlar. Bu ayrıma dayanarak, Locke basit ve karmaşık

ideler arasındaki ayrımı yapar. Basit ideler duyumdan kaynaklanırlar ve nesnenin niteliklerinin pasif olarak algılanmasıdır. Zihinsel işlem yolu ile duyumdan gelen basit ideler yansımanın basit idelerine dönüştürülürler. Öte yandan, karmaşık ideler zihnin aktiviteleridir. Bu aktif aşamada, zihin basit ideleri bir araya toplar, birleştirir, ayırır ya da soyutlar.

Locke, ideleri üreten nesne ile nesnenin niteliklerine dayanan ideler arasındaki ilişkiye odaklanır. Nesnenin nitelikleri zihinde ide üretme gücüne sahip olan şeylerdir. Locke, iki tür nitelik tanımlar. Birincil nitelikler nesnede gerçekten var olan yani nesneye ait olan niteliklerdir. Birincil nitelikler, bizim algımızdan bağımsız olarak ama nesneye bağımlı olarak var olurlar. Birincil nitelikler matematiksel nitelikler olarak tanımlanırlar; yer kaplama, katılık, yapı, hareket gibi niteliklerdir. İkincil nitelikler ise, nesnede olmayan ama birincil nitelikler aracılığı ile duyum yaratma gücüne sahip olan niteliklerdir. Başka bir deyişle, ikincil nitelikler bizim belirli bir algı aygıtımızın nesnenin birincil nitelikleri ile karşılaşması sonucu ortaya çıkarlar.

Locke'un epistemolojisinde ideler zihinde var olan ve bilginin zihinsel yanını temsil eden şeyler olarak tanımlanırlar. Bu açıdan Locke'un ide tanımı, Descartes'in ide tanımı ile benzerlik gösterir. Ancak Locke, algı ve düşünce arasında bir ayrım yapmaz. Her iki kavramı da, "bir şeyin bilincinde, farkında olmak" olarak tanımlar. Algı ve düşünce birbirine bağlı iki kavramdır ve bağımsız olarak ele alınamazlar. Ancak, Locke'un kullanımında algı, duyum ve düşünce kavramlarında belirsizlik vardır. Bu kavramlar hem bir eylemi hem de duyumun nesnesini temsil ederler. Öte yandan, ideler hem zihnin nesnesini hem de algı ve düşüncenin nesnesini temsil ederler.

Locke'un epistemolojisindeki belirsizliklerin, kendisini rasyonalizm karşısında bir açıklama yaratma zorunluluğunda hissetmesinden ve

rasyonalizmin kavramlarından kurtulamamış olmasından kaynaklandığı söylenebilir. Locke'un çabası Descartes'in doğuştan gelen ideler kavramına bir cevap olarak görülebilir. Her ne kadar, tüm bilginin deneyimden geldiğini söylese de, kavramsal belirsizlikler Locke'un deneyciliğinin anlaşılmasını zorlaştırmaktadır. Locke'un epistemolojisi klasik anlamda duyu deneyimini, yani zihin ve nesne arasındaki uzlaşma kavramını göstermektedir. İdelerin nesnenin niteliklerini temsil etmesinden hareketle, deneyim de sadece duyu deneyimi olan bir temsil olmaktadır.

İngiliz Deneyciliğinin bir diğer önemli temsilcisi ise David Hume'dur. Hume, Locke'a göre tam bir deneyci olarak tanımlanabilir. Ancak Hume'un deneyim kavramı da sadece duyu deneyimi olarak sunulur. Hume, natüralist deneyci bir filozof olarak anılmasına rağmen, felsefesinde 'canlı yaşantı' kavramını yansıtan bir deneyim kavramsallaştırması yoktur. Hume'un epistemolojisi, Locke'un epistemolojisinin yeniden kavramsallaştırılması olarak görülebilir. Hume, Locke'un duyumdan gelen ve yansımadan gelen ideler ayrımını kaldırarak, izlemin ve ideler arasındaki ayrıma odaklanır. Bu değişim, Hume'u metafizik bir var sayıma düşmekten kurtarır. Ona göre, bilgi için duyu deneyimi zorunludur. Hume'un ide ve izlenimleri sadece canlı olmak ve kopya olmak gibi bir farkla birbirlerinden ayrılırlar. Burada, zihnin işlevi olması bakımından bir ayrım yoktur. Zihnin işlevi ide üretme sürecinde ortaya çıkar. İdeler hafıza ve hayal gücü aracılığı ile üretilirler.

Hume'un felsefesinin en önemli elementlerinden biri neden-sonuç ilişkisi konusundaki görüşleridir. Deneyim bize, neden sonuç ilişkisinin zorunlu bağlantılarını vermez. Zorunlu bağlantılar zihin tarafından oluşturulurlar ve nesnede bulunmazlar. Bu nedenle, Hume'un ünlü argümanı, yarın güneş doğacak önermesinin sadece alışkanlıksal bir eğilim olduğunu söyler.

Hume epistemolojisinde aklın ya da zihnin rolü azaltılmıştır. Hume bilgiyi inanç kavramıyla açıklar. Hume'un şüpheciliği inançlarımızın doğal var sayımlar olduğunu herhangi bir akılsal çıkarıma dayanmadığını iddia eder. Dış dünyanın varlığı ve onun bilgisine ulaşabileceğimiz inancı akıl yürütmeye değil, alışkanlığa dayanan bir inançtır.

Bu noktada, Hume'un alışkanlık kavramının, gelenek, görenek, kültür, tekrar eden davranış gibi geniş bir deneyim kavramının parçalarına gönderme yapmasının bu çalışmadaki 'canlı yaşantı' kavramına karşılık gelmesi açısından önemli olduğunu söyleyebiliriz. Ancak, bir natüralist olarak Dewey bu tarzdaki deneyim kavramsallaştırmasını tüm felsefesine temel alırken, yine bir natüralist olan Hume sadece epistemolojik açıdan inançlara bir zemin olarak düşünmüştür. Bu nedenle, Hume'un deneyim kavramını ele alışı da, modern düşüncenin duyu deneyimi kavramsallaştırmasından bağımsız değildir.

Saf Aklın Eleştirisi'nde Kant, rasyonalist ve deneyci geleneği önsel sentezi ile birleştirmeye çalışmıştır. "bütün bilgi deneyimle başlar, ancak deneyimden kaynaklanmaz" sözü ile, deneyimi ilk yönerge olarak sunmuştur. Bilinen sentetik önsel bilgi kavrayışında Kant, zihin ve nesne arasındaki ilişkiyi korumaya çalışmaktadır. Bu ilişkide, zihin nesneye uymak zorunda değil, fakat nesne zihnin işlevine uymak zorundadır. Bu da demektir ki, deneyim zihnin formları ve kavramları içinde ve aracılığı ile oluşur. Deneyim, sadece zihnin kavramları çerçevesinde, koşulu ile olanaklıdır. Bilgi zihnin kavramlarının katkıda bulunduğu kadar bir deneyim içerir. Bu kavramsallaştırma Kant'ın aşkınsal felsefesidir ve deneyimin olanaklılığını sorgular. Öte yandan, duyum bize kavramları sağlamaz. Kavramlaştırma ve yargıya varma sadece zihnin bilişsel yetileri ile yapılabilir. Nesnenin kavramlarını oluşturan ve yargıya varan anlama yetisidir. Anlama ve duyum birbirine indirgenemeyen ancak birlikte çalışması gereken iki yetidir. Anlama

hiçbir şeyi sezemez, duyum hiçbir şeyi düşünemez. Kant'ın “duyusuz kavramlar boş, kavramsız duyular kördür” sözü bu noktada söylenmiştir.

Zihin nesne ile sezgi aracılığı ile etkileşime geçebilir. Zaman ve mekan zorunlu sezgi koşullarıdır ve ne deneyimden ne de önsel kavramlardan çıkarılırlar. Zaman ve mekan, zihnin zorunlu ve önsel sezgileridir ve deneyimden önce gelirler. Başka bir deyişle, deneyimin koşuludurlar ancak deneyimlenemezler. Öte yandan, zaman ve mekan nesneye de ait değildirler. Zaman ve mekan, önsel bilginin ya da kavramların karşılaşılan nesneye zorunlu ve evrensel olarak uygulanmasını olanaklı kılan koşullardır.

Zaman ve mekanın yanı sıra, anlamanın önsel koşulu olan düşüncenin kategorileri yani önsel kavramlar vardır. Zihin deneyimi sentezleyip yargıya varırken bu kavramları kullanır. Bu kavramlar, anlamanın bir eylemi olarak duyular aracılığı ile verili olan nesneye zorunlu olarak uygulanırlar.

Sezgiler ve kategoriler deneyimin zorunlu koşullarıdır. Kant'ın “deneyimin olanaklılığı” kavramı, onun aşkınsal idealizmi açısından oldukça önemlidir. Deneyimi olanaklı kılan ya da belirleyen şey nesne değil, öznenin zihninin kategorileridir. Kant'ın yaklaşımda deneyim ‘öznenin deneyiminin sınırları’ olarak şekillenmektedir. Dolayısıyla, Kant'ın kurucu öznesi deneyimin nesnesini belirlemekte, şekillendirmektedir. Bu nedenle Kant'ın deneyim kavramı sınırlandırılmış bir deneyimi göstermektedir. Bu sınırlandırma geleneksel anlamda aklın gücünün ya da önemli yerinin Kant epistemolojisindeki yansıması olarak görülebilir. Öte yandan, Kant deneyimi sadece güvenilir bilgi kaynağı olmak açısından ele almıştır. Sözüne ettiğimiz ‘canlı yaşantı’ kavramsallaştırması anlamında, Kant felsefesinde, insanın dünyadaki tüm karşılaşmalarını içeren bir deneyim kavramından söz edemeyiz.

Deneyimin olanaklılığı kavramı, nesnenin bilincinin zorunlu koşullarını göstermektedir. Sezgiler ve kategoriler deneyimin olanaklılığının önsel koşullarıdır. Bir başka deyişle, nesnel bilginin koşullarıdır. Bu Kant'ın aşkınsal yöntemidir ve deneyimin olanaklılığının zorunlu ve evrensel koşulları olarak tanımlanır. Bu anlamda, Kant için de deneyimi zihinsel bir kavrama ve epistemolojik bir fonksiyona indirgediğini söyleyebiliriz.

Modern felsefenin klasik yaklaşımı, deneyim ve doğa arasında bir ayrım yapmaktır. Deneyim öznel tarafı temsil ederken, doğa nesnel tarafı temsil eder. Descartes ile başlayan sübjektivist düalist görüş, deneyimi özne ve dünya ayrımı ya da özne ve nesne ayrımı üzerinden açıklar. Bu görüşe göre, deneyimleyen özne, deneyimlenen nesne ve bilgi deneyimde içerilen üç kavram olarak var sayılır. Bu tanıma göre, bilgi hem öznenin deneyimine hem de nesnenin deneyimine gönderme yapan aracı bir kavramdır. Bilgi deneyimleyen özne ile, deneyimleyen öznenen farklı olduğu varsayılan deneyimlenen nesne, yani fiziksel dünya arasındaki ilişkiyi göstermektedir.

Sübjektivizm, öznenin ve öznenin eylemlerinin dünyanın kurallarının temeli olduğunu var sayan felsefi görüştür. Başka bir deyişle, öznel deneyim dünyanın temel kurallarının belirlenmesinde önceliğe sahiptir. Sübjektivizmin pek çok radikal versiyonu vardır. Bazıları, dünyanın varlığını öznenin algısına ya da farkındalığına indirgeyebilirler. Wittgenstein Tractatus Logico – Philosophicus adlı eserinde, “özne dünyaya ait değildir, fakat dünyanın sınırındır” sözü ile sübjektif görüşün özel bir örneğini sunar.

Sübjektivizm, özneyi doğrunun, ahlakın ve anlamın merkezine yerleştirir. Dünyadan ayrı bir şey olarak ve dünyanın sınırı olarak tanımlanan bu özne, doğrunun ve bilginin tek zemini olarak kabul edilir. Sübjektivizmin bu bakış açısı, kaçınılmaz olarak özne ve nesne düalizmini yaratır. Özne, içinde eylemde bulunduğu fiziksel dünyadan ayrılır. Bu bakış açısıyla, deneyim

öznenin önsel yetilerinden ayrı düşünülemez. Bu yetiler özgürlük, rasyonellik ve özerklik olarak sıralanabilir. Bunun yanı sıra, öznenin deneyimi, öznenin doğal olmayan bir eylemi ya da yeteneği olarak, ya da özneye doğal olmayan bir yoldan verili bir şey olarak görülür.

Descartes'in özne vurgusu ve bu öznenin rasyonelliğinin önceliği, özneye bu dünyada yeni bir yer açmıştır. Öte yandan, Kant deneyimi öznenin sınırlı eylemi olarak tanımlayarak farklı bir özne fikri sunmuştur. Özetle, modern felsefede deneyim, öznenin duyuusal eyleminden başka bir şey değildir. Sadece duyu deneyimini yansıtan, deneysel bilinç ya da algıya indirgenen, bilişsel bir kavram ya da zihin içeriği olarak tanımlanan bu deneyim anlayışı modern felsefenin mirasıdır.

Ancak, bütüncül bir doğa anlayışı üzerinden tanımlanan ve insanı bu doğanın içinde bir organizma olarak ele alan farklı bir bakış açısı mümkündür. Bu bakış açısının başlangıç noktası, Darwin'in biyolojisinin tanımladığı gibi, bütüncül ve değişen doğa anlayışıdır. Bu anlayışa göre, insanın bütün aktiviteleri ve oluşturduğu her şey doğanın bir parçası ve tek bir deneyimin yansımaları olarak görülür. Bu natüralist görüşe göre, deneyim organizma ve doğa arasındaki tüm faktörleri içeren bir etkileşim sürecidir. Geleneksel felsefenin duyu deneyimi nosyonuna karşı 'canlı yaşantı' nosyonu, bu natüralist görüşü temsil eden deneyim kavramsallaştırmasıdır.

Bu natüralist görüş benimsendiğinde; sübjektivist ve idealist görüşlerin sınırlı ve doğal olmayan deneyim kavramları, kavramsal bir bozukluk ya da soyutlama olarak görülebilir. Kavramsal bozukluk nosyonu, deneyimin sadece bir elementinin izole edilmesini, soyutlanmasını ifade etmektedir. Bu soyutlama deneyimin sınırlanmasına neden olmaktadır. Eğer bu natüralist görüşü benimserseniz, 'canlı yaşantı' kavramı bize insanın dünyadaki problemlerinin üstesinden gelebilmek adına daha kabul edilebilir bir dünya

görüŖü sunacaktır. Bu natüralist dünya görüşü, insanı doğaya ait bir Ŗey olarak sunan ve insanın doğa ile birliğini sađlayan bir deneyim anlayışı sunmaktadır. Bu deneyim, hem dünyaya ait olan hem de bu doğal dünya tarafından içerilen bir Ŗey olarak sunulmaktadır.

Natüralizm, doğal olayları hiçbir doğaüstü nedene gerek duymadan açıklayan deneysel bir yöntem ve bir felsefi görüŖtür. Natüralizmin pek çok farklı çeŖidi vardır ancak en temelde yöntemsel olarak bilimin deneysel yöntemini benimser. Ontolojik açıdan sadece doğal olanı gerçek olarak kabul eden ve doğaüstü varlıkların olmadığını iddia eden bir görüŖtür. Etik açıdan ise etik kuralların insanın deneyimine görece olduğunu kabul eder. Sübjektivizmin her tarzından kaçınan natüralizm insanı doğa ile bir bütün olarak sunar. Deneyim natüralist felsefenin merkezi kavramıdır.

Natüralist yaklaşım, deneyimi kazanılan bir Ŗey olmaktan çok, aŖa gelen, çekilen ve katlanılan bir Ŗey olarak açıklamaktadır. Bu yeni deneyim anlayışı, insanın ve insan yaşamının toplum, kültür, tarih gibi tüm boyutlarının bütüncül bir doğa içinde ele alınmasını sağlamaktadır. Dewey'nin deneyim nosyonu böyle bir deneyim kavrayışı sunmaktadır. Dewey'e göre sübjektivizm, geleneksel felsefenin bir hatasıdır çünkü deneyimi öznel ya da kişisel bir karakter olarak sunmaktadır. Ancak Dewey için deneyim sadece kişisel deđil, aynı zamanda sosyal bir kavramdır.

Geleneksel felsefe, insan yaşamını tüm boyutları ile ele almamıştır ve sosyal, kültürel koşulları dikkate almamıştır. Dewey'e göre, geleneksel felsefe özne ve nesne arasında, görünüş ve gerçek arasında, fiziksel ve zihinsel arasında, insan ve doğa arasında, birey ve toplum arasında aşılmaz bir düalizm yaratmıştır. Bu şekilde, insan yaşadığı dünyaya yabancılaşmış ve insanın zihinsel işlevleri açıklanamayan gizemli bir Ŗey olarak sunulmuştur. Bu

nedenle, epistemolojinin soyut problemlerinden insanın somut problemlerine dönülmelidir.

Dewey bilgiyi, öznenin dış dünyayı bilgisinin nesnesi olarak arayışından çok, organizmanın içinde bulunduğu çevre ile her türden etkileşimi olarak açıklar. Bu nedenle, deneyimin hem epistemolojik kavramsallaştırmasını hem de ontolojik kavramsallaştırmasını karşılayan, yani hem duyu deneyimini hem de yaşantı deneyimini kapsayan, doğal olarak açıklanan ve geleneksel felsefenin sübjektivist, düalist ve idealist kavramsallaştırmalarının sorunlarını aşabilen bir natüralist deneyim anlayışı sunulmalıdır.

John Dewey'nin deneyim felsefesi ya da natüralist deneyim metafiziği bu çalışmada deneyim kavramı konusundaki araştırma açısından özel bir ilgiyi hak etmektedir. Tüm felsefi kariyeri boyunca farklı bir bakış açısı ile deneyim kavramını ele almaya çalışan Dewey, bu bakış açısına “deneyimin yeniden kurulması” adını verir. Dewey'nin bu farklı bakış açısı, deneyim kavramının natüralist kavramsallaştırması olan ‘canlı yaşantı’ kavramı ile temsil edilmektedir. Öte yandan, Dewey bu kavramsallaştırması ile ontolojik bir deneyim kavramı sunmaktadır ki, felsefi açıdan, bu ontolojik kavramsallaştırmanın epistemolojik kavramsallaştırmadan daha gerekli olduğu öne sürülebilir. Eğer ontolojik deneyim kavramını, yani ‘canlı yaşantı’ kavramını felsefenin temel alanı olarak kabul edersek, sübjektivist ve idealist görüşlerin problemlerinden kurtulabiliriz ve natüralist görüş bize insanın düşüncesinin ve yaşamının tüm elementlerini içeren daha geniş bir alan sunabilir.

Bu çalışmada, Dewey'nin doğa, tarih, kültür ve insanın tüm diğer ilişkilerini içeren ‘canlı yaşantı’ kavramı geliştirilerek farklı bir deneyim kavramı olanağı olarak sunulmuştur. Deneyim kavramını felsefi açıdan bir başlangıç

noktası olarak almanın, bizim doğa içindeki insana dair bakışımızı değiştireceğine inanıyorum.

Dewey'nin felsefi kariyeri üç dönemde ele alınır ve eserleri bu üç dönem içinde sınıflandırılır. Erken dönem Dewey'nin idealist dönemidir. Bu dönemde Dewey, Hegel'in felsefesi ve onun idealizmi etkisindedir. Ayrıca William James ve psikoloji biliminin etkileri de görülür. Orta dönemi deneyselci dönemidir. Bu dönemde deneycilik ve deneyci felsefeye odaklanır ve deneyim kavramı üzerinden bu görüşlerini oluşturmaya çalışır. Ayrıca bu dönemde eğitim felsefesi ve politika alanlarında da önemli yazıları vardır. Geç dönemi ise natüralist dönem olarak adlandırılır. Özellikle deneyim felsefesi açısından en önemli dönemi geç dönemidir. Ayrıca bu dönemde felsefesi açısından çok önemli eserler vermiştir.

Bu üç dönem arasında çok keskin bir çizgi olmasa da, deneyim kavramının farklı analizleri Dewey'nin neden deneyimin yeniden kurulması konusuna dikkat çektiğini anlamamız açısından önemlidir. Dewey'nin eserlerinde deneyim kavramının geliştirilerek sunulduğunu görebiliriz. Farklı dönemlerde deneyim doğa, kültür, tarih, ilişki, etkileşim, süreklilik gibi kavramlarla tanımlanmıştır ancak bu tanımlamalar arasında büyük bir ayırım ya da öncekinden vazgeçme söz konusu değildir. Özellikle süreklilik ve bütüncül doğa yaklaşımları ve insanı bir organizma olarak gören anlayışı tüm dönemlerinde değişmeden kalmıştır. Öte yandan, bu dönemlerin hiçbirinde deneyimin sübjektivist ve düalist yaklaşımlar üzerinden tanımlanmadığını da söyleyebiliriz.

Dewey'nin deneyimi yeniden kurmasını ve natüralist deneyim kavramsallaştırmasını felsefesinin temeli olarak açıklayabiliriz. Dewey'nin felsefesi geleneksel felsefenin yeniden yapılandırılması olarak görülebilir. Dewey, geleneksel düşüncüyü yeniden okumak, kavramlarını analiz etmek ve

deneyim kavramını bu düşüncenin temeline koymak istemektedir. Dewey'nin natüralist metafiziği daha çok geç döneminde gün ışığına çıkar ve bu görüşü deneyimin metafiziği olarak adlandırılır. Bu çalışmada, bu tanım deneyimin ontolojik kavramsallaştırması olarak sunulmuştur. Dewey'nin deneyim kavramı doğaya, tarihe, kültüre, organik etkileşim ve alışverişlere ve iletişimde olan tüm doğal şeylere, cinsle ilgili süregelen ilişkilere, hissetmeye, yapmaya, katlanmaya, çekmeye, dayanmaya ve bilmeye gönderme yapan oldukça geniş bir kavramdır. Deneyim, insanla ilgili olan her şeyi insanın içinde bulunduğu doğayı ve insanın içinde bulunduğu dünyayı kapsayan bir kavramdır. Bu denli geniş bir deneyim kavramsallaştırmasıyla, Dewey sübjektivizmin ve idealizmin herhangi bir türüne düşmez.

Geç döneminde, Dewey'nin deneyim anlayışında epistemolojik kavramsallaştırmadan, ontolojik kavramsallaştırmaya doğru bir geçiş görmekteyiz. Deneyim bir alan olarak ortaya çıkar ve kültür, doğa ve tarih kavramlarını da kapsayan bir alan olarak sunulur. Bu dönemin ilk eseri de, sistematik bir deneyim kavramsallaştırması sunan Deneyim ve Doğa (1925) adlı eseridir. Bu eserinde hem deneyimin doğ ile özdeşleştirilmesi ve insanın doğanın bir parçası olarak görülmesi hem de insanın oluşturduğu din, ahlak, sanat, yasa gibi kültürel nosyonlarının da deneyim alanının birer parçası olarak sunulması söz konusudur.

Kültür insanın tüm ilişkilerini ve eylemlerini içeren bir deneyim alanıdır. Dewey kültürü bilgi, inanç, sanat, gelenek ve ahlakı içeren bir bütün olarak ve insanın bir toplum üyesi olarak üretebildiği her şey şeklinde tanımlar. Kültür bilim, felsefe, dil, din, siyaset ve sanat gibi boyutları da içerir ve insanın sosyal bir canlı olarak yaşamının tüm elementlerini ve doğa ile ilişkisinin tüm elementlerini içine alır. Aynı zamanda kültür oluşturabilen sosyal bir canlı olmak, insanı diğer hayvanlardan ayıran bir özelliğidir.

Dewey tarihsel ve kültürel faktörlere odaklandığı kadar, insanı bir organizma olarak gördüğü biyolojik faktörleri de vurgular. Bu nedenle kültürü, modern bir kavram olarak değil antropolojik bir kavram olarak ele alır.

Başka bir açıdan bakıldığında, Dewey klasik anlamda metafizik kavramını kullanmaktan kaçınır ve kültürü metafizik yerine kullandığı söylenebilir. Dewey metafiziği içinde yaşadığımız var olanlar dünyasının doğası, ya da varlıkların cinslerine ait olan izlerinin kavranması olarak tanımlar. Doğal varlıklar, varoluşlarına özgü olan cinslerine ait izlere sahiptirler ve bu izler doğal şeylerde, durumlarda ve olaylarda vardır. Bu izler özel bir bilim tarafından değil ama deneyim yolu ile kavranabilirler. Bu izler nitelikleri, ilişkileri, bireyselliği ve birliği ve zorunlulukları barındırırlar. Bu izler tüm varlık türlerini fiziksel ve zihinsel olan arasında bir ayırım yapmadan gösterirler.

Dewey metafizik ve ontoloji kavramlarını birbirinin yerine kullanır. Dewey'nin metafiziği alternatif bir metafizik olarak görülmelidir ve deneyim kavramı üzerine kurulur. Yaşam ve tarihi de kapsayan bu deneyim metafiziği 'canlı yaşantı' kavramı ile açıklanır. Canlı yaşantı ya da yaşantı deneyimi sırdan ve her türlü deneyime karşılık gelmektedir ve burada özne ve nesne arasında keskin bir çizgi yoktur. Deneyim; hisleri, duyuları, kavramları, fiziksel olayları, fiziksel şeyleri, ilişkileri aktüel ve potansiyel olanı, uyumu ve uyumsuzluğu, hafızayı ve hayal gücünü, geçmişi ve geleceği, şimdinin farkındalığını, illüzyonu ve halüsinasyonu içeren bir kavramdır. Deneyim hem doğanın kendisidir hem de doğa içindedir. Organizma sadece doğanın içinde değil, doğa aracılığı ile yaşar. Deneyim iki anlamlı bir kavramdır. Hem tüm ayrımları içine alan bir alandır hem de insanın eylemlerini; başına gelenleri, katlandıklarını, sahip olduklarını ve bildiklerini kapsayan bir kavramdır.

Dewey'nin deneyim metafiziğini açıklayan üç temel prensibi vardır. Bu prensipler, etkileşimde olmak, süreklilik ve dolaylıdır. Dewey'e göre var olan her şey etkileşim içindedir ve bu etkileşim kesintisiz bir süreklilik içinde gerçekleşir. Etkileşim kavramı, doğadaki tüm ilişkileri içerir. Daha sonra etkileşim yerine alış veriş kavramını kullanan Dewey, deneyimi organizma ve doğal çevresi arasındaki bir alışveriş olarak tanımlar. Süreklilik prensibi ise, Darwin'in Dewey üzerindeki etkisini gösteren bir prensiptir. Organizma ve davranışları hiçbir doğüstü etki olmadan değişir ve gelişir. Organizmanın bir tohumdan ağaca dönüşümü şeklindeki gelişimi süreklilik kavramının anlamını verir. Ayrıca, cinslere özgü izlerin taşınması ve fark edilmesi de süreklilik kavramı ile mümkündür. Bu anlamda süreklilik kavramı Dewey'nin deneyim metafiziğinin temel kavramıdır.

Öte yandan, dolaylıdır prensibi, doğadaki bu sürekli etkileşim içinde, bilginin ya da deneyimin dolaylıdır olarak sahip olunmasını ya da hissedilmesini ifade eder. Dolaylıdır bilişsel olmayan bir kavramdır, sahip olma ve hissetme olarak tanımlanır. Dolaylıdır olarak hissetme doğadaki yaşamın ilk safhasıdır. Bu evrede bilinç ve bilme yoktur, bilişsellik öncesi bir evredir. Ancak Dewey için bilişsel olmayan bilişsel olan arasında keskin bir ayırım söz konusu değildir. Bir süreklilik çizgisinde gerçekleşen süreçlerdir. Bu üç prensip, Dewey'nin doğa, tarih ve kültür olarak da tanımlanan deneyim kavrayışını anlamamızı sağlar.

Amerikan natüralist geleneğinin bir diğer önemli temsilcisi ise George Santayana'dır. Hem Dewey hem de Santayana natüralist geleneğinin en önemli temsilcileridir ve natüralist sözcüğü de bu iki düşünürün karşılıklı yazışmalarında şekillenmiş bir sözcüktür. Ancak, bu iki düşünür arasında, birbirlerinin natüralist kabulleri konusunda bir tartışma ve itiraz vardır. Santayana Dewey'nin natüralizminin metafizik var sayımlar içerdiğini iddia ederken, Dewey ise Santayana'nın natüralizminin düalizm içerdiğini iddia

etmektedir. Temel anlaşmazlıkları doğrudan gerçekçilik yani doğanın dolayimsız olarak kavranması konusundadır. Bu anlamda, Santayana Dewey'nin dolayimsızlık prensibine karşı çıkar. Ancak bu tartışma da, deneyimi önceleyen bir arka plan kabul etmeyen ve deneyim ve doğa arasında bir sınır getirmeyen Dewey'nin natüralizmi daha kabul edilebilir görünmektedir. Santayana'nın deneyimlenemeyen bir öz kabul etmesi, natüralizm ile bağdaşmamaktadır.

Bu çalışmada, Dewey'nin eserlerinde deneyim kavramı incelenmiş ve bu inceleme 'canlı yaşantı' kavramı çerçevesinde sunulmuştur. 'Canlı yaşantı' kavramı, modern felsefenin epistemolojik kısıtlamalarından kurtulmayı sağlayacak bir kavram olarak ele alınmıştır. Natüralist 'canlı yaşantı' kavramı ve fenomenolojinin 'canlı yaşantı' kavramı arasındaki benzerlik ve ilişki açık bırakılmış, ileride bu konuda yapılacak bir çalışma için arka plan sunulmuştur. Son olarak, bu çalışma günümüzdeki çevre politikaları sorunları açısından da bir arka plan sunmuştur. Natüralist deneyim anlayışının sağladığı farklı doğa algısının ve doğada insanın yerinin birçok ekolojik probleme çözüm getireceği düşünülmektedir. Günümüzde, felsefe ve bilim insana ve doğaya dair pek çok yeni kavram üretmektedir. Bu anlamda, natüralist deneyim kavramı da insanın güncel ihtiyaçları ve doğa ile uyumlu yeni bir kavram olarak düşünülebilir ve bir çevre politikası olarak benimsenebilir.

TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü

Enformatik Enstitüsü

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü

YAZARIN

Soyadı : AYDIN

Adı : AYSUN

Bölümü : Felsefe

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : Lived Experience: Dewey's Naturalistic Conception

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans

Doktora

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.

2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.

3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz.

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: