



The Aesthetic Origin of “Intuition” and “Immediate Experience” according to Croce and Dewey

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ABSTRACT

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

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

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Introduction

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

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

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

Part 1: Benedetto Croce

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

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

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

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

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

1-2. Art and Expressionism

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

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

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

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

1-3. Aesthetics as a Type of Knowledge

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

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

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

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

1-4. Intuition in Croce

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Part 2: John Dewey

2-1. John Dewey and His Pragmatism

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2-3. Immediate Experience

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

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

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

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

2-4. Dewey and Intuition

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

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

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

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

Part 3: Comparing the Views of Dewey and Croce

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

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

3-1. Transcending Kantian Aesthetics

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

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

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

3-2. Expression and Action

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

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

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

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

3-3. The Primacy of Aesthetics over Science

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

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

3-4. Intuition

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

understanding new situations.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Conclusion

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

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

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

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

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

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