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The Rise of the "Other" and the Fall of the "Self": from Hegel to Derrida



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Abstract

Since time immemorial, due to its metaphysically grounded perspective, western philosophy has not been able to detach itself from the egoistic outlook, and thus, the interaction with the "other" had no role in this philosophy. The world has always been interpreted from the perspective of "self" ignoring the "other". Reviewing this mode of thought from Ancient Greece to Modern Age, one can reveal a kind of repression and forgetfulness of "alterity" and difference which Levinas has well highlighted in his philosophy. The very foundation of this egoism can be traced back to the Socratic slogan "know yourself". In the same spirit, a kind of self-centered moral philosophy has been developed, the clear example of which is Kant's ethics. In line with Hegelian tradition of recognition, contemporary thinkers have redefined ethics and politics and acknowledged the constitutional dependence of the "self" on the "other." Based on the coordinates of their thought as well as the historical condition of their own time in the formation of subjectivity, these thinkers have criticized the neglect of the "other". Hegel's role in underlining the importance of the vital status of the "other" is unique. Hegel bridges all post-Hegelian currents on the concept of "Other". Then, in the present essay, we seek to show that since Hegel's time up to Derrida, we have been witness to the rise of "Other" and the fall of "Self".

Keywords: The Other, the Self, Ethics, Hegel, Derrida

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If one could possess, grasp, and know the other, it would not be other.

Levinas

Introduction

Socrates was the first thinker in the history of philosophy who established the very foundation of the neglect of the other by the slogan of "know yourself". Upon a review of *Apology* and *Phaedo* (which are respectively dedicated to the report of the day of Socrates' trial and the day of his philosophical martyrdom), it becomes evident that how Socrates devoted himself to knowing and understanding the soul. For Socrates, one who does not know himself is certainly incapable of knowing other things too. Accordingly, self-knowledge turned into the source of the Other-knowledge. Also Plato sought for the criterion of the reality and the virtuality of things in the degree of purity of their presence by the soul and self. There is no book by Plato that does not address the question of the soul and its noblest part, viz. the reason (for example, *Phaedo*, *Republic*, and *Timaeus*). In *Republic*, Plato in his so called allegories of the Cave and the Divided Line, considers as illusions the others, who are not able to have a full presence by the soul as the subjects of mathematics and metaphysics do (Plato 1997, p. 1130-1137). Having broached the concept of intellectual life and the activity of the soul according to reason, Aristotle introduces self-love as the best example of friendship and excludes others from the realm of friendship (Aristotle 1998, p. 227).

Medieval thinkers continued to neglect the other in a different form. In the Middle Ages, self-knowledge was of great importance in line with the same Platonic and Aristotelian approaches, though "self" in this context owes its meaning more to such Christian teachings as original sin, creation, salvation, and faith. In the Middle Ages, the science of soul has shown its complete obedience to theology. The key concern of Augustine is God and the soul. In his eyes, the meaning of philosophy lies in thinking of God and soul. Following Christian tendencies, he connects human beings to God. Human being is created by God and owns a divine spirit which has turned away from its Creator due to the Original Sin and this is why it is always in search of its origin (Augustine 1966, p. 263).

Modern philosophy with its Cartesian basis and prioritization of human knowledge, ultimately remains an unfinished project that fails to explain the other. Despite all its valuable and spectacular achievements, modern philosophy is basically incapable of talking about the other. By suspending all beings, Descartes tries to achieve his pure solitude and the complete presence of his soul by himself. The first step towards this goal is the rejection of all others. Subject or I (or Cartesian *Cogito*) is the one who has direct and immediate and unmistakable access to his mental states and does not need the other in the course of this cognition (Descartes, 1996). For Kant, subject has a one-dimensional nature. The nature of this subject and its autonomy takes form according to the epistemological area and in the space of pure consciousness. This subject breathes only in the space of knowledge and its

transcendental conditions. This is why Kant did not distinguish between consciousness and self-consciousness. On this basis, the autonomy of subject has also led to the emergence of an ethical egoism. In *Critique of Practical Reason*, Kant has expressed a negative view of heterogeneity: he has considered the autonomy of the will to be the unique principle of all moral laws as well as the duties in accordance with it. According to Kant, heterogeneity is in conflict with the principle of duty and does not allow the will to be moral (Kant 1879). For Kant, and contrary to Levinas, my duties to myself take precedence over our duties to others.

What is worth noting is that the history of Western philosophy after Kant is largely a reaction to the theory of self-governing or autonomy. Therefore, after Kant, thinkers in an encounter with subjectivism and egoism theory, have weakened and reduced its aspects or destroyed its principle. In other words, they critically attacked their own prioritization and egoism in philosophy in various ways. With Hegel and after him, contemporary western philosophies take on a character not found in Greek and modern philosophies - from Socrates to Kant. The concept of philosophy has completely changed its conventional meaning for these philosophers - which we have become accustomed to in the philosophical tradition - and as a result, our perspective of ourselves as the self-knowing ego and a thinking subject - is almost abandoned. At this point, we recognize that subject is no longer Plato's rational soul or Cartesian thinking substance. The common message of post-Hegelian philosophies is that we should all consider our lived-experience as the basis of any philosophical thought. Accordingly, when we reflect on Hegel's phenomenology, we see that: "Self-consciousness exists in and for itself when, and by the fact that, it so exists for the Other; that is, it exists only in being acknowledged" (Hegel 1977, p. 111).

After Hegel, Schopenhauer understands the Other in terms of the concept of empathy as the basis of his ethics. In Twentieth Century, Husserl is one of the first contemporary thinkers to highlight the concept of the Other. Although Husserl introduces phenomenology as "Egology", in his later thought he yet considered the life-world as the subject of phenomenology, so that he could get rid of the problem of solipsism. Heidegger argues that we are part of an intersubjective relation with others to which he refers as 'being-with'. Through "being-with", we have an everyday familiarity with other people in the shared world of the objects and the people we encounter. In France, Levinas bases Ethics not on Socratic self-knowledge, but on the priority of the Other over the I. Finally, inspired by Levinas, Derrida develops the concept of the Other into politics and ethics.

Therefore, our main question in this essay is as follows: How have thinkers, from Hegel to Derrida, criticized the neglect of the other based on the features of their philosophical thoughts and historical situation of their time? What is Hegel's role in showing the importance of the other? How is the other deconstructed in the thinkers after him? This essay will struggle to develop a better understanding and bring new insights of the meaning of the other from Hegel to Derrida. The main claim of the

essay is that from Hegel to Derrida, we see the gradual emergence of the other and the fall and fragmentation of the subject. Hegel seeks to pursue the "other" that have not been suppressed and rejected, an issue that has been seriously followed up by the postmodern philosophers, particularly Levinas and Derrida. From Hegel onwards, the other emerges, and thus many western philosophies (particularly in the continental philosophies) move toward ethics, politics, and society. More philosophies turn to moral and social issues, and moral and social concerns become the main focus of these philosophies. The contemporary philosophers no longer think in ascending order, but think horizontally.

Hegel: The Other and the Concepts of Recognition

Hegel sought to depose the Kantian opposition between theoretical reason and practical reason in order to establish an idealism that would not end in solipsism. Hegel is after an "other" who is not marginalized and rejected. He views the subject's perception of himself as the result of the process of his relation to the other in dialectically way, and he develops subjectivity in relation to the other. In fact, *subjectivity is always intersubjectivity*. For Hegel, contrary to Descartes' abstract and immediate subject, and also unlike Kant's transcendental subject, consciousness is a concrete and mediated achievement in an intersubjective experience. The important point of Hegel's thought lies in the distinction between consciousness and self-consciousness. Hegel seeks an "other" who is marginalized and rejected in metaphysics. He sees the subject's perception of himself as the result of the process of his relation to the other, and he develops subjectivity in relation to the other. For him, consciousness is the relation of the subject to an object, while self-consciousness is about the relationship of one subject with the other subject. Her objection to Kant is that ignoring this distinction seemingly leads to the acceptance of a kind of self-consciousness, which is in fact nothing but a dominant consciousness that treats other self-consciousness as objects (Caygill 2000).

The other is considered as the main aspect of recognition in Hegel's philosophy. In such a way that the process of my recognition will not be possible without the existence of the other. Contrary to Kant, he does not consider self-consciousness to belong to the subject of the individual who meditates in his solitude without any interaction with other individuals. By explaining the relationship between master and slave, Hegel shows that the self-consciousness of each of the two depends on her consciousness of the Other. "Self-consciousness exists in and for itself when, and by the fact that, it so exists for another; that is, it exists only in being acknowledged" (Hegel 1977, p. 111).

According to Hegel, a critical study of the dialectic of the Enlightenment (the dialectic of emancipation-domination) should be on the agenda of philosophy. Many of Hegel's most important commentators consider the chapter of slave-master as an interpretation of anti-solipsism, and they argue that the fundamental question of

Hegel in this section of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is as follows: How can one avoid the radical subjectivity and solipsism? (Beiser 2005; Norman 1981; Solomon 1983; Rauch 1999). The first answer to this question is to focus on the "other". In my recognitions, I depend on the other. The other is part of my nature, and the "self" that constitutes all reality cannot exist without the "other." What Hegel seeks in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is that we must finally accept that the "self" and the "other" belong to the intrinsic and equal parts of a larger consciousness. These two are not heterogeneous and are members of a single society, and ultimately, we need the absolute.

For Hegel, self-consciousness can never be realized directly, because pure, direct, and mystical self-thinking practically results in the loss of both self and the world. As a result, consciousness realizes the fact that in order to become self-conscious, and consequently to achieve self-consciousness, it has to resort to external objects. By the same token, to prove the itself, consciousness needs to deny the other. Master's self-consciousness finds the only way to prove itself not in a mere object, but in another self-consciousness. According to Hegel, self-consciousness [master] exists only through other self-consciousness [slave]. In fact, this is the only reason he has self-consciousness; because it is only in this way that his unity in his otherness is revealed to him. But on the other hand, the purpose of the secondary self-consciousness of entering this field is not only the acknowledgment of the first self-consciousness, but also the consolidation of its self-consciousness. So here we are faced with two self-consciousness, each of which seeks to deny the other and gain recognition from it. "Thus, the movement is simply the double movement of the two self-consciousness. Each sees the Other do the same as it does; each does itself what it demands of the Other, and therefore also does what it does only in so far as the Other does the same. Action by one side only would be useless because what is to happen can only be brought about by both" (Hegel 1977, p. 112)

In this dialectical relation, there is an inner need between the two sides of the opposition, and in the first place the Hegelian dialectic guarantees the confirmation of the opposition of the self and the other. Although the relationship between the master and the slave is embodied as a struggle to stay, and the struggle in the Hegelian system of thought is necessary for life, and in the first place it seems that the master is independent and has no need for the slave, but Hegel in the dialect of the master-slave finds a profound upheaval in which master does not have the independent consciousness that he thinks, rather he needs the slave to recognize himself, and he is nothing without the other.

Another point is that it is true that the slave's consciousness appears at the beginning not as the truth of self-consciousness rather outside itself, but just as being a master showed that his innate nature is the opposite of what he wants it to be, so slavery is like consciousness. A person who has been forcibly pushed back into himself will return to himself and become a truly independent consciousness (Ibid, p. 117). It is at this time that the master and the slave lose their position of master and slavery,

and the self-consciousness, in the continuation of its evolutionary course during the phenomenology, abandons the form of master and slave and adopts another form. Absolute knowledge is ultimately a kind of collective self-consciousness that encompasses all "self" and therefore "others" and puts them in a spiritual relationship with each other: "What still lies ahead for consciousness is the experience of what Spirit is——this absolute substance which is the unity of the different independent self-consciousness which, in their opposition, enjoy perfect freedom and independence, 'I' that is 'We' and 'We' that is 'I'" (Ibid, p. 110).

The dialectic of phenomenology at the level of consciousness is the display of conflict with the "other," and for Hegel, alterity is as important as sameness. Accordingly, Hegel's reading does not ultimately lead to Cartesian-Fichte-Kant subjectivism, and, of course, distances itself from postmodern subjectivism.

Schopenhauer: Empathy with the Other as the Foundation of Ethics

After Hegel, Schopenhauer is one of the thinkers who, like Hegel, considers egoism as the first immoral stimulus and the main opponent of the virtue of justice, because everything in it is subject to the interests of the egoistic 'I'. Like Hegel, Schopenhauer was also one of the first philosophers of his era to have devoted himself to the priority of the other in response to the self-centered ethics of Kant. Unlike Kant, who based ethics on the a priori concept of "pure duty", Schopenhauer replaces Kant's duty with the posterior concept of "empathy". Schopenhauer's reaction to Kant's ethics on the issue of empathy is a critical and hostile one. According to Schopenhauer, Kant's moral subject is a heartless subject without love and affection, a subject who is indifferent to the suffering of the others (Schopenhauer 1915, p. 50). For Schopenhauer, pure practical reason is an illusion and morality can arise only from the feeling of compassion.

One of Schopenhauer's critiques of Kant's ethics is his critique of the concept of duty. Kant defines the concept of duty as respect for the moral law, the subject of which sets the law rationally and a priori, independent from experience and, in fact, without paying any attention to the suffering of others. According to Schopenhauer, Kant also admits that not a single instance of task-based action can be found in the world of experience. He even quotes Kant in which he considers the commands of empathy and affection to have no moral value (Ibid, p. 127).

Although there are many ethical concepts in Schopenhauer's thought, the most central concept is "empathy". Schopenhauer called this concept "the great mystery of ethics" in his book the *Foundation of Ethics* (Ibid, 144). It is worth noting that, according to Schopenhauer, the existence and nature of the concept of "empathy" depends on the other, so our concern in the first place should be being happy and empathetic and compassionate to others. We must put ourselves in the place of others in sorrow and joy, and this is the true meaning of empathy. If I do so, my selfishness will no longer be the moral standard of my action. Empathy as the only basis of morality is so

important that according to this philosopher, human justice and happiness are rooted in this natural human feeling. According to Schopenhauer, if there is no "empathy", there will be no justice. Schopenhauer argues: "When once compassion is stirred within me, by another's pain, then his weal and woe go straight to my heart, exactly in the same way, if not always to the same degree, as otherwise I feel only my own. Consequently, the difference between myself and him is no longer an absolute one" (Ibid, p. 170).

Husserl: The Departure from Phenomenology to the Life-World and the Other

Husserl has been called the father of phenomenology. He first makes consciousness the main subject of his phenomenology, so many have regarded his phenomenology a kind of epistemology. He explicitly considers phenomenology to be a science that begins as a pure egology, and even introduces alter ego as the subject of a phenomenological egology. But Husserl's conscious reading is only one of the major approaches to his work, and Husserl, in his later works, went beyond egology, which discusses consciousness and how things are constituted, and considers the position of the world life to be a matter of phenomenology, may he can get rid of the problem of solipsism. In his later works, Husserl finds that cultural and historical issues provide a more appropriate model for understanding phenomenological issues related to consciousness.

For Husserl, the question of the existence of the other is first posed to me as a theory of the transcendence of another experience, the so-called empathy. Now, for Husserl, the term 'empathy' denotes a specific class of basic intentional experiences: "The intentionality in one's own ego that leads into the foreign ego is the so-called empathy" (Husserl 1962, p. 321). But it soon goes beyond that. I experience the others as subjects or actors for this world, the subjects who experience this world, that is, and the world that I experience, and therefore experience me.

In the last period of his thought, Husserl seems to have departed his phenomenological perspective to reach a socio-historical perspective of the world life. In his eyes, if we avoid becoming engulfed in our scientific thought, we will find that we scientists are, above all, human beings, and therefore among the world life components that has always existed for us and is given in advance; and so, science as a whole, together with us, is drawn into the world life: "all our theoretical and practical themes, we can also say, lie always within the normal coherence of life-horizon world" (Husserl 1970, p. 144). The life-world is a perceptual component of the coordinated interpersonal intentional experience. This world includes physical, cultural, social and historical objects, in which, of course, the role of history is much more prominent. It is from this point onward that Husserl becomes concentrated on the justifying this world. This world is "our world". The transcendental self alone is replaced by a

transcendent "we" capable of "we co-exist". It is the data from which phenomenological analysis must begin (Husserl, 1970, p. 190).

Although Husserl calls himself a neo-Cartesian, he never defends a subject-oriented, classical Cartesian-Kantian philosophy, for in his later period he was no longer interested in solipsistic attitude, rather, on the contrary, he was always after an intersubjective philosophy and a transcendent perspective. Husserl's phenomenological perspective though was at first anti-Hegelian, and according to his phenomenology it would be meaningless to say that the external exists as something else, later Husserl openly approaches Hegel's project.

Heidegger: The Other as the Existential Mode of Dasein

Ontology is the field of practice of Heidegger's philosophy, and his fundamental question is the question of Being. However, no doubt, this ontology is possible only under the shadow of phenomenology; Heidegger is indebted to Husserl in phenomenology and became acquainted with phenomenology through Husserl's *logical Investigations*. But Heidegger's approach to the problem of Being (Seinsfrage) is different from Husserl's. What Heidegger wants is highlighting the ontology which is the very foundation and cause of the problem of other minds. Heidegger is not looking for another solution to this traditional problem, rather he is looking for another ontology, in the face of a theory that presents our experience of others in the first place as a complex problem.

Heidegger transfers and dissolves the problem of the "other" from the realm of epistemology to the realm of ontology. His approach shows how an unreal and illegitimate problem that arises from the incorrect analysis of human being and the world and the relationship between the two has become a pervasive and unsolvable epistemological dilemma. It is only in traditional philosophy where the solipsist subject fails to decide of its own relationship with the world and the other. According to his analysis, every human being is coexistent with others and encounters others in practical life, and this encounter leaves no room for epistemic doubt on the existence of others. Heidegger believes: "In that Da-sein is at all, it has the kind of being of being-with-one-another. Being-with-one-another cannot be understood as a summative result of the occurrence of several "Subjects" itself is possible only by treating the Others encountered in their Mitda-sein merely as "numerals". This number is discovered only by a definite being with and toward one another" (Heidegger 1996, p. 117). Being-in-the-World in Heidegger's thought is considered the most important description of human being. This view seeks precisely to challenge the new Cartesian subjectivism, according to which the existence of the subject is proved to be certain, but the existence of the world and its certainty becomes a dilemma. Understanding man as being-in-the-world fundamentally destroys the subjectivist understanding of man. It should be noted that Heidegger's fundamental

insight that man is the being-in-the-world should not be understood in the ordinary sense of man's being in the world.

This is exactly why the modern Cartesian subjectivism, or Cogito's experience, proves the existence of human consciousness or subject independent of the world or objects, while the demonstration of the existence of the world turns into a dilemma. In Heidegger, man is not only in the world, but is *being-in-the-world*, and another meaning of this statement is that the assumption of the existence of man independent of the world in Cartesian thought is nothing more than an illusion, because, for Heidegger, Da-sein independent of the world or subject independent of the object is not possible. Human existence is the same as belonging to the world. In other words, the subject is the same as belonging to the object and not independent of it. Heidegger faces the problem of others in relation to a practical approach to the world and the environment; because what is important in dealing with the world is not the individual world, but the public environment (Heidegger 2009, p. 188).

For Heidegger, the characteristic of the beings we encounter first and foremost in our daily lives is that they all involve references to other people; because they are produced by others or because what we want to do with them is for the sake of others. In short, we constantly use beings in our daily lives that refer to others, and this reference is often an indefinite reference to others (Heidegger 2009). Heidegger wants to show that the world is necessary for intersubjectivity in an ontological structure, and that human existence, regardless of any real experience of others, is inherent in this totality or intersubjectivity and as one with (Hall 2008). In other words, being - not solely concerned with Dasein's actual or practical experience of the Other, but being with others already and as an existential attribute, is inherent in Dasein. Just as being-in-the-world is inherent in Dasein and is essentially Dasein himself.

According to Heidegger, being a human is essentially being with others, and therefore it must be said that communication with others is part of Dasein's existence. This connection with others is different from the connection that man makes with objects. "Being on the Other side is certainly ontologically different from being on the higher objects. In being with the Other and in the Other, there is a kind of relationship from Dasein to Dasein." (Heidegger 1996, p.117). Knowing Dasein depends on having the right relationship with others, in other words, being transparent about being together with another.

Dasein is in a world which he shares with others. In the conditions of authentic being after understanding the call of conscience, we are simultaneously faced with real possibilities and situations that include others. For Heidegger, however, the Other sometimes has a negative aspect and is seen as an obstacle to Dasein's flourishing. And sometimes the attributes he lists for Dasein, such as caring, understanding, talking, etc., are completely individualistic. But for Heidegger, there is a positive state of being with others, an authentic fear of the Other in which one helps others to understand their guilt and responsibility for their lives (Magrini 2006).

Therefore, being with others in Heidegger should not be understood as not being authentic. Human existence is impossible without the world. This world actually proceeds with a world of things as *existence exists* in constant interaction with others. Therefore, no one can be separate from others. Basically, the being of existence requires a social dimension. They are the foundations of Dasein's existence (Tuttle 2005, p. 71). In fact, the environment in which the person is effective in the authenticity of the person, and because of Dasein's influence on others, it must be said that others are also involved in the originality of the person.

Levinas: The Priority of the Other over the Self

Using the phenomenological method, Levinas wants to describe and explain the primacy of ethics over metaphysics based on this initial experience. Although he makes phenomenology the starting point of his ethical research, he reveals its shortcomings to Husserl and Heidegger. The focus of Levinas' critique of the work of Husserl and Heidegger must be found in something that both Husserl and Heidegger either did not address or, if they did address, was not at the center of their philosophy, but at the margins, and that is nothing but ethics. Levinas sees the basis of all traditional Western ethics and philosophy in subjectivism. In traditional ethics, my relationship with myself is the primary relationship. Levinas argues in *Totality and Infinity* against this traditional ethics and regards it as monotheism: "Western philosophy has most often been an ontology: a reduction of the other to the same by interposition of a middle and neutral term that ensures the comprehension of being. This primacy of the same was Socrates's teaching: to receive nothing of the other but what is in me, as though from all eternity I was in possession of what comes to me from outside -to receive nothing, or to be free" (Levinas 1969, p. 44).

By exploring the other in his phenomenology, Levinas explicitly places my moral relationship with the other at the center of his phenomenology. Levinas's heteronomy, contrary to the principle of autonomy which is based on the freedom of the subject, denies any kind of absolute freedom of the subject. Heteronomy principle requires us to suspend our freedom in the presence of the other. Contrary to what modern philosophers think, the other's constitution does not depend on my existence, but the subject does not form without the other, and my constitution is dependent on the other. It is the Other who determines the subject. Thus conceived, "Subject is the beginning and the end of the other" (Levinas 1969, p. 10). According to Levinas, contrary to modern views, the *Other* is not an object that is recognizable and divisible. The other is transcendent, alien, mystery and beyond. In other words, the other is beyond metaphysical cognition, the cognition that wants to know something or a being from the realm of ontology as an object. According to Levinas, although the other exists in in this world physical form, the otherness of the other is beyond this world of being. To be beyond *being* means to be unattainable by human intellect, not the non-being or nothingness of the other. For the concept of nothingness does also

belong to the realm of ontology. In other words, we have a face-to-face relationship with the other, but this relationship is not an epistemological one. So the meaning of relationship here is a specific meaning, not an ordinary meaning. In *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas says that a face-to-face relationship with the other is an unrelated relationship. (Levinas 1969, p. 220).

The otherness of the other is not formal; it is not a simple violation of my nature, and it is not formed through the resistance against the sameness or the Self, rather it precedes every beginning and every domination by the subject. This other is otherness which composed of the same other content that is not limited to the same. (Ibid, p. 39). For Levinas I am fully responsible for being accountable to all others and accountable for everything in others, even to their own responsibility (Levinas, 1985, p. 99). The epistemological dimension never prioritizes the body, but the body is the subject of a passive body that sacrifices itself for the other without any conditions or expectations. Thus, the ethical embodied subject is created. Levinas's incarnation is the source of situations such as endless suffering and infinite responsibility, a responsibility that has already held me hostage (Critchely 1999, p. 62-64). Proximity constitutes a fundamental ethical relationship with the other in which the commitment to the other precedes the freedom. According to Levinas, this unconditional and endless responsibility rests solely on the subject and does not involve a symmetrical relationship with the Other, because being human is exposing oneself to the other and an irresistible and inescapable responsibility to the Other. (Critchely 1999; Cornell, 1992).

Derrida: The other as an event and a deconstruction

Derrida in one sense can be understood and relocated within the context of Levinas's discussions. Accordingly, Derrida's intellectual effort should be taken as an attempt to go beyond the ontological debates, and his method of deconstruction should be fathomed as an analysis taking place not in the realm of ontology rather in the binding force of ethics. Like Levinas, Derrida views the history of western thought as the history of the suppression of the other. The other has always been reduced to the same. In metaphysical thinking, encountering the other is possible only when the Other can become part of my inner structure. But the otherness of the other can be experienced only when I come out of my inner cohesion. Deconstruction represents Derrida's strategy for showing the irreducibility of the other. This is to say that the other exists and is in his way to come. This promise remains as a promise in the sense that it is never fulfilled by presence. For Derrida, the other absolutely limits my power through talking to me and looking at me from another point of departure in the world, as no finite power can limit it. Therefore, the Other can never be ignored by me. The repressed always returns (Derrida 1978: 130).

Deconstruction in Derrida's philosophy is a positive critique: "It happens and it happens, an event that does not wait for reflection, awareness or organization of the

subject and even modernity. It is self-constructed" (Derrida 1988, p. 4). To put it otherwise, it is the other that responds to the other in the form of another voice. Deconstructive thinking seeks to save others who have been marginalized. Deconstruction is an event occurring to us, and gets us engulfed in the passivity. Moreover, deconstruction even deals with itself in a deconstructive way. Deconstruction is not even in the realm of our ordinary consciousness and intellect and is beyond our control and breaks every boundary. For it treats itself *deconstructively*. If we turn to Levinas again, we will better understand deconstruction. The Other is beyond my power and I have no power over him. The other appears to me and challenges me in my "I-ness".

Having given preference to presence, introspection, homogeneity, unity, and wholeness, the metaphysical tradition pioneered a path that leads to the domination of the heavy shadow of presence-oriented-ness and self-centered-ness over the tradition of Western thought, and transforms Western culture into a presence-oriented and self-centered culture. Converts. Presence-oriented-ness is another expression for the self-centered-ness. Presence is desirable, because it indicates the domination of the ego and self over the object that stands before it. Presence is a sign of my mastery. This is indeed a mastery that overcomes mutual understanding, interaction and balance. Western metaphysics, by understanding the world from the point of view of an "I", has closed the way to the other. In the metaphysical tradition, whatever belongs to the "I", or turns into its possession, will be real and original. On the contrary, what lies before the "I", and is not to be possessed by it, is unreal and unreal. According to Derrida, there is no morality without the presence of the other, and consequently without absence, concealment, turning away, difference and writing (Derrida 1976, p. 140).

The metaphysics of presence is Plato's legacy, and its main feature is believing in a place in heavens, in human inside, or somewhere else where the truths are present, i.e. are of an immovable existence. In the world of experience, everything is dynamic and changeable, then this world is the realm of absence, not presence, and in the metaphysical history of the West, man has always sought for presence elsewhere. (For example, Plato sought for it in ideas that exist in the world of ideas while Aristotle sought for it in the concept of substance). Believing in a place where truths are present is the metaphysics itself. Derrida argues that Western thought is metaphysical even in modern times. Such dualities as soul-body, sky-earth, man-woman, speech-writing, good-evil, natural-cultural, and the most key ones of which for Derrida: i.e. presence-absence. Presence is the same aspect that is always becoming and changing. In his works, Derrida shows that all the concepts and ideas we use belong to this metaphysics. He shows that metaphysics reveals and destroys itself by creating a gap between what it says and what it leaves unsaid, between presence and absence, between self-consciousness and the unconsciousness. By rejecting the "either/or" logic, Derrida introduces a new logic in which the two sides of a dualism actually need

each other, and there is a trace or a footprint of one side exists in the other side. Derrida deconstructs the "either/ or" logic as the contradictive core of the western metaphysics.

Discussion

The history of metaphysics is the history of the development of the subjectivism, which was concealed in the thought of the founders of metaphysics, i.e. Socrates and Plato, it reached its high point, in modern subjectivism, viz. in the Cartesian and Kantian traditions. According to the metaphysical subjectivism, the truth and nature of human being is first of all and in its essence the consciousness and knowledgeability (being a subject). Throughout the history of philosophy, based on this understanding, the true nature of man has been interpreted with different notions such as: rational animal, thinking substance, transcendental subject, conscious agent, and autonomous subject. "The whole of modern metaphysics was prepared by Descartes." (Heidegger, 1977:127). The "I think" is the most dominant influence of Descartes on modern metaphysics, i.e., the idea of subjectivity determines the aims of modern philosophy. The "truth" for modern philosophy is what is represented in our subjectivity. Therefore, Descartes discusses the Archimedean point by the certitude of the "cogito". From Hegel onwards, the Cartesian self-governing subject is rejected, and in this perspective, egoistic theories are destroyed. If Hegel has started with individual consciousness, he did not undertake this task in a way taken by Descartes and Kant. The context of his debate should not be reduced to epistemology in the conventional sense of the word. Hegel starts with individual consciousness to reach the Absolute, and this individual consciousness is never separate from the absolute.

Having discussed the concept of the other, Hegel not only connects the modern and postmodern thoughts rather at the same time he is himself the gap between the two. If there is in truth an "I" for whom the Other is an object, this is because there is an Other for whom the "I" is an object. Hegel has a unique place in the history of philosophy. Said differently, he is both the pinnacle of modern thought and at the same time provides the basis for the postmodernists. Hegel identifies human being with the divine self-consciousness, which is a unification of consciousness (self and other) in a single, universal self. Each of us is a self in that we exist for ourselves as well as for others—we are both objects and subjects, part of one reality, and we come to know selves through our interaction with others in a common Form of Life. But this is very different from saying that there is a universal self that does not strive in any way to absorb other selves into itself, nor to surrender completely to another (Berenson, 1982: 86). Accordingly, although Hegel's dialectic begins with a description of historical antagonism, the mission of his philosophy is the recognition of the other. The whole of post- Hegelian thought, on the basis of the concept of Other, can be called the Hegelian revolution, and Hegel can be seen as the spinal cord

that holds the body of all post-Hegelian currents together, even those who criticize Hegel.

Contemporary philosophy has highlighted the important role of the other in the history of philosophy. In the field of approach, two important currents were formed in the nineteenth century, which completely challenged the long-standing antagonistic relationship between the self and the other. In these two currents of thought, we view Hegel's unique position on the intersubjective relationship between the self and the other. 'Reaction against Hegel—which leads back to Hegel. How?', we read in Merleau-Ponty's course notes from the Collège de France (Merleau-Ponty [1954–55] 2010: 63). The latter question marks the whole history of twentieth-century phenomenology, which is clearly indebted to Hegel's thought in significant ways. Husserl's concern with the historical and cultural life-world in the *Crisis of European Sciences*; Heidegger's ontological interpretation of logic and concern with the historicization of human existence; Merleau-Ponty's dialectic of the visible and invisible—all involve an implicit return to Hegelian themes and strategies. Surprisingly, however, such affinity was not acknowledged by most of the representatives of the phenomenological movement.

Husserl and Heidegger are clearly indebted to Hegel for the concepts of life-world and being-in-the-world. Accordingly, they, like Hegel, regard knowledge of the world as the result of a two-way relationship between self and the other. Starting with Descartes, the subject becomes the center, and the subject, as the first true being, has priority over all other beings. Contrary to this priority of the subject, Heidegger's goal is to show that there is no subject distinct from the external world of things, because Dasein is essentially Being-in-the-world. Therefore, Heidegger puts together the separation of the subject and the object by the concept of "Dasein" which is essentially a Being-in-the-world. Heidegger tries to shift the idea of subject from the Cartesian mechanistic interpretation of man to its more primordial sense of Being. In this manner, Heidegger takes over Husserl's orientation toward the question of origin and in his existential analytic of Dasein, Heidegger no longer grasps the Being of Dasein as something present-at-hand.

The culmination of the priority of the other over the subject must be shown in Levinas's thought. We see that these two important philosophical currents have greatly influenced the fields of humanities in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. According to Derrida, Levinas gets closer to Hegel when he criticizes him. This is the case with all post-Hegelian philosophers. Levinas interprets Hegel's thought in such a manner that it is opened to a supplement of ethical meaning. This ethical meaning is irreducible to truth and history as Hegel understands them, yet it invokes them and makes them possible. As Levinas himself regarded Hegel as one of the greatest philosophers, he has inevitably learned and appropriated something from Hegel's philosophy within his own thought. His positive perspective of Hegel's early theological writings, and particularly on the identity relationship of parent to child, is

well known (Levinas. 200: 299). Both Levinas and Hegel claim that the Other constitutes the identity of the self, and is encountered through Desire. But, it is also through Desire that we find a divergence between them. In line with the Hegel scholars in France, he would have learned much about the Hegelian philosophical intuition. In any case, passing through Hegel has not been easy for thinkers after him, because Hegel bases his philosophy and thinking on confrontation with the other and breaking with the status quo. Although both Heidegger and Derrida criticize Hegel as the archetype and historical culmination of the metaphysics of presence, Hegel's dialectics also serves as a model for their critical destruction or deconstruction of metaphysics.

Levinas, the leading philosopher of ethics bases his philosophy upon the nature of the relationship that exists between the individual himself and the others, because the dialog between the self and the Other is quite significant for one's self to get unfolded. Levinas bases his philosophy on this, explicitly implemented on the Other as a central issue in the Western philosophy, and he places ethics as the first philosophy by putting the responsibility towards the Other on this basis since a human life can only be possible by realizing the Other (Gibson 1999, 202). According to Levinas, it is impossible to engage in serious philosophy without following the way of Heidegger one way or the Other (Levinas 2006, 51-52). I claim that it is an incontrovertible fact that Levinasian philosophy is grounded in Husserlian philosophy, but also, that the main effect in the formation of his philosophy is Heidegger's philosophy. According to Levinas, a serious philosophy is not possible without proceeding this or that way from Heidegger's way (Levinas 1979, 42-47).

Levinas rejects what he takes to be Husserl's primary focus on theoretical cognition and Heidegger's focus on ontology. He espouses instead the view that first philosophy is not ontology but ethics and that ethics must be grounded in a non-Husserlian understanding of our encounter with the Other. Derrida, in a similar manner, rejects what he takes to be Husserlian and Heideggerian commitments to the metaphysics of presence and to the relevant, but problematic, views of identity and truth.

Conclusion

By highlighting the importance and necessity of the discussion of the other in Hegel and the contemporary era, given the ever-increasingly complicated and entangled individual and social relations, we have sought to explain and evaluate the views of several great contemporary thinkers who have themselves been witness to appalling wars, so that to cast light on the problem of intersubjective relations and human ties. Since we live in a common world with others, we are mutually interdependent. Thus, the dialectic of enlightenment (dialectic of liberation-domination) needs to be put on philosophy's agenda (Hegel). On the other hand, by seeing the other's pain and empathy with him from an ethical point of view, we will no longer consider the

difference between the self and the other to be an absolute difference (Schopenhauer). Another reading believes that we need to be sensitive of our own concrete existential possibilities such as committed freedom, individual angst as well as the concern of authenticity and thus, take steps toward original relations with others (Heidegger). Otherwise we have to listen to Levinas's call on the proximity with the other as a fundamental ethical relationship in which commitment to the other is prior to every will. Finally, one needs to state that the other can never be neglected by the self, because the repressed continuously returns (Derrida).

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