

Muharrem Hafız, *Platon Felsefesinde Khora [Khôra in Plato's Philosophy]* (İstanbul: Dört Mevsim Kitap, 2019), 304 p.

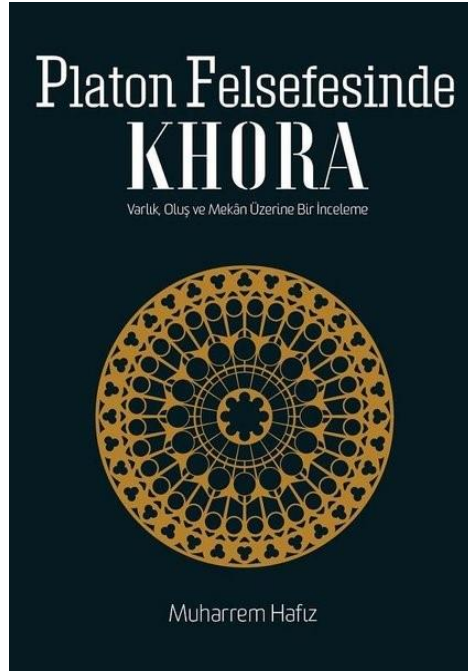
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Book Review

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Especially with his work aforementioned, Muharrem Hafız made important contributions to the field of philosophy. He voiced a new reading and interpretation attempt towards the philosophy of dualism and Aristotelian or Neo-Platonic interpretations, which has an important place in the history of philosophy. In the work, the author examines the meanings attributed to the concept of Khôra, which draws attention in *Timaeus*, from many aspects, and endeavors to touch on all the frames in which the concept is discussed. The Khôra, which Plato deals with in *Timaeus*, is a new kind of participation that includes and nurtures existence and being. The author brings a different perspective to the philosophy of duality by examining the interpretations of Khôra, which is added to the



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distinction between existence (idea) and being (sense), as a third type, first in Plato's philosophy and then from the ancient period to the contemporary period. This is also a different approach to Plato and Plato's philosophy. Khôra was discussed in different ways. The reason for the diversity in the interpretations of the concept from antiquity to the contemporary period is the inherent indeterminacy of the concept. Although Khôra etymologically means country, homeland and land, it has been handled in different ways by many thinkers. The author also made a comprehensive examination of his work and tried to include almost all the comments he could reach about the concept since Plato.

The book consists of an introduction, three main chapters and a conclusion section. The section of the introduction is a prelude to the main subject, the scope of the subject and the research method. The reader is prepared for the content with the conceptual analysis, terminology and segmentation information added to the entry. This chapter is very useful for a book dealing with the concept of an uncertain nature.

In the first part, three main issues are discussed: the metaphorical presentation of the concept of Khôra, its rational presentation and its place between the existence-being duality through its use in Plato dialogues. Its metaphorical presentation is a result of the ambiguous nature of the concept. Many thinkers have tried to make the concept prominent in minds through metaphors. The author examines the metaphors one by one and explains why the concepts of mother, reservoir and gold were chosen. This method also reveals the similarities between metaphors and the concept of Khôra. Thus, a certain picture appears in the minds regarding the concept of Khôra.

With the rational presentation of the concept, Khôra begins to be introduced gradually. The rational presentation is based on Plato's dialogues. *Theaetetus*, *Timaeus*, *Sophist* dialogues stand out in this respect. The author draws attention to the fact that in the *Theaetetus*, being approaches existence and in *Sophist* existence approaches being. The most important feature of Khôra is

that it provides the transition between existence and being. After pointing out this feature, the author determines some of the features of Khôra through metaphoric implications and rational inferences. Then he examines the place of the concept between existence and being and its relationship with them. He briefly compares the features and functions of each. This comparison also shows the distinction of Khôra as a third species.

The second part of the book includes commentaries on the concept of Khôra in the history of philosophy. As a result of the author's investigations, it was revealed that Khôra had evaluations such as matter (material), place, environment, both matter and space, or neither matter nor space in the history of philosophy. An evaluation can be made about the use and nature of Khôra through these comments.

Also, the diversity in interpretations is a reflection of the indeterminacy of the concept. In this respect, the author's gathering of comments is an important contribution. This section also includes Aristotle's critical interpretation, Neo-Platonists' interpretations of Khôra as the space confirming the theory of emanation and modern interpretations in which Khôra is meant as matter or space. In addition to these interpretations, the author mentions the interpretations of people such as Moderatus of Gades (1st century), Plotinus (204/5-270) Abu Bakr al-Razi (854-925) and John Burnet (1863-1928) who defend the unity of matter and space with a unifying point of view, arguing that Khôra is both matter and space. Derrida's (1930-2004) opinion stands in opposition to these views. According to him, Khôra is a concept that can be positioned against the dualistic understanding of the philosophers and cannot be evaluated as either space or matter. For Derrida, Khôra is a concept that can escape from dichotomies and language determinations. Therefore, it would be wrong to surround it with certain definitions. The author's inclusion of the philosophers' interpretations of Khôra in this section is beneficial in terms of seeing the meaning and evaluation of the concept in different ways in the course of the history of philosophy.

In the third and last chapter, it is examined from what angles and how the concept of Khôra is handled in the contemporary period and its use in feminism and aesthetics are included. It is especially striking that the concept is used by feminist thinkers. While some consider Khôra as a supportive element (concept) of feminism, some feminist thinkers consider and criticize its metaphorical using such as the reservoir or mother as the product of masculine logic. For example, Julia Kristeva (1941-) insists on identifying the Khôra with the maternal body, while Luce Irigaray (1930-) finds the concept valuable in that it represents an excluded and marginalized femininity against the general mindset dominated by masculine metaphysics. On the other hand, Judith Butler (1956-) does not accept this type of defense because she sees it as a form of interpretation formed from materiality and again masculinity.

It is quite correct that the author included feminist comments after informing the reader about the nature of Khôra in the first two chapters. In this way, it will be possible to understand more clearly how the concept takes place in the world of thought and social issues in modern times.

The author establishes the connection between Khôra and aesthetics through the concepts of choir and dance space in Greek Tragedy. At this point, the aesthetic relationship with Khôra is established through Nietzsche (1844-1900) and the choir/Khôra experience. In this title, Khôra is considered as the place of participation in divine creation through human creation under the influence of Nietzsche.

The work meets with the reader as the product of detailed research and reading on the concept and Plato's philosophy. Khôra is a concept that is difficult to explain and convey, due to its indeterminable nature and lack of a clear definition. However, after the author creates a frame in the minds with metaphorical expressions in his work, he also shows its usage in Plato dialogues and facilitates the understanding of the concept. Thus, the place of Khôra between existence and becoming clearer. After-

ward, he clarifies the concept in his mind by giving comments about Khôra objectively. It is especially important to include feminist interpretations in terms of showing the concept's interpretations in modern times. The detailed and systematic presentation of Khôra is also valuable work to reinterpret Plato and Plato's philosophy. Thus, approaches towards Plato's philosophy also differed. Also, the classic existence and being a dilemma is carried to another dimension with the concept of Khôra.

