

## IS CROCE'S PHILOSOPHY ANTI-ESSENTIALIST AND AGAINST METAPHYSICS?

Ahmet Emre DEMİRCİ\*

### ABSTRACT

*This essay might be considered an attempt to analyze Croce's philosophical discourse in general, where he points out his thoughts as a "humanistic alternative to the consolations of religion and metaphysics"; and, to argue whether his aimed task was successful, especially in setting a strict distinction between his philosophical perspective and his claimed anti-metaphysical position. The first major step to take is to focus on his essentialist philosophy of art, namely, "art as expression"; and second, his division of knowledge between theoretical and practical, which he claimed as products of the main directions of the human mind or human consciousness which Croce called "spirit", or, of that which "really" exists. Initially, we could argue that even this presupposition could be considered highly metaphysical.*

**Keywords:** Croce, aesthetics, essentialism, metaphysics, art

## CROCE'NİN FELSEFESİ ÖZCÜLÜK VE METAFİZİK KARŞITI MI?

### ÖZ

*Bu çalışma genel olarak Croce'nin felsefi konumunu analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Croce felsefi konumunu – özellikle tin felsefesine ilişkin bakışını – tanımlarken, düşüncelerini "din ve metafiziğin tesellilerine hümanist bir alternatif" olarak ifade etmiştir. Bu çalışmada Croce'nin felsefi tutumunun başarısı, felsefi bakış açısı ile iddia ettiği metafizik karşıtı konumu arasındaki farklılıklar bağlamında değerlendirilecektir. Sözkonusu değerlendirme sürecinde öncelikle Croce'nin "ifade olarak sanat" olarak bilinen özcü sanat felsefesine odaklanılacaktır. Sonraki aşamada ise Croce'nin "tin" ya da "gerçekten" var olan şey olarak tanımladığı ve insan zihni ya da insan bilincinin temel yönelimlerinin ürünleri olan teorik ve pratik bilgi ayrımı ele alınacaktır. Başlangıç olarak, bu iddianın bile oldukça metafizik bir ifade olduğunu söylemek mümkündür.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Croce, estetik, özcülük, metafizik, sanat

\* Prof.Dr., Anadolu Üniversitesi, İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi, İşletme Bölümü,  
ORCID: 0000-0002-8214-2680, aedemirci@anadolu.edu.tr

Makalenin geliş tarihi: 14.12.2023  
Makalenin kabul tarihi: 29.04.2024

Submission Date: 14 December 2023  
Approval Date: 29 April 2024

### **Metaphysical Essentialism and Croce's Conception of Art as Expression**

Essentialism, in the broadest sense, could be considered as any philosophy that acknowledges the primacy of essence. Although there are several kinds of essentialism, our paper focuses on metaphysical essentialism since it is thought to be directly related to Croce's philosophy – especially his conception of art as expression. According to Raven, metaphysical essentialism claims that there are essences. However, it does not provide any solid claim which essences there are. No matter which essentialist view is defended, all essentialists agree that there are essences even if they do not have an agreement over which there are<sup>1</sup>. In general, metaphysical essentialism is the view that things have an essence or an innate structure that makes them what it is.

Metaphysical essentialism has an a priori nature; it is universalist and realist, and not dependent on anything contextual<sup>2</sup>. Thus, there have been two broad essentialist traditions since antiquity. One is represented by Plato while the other is represented by Aristotle. According to the dualist ontology of Platonic tradition, essences are detached from the experienced world. In other words, essences have a higher ontological status and priority over their worldly instances. The core idea of Platonic essentialism can be seen in Plato's theory of forms. According to Plato, a form is an essence that participates in its worldly instances, yet it transcends them. On the other hand, in the Aristotelian tradition, essences are not transcendental and they are embedded in this world. In contrast to Platonic tradition, essences have no ontological priority over their worldly instances. The core idea of Aristotelian essentialism is that essences are as much a part of the world as their worldly instances. In short, the Aristotelian essentialism claims that the essences are embedded in this world<sup>3</sup>. In consideration of these two different essentialist traditions, I claim that Croce's essentialist status is more identical to that of the Aristotelian tradition.

Furthermore, the perspective that there is at least one attribute (could be more than one, too) that enables a distinction between a substance and other beings that are not that substance, namely, essentialism, is a metaphysical point of view. Concerning art, Croce's view is that what characterizes art is nothing but expression (he would use expression synonymously with intuition as he

---

<sup>1</sup> Raven, Michael J., "Explaining Essences". *Philosophical Studies*, 178(4) (2021), 1046.

<sup>2</sup> O'Connor, Peg. "Cressida J. Heyes, Line Drawings: Defining Women through Feminist Practice". *Hypatia*, 20(2) (2005), 195.

<sup>3</sup> Raven, Michael J., Explaining Essences, 1048.

pursued). So, it could be argued that Croce's philosophy of art has an essentialist character. Supporting this argument, Croce affirms that "linguistics and aesthetics are the same thing". Regarding Croce's essentialist position, Shusterman<sup>4</sup> claims that;

By asserting that traditional aesthetic distinctions cannot rely on fixed essential principles since aesthetic perception is always a matter of the changing play of language and experience, yet failing to equally insist that pragmatic distinctions can nonetheless be usefully made, Croce's theory falls into much wider essentialism - a monism of the world as intuition-expression or language. Supporting this monistic standpoint, Croce says<sup>5</sup>:

It is false to say that a verb or noun is expressed in definite words, truly distinguishable from others. Expression is an indivisible whole. Noun and verb do not exist in it, but are abstractions made by us, destroying the sole linguistic reality, which is the sentence.

Such statements as the one given above seem to lead us to a much wider and pernicious essentialism, an engulfing and unconstructed monism of expression<sup>6</sup>. The expressionist view(s) of art (including Croce's theory), which holds the aesthetic expressions of feelings and thoughts as a basis, has/have been influential in the first half of the past century. To evaluate art as the expression of human feelings and connecting it with the inner world, as well as with the artist's experiences of feeling and the expressions of those emotions are typical features of the expressionist view of art. In other words, what matters in expressionism while searching for the essence of art in the artist, is inner experience, and psychological mood, but more than these, the talent for original spiritual expression.

Feeling or imagination is much more important than the product(ion) itself in the expressionist view of art; the original creative act is in the artist's soul or mind, and the choice for expressing this or not belongs to no one but the artist. In fact, the artist's aesthetic thoughts and feelings constitute the basis and art owes its significance to it providing the path for spiritual experience-i.e., for

---

<sup>4</sup> Shusterman, Richard. "Somaesthetics at the Limits". *The Nordic Journal of Aesthetics*, 19(35) (2008), 19.

<sup>5</sup> Croce, Benedetto. *Aesthetic as Science of Expression and General Linguistic*. Cambridge University Press, 1922, 146

<sup>6</sup> Shusterman, Richard. "Analytic Aesthetics, Literary Theory, and Deconstruction". *The Monist*, 69(1) (1986), 31.

providing a real and meaningful form and content to feelings and thoughts. The representatives of the expressionist view put a special emphasis on that, the pleasure due to expression is for its own sake (hence, art is for the sake of art itself).

Another significant issue to be taken into consideration is originality, as the criterion that helps us make a distinction between aesthetic expression itself and other emotional activities or manifestations. In his book "La Poesia" (1936), Croce offers his theory of literature and its relations to poetry. Furthermore, in "La Poesia", Croce analyzes the sophisticated nature of poetic and literary expression, and discusses four fundamental forms of expression. These form different form of expression are the "expression of feeling in its immediacy", the "poetic expression", the "prosaic expression", and the "oratorical or practical expression". Croce later investigates whether literature could be identified with any one of them<sup>7</sup>. An explosion of uncontrolled emotions including joy, fear, sorrow, and astonishment is encapsulated in the simplest form of expression known as the interjection, which represents "feeling in its immediacy. Croce claims that the second type of expression which he calls as the poetic expression is a form of knowledge and thus, it differs from the feeling. Unlike feeling, according to Croce<sup>8</sup>;

[...] Poetry ties the particular to the universal; it embraces suffering and pleasure, transcending them, and, rising above the clash between the parts, it reveals the place of each part in the whole, the harmony over the conflict, the sweep of the infinite over the narrowness of the finite. This mark of universality and totality is the very character of poetry.

As the third form of expression, the prosaic expression differs from the poetic expression. According to Croce, this difference is very identical to the differences between fancy and thought, and poetizing and philosophizing. Croce notes that, unlike poetic expression, prosaic expression will not consist in the expression of affections and emotions, but in the definition of thought. Thus, it

---

<sup>7</sup> Gullace, Giovanni. "Poetry' and 'Literature' in Croce's La Poesia." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 19(4) (1961), 454

<sup>8</sup> Croce, Benedetto and Gullace, Giovanni. *Benedetto Croce's Poetry and Literature: An Introduction to Its Criticism and History*. Southern Illinois University Press, 1981, 15-16

does not express images, but signs and/or symbols of concepts<sup>9</sup>. Finally, the third form of expression is oratorical or practical expression. Although Croce refers oratorical expression also as practical expression, practicality of oratorical expressions is different from other forms of practicality outwardly – not in any substantial characteristic. According to Abbott, oratorical expression has the power to elicit and address certain emotional states, positioning it as a practical pursuit in the spiritual realms of economics and ethics. Thus, oratorical expression, as praxis, differs from poetic expression which is intuitive and aesthetic. Croce claims that oratorical or practical expressions have two possible functions namely as persuasion or entertainment. Croce considers entertainment as a function of oratorical expression since such a function satisfies a basic need of a human mind through arousing emotions<sup>10</sup>.

Aesthetic expression is either the creation of a form due to an expression or to a certain feeling, or transformation of the emotion felt to a consistent and specific form of experience; and only this (type of) expression is original or unique. Once constructed, the spiritual expression may be repeated and become a part of the culture via continuous usage. The expressionist view of art utters that the aesthetic expression itself could never be (in the form of) an imitation; what really matters is to find out that which is not imitation. And that's why the expressionist view of art attributes an extremely high level of significance to creativity on one hand and sublimates the artist to the level of a real creator. Within this perspective, the lower-level artists are subject to the creative artist; and, the great artists are those who are the creators of new (original) forms or viewpoints. In contrast to these great artists, the contributions of the others (subject/lower level artists) are much more restricted, despite the original aspects in detail. The expressionist view of art puts forward the notion of "genius" at this point, concerning originality and creativity; and genius in art, within this sense, characterizes the original and creative artist, who surpasses her/his masters in every respect, and who develops totally new forms of expression which have been unknown before.

From the expressionist view, the creation in art or the creation of the artist is not a divine creation or creation out of nothing. Besides, the secret of the

---

<sup>9</sup> Croce, Benedetto and Gullace, Giovanni. *Benedetto Croce's Poetry and Literature: An Introduction to Its Criticism and History*, 22-25

<sup>10</sup> Abbott, Don Paul. "The Doctrine of Double Form: Benedetto Croce on Rhetoric and Poetics". *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, 21(1) (1988), 8

creation does not have its roots in the material or the resources of the work of art. On the contrary, the mystery is in the rather mystical advance/progress, which transforms those resources into (a) work(s) of art. From the point of view of the expressionist theory of art, claiming that art expresses almost a miracle due to the mentioned mystery, the miracle is in the total transformation of the present data by the art and artist. In other words, the miracle of art is in that it pulls the present data off the world we live in, for the sake of introducing them into another world. That's why many people refer to the inspiration of the artist/the process that inspires the artist, to give an account of the artistic creation.

Croce, whose name might be substituted for the expressionist theory of art, is the one who made the distinction of representation and expression a significant instrument in the contemporary philosophy of art. Indeed, while pointing out a distinction between concept and intuition-where the latter depicts an acquaintance with the individuality/particularity of an object, and the former, coming out only as an instrument for classification, Croce means to say that the distinction between representation and intuition corresponds to the distinction of concept and intuition, hence, that intuition and expression are identical.

Croce emphasizes poetry as well, which is pioneering in the expression of feelings and various modes of the human soul, and, holds that poetry also puts various aspects of the practical personality of human beings into the service of contemplation. In Croce's view, all art-in the final analysis- has to be the expression of feelings.

Based on this perspective, Croce often identifies expression with creation, too; and affirms that the process of creating an ideal and perfect object by the artist - which is absent in nature - begins with taking some impressions from nature itself. The artist, according to Croce, reaches a certain expression after subjecting the impressions to a synthesis; what's more, expression becomes a unique aesthetic experience that occurs in the artist's imagination/soul, happening only once. That's where creation lies. The artist who creates the mentioned experience in her/his soul takes pleasure due to the expression created by her/himself. Nevertheless, this expression/creation does not persist always or continuously; the memory of the artist cannot keep this experience consistently, as it is a spiritual synthesis. This is the reason why the work of art is unique and a value created only at once. The artist finds solutions to deal with the weakness of memory, to keep the mentioned spiritual synthesis, hence the

aesthetic expression. The artist finds the solution in manifesting these expressions through physical objects such as words, marble, paint, color, wood, etc. And this type of manifestation, i.e. manifesting the expression experienced in the artist's soul and imagination through objects, results in the works of art. Accordingly, a poem, a painting, a sculpture, or a musical track are instruments that are helpful for keeping the aesthetic expression alive, rather than beings that exist for their own sake. This argument on the works of art are mainly grounded in Croce's later work "Breviary of Aesthetics: Four Lectures" (1913)<sup>11</sup>. In order to respond the question "What is Art?", Croce questions whether art is a physical fact since art involves words, color combinations, certain forms of body, and sounds. Croce believes that error of "physicalizing" art exists in popular thinking. According to Croce, art cannot be reduced to physical facts since, in the first place, physical facts *have no reality* while art – to which many devote their lives and which provide us with divine joy is *extremely real*; thus, art cannot be a physical fact, , which is something that is not real.<sup>12</sup>. Although this argument about art, physical facts, and their reality sounds counterintuitive and paradoxical, Croce refers to the philosophers from various traditions and physicists – although he does not provide any specific traditions or names – "when they conceive of physical phenomena as products of principles removed from our experience". Basing his arguments on these views, Croce claims that physical facts or phenomena manifested through their internal consistency and general consensus, not yet as a definitive reality, but as a conceptual framework designed for scientific inquiry<sup>13</sup>. Thus, focusing solely on the physical aspects of a work of art – such as counting the words in a poem or measuring the size and weight of a statue – distracts us from the sense of the poem and our enjoyment of it.

Therefore, the original expression occurs in the artist's soul and is reflected as a work of art (creation) in the external world; the physical objects or works (of art) serve as instruments, for the purpose of saving and keeping spiritual expressions. Although what is often addressed as "beautiful" are the physical objects or works of art, the real beauty is the one occurring in the soul of the artist. The beauty of the works of art are/have to be only auxiliary

---

<sup>11</sup> Croce, Benedetto. *Breviary of Aesthetics: Four Lectures*. University of Toronto Press, 2007, 10

<sup>12</sup> Croce, Benedetto. *Breviary of Aesthetics: Four Lectures*, 10

<sup>13</sup> Croce, Benedetto. *Breviary of Aesthetics: Four Lectures*, 11

instruments, which lead us to the real/essential expression, or, to real beauty itself.

### **Croce and Metaphysics**

An interesting part of Croce's philosophy is the way he tackles the concepts of genius. Genius is closely linked with Spirit and values. According to Croce, all activities or expressions are about genius. In other words, Croce claims that genius could be referred to as the creative activity. Thus, for Croce, beauty, truth, economic activity (useful), and moral actions require genius. At this point, according to Tunalı<sup>14</sup>, in Croce's philosophy, there would be no place for religion and metaphysics, and that is the main reason why Croce considers his philosophy against metaphysics and calls himself an anti-metaphysician or ultra-metaphysician. Croce notes<sup>15</sup>:

[...] In this sense we are anti-metaphysicians, while declaring ourselves to be ultra-metaphysicians, when the word is used to claim and to affirm the office of philosophy as self-consciousness of the spirit, distinguished from the merely empirical and classificatory office of the natural sciences

Croce also claimed that his "philosophy of spirit" as a humanistic alternative to the consolations of religion and metaphysics. Thus, Croce has rejected all forms of religion, as not being sufficiently logical, and defended the standpoint for metaphysics. Croce had the idea that all metaphysics is just the justifications of religious ideas and not full and viable philosophical systems. Regarding the impossibility of metaphysics, Croce says<sup>16</sup>:

[...] For the same reason, philosophy, as the science of the spirit, cannot be philosophy of the intuitive datum; nor, as has been seen, philosophy of history, nor philosophy of nature; and therefore, there cannot be a philosophical science of what is not form and universal, but material and particular. This amounts to affirming the impossibility of Metaphysic.

---

<sup>14</sup> Tunalı, İsmail. *Benedetto Croce Estetiğine Giriş*. Ayrıntı Basımevi. Ankara, 2019, 17

<sup>15</sup> Croce, Benedetto. *Aesthetic as Science of Expression and General Linguistic*, 64-65

<sup>16</sup> Croce, Benedetto. *Aesthetic as Science of Expression and General Linguistic*, 64



However, I strongly believe that Croce's philosophy is highly metaphysical. His writings and details about his "philosophy of spirit" clearly indicate that Croce was a metaphysical idealist. Supporting this point of view, in his book about the history of aesthetics, Monroe Beardsley says<sup>17</sup>:

He [Croce] came with a radically new concept of the aesthetic, and it had two virtues. First, it interpreted aesthetic phenomena in the context of a respectably idealist metaphysics that many of his readers recognized as Hegelian, yet in a manner so concrete, so down to earth, and so close to actual works of art, that many of his conclusions could readily be translated into naturalistic terms.

Furthermore, Beardsley<sup>18</sup> claims that – though Croce professed himself "anti-metaphysical" – Croce's "philosophy of mind" is a solid metaphysics and a form of idealism, and his aesthetics is a remarkably essential and inherent part of it. Similarly, Cacciatore<sup>19</sup> notes that according to Caracciolo (an interpreter of Crocean philosophy), Croce had a strong psychological and sentimental inclination to the metaphysical. However, he [Croce] revealed himself as incapable of thinking the metaphysical to the end, due to an initial refusal to think metaphysically. Furthermore, the concept of "Spirit" is common and frequently appears in Croce's works. By mentioning "Spirit", Croce implies the whole logico-metaphysical evolution of the mind in which all activities are "moments," and of which all structures are phases<sup>20</sup>.

Furthermore, Croce's arguments provided in his work "Filosofia dello Spirito" (1913) led some Crocean scholar to question Croce's anti-metaphysical position. For example, according to Gennaro Sasso, a leading Crocean scholar, Croce was forced to encounter some internal contradictions in his philosophical system. His position as an absolute idealist and his views on absolute historicism (storicismo assoluto) are mostly related to Hegelian Weltanschauung (Hegelian Worldview). Furthermore, Croce's absolute historicism was considered as an all-encompassing vision of reality by the critics, namely a piece of metaphysics

---

<sup>17</sup> Beardsley, Monroe C. *Aesthetics from Classical Greece to the Present: A Short History*. Tuscaloosa and London, 1966, 319

<sup>18</sup> Beardsley, Monroe C. *Aesthetics from Classical Greece to the Present*. 327

<sup>19</sup> Cacciatore, Giuseppe. (2006). Alberto Caracciolo interpreter of Croce. *Archivio di Storia Della Cultura*, 19 (2006), 19

<sup>20</sup> Edman, Irwin., "The Conduct of Life by Benedetto Croce & Arthur Livingston". *The Journal of Philosophy*, 22(20) (1925), 557.

instead of an attempt to free us from any grand narrative<sup>21</sup>. However, rejection of an all-encompassing systems was among the main reasons why Croce was considering himself an anti-metaphysicist.

I also propose that Croce's ontological classification of the theoretic and practical activity of the Spirit offers a metaphysical standpoint. This classification suggests that there are four domains of the Spirit (or Mind). These four domains are included in two main categories namely theoretic and practical. In other words, spiritual or mental activity is either theoretic (it understands or contemplates) or it is practical (it wills actions). The theoretic divides into the aesthetic, which deals in particulars (individuals or intuitions), and logic, or the intellectual domain, which deals in concepts and relations, or universals. The practical divides into the economic - by which Croce means all manner of utilitarian calculation and the ethical or moral. Regarding this classification and their individual roles, Croce says<sup>22</sup>:

Man understands things with the theoretical form, with the practical form he changes them; with the one he appropriates the universe, with the other he creates knowledge.

It is important to note that each individual domain is subject to a characteristic norm or a value. For instance, aesthetics is subject to beauty, logic is subject to truth, economics is subject to the useful, and the moral is subject to the good.

I also understand that there is a strong hierarchical relationship between these domains. In other words, the domains of Spirit are not independent of each other. Croce claims that the first form lays a foundation for the second form. In support of this view, he [Croce] says<sup>23</sup>:

[...] But the first form is the basis of the second; and the relation of double degree, which we have already found existing between aesthetic and logical activity, is repeated between these two on a larger scale. A knowing independent of the will is thinkable, at least in a certain sense; will independent of knowing is unthinkable. Blind will is not will; true will has eyes.

---

<sup>21</sup> Paci, Luca. *Antimetaphysics as Analytical Method in Croce's Conception of History*. Swansea University (United Kingdom), 2004, 223

<sup>22</sup> Croce, Benedetto. *Aesthetic as Science of Expression and General Linguistic*, 47

<sup>23</sup> Croce, Benedetto. *Aesthetic as Science of Expression and General Linguistic*, 47-48

Croce further says (regarding the relations between the four domains of the Spirit)<sup>24</sup>:

The four moments imply one another regressively by their concreteness. The concept cannot exist without expression, the useful without both and morality without the three preceding degrees. If the aesthetic fact is in a certain sense alone independent while the others are more or less dependent, then the logical is the least dependent and the moral will the most

At this point, it is also important to note that these four domains of the Spirit or Mind, exhaust the activity of the spirit. In other words, Croce rules out other domains by either arguing that they are identical to one of the four acknowledged domains or by showing that they simply do not exist<sup>25</sup>. Regarding the impossibility of the existence of other domains, Croce says<sup>26</sup>:

A fifth form of Spiritual activity does not exist. It would be easy to show how all the other forms either do not possess the character of activity, or are verbal variants of the activities already examined, or are complex and derivative facts, in which the various activities are mingled, and are filled with particular and contingent contents.

Croce gives examples of this view. For example, the juridical fact is considered what is called objective law and is derived both from the economic and the logical activities. Croce also gives religion as an example when implying the impossibility of further forms. Croce claims that religion is nothing but knowledge and does not differ from its other forms and sub-forms. Croce says<sup>27</sup>:

[...] For it [religion] is in turn either the expression of practical aspirations and ideals (religious ideals), or historical narrative (legend), or conceptual science (dogma).

In other words, religion is nothing but a mixture of knowledge, legend, and dogma, each of which resides under one of the four forms of the spirit. As a form of knowledge, religion is identical with philosophy, as the legend it is similar to historical narrative and therefore with art as well, and as dogma, it is

---

<sup>24</sup> Croce, Benedetto. *Aesthetic as Science of Expression and General Linguistic*, 61

<sup>25</sup> Peters, Rik. (2013). *History as Thought and Action: The Philosophies of Croce, Gentile, de Ruggiero and Collingwood*. Andrews UK Limited, 2013, 61

<sup>26</sup> Croce, Benedetto. *Aesthetic as Science of Expression and General Linguistic*, 62

<sup>27</sup> Croce, Benedetto. *Aesthetic as Science of Expression and General Linguistic*, 63

identical with science. Religion, Croce concludes, can therefore be completely 'subsumed' by other forms of the spirit<sup>28</sup>.

### Conclusion

Although Croce is claimed to be an anti-essentialist and he [Croce] attempts to offer a humanistic alternative to the consolations of religion and metaphysics, I believe that his position as an anti-essentialist and against metaphysics is debatable. Croce's definition of art (as expression) clearly stands on the grounds of essentialism. Analytic aestheticians also agreed that the field of aesthetics was dominated by the essentialism of Hegel and his idealist followers like Croce. However, it is important to note that Croce's reception of Hegelian philosophy, while relevant, does not completely inform his philosophy of art and there are obviously few departures from Hegelian idealism<sup>29</sup>. Croce's philosophy offers a kind of essentialist theory since Croce believed that he has identified the very "essence" of the art. Croce and other expressionist and essentialist theorists such as Collingwood shared the perspective that the essence of art is an inner feeling that is expressed externally through the physical manifestation of art.

I believe that Croce's claim that the only real existence is Spirit/Mind or intuition is a strong metaphysical argument. Furthermore, Croce establishes a scheme that depicts the domains of the Spirit which serves as an ontology of spiritual activities. Such an ontology is obviously metaphysical since it classifies the domains of the Spirit and establishes solid links between these domains. Thus, based on the arguments given in this study, although Croce attempted to escape from being an essentialist and develop a metaphysical philosophy, I believe that Croce's consequent philosophical approach is neither anti-essentialist nor completely against metaphysics.

---

<sup>28</sup> Peters, Rik., *History as Thought and Action: The Philosophies of Croce, Gentile, de Ruggiero and Collingwood*, 62

<sup>29</sup> Giovanna, Pinna. "The Aesthetics of Idealism: Facets and Relevance of a Theoretical Paradigm". *Rivista di Estetica*, 81, 2022, 15.

## REFERENCES

- Abbott, Don Paul. "The Doctrine of Double Form: Benedetto Croce on Rhetoric and Poetics". *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, 21(1) (1988), 1-18
- Beardsley, Monroe C. *Aesthetics from Classical Greece to the Present, A Short History*, Tuscaloosa and London, 1966
- Cacciatore, Giuseppe. "Alberto Caracciolo interpreter of Croce". *Archivio di Storia Della Cultura*, 19, (2006)
- Croce, Benedetto. *Aesthetic as Science of Expression and General Linguistic, Part II* (trans. Douglas Ainslie), Cambridge University Press, 1922
- Croce, Benedetto and Gullace, Giovanni. *Benedetto Croce's Poetry and Literature: An Introduction to Its Criticism and History*. Southern Illinois University Press, 1981
- Croce, Benedetto. *Breviary of Aesthetics: Four Lectures*. University of Toronto Press, 2007
- Edman, Irwin. "The Conduct of Life by Benedetto Croce & Arthur Livingston". *The Journal of Philosophy*, 22(20), 556-559, (1925)
- Giovanna, Pinna. "The Aesthetics of Idealism: Facets and Relevance of a Theoretical Paradigm". *Rivista di Estetica*, 81, 5-15, (2022)
- Gullace, Giovanni. "'Poetry' and 'Literature' in Croce's La Poesia." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 19(4), 453-461, (1961)
- Kemp, Gary. *Croce's Aesthetics*, in <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/croce-aesthetics/> Date: 21.12.2021, 2021
- O'Connor, Peg. "Cressida J. Heyes, Line Drawings: Defining Women through Feminist Practice". *Hypatia*, 20(2), 194-197, (2005)
- Paci, Luca. *Antimetaphysics as Analytical Method in Croce's Conception of History*. Swansea University (United Kingdom), 2004
- Peters, Rik. *History as Thought and Action: The Philosophies of Croce, Gentile, de Ruggiero and Collingwood*. Andrews UK Limited, 2013
- Raven, Michael J. "Explaining Essences". *Philosophical Studies*, 178(4), 1043-1064, (2021)

IS CROCE'S PHILOSOPHY ANTI-ESSENTIALIST AND AGAINST METAPHYSICS?  
CROCE'NİN FELSEFESİ ÖZCÜLÜK VE METAFİZİK KARŞITI MI?  
Ahmet Emre DEMİRCİ

Shusterman, Richard. "Somaesthetics at the Limits". *The Nordic Journal of Aesthetics*, 19(35), (2008)

Shusterman, Richard. "Analytic Aesthetics, Literary Theory, and Deconstruction". *The Monist*, 69(1), 22-38, (1986)

Tunalı, İsmail. *Benedetto Croce Estetiğine Giriş*. Ayrıntı Basımevi. Ankara, 2019