

Phenomenology and Pragmatism: On the Philosophical Conceptualization of Anthropological Culture

Fenomenoloji ve Pragmatizm: Antropolojik K lt r n Felsefi Kavramsallařtırması  zerine

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Abstract: In the philosophical thought of twentieth century, the notion of world of life frequently confronts as an ontological concept that expresses the existence of the subject in the world. This notion is presented as a multi dimensional and multiple meaning concept, which represents all elements of the relationship between the subject and the world, all modes of this relationship and it also constitutes the ground of this relationship. In this sense, the phenomenological and pragmatist perspectives, that identify this notion with the interactional experience of the subject, become especially prominent. On the other hand, the concept of anthropological culture is a common concept and comes in sight based on the notion of experience in the views of both philosophical traditions, especially John Dewey's and Merleau-Ponty's. In this context, the aim of this study is on the one hand to analyze the philosophical basis of the concept of anthropological culture and on the other hand to evaluate and compare the presentation of this concept on the ontological ground by pragmatist and phenomenological traditions.

Keywords: Experience, nature, anthropological culture, phenomenology, John Dewey.



1. Introduction

In the Twentieth Century, the notion of realms of life or world of life becomes prominent as an ontological concept in philosophy. In general, this notion is evaluated as an ontological ground in order to explain the the ground for interaction and relation of elements of human life. Some pragmatist philosophers and some philosophers of phenomenological perspective, and also some phenomenological interpretations of other continental views present different kinds of the concept of realm of life in this sense. In these definitions, the elements of human life or realm of life refers to the biological characters, the intellectual productions, the creative productions, the social and cultural institutions of human being and also language, art, religion and myth. According to this, the elements of life are treated in a holistic perspective, in which each one is interpreted as a part of an active and continuous life progress.

On the other hand, some philosophical perspectives explain this life progress and the activity in human life by presenting a different conception of experience. The elements of human life are also seen as the elements of human experience as the ground or realm of life. The understanding of such kind of life experience is also identified with the notion of anthropological culture in philosophical perspective. In a broad sense, the notion of anthropological culture refers to all natural and cultural aspects of human life in general. Such philosophical conceptualization of culture contrubitutes to the anthropological one in two ways. First, it brings the notion of life experience and identifies this notion with the anthropological culture. Second, by this way, it extends the elements and parts of the definition of culture in order to understand this notion in a broad sense.

Based on this background, the notion of anthropological culture should be analyzed from the philosophical perspective, in order to explain and evaluate culture in the ontological point of view. Accordingly, the aim of this study is to present and evaluate the philosophical conceptionalization of the notion of anthropological culture as an ontological ground of experience. In this respect, the concept of anthropological culture will be discussed both from pragmatic and phenomenological perspectives. For this purpose, first the general definition and elements of culture in anthropological sense will be presented. In this part, the philosophical point of view



on the discipline of anthropology and the notion of phenomenological anthropology will be discussed. Second, general perception and acceptance in philosophical point of view will be evaluated and specifically Eugene Gendlin's, Merleau-Ponty's and Dewey's interpretations of experience and culture will be compared and analyzed. As a result of this analysis, to characterize and to understand the philosophical identification and expression of experience, nature, culture and realm of life are main goals of this study.

2. The Concept of Culture: Anthropology and Philosophy

The concept of culture has a dynamic and changeable character, therefore to represent a single and static anthropological concept of culture seems to be impossible. However, it is possible to determine the elements and involved characters of culture. Accordingly, in different times of history of thought or especially of the discipline of anthropology, the prominent sociological and physiological characters of culture are evaluated and discussed. This cultural relativism in definition refers to independent elements of culture from civilization and refers to the plurality and diversity in the unity of life of human species (Darnel, 1997, p. 44). According to this relativism and plurality, while some anthropologists from classical perspective focus on the historical and social ground of culture, the others focus on biological and individual ground of it. For example, Alfred Kroeber uses the notion of "superorganic" as the definition of culture and he focuses on historical and social elements of culture rather than the natural side of it. He argues that "culture was the crucial distinctive feature of the realm of the superorganic... Culture superseded biological evolution, with history and society giving it a unique cumulative character and a potential for more rapid adaptive change than was possible at the organic level" (Darnel, 1997, p. 44).

On the other hand, in contrast to this sociological or social point of view, Edward Sapir argues that the anthropological analysis of the cultural level needs to evaluate actions and understandings of its individual members (Darnel, 1997, p. 46). The role of individual and the determination of society on the individual are the central aspects of this debate. Accordingly, Alexander Goldenweiser supports Sapir's individuality and he argues that "culture, was "not only carried but also fed by individuals". Indeed, "the biographical individual" constituted an "historic complex *sui*



generis.... [and] composed of biological, psychological and civilizational factors" (Darnel, 1997, p. 47).

At this point, in the discipline of anthropology two main themes arise in order to explain and understand the notion of culture. Aram Yengoyan argues that this dualism brought the demise of the concept of culture. He explains the separation in the elements of the concept of culture as follows:

Traditionally, the culture concept as developed by Alfred Kroebe and Leslie White, and by Emile Durkheim's theoretical distinction between social facts and psychological facts, emphatically made an ontological separation between behavior and culture (society), and in turn the cultural or social level was anterior to behavior. Behavior was thus only an expression of culture, and ideally all behavior that was collectively based could be predicted from cultural rules. However, none of these theories could ever empirically show how cultural structure is expressed in behavior (Yengoyan, 1986, p. 370).

The dualism between individual and social refers to the distinction between behavior or action of individuals and social group and social sign-meaning in culture. According to this, some anthropologists prefer the social intelligible sign-meaning as the culture rather than action (Lee III, 1988, p. 118).

So, in anthropological sense, we can say that the prominent elements of the notion of culture is formed by the opposition between individual and society and also the opposition between practical and theoretical. On the one side practical action and organic characteristics of individual are preferred as characteristics of culture and on the other side social and social intellectual values, such as symbols, language, meaning, are preferred as characteristic of culture. However, Pierre Bourdieu defines "culture as practice" (Lee III, 1988, p. 120) and states that "a theory of practices would draw out the relation between symbolic structures and the more fundamental action structures" (Lee III, 1988, p. 121) as a unity of these two sides.

The problem of opposite elements in the definition of culture causes the two distinct perspectives in anthropology and this must be overcome by presenting a new perspective. Richard Schacht opposes this accepted distinction about human life and he argues that culture is a phenomenon that refers to the complex dimension of human reality as "biological and



physiological, social and cultural, and psychological and experiential” (Schacht, 1990, p. 174) Accordingly, for him, this complex dimension can be provided by philosophical anthropology. He explains this complexity and the relationship between elements of culture as follows:

A philosophical anthropology must not only be sensitive to the historical and cultural dimensions of human life, but must be biologically informed as well, and therewith also neurophysiologically enlightened. This by no means implies any reductionist commitment; on the contrary, it leaves entirely open the possibility that most of our humanity is a matter of developments of various sorts along lines our biology and neurophysiology do no more than make possible and broadly constrain. (Schacht, 1990, p. 157)

Accordingly, philosophical anthropology is presented as an inclusive concept, which overcomes the two dimensions problem in anthropological point of view, and also gives phenomenological starting point that explains “being-in-the-world as an embodied mind, and that our patterns of thinking and perceiving have their origin in biological as well as logical and psycho-logical processes” (Rubinoff, 1968, p. 87). Philosophical anthropology gives us a holistic theory. “The theory which grounds our conceptual framework in the biological and ontological facts of our existence is a direct challenge to the prevailing tendency of our time to reduce all ideas to variables of a primarily sociological and historical nature” (Rubinoff, 1968, p. 87).

Violeta Demeshchenko presents the inclusive and holistic characters of philosophical anthropology as follows;

Socio-cultural anthropology and anthropology of culture are formed in the depths of philosophical anthropology. The focus of philosophical anthropology is questions about the origin, nature and essence of man, the modes of his existence, general connections with the world, nature and society. Its interest lies in the secrets of human existence — the problems of a soul and a body, the meaning of life and faith, death and immortality, love and happiness, and others. The main question of philosophical anthropology is the study of the nature and essence of man as a whole being. (Demeshchenko, 2021, p. 45)

Accordingly, instead of modern and general anthropology, that separates the elements of life of human being, philosophical anthropology is



interpreted as a new and necessary perspective that “focuses on those integration features allowing to present humanity as a whole” (Demeshchenko, 2021, p. 54).

Today, anthropology seeks to synthesize philosophical and scientific knowledge about man in a single cognitive picture of the world on the basis of general scientific methods, taking into account comprehensive and systematic approaches. (Demeshchenko, 2021, p. 54)

In this respect, we realize that anthropology needs the holistic point of view, which presents both the existence of human being in the world and defines culture according to this existence. The opposition of biological-natural and historical-social symbols should be overcome and philosophical, and specifically phenomenological, point of view provides us this overcoming with the notion of interactional experience or lived experience. For this reason, the notion of anthropological culture should be analyzed in terms of the philosophical conceptions of experience, nature and culture.

3. The Philosophical Frame of Anthropological Culture: Experience, Nature, Meaning and Art

Philosophical conception of culture is based on the notion of experience, and it is also accepted that culture and especially language are implicit in this experience. In philosophy, phenomenological conception of anthropology and culture and also phenomenological reading of pragmatist notion of experience have an important role in this conception. In general, in the phenomenological point of view, life is defined as an interactional process in natural and cultural environment. Eugene Gendlin explains this perspective as a mode of language that is created by new phenomenology after postmodernism. According to him, life and cultural elements of life, such as all theories, schemes, symbolizations, which create meaning, cannot be understood independent from bodily life experience. He says that “artistic forms, philosophical patterns, religious codes, social patterns, moral values, rituals and all modes of constitution of schemes” (Gendlin, 1962, p. 4) are based on and formed by bodily-felt experience and symbolizations of human being (Aydın, 2020, p. 490).

The understanding of cultural elements of life on the basis of experience brings us the complex and completed notion of anthropological



culture. According to this, we meet this philosophical understanding of anthropological culture in both phenomenological and pragmatist sides. While Gendlin's phenomenology focuses on cultural symbols, language and meanings from bodily-felt experience, Merleau-Ponty focuses on bodily experience and habitual-intentional existence of subject in the world. On the other hand, John Dewey focuses on the identification of experience, culture and nature as a field of continuous interaction of life. According to this conceptual ground, philosophical notion of anthropological culture contributes to the classical anthropological acceptances in a new direction.

Phenomenological approaches... have contributed greatly to how anthropologists think of lived experience, illness and healing, suffering, violence, morality, bodiliness, sensory perception, communicative practices, mind and consciousness, creativity and aesthetic efforts, and subjectivity and intersubjectivity, among other themes and topics. More generally, they have helped anthropologists to reconfigure what it means to be human, to have a body, to suffer and to heal, and to live among others. (Desjarlais & Throop, 2011, p. 88)

According to philosophical point of view, culture cannot be interpreted only from the logical, determined and defined frameworks or symbolizations of theories. Rather, culture depends on the relation of human being with the world and on her knowing, acting, experiencing in this world. Therefore, the philosophical point of view and schemes should be started from experience that forms all elements of life and culture. The symbols and meanings cannot be separated from experience, because symbols arise from interactional life experience. Accordingly, Gendlin argues that determined concepts, symbols and language of theories cannot conceive the practical, holistic and dynamic elements of culture (Gendlin, 1962, p. 5). So, the philosophical conceptualization of culture needs new mode of thinking and language and should overcome conceptual forms of tradition. These conceptual forms, such as "distinctions, differences, comparisons, generalizations, similarities, schemes, figures, categories, perceptions, cultural and social forms" (Gendlin, 1962, p. 3) determine and restrict both experience and language. For this reason, philosophy needs to overcome these



conceptual forms and only experience and meaning from experience provide this new overcoming perspective.

In phenomenological anthropology, however, there is a much greater emphasis on experience, the ongoing 'flow' of life and the anthropologist as a person who participates 'sensuously' in different life-worlds. To participate in this 'flow of life', the phenomenological term *epoché* plays an important role... In anthropology this means that views on reality are not evaluated for their truth, or analysed as forms of 'false consciousness',... rather, they are understood as experiences of reality that arise out of the daily life and practical concerns of people, without reducing them to socio-economic conditions or principles external to the situation itself. (Knibbe & Versteeg, 2008, p. 49)

On the other hand, phenomenological interpretation provides the different conception of nature, which is defined by the identification with culture or realms of experience in general. Demeshchenko presents the relation of nature and the world of culture as follows;

Human does not interact with nature, directly nature is replaced by "environment" or the world of culture: words and language forms, constructions of mythological thinking, rituals and dogmas of religion, artistic images of art. Culture as the production of symbols in relation to the world of nature is in another dimension, its existence takes place outside the physical world... However, in this aspect human is a holistic correlation of the human and the social and naturally brings the human world into the social world. (Demeshchenko, 2021, p. 48)

One of the influential philosophers from phenomenological perspective is Merleau-Ponty and his philosophical view is very effective on the formation of this new direction in anthropology. He constitutes the relationship between human being and world on the notion of intention. The subject has intention to the world and perception is the ground of this intention. The subject's intentionality constitutes the world and this intentionality refers to all sensible, organic, psychological, social and cultural relations of this subject. So, for Merleau-Ponty, the relationship between the subject and the world presents the elements of life and interaction of these elements. This relation is not knowledge based on subject-object dualism,



but it is habitual activity, intentional action, interaction and creation of the meaning of subject (Aydın, 2017, p. 253).

The interactional and relational aspects of subject's existence in the world, is based on bodily experience. As an organism, the subject has experience of the world by perceiving and following change, action, continuity and all relations in nature or world. So, experience in this sense has two sides; the first is that the subject has connection and relation with the world and the second is that the subject follows and experiences the relations of features or elements of the world. In this respect, creation of meaning and culture arise from this second kind of experience of the subject. The subject connects to the world by experiencing and following these relational networks of environment or nature (Maurice Merleau-Ponty, 2014, p. 28).

According to Merleau-Ponty, the subject's attitudes in front of the world is not one side affection, but it is a corresponding interaction. For this reason, being-in-the-world refers not to static but dynamic, changeable and continuous interactional experience. So, all meanings, all elements of art and all cultural products are the result of these attitudes of the subject in experience (Maurice Merleau-Ponty, 2014, p. 28).

From a phenomenological perspective, then, distinctions between subjective and objective aspects of reality, between what is of the mind and of the world, are shaped by the attitude that a social actor takes up toward the world, as well as by the historical and cultural conditions that inform the values, assumptions, ideals, and norms embedded within it. There is no strict line demarcating the subjective and objective because both are necessarily articulated by attitudes toward experience. (Desjarlais & Throop, 2011, p. 89)

Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological perspective rejects and criticizes dualities in philosophy and so dualities in anthropology. For this reason, the unity of the subject and the world and a holistic understanding of experience and culture represent the main frameworks of the notion of anthropological culture. On the other hand, we meet this holistic conception of anthropological culture in John Dewey's philosophy of experience. It can be said that, Dewey's critical philosophy and his critics on the traditional philosophy can be compared with the critics on dualist perspectives in



classical anthropology. Accordingly, it can be said that the phenomenological interpretation of Dewey's notion of experience, his identification of nature, culture and life experience represent the ultimate conception of anthropological culture. For this reason, Dewey's justifications of criticism in philosophy and of representation of experience can be seen as the justification of criticisms in anthropology and representation of culture as world of life.

Dewey is one of the most influential American Pragmatist philosophers, and he is also an important figure of Twentieth Century in the fields of education, psychology, philosophy and politics. Although Dewey presents different perspectives and thought in different areas of intellectual and philosophical generation, the main central philosophical concept of his thought is always experience and it feeds into his all periods. Accordingly, Dewey puts forward a philosophy of life that derives from the human experience. He provides a philosophical method or a philosophical investigation that gives us the theory from the practical life experience. The notion of life experience represents both the field of experience in an ontological sense and the act of experience in an epistemological sense. In this respect, Dewey's philosophy of experience deserves a special attention, analysis and evaluation.

Dewey's philosophical position changed in time depending on his developing conceptions of experience. Within this context, we realize idealist, empiricist, pragmatist and naturalist conceptions of experience. However, as he also mentioned, these different conceptions and different periods reflect the progress of the notion of lived experience that is the ultimate definition of his philosophy. This ultimate definition of experience refers to the unity and identity of nature and culture. According to this identity, Dewey defines his philosophy as metaphysics of experience by presenting the nature-culture as a metaphysical ground.

The philosophy of Dewey is a critical philosophical investigation that suggests a new starting point for the traditional philosophical perspective. This starting point is a new conceptual frame that is formed by the concept of experience. Accordingly, this starting point provides new and very different relationship between the subject and the world, which does not include any kind of dualism. So, for Dewey the main subject of philosophy



should be this kind of investigation on the basis of experience. David Hildebrand cites Dewey's statement on the critical character of this philosophical investigation as follows; "philosophy is criticism, criticism of the influential beliefs that underlie culture" (Hildebrand, 2008, p. 1).

At this point, we can see the place of culture in Dewey's philosophy. Dewey's notion of critical philosophical investigation refers to the investigation of life, beliefs and culture. On the other hand, this position attaches the notions of experience and culture. Because both two notions are suggested as the ground of interactional relations of human being in the world. John Stuhr defines these interactional relations as follows;

Experience denotes what is experienced, the world of events and persons; and it denotes that world caught up into experiencing, the career and destiny of mankind.... For Dewey, experience is not to be understood in terms of the experiencing subject, or as the interaction of a subject and object that exist separate from their interaction. Instead, Dewey's view is radically empirical: experience is an activity in which subject and object are unified and constituted as partial features and relations within this ongoing, unanalyzed unity. (Stuhr, 2000, p. 437)

Dewey calls his philosophy on this ground as "metaphysics of experience". This definition of experience presents the ontological meaning rather than epistemological, which refers to the traditional restricted meaning of it. "Experience is an ontological concept, which includes and represents the world that is a realm of an interactional experience and the subject that is in a continuous interaction in this world" (Aydın, 2017, p. 252). In this respect, Dewey's philosophy represents the notion of life experience, which is identified with history, culture and nature and also all elements and practical aspects of human life. Accordingly, for him, the problems of philosophy can only be solved by this identification of experience as a method and by turning to the notion of realm of life. He defines experience as "living and life-functions" as follows;

The first postulate to be set forth is that... experience is taken as synonym for *living* or occurrence of *life-functions*. The second of the postulate is that *living* and *life-functions*, as the words are here used, stand for events whose nature is most clearly and fully presented in *human living*, a fact which is equivalent in general, to recognition of the socio-cultural



nature of the phenomenon deal with. The third postulate is that *psychological* theory or doctrine is concerned with the analysis and description of just these phenomena, which may also, taken collectively be named behavior. The fourth postulate, underlying and giving point to the discussion as a whole, is that a correct theory of *experience...*" (Dewey, 2012, p. 315).

Dewey rejects and criticizes the double-sided ontological acceptance in philosophy. According to him, these double-sided thoughts define philosophy as to prove the high kind of reality, which is beyond daily life of human being (Dewey, 1920, pp. 92-93). For this reason, he argues that, because of this double-sided perspective in ontology, the elements and values of human life are removed from philosophical thought. For Dewey, philosophical dualities and distinctions cause the perception of human being as an existence that is isolated from life and nature, but the aim and priority of philosophy should be to explain the elements and relations of life. Accordingly, the philosophical investigation on reality should be based on "the realm of experience and the interactional-inner dynamics of the elements of experience" (Aydın, 2019, p. 530).

Dewey's notion of experience is not only an epistemological concept that defines act of subject, who is isolated from nature, but also an ontological concept that refers to the essential issue of philosophy and refers to the experience of the whole nature. So, the reality is an interactional or transactional realm of experience and also based on organic, dynamic, holistic and continuous process of life. It is organic because the human beings as an organism has immediate relation and interaction with nature. So, experience is a field in which an organism has continuous, interaction and change and also in which she preserves and transports her characters from the past to the future.

Experience became once again an interaction of natural processes. Conceived in biological terms, it was now taken as an interaction between an organism and its environment, an affair of responses to stimuli; conceived in social terms, it was construed as the complex interactions between the individual and his cultural setting, an affair of education and of social and cultural reconstruction in the broadest sense. (Randall, 1959, p. 373)

At this point, it is important that the experience has both natural and historical characters, because as an organism, that has continuous



interaction with natural environment, the human being has natural and historical existence. According to these characters, the life is a continuous and dynamic adaptation process, which refers to all actions and the modes of relations of organism in nature (Dewey, 1920, p. 129). In addition, Dewey defines life by saying that “the present argument holds “life” is not entity or force; that life is *living*, and living consists of a number of interrelated activities or functions in which environing energies are operatively involved” (Dewey, 2012, p. 322).

Experience is first identified with reality, than identified with nature, and after that, Dewey presents the identification of experience and culture. He argues that “experience has its equivalents in such affairs as history, life, culture” (Dewey, 1925, p. 42). According to this, the human being is not only a biological organism but also social and historical existence. So, in *Experience and Nature* (1925) the notion of experience refers to custom, beliefs, knowledge, art, science, morality, nature, history, religion and myths. In this respect, Dewey’s notion of anthropological culture is formed with the synthesis of nature and culture. Dewey presents this synthesis as follows;

In truth, experience knows no distinction between human concerns and a purely mechanical world. Man’s home is in nature; his purposes and aims are dependent for execution upon natural conditions. Separated from such conditions they become empty dreams and idle indulgences of fancy. This philosophy is vouched for by the doctrine of biological development which shows that man is continuous with nature, not an alien entering her processes from without. (Dewey, 1916, p. 333)

Culture does not exclude the biological characters and the effects of biological factors in the life of organism. Culture as the realm of experience includes all biological elements of life. This definition of anthropological culture rejects the modern definition of culture that separate nature and culture. However, Dewey focuses on the complex and holistic character of culture and argues that culture includes all relations and “any other capabilities acquired by a man as a member of society” (Dewey, 1925, p. 42).

The identification with culture also refers to the ultimate and completed state of experience and this state is the aesthetic experience and art. In *Art as Experience* (1934), he expresses art as an utmost affair of



experience, in terms of both as a social-cultural product of human being and as a natural-immediate ecountering with this object of art. Dewey says that “there is no test that so surely reveals the one-sidedness of a philosophy as its treatment of art and esthetic experience” (Dewey, 1934, p. 278). This special character of art, as a completed experience, also creates the meanings and values of the world. Human being has a desire to connect to the world by creating meanings and the aesthetic experience expresses this desire and meanings (Aydın, 2017, p. 260).

On the other hand, Dewey uses the notion of culture instead of metaphysics. For him, the notion of metaphysics refers to the nature of the world in which we live and he defines metaphysics as “cognizance of the generic traits of existence” (Dewey, 1925, p. 50). The notion of generic traits explains the historical and transactional character of existences in the realms of experience. All natural things, all states and affairs have generic traits that are special to their nature. These traits are parts of continuous whole and they can only be conceived by experience (Alexander, 1986, p. 44). At this point, the notion of lived experience explains all these identification with the notions of culture, nature and metaphysics. Thomas Alexander explains this identification as follows;

“Culture” is the shared life of human beings upon the earth as it is appropriated in terms of meaning and value. “Experience” designates this relationship and “metaphysics” will attempt to describe it in its most general features. “Nature” will provide the material of “culture”, and “culture” (“experience”) will be an exploration of the possibilities of nature. Nature will not be something that is “hidden” by culture any more than the nature of clay will be “hidden” by the art of pottery. (Alexander, 1987, p. 71)

The notion of lived experience, that includes both natural-biological relations and social, cultural historical relations, finds its equivalent at the notion of anthropological culture. This equivalence of two notions also provides the possibility of the phenomenological interpretation of pragmatism or specifically Dewey’s philosophy. The notion of lived experience and the identification of culture and experience in the concept of metaphysics is very important to understand phenomenological aspects of anthropological culture.



The phenomenological interpretation of Dewey's philosophy is based on its conceptual similarities between Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology. The priority of experience, the habitual and immediate or precognitive level of experience, having and felt meaning in experience and finally aesthetic experience are main conceptions of both philosophers. Especially the privileged place of aesthetic experience meets these two philosophers on the notion of art and being-in-the-world in a harmony (Kestenbaum, 1977, p. 12). Accordingly, aesthetic experience refers the bodily-felt experience for both two philosophers and it provides the ultimate meaning of harmonious orientation of organism in and by its natural-cultural environment. In conclusion, this harmonious orientation is also the notion of anthropological culture as well.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the definition of culture cannot be evaluated independent of philosophical point of view. Philosophy presents the ontological ground for realm of life and this ground also gives complete meaning for culture. According to this ontological point of view, the philosophical definition of the notion of anthropological culture is important for two reasons. First, it provides a philosophical expansion in the discipline of anthropology. This expansion presents a new perspective that overcomes anthropological dualisms between nature and culture, individual and society, theory and practice. The phenomenological point of view in anthropology introduces the unity of these distinctions. In addition, this new perspective removes determined and isolated subject and it presents the unity of the subject and the world.

Second, the notion of anthropological culture is important for philosophical interpretation of nature and culture or environment in general. At this point, both phenomenological and pragmatist perspectives provide a very detailed conceptualization of experience that is presented as a ground of all natural and cultural elements, relations and interactions of life. Therefore, to analyze experience refers to analyze and evaluate culture in a holistic view that includes all characters of life.

To sum up, as a philosophical subject, the notion of anthropological culture has a place in both phenomenological and pragmatist sense and that place refers to philosophy of experience for both perspectives. In this



respect, it can be said that two philosophical traditions provide genuine interpretation and contribution for the discipline of anthropology by presenting a different conception of culture. This new conception of culture is surrounded by experience that involves all elements of human life. Accordingly, philosophy proposes and provides the notion of anthropological culture as the notion of life experience in both pragmatic and phenomenological sense.

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Öz: Yirminci yüzyıl felsefî düşüncesinde yaşam dünyası nosyonu öznenin dünya içinde bulunuşunu ifade eden ontolojik bir kavram olarak sıklıkla karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Bu nosyon, öznenin dünya ile ilişkisinin tüm öğelerini ve bu ilişkinin tüm tarzlarını temsil eden ve aynı zamanda da bu ilişkinin zeminini oluşturan çok boyutlu ve çok anlamlı bir kavram olarak sunulmaktadır. Bu açıdan, yaşam alanı nosyonunu öznenin etkileşimsel deneyimi ile özdeşleştiren fenomenolojik ve



pragmatist bakış açıları özellikle öne çıkan yaklaşımlardır. Öte yandan, her iki geleneğin, özellikle John Dewey ve Merleau-Ponty'nin, yaklaşımlarında ortak olan ve etkileşimsel deneyim nosyonu temelinde öne çıkan kavram ise antropolojik kültür kavramıdır. Bu bağlamda bu çalışmanın amacı, bir yanda antropolojik kültür kavramınının felsefi temellerini analiz etmek, diğer yandan pragmatist ve fenomenolojik geleneklerin bu kavramı ontolojik zeminde nasıl sunduklarını karşılaştırarak değerlendirmektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Deneyim, doğa, antropolojik kültür, fenomenoloji, John Dewey.

