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## ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

### Toward a Philosophical Understanding of Hegelian Historicism in Architecture\*\*

Zahra Davari<sup>1</sup>, Mohammadmehdi Soroush<sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ph.D. Candidate in Architecture, Department of Architecture, Faculty of Art and Architecture, Ha.C., Islamic Azad University, Hamedan, Iran

<sup>2\*</sup> Associate Professor, Department of Architecture, Faculty of Art and Architecture, Ha.C., Islamic Azad University, Hamedan, Iran

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#### ABSTRACT

This paper explores the meaning of historicism in architecture from Hegel's point of view. In Hegel's holistic view, in history's existence up to the "History spirit" in different times leads to be titled as "History act". In this way of thinking about history, history is continuous and historical developments and events take place with dialectical logic. Accordingly, the understanding of architecture is possible solely through the comprehension of historical continuity and its relation to the manifestations of the World Spirit. In fact, the architecture of each era reflects a specific mode of human awareness of the self and the world, embodied in space, form, and meaning; thus, it can be considered one of the concrete aspects of the dialectical course of history. This qualitative research is based on interpretative-analytical paradigm. The results of this research show that Hegelian historicism in architecture can be considered from general and specialized views. From a general point of view, Hegelian historicism in a simple and brief expression means that all human activities, as well as architecture, are defined based on their own history. But in particular, Hegelian historicism in architecture, as an applicable methodology derived from the theory Hegel's Zeitgeist theory. This methodology can be used to study issues related to the context and historical facilities of the period of creation of architectural works from different points of view.

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\*Corresponding Author:

Email: [soroush@iauh.ac.ir](mailto:soroush@iauh.ac.ir)

Phone: +988134481000

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-00002-1328-4247>

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Hegel's perspectives on architecture, and more specifically on historicism in architecture, can be traced to his historical approach in philosophy as well as his philosophical reflections on art. Hegel was born in a land and era that, on one hand, represented a central hub of philosophical thought, and on the other, coincided with the emergence and development of two opposing philosophical schools: idealism and materialism. The German variant of idealist thought, which evolved during the Enlightenment and was grounded in the study of artistic and historical works based on rules and the principle of causality, gained stability and continuity in Germany. Eventually, under Hegel's leadership—who, together with Fichte and Schelling, formed a triad of post-Kantian idealist philosophers inspired by Kant—it reached a high level of maturity, subsequently providing a fertile ground for the development and flourishing of historicist thought (Taheri & Zarifian, 2019, p. 140).

Hegel considered history as the foundation and central axis of his philosophical approach. From a broader perspective, this understanding of philosophy is closely linked to the depth and scope of his epistemological engagement with the idealist tradition, particularly with the variant known as “absolute idealism.” According to many scholars, Hegel is regarded as the true founder of historicist thought and one of the most significant and influential figures in historical research, especially in the field of art history (Golijani Moghaddam, 2007, p. 95). In essence, Hegel should be considered a philosopher who, by historicizing philosophy, elucidated philosophical concepts and themes within historical contexts and conditions, and extended this approach to other domains, including the arts.

Hegel regards history as the biography of the Spirit, or, in other words, as the actions of the Spirit across different periods. Within this epistemological framework, he considers every phenomenon as a determinate manifestation of its historical form or example. From his perspective,

despite differences in hierarchical rank, art, like religion and philosophy, constitutes a moment of the key principle of his philosophy, namely the “Absolute Spirit” (Mosleh, 2012, p. 135). In Hegel's philosophy, these three elements are viewed as stages or levels in the attainment of truth: art expresses and manifests truth through aesthetic forms; religion interprets and analyzes truth through spiritual and mythological concepts; and philosophy, through systematic and logical analysis, achieves a deeper understanding of truth. Reason plays a crucial role in each of these stages: art requires reason to analyze and comprehend the deeper meanings of artistic works; religion, aided by reason, interprets spiritual and symbolic concepts; and philosophy, as the highest stage, engages in rational and systematic analysis of truth. These three domains function as complementary aspects in the evolution of human knowledge (Hegel, 1807; Hegel, 2015; Hegel, 2004a; Hegel, 2004b). Accordingly, it can be asserted that, for Hegel, the category of art, including architecture, has never been secondary. Consequently, he extensively addresses this issue from a philosophical standpoint in his lectures and numerous footnotes.

As will be examined in the following sections, Hegelian historicism in architecture should be understood within the framework of Hegel's historical subjectivity, which is derived from his philosophical principles and concepts. In this study, the author employs a qualitative methodology, drawing on data obtained from library-based research, to investigate the conceptual layers of this perspective within the context of architectural thought. The scope of the research, in accordance with the topic and primary focus of the article, is directed toward elucidating the concept of historicism in light of Hegel's thought and its reflections in architecture. (Ricoeur, 1981) From a Hegelian vantage point, the historicity of art and architecture is not simply a chronicle of stylistic mutations but the phenomenology of the Geist manifesting itself through concrete sensory forms that

disclose internal tensions and resolve them through projects that synthesize affirmative achievement with moments of negation. In this regard, architecture transcends being a mere ornament of cultural life; it embodies the historical consciousness of a community insofar as it crystallizes social relations, technical infrastructures, and ethical commitments into a sensuous exterior that mediates between the sublime and the ordinary, between aspiration and limitation. For Hegel, aesthetic production cannot be disentangled from the dialectic of freedom, and architectural works thus function as material surrogates for the self-consciousness of the universal spirit, translating the promise of absolute knowledge into built programs and spatial logics that materialize the process of overcoming particularity through form. Consequently, the historicity of architectural production rests on its ability to articulate a social totality—its institutions, norms, and practices—within a visible, inhabited form that invites retrospective interpretation as both achievement and constraint, thereby constituting a critical archive of a civilization's self-understanding across epochs. (Ricoeur, 1981) In textual continuity, one may also read a third layer of argument: the monument as a living dialogical artifact that does not merely register historical sequences but actively participates in their reformulation. The architectural artifact, as a materialized schema of collective intention, encodes the evolving ideals of public life, the negotiation of space with power, and the democratization of exposure to beauty, labor, and memory. (Gadamer, 1981) Thus, architectural history, under Hegelian historicity, unfolds not through a simplistic succession of styles but through a dialectical thickening of form, function, and meaning, wherein each era both inherits and subtracts, reinterpreting predecessors to realize new syntheses of freedom and universality within the situated concreteness of urban and rural environments. The result is a historiography that treats buildings as conscious agents within the broader narrative

of Spirit, whose external demeanor—stone, glass, steel, and earth—speaks the ethical and cognitive aspirations of communities, while also revealing the contingent barriers that constraint and redirect the trajectory of architectural thought toward progressively more comprehensive mediations of social life. (Shoemaker, 2016)

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

*Historicism and Its Relation to Hegelian Thought*  
Hegel's philosophical positions and concepts regarding topics such as historicism in architecture, like his other domains of inquiry, are inseparable from his broader philosophical system. Therefore, in this section, to the extent possible within the scope of this paper, the author addresses interrelated topics—including the philosophy of history, dialectics, the *Zeitgeist*, and the category of art—which together constitute the epistemological framework of Hegel and operate within a unified and purposeful line of thought. These discussions serve as preliminary considerations aimed at elucidating the concept of historicism in architecture from Hegel's perspective. In essence, this preliminary examination provides a conceptual framework that facilitates a more precise analysis and understanding of the relationship between Hegel's philosophy and the manifestations of historicism in architecture.

### *Philosophy of History and Its Elucidation in Hegelian Thought*

Belief in history as an independent, living, and purposeful phenomenon, and the reflection upon it, has long been a deeply rooted topic within human thought. Throughout history, it has been the subject of various studies, reflections, and debates among religious and philosophical thinkers (Vasei, 2011, p. 1). Specifically, the establishment of a field known as the philosophy of history, and the consideration of history as a meaningful whole, can be traced in Western thought from early Christianity up to

the twentieth century—particularly in line with the scholastic tradition in philosophy (Funplf & Westphal, 2004, p. 134; Edinsh, 2001, p. 2). Generally, the teleology of history can be examined from two perspectives: (1) religious and transcendent to human experience, and (2) rational and based on human intellectual achievements (Vasei, 2011, p. 2). From a religious perspective, belief in the teleology of history stems from supra-experiential convictions and revelatory data. In particular, Christianity—drawing on the Torah-Abrahamic tradition—introduced the theory of divine law through major Christian thinkers such as Saint Augustine, who considered God’s will as overseeing and governing history. This notion, rooted in the inner teachings of Christianity, contrasted with the cyclical view of history held by the Greeks and instead promoted a linear understanding of historical development (Sanei, 2003, p. 51). Parallel to these developments, in the Islamic world, a similar divine-oriented view of history emerged through the work of Ibn Khaldun, the prominent Muslim thinker, who proposed—based on what today might be called a quasi-naturalistic perspective—that the movement and life of history follow divine-natural laws in an evolutionary process from barbarism to civilization; in other words, humanity gradually becomes civilized over the course of history. In the modern era, some later thinkers secularized this perspective, removing the divine element and interpreting it instead as a natural order governing history (Vasei, 2011, p. 55).

Alongside this religious approach, rational and philosophical reflection sought to uncover the direction and trajectory of historical movement, offering a lens into the future and the final destiny of humanity (Vasei, 2011). This rational-philosophical approach provided the groundwork for Enlightenment philosophers, such as Kant, who systematically summarized the totality of world history in his essay “Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose” (Kant, 1991). However, the highest

degree of historical thought crystallized in Hegel’s philosophical system, so much so that contemporary scholarship considers historical thinking the true heritage and central pivot of Hegel’s philosophy. Much of the subsequent discourse in this field can be seen as an exposition or development of Hegelian ideas (Sanei, 2003, p. 61). Accordingly, Hegel’s historical thought can be regarded as the primary reference and central axis for later research in this domain. As some scholars contend, Hegel’s philosophy of history represents the greatest existing philosophical theory regarding history, pursuing, from a rational and philosophical perspective, the discovery of meaning beyond mere events and appearances (Little, 2010, p. 6). In summary, regarding Hegel’s philosophical stance on this matter, he posits that reason—viewed as a supra-historical principle that, according to him, drives the course of history—is intrinsically linked to historical data, a position rooted in the German idealist tradition. He maintains that history inherently follows a rational trajectory toward specific conditions, namely the realization of human freedom (ibid.). From Hegel’s perspective, this freedom is the outcome of a historical process and is actualized only within the temporal flow of history, across successive generations (ibid.). Accordingly, Hegel emphasizes that the true understanding of history is attainable solely through reason and the Absolute, and by engaging with the dialectical process inherent in the historical essence itself.

#### *Hegelian Dialectical Structure*

In Hegel’s system, dialectics is a triadic structure consisting of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. According to Hegel, every entity, in its movement and development, generates its own opposite: the first is the thesis (a state or institution), the second is the antithesis (the opposing or counter state), and the outcome of the interaction and combination of these two opposites is the synthesis (the unified or reconciled state). The synthesis, while embodying the qualities

of both opposites, stands at a higher and more valuable level. In the subsequent process, this synthesis itself becomes a new thesis, and the cycle continues indefinitely, forming an evolutionary process (Mansournejad, 2004, p. 141). Based on the above, Hegelian dialectics can be considered as founded upon three fundamental parameters: Transformation and movement are inherent in the essence of everything, whether thought or matter. The source of this transformation and movement lies in the existence of contradictions. Change and development occur through the reconciliation and coexistence of opposites (Motahhari, 1993, p. 69). In fact, within Hegel's epistemological framework, history is meaningful only through its dialectical cycle, which culminates in the emergence of a synthesis. If, over time, only the two components—thesis and antithesis—come into conflict without the realization of a synthesis, then, according to Hegel, this constitutes a state devoid of true history, and any apparent historical change remains incomplete (Sadeghi, 2005). Accordingly, Hegelian dialectics is not merely a methodological tool for analyzing contradictions and transformations; it also forms the foundation of his historical understanding, wherein history progresses along a rational and purposeful path through the interaction of opposites and the realization of synthesis.

#### *Zeitgeist*

In general, the Spirit constitutes the most fundamental concept in Hegel's philosophical system and serves as a crucial entry point in his discussion of historicism. In fact, to a certain extent, the basis of Hegel's intellectual and philosophical development can be understood through his interpretation of this concept. As some scholars note, within Hegel's system, the totality of history is nothing other than the manifestation of the Spirit in concrete form (Tabatabaei, 1984, p. 37). In other words, from Hegel's perspective, the Spirit represents the biography of the world Spirit across different historical periods, or, as he specifically terms it in *Elements of the Philoso-*

*phy of Right*, the “history of the Spirit's deeds” (Hegel, 1991, p. 371).

Following this supra-historical perspective, Hegel employs the German compound term *Zeitgeist*, composed of *Zeit* (time) and *Geist* (Spirit), meaning the “*Zeitgeist*.” This term, originally coined by Johann Gottfried Herder, denotes that which is specific to a particular historical period and distinguishable from both preceding and succeeding eras (Lotfi, 1989, p. 16). According to Hegel, the *Zeitgeist* is an immensely powerful force arising from the collective will and desires of humanity, manifesting differently in each historical period. This Spirit maintains a direct and immediate relationship with truth, and humanity, whether actively or passively, cannot escape or evade it (Rothner-Treich, 2006). Building on the foregoing, the *Zeitgeist* in Hegel's view can be understood as a description of the entirety of a particular historical period, or a specific span of time, which dominates and permeates all intellectual, cultural, political, social, and other processes. As Hegel poetically expresses, “History is a flowing stream, an identity that is fluid, and a poem continuously being written, in which each era contributes a word; yet, taken together, there is only one poem, one meaning and one theme. Thoughts and arts in each era manifest the Spirit of that time. Philosophers, artists, poets, and rulers, according to Hegel, are all like the two ends of a single tapestry, different organs of the same body animated by a living Spirit, all interconnected and sewn together by an invisible and undiscovered thread; all are the hands and tongue of a single mind, and all the blood and nerves of one body” (Vasei, 2011, p. 39). (Fig. 1)

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### *Stages of Maturity in Art and Architecture from Hegel's Perspective*

#### *Art*

From Hegel's perspective, the philosophy of art—like the philosophy of history, the philosophy

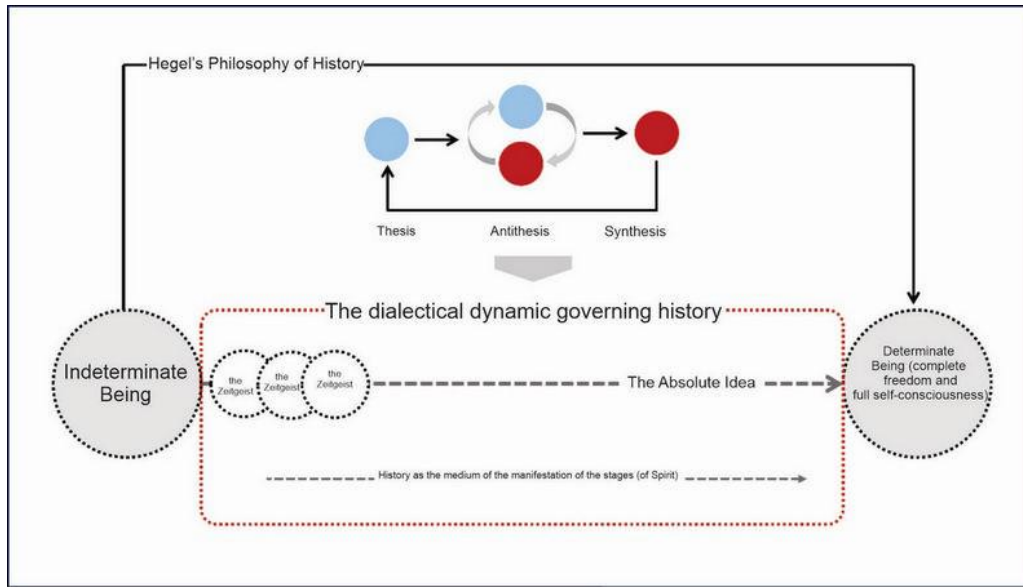


Figure 1: Diagram of Hegel's philosophy and its relationship to history (Source: Authors)

of right, and the philosophy of religion—arises from a single truth, namely the expansion of Spirit within the sensible world, whose ultimate aim is to transcend sequences of oppositions and attain the pure Absolute. Hence, Hegel's method in analyzing art is neither empirical nor aligned with contemporary scientific approaches; rather, it is grounded in the fundamental principles of his comprehensive philosophical system (Mojtahedi, 2016, p. 122). More precisely, art is nothing other than the manifestation of truth—a truth which, in Hegel's view, finds the opportunity for appearance and articulation within the course of history. In Hegelian thought, Spirit, in the initial stage of its dialectical progression and as the first revelation and appearance of Absolute Spirit, becomes manifested in the form of art. Subsequently, this Spirit appears in the form of religion, and ultimately emerges in the guise of philosophy. Accordingly, within Hegel's system, the philosophy of art must be regarded as an integral component of the philosophy of history and the philosophy of Spirit (Mosleh, 2012, p. 135). From Hegel's standpoint, every work of art possesses two distinct yet complementary aspects: the Idea (content) and Form (the

sensible configuration). He maintains that the beauty of an artwork results from the particular mode of interaction and balance between these two dimensions. On this basis, Hegel classifies the historical evolution of art into three epochs, according to the type of relationship governing these aspects (Mojtahedi, Karim, 1975, p. 161).

Within the framework of Hegelian thought, the perfection of art always lies in its own self-negation. This means that as art advances and matures, it gradually loses its concrete individuality and becomes dominated by a non-material, non-sensuous form (ibid.). Accordingly, and based on the degree to which Spirit prevails over the material dimension of art, Hegel distinguishes three stages—Symbolic, Classical, and Romantic—each of which will be addressed in the following section:

1-Symbolic art stands at the threshold and the earliest stage of artistic development, and according to Hegel, its primary exemplar is architecture. In Hegel's view, symbolic art exists in an abstract and indeterminate condition. In other words, at this stage Spirit is in constant struggle with the sensuous realm, and no harmony or equilibrium exists between content and form.

The content, or Spirit, remains fully dominated by materiality and form, existing at the lowest degree of clarity and vitality. Symbolic art constitutes the first medium through which Spirit ignites and manifests itself, and within Hegel's dialectical logic, it corresponds to the stage of the thesis. Moreover, in the course of his extensive reflections on symbolic art, Hegel identifies three additional sub-stages which illuminate the inner logic of its historical development. In the phase of unconscious symbolism, the demand for meaning arises solely from an external shape or configuration. Here, the artist draws no distinction between the Absolute and the sensible world; beauty appears directly and naturally to intuition, while the disharmony between form and meaning remains veiled and concealed. Sublime symbolism marks the second phase in the development of symbolic art. In this stage, the incompatibility between form and meaning becomes evident. The artist now distinguishes between the two and seeks to reveal this disparity through various expressive means within the artwork. Conscious symbolism represents the final phase of symbolic art's evolution. At this point, the artist attains a deeper understanding of the relationship between form and meaning. Forms gradually dissolve, giving way to smaller, decorative motifs that replace the earlier substantial shapes (Motamedi, 2011, pp. 73–167).

2. Classical art constitutes the second principal stage within the hierarchy of artistic development. At this stage, a harmony and equilibrium between content and form—or between Spirit and matter—is achieved. From Hegel's perspective, sculpture stands as the paradigmatic art of this period and, moreover, serves as a prelude to the emergence of Romantic art.

3. Romantic art represents the third and highest stage of artistic evolution. In this phase, the content—that is, Spirit—entirely prevails over form and materiality. According to Hegel, the primary expression of this art is poetry, while music and painting occupy lower ranks within this hierarchy. For Hegel, traversing these three

stages of art constitutes a spiritual journey: symbolic art searches for perfection, classical art attains it, and romantic art ultimately transcends it (Mojtahedi, Karim, 1975, p. 164).

#### *Architecture*

In Hegel's thought, architecture is not only an ever-dynamic phenomenon but also the first art and the precursor to several beginnings. For him, this art is the closest to unrefined nature and occupies the initial point in the progressive movement of Spirit, which ultimately achieves its highest fulfillment in poetry and music (Kolb, 2003, p. 1). Although Hegel classifies architecture as a form of symbolic art and considers it the principal manifestation of that stage, he nonetheless attributes classical and romantic modes to architecture as well. From his perspective, the noble and elevated arts are the loci in which Spirit reveals itself. Symbolic art—including symbolic architecture—belongs to a historical period in which human apprehension of Absolute Knowing (or Absolute Consciousness) remains enigmatic and obscure. Hence, perfection and exaltation cannot be realized in symbolic architecture; for symbolic architecture, and symbolic art more generally, is confined to its material form and lacks the capacity to convey meaning or to enter into genuine union with Spirit. Consequently, even at its highest achievement, this art communicates only vague and imperceptible messages (Gat & Lopes, 2006, p. 53). Symbolic architectural works lie somewhere between building and sculpture, such that they may be described as sculptural buildings or building-like sculptures. Among the most prominent examples of this type of architecture are the Tower of Babel and the Pyramids of Giza, which represent fully developed instances of symbolic architecture (Kolb, 2003). In classical architecture, although the material element still casts a veil over Spirit and does not permit its full manifestation, this form of architecture nevertheless provides a balanced dwelling and an appropriate spatial setting for

the classical arts, which themselves embody the revelation of Spirit. Through this provision, a state of equilibrium between Spirit and matter is achieved. From Hegel's perspective, the perfection of classical architecture is exemplified in the classical Greek temples, which served as sanctuaries for the statues of the gods and for sculptural artworks (Hegel, 1975, p. 686).

In Romantic architecture, the unity and balance between Spirit and matter dissolve, and architecture comes under the dominance of Spirit. This type of architecture encompasses Romanesque, Gothic, and secular styles (Hegel, 1975, pp. 697–698). In Gothic architecture, which Hegel considers the ideal form, the function and role of walls and columns are directed toward the spiritual realm, signifying separation from the material world. The striving and

movement of Spirit, guided by the firm beliefs of Christianity, are oriented heavenward (Houlgate, 2009). Referring back to the discussion on the periods and conditions of art and architecture, it can be concluded that the principle of becoming—a principle that, like a secret of life, permeates all dimensions of human existence, including cultural, political, and social spheres, and reconciles the contradiction between being and non-being—constitutes the key concept of Hegel's philosophy of history and serves as the central axis of his thinking on art. Accordingly, within this epistemological framework, art (and architecture, by extension) and its stages of development derive their meaning and truth solely through the passage of time, historical transformation, and the process of becoming. (Fig.2)

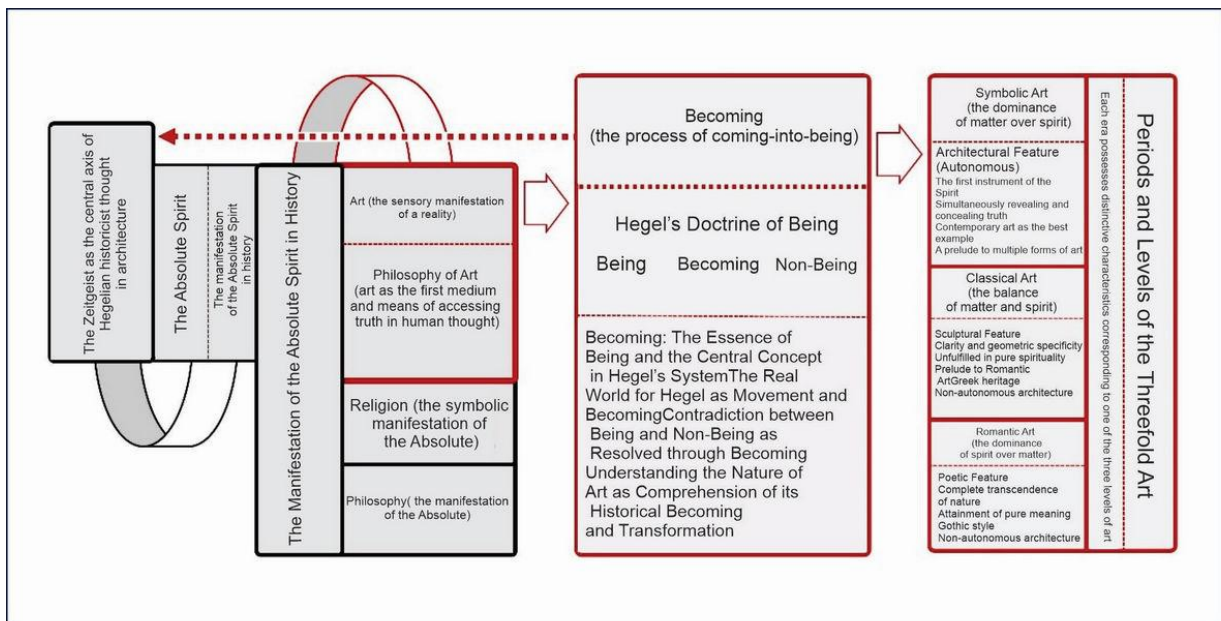


Figure 2: Stages of Enlightenment in Art from Hegel's Perspective (Source: Authors)

In Hegel's philosophy, becoming constitutes an intrinsic aspect of being. He maintains that being and non-being are inseparable aspects of reality, and indeed, being emerges from non-being, while non-being arises from being. This contradiction and tension serve as the driving force for movement and change in the world

(Hegel, 1807).

### Historicizing Architecture from Hegel's Perspective

In Hegel's philosophy of history, which fundamentally derives from his idealist conception of the Absolute Idea, he provides a comprehensive and teleological perspective on the move-

ment of history. Within this framework, history is conceived as a directed process, progressing from an indeterminate beginning to a determinate end, or, in other words, from potentiality to actuality. History is regarded as a dialectical process, wherein progress and development emerge through contradictions and conflicts. From this standpoint, the Absolute Spirit or World Reason gradually manifests in the world,

and this manifestation signifies an increase in freedom and self-consciousness among individuals and societies (Hegel, 1807). In other words, within this philosophical approach, history in its entirety and true essence constitutes nothing but the foundational basis for the movement of Spirit from the unconscious (being-in-itself) to self-consciousness (being-for-itself) (Mehrnia & Rezaei Sarcheqa, 2016, p. 144). (Fig. 3)

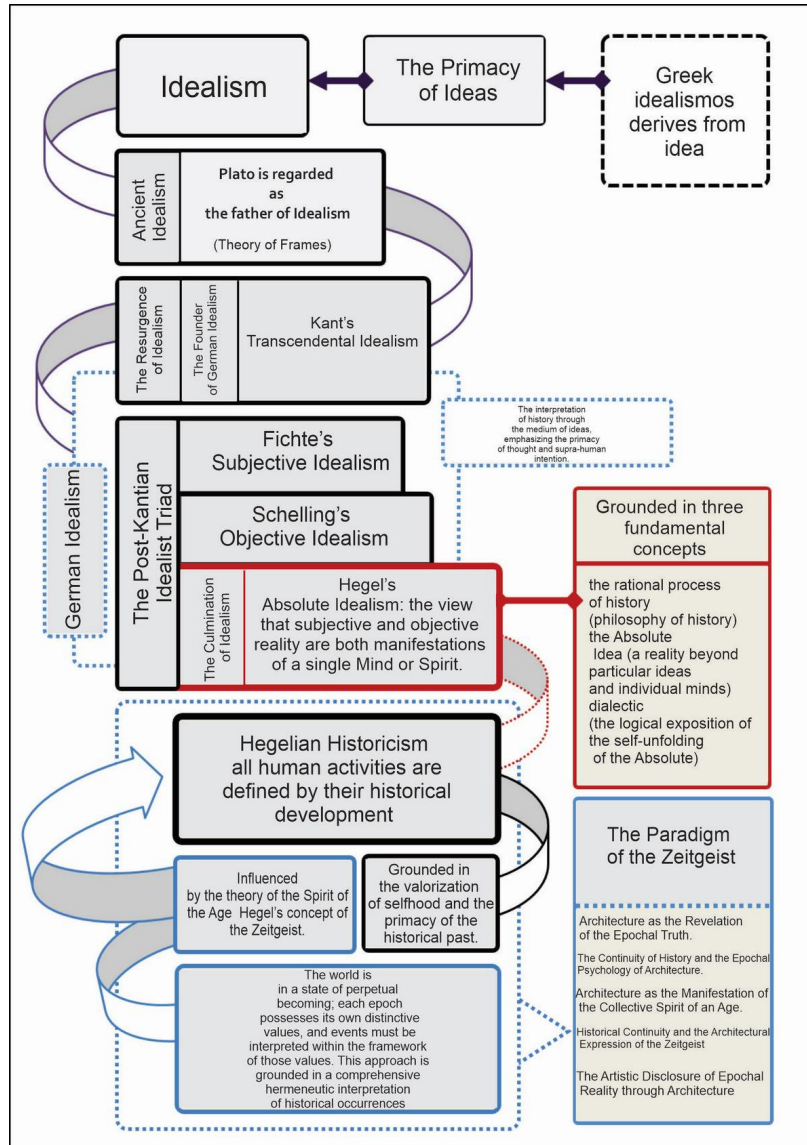


Figure 3: The stages of the formation of Hegel's historicism (Source: Authors)

## **CONCLUSION AND RESULTS**

Within Hegelian thought, history is inherently fluid and dialectical in nature. Accordingly, the movement-or, in other words, the process of “becoming” occurring in history and in all phenomena of the world is examined and analyzed with reference to universality and the principles of dialectical logic. In this framework, the history of any phenomenon unfolds through its inherent contradictions and their resolution (*Aufhebung*), ultimately leading to its realization and actualization. As his famous statement, “Philosophy is the history of philosophy” (Hegel, 2001), clearly indicates, understanding the history of a phenomenon is tantamount to understanding the phenomenon itself; that is, comprehending a phenomenon and comprehending its history are two sides of the same coin. In light of this, Hegelian historicism can be succinctly characterized as an approach that interprets phenomena based on their authentic historical form. From this holistic perspective, unlike the causal and reductionist approach prevalent in descriptive historiography—which relies on minimalistic or partial factors to explain the emergence and development of historical works—the understanding of the formation of these works necessitates a comprehensive study and examination of their full historical context. A closer examination of this theoretical framework and its connection with other key components of Hegel’s thought reveals that Hegel’s theory of the *Zeitgeist* can be regarded as the central axis of historicism in architecture. From this theoretical perspective, a work of architecture can be seen as a product of the truth of its era or, in other words, as emerging from the collective psychology of the people of that time (Heidmeyer, 2011, p. 225). Within this conceptual framework, various social, cultural, philosophical, religious, political, and economic forces are considered as presuppositions and factors that influence the artist and the process of artistic creation, sometimes even leading to stylistic and doctrinal transformations.

This theory, grounded on two fundamen-

tal pillars—contextualization and interpretation—serves as a research methodology applicable within the framework of historicism, enabling the analysis of the process of formation of an architectural work from multiple perspectives. Moreover, this conceptual model has the capacity to clarify certain ambiguities in architectural history, such as the reasons behind the general stagnation or barrenness of a cultural and architectural milieu in a given era, or the remarkable creative fertility exhibited in one or a few specific works. Broadly speaking, historiography based on the *Zeitgeist* theory relies on a holistic approach to the analysis and interpretation of phenomena (Koselleck, 2004). Reflecting the practical and research-oriented dimension of historicist thought, this theory analyzes issues with an emphasis on argumentative strategies and logical coherence (Giddens, 1984). Within this analytical framework, the primary parameters for assessing and analyzing historical works can include the description of the studied works, the explanation of causal factors, and the comparison of these works with other contexts, thereby providing a comprehensive and integrative perspective (Burckhardt, 1958; Wölfflin, 1964). Regardless of minor differences in perspectives and methodologies, the overall research approach emphasized by historians and scholars of the *Zeitgeist*, such as Burckhardt and Wölfflin, is based on descriptive, explanatory, and interpretive research paradigms for the analysis of cultural and artistic works of a given period. According to these paradigms, the method of analyzing architectural works under the *Zeitgeist* approach can be summarized as the following process:

- At the descriptive level, the physical elements and formal characteristics of architectural works from a given period are meticulously and intricately represented to reveal a comprehensive and meaningful picture of these works. Subsequently, in the explanatory and interpretive phase, two concurrent dimensions are considered: first, the analysis of the various

causal and contextual factors that influenced the formation and development of these works, which involves an examination of the historical and social structures related to the artifacts; second, the interpretation of the cultural meanings and concepts embedded within these works, leading to a deeper understanding of the relationship between architectural works and the *Zeitgeist*. Through this interpretive process, the cultural and social essence of the period, as well as the hidden connections between sensory manifestations and conceptual meanings, are elucidated.

The concept of historicism from Hegel's perspective in architecture can be considered from both a general and a specific viewpoint (or, in other words, from theoretical and practical aspects). From a broad and comprehensive perspective, Hegelian historicism can be succinctly understood as the notion that all human activities can only be interpreted and explained in the context of the historical conditions in which they occur. From a theoretical standpoint, this type of historical perspective in Hegel can be regarded as an outcome and elaboration of his idealist concepts and positions in the realm of history, which permeates the essence of all human knowledge and sciences, including architecture, in a continuous and flowing manner. At the core of Hegel's idealist thought lies the origin and essence of the Spirit, and history, in itself, is nothing but an account and manifestation of the Spirit's progression through various temporal stages. In Hegel's theoretical interpretation, history is intrinsically conceived as a coherent, continuous process imbued with necessity and dialectical rationality. This process guides human beings from the state of being-in-itself to being-for-itself in the evolution of the Spirit, ultimately culminating in the highest degree of historical self-consciousness, freedom, and agency. From a more specific and applied perspective, Hegelian historicism in architecture can be conceived as an epistemological methodology, grounded in Hegel's philosophical princi-

ples of Philosophy of History and Dialectics, and, in particular, informed by his fundamental theory of the *Zeitgeist* (*Zeitgeist*). This theoretical framework, relying on descriptive, interpretive, and comparative paradigms, provides a mechanism for uncovering the hidden relationships between architectural works and the spirit of their time, enabling a reading of the inner layers and invisible currents of history. In this view, architecture is not a static entity but a dialectical phenomenon in becoming, and history is not a series of discrete events but a dynamic, continuous process that unfolds through the movement of opposites and their resolution in synthesis. Consequently, any historical periodization or segmentation is not objective per se but rather a conceptual construct, reflecting the human mind's way of apprehending reality; in Hegelian dialectics, truth emerges from the unification of opposites and the continuity of the historical Spirit. Practically, Hegelian historicism as a methodology for understanding architectural phenomena does not focus on individual architects, styles, or fixed historical periods. Rather, it aims to explain how the *Zeitgeist* materializes in the architectural works of each era. In this framework, an architectural work represents the tangible manifestation of the spirit of its time, carrying historical consciousness and reflecting the collective will of humans as they advance toward self-consciousness within the Absolute. Thus, the historical study of architecture requires the recognition of the cognitive, cultural, and epistemic structures that distinguish one period from another. According to Hegel, the essence of history is revealed not through chronological intervals or individual actions, but in the unfolding and manifestation of the Spirit across various spheres of life, including art and architecture. Accordingly, Hegelian historicism, as a philosophical apparatus, seeks to disclose the inner connection between architectural works and the intellectual and spiritual foundations of their era. Through this epistemic lens, architecture is understood not merely as a physical

structure but as a living expression of collective understanding, thought, and the Zeitgeist.

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