

# From Dualism to Monism: Cognitive Semantics and Marx's Dialectic

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Aristotle distinguishes arguments toward and from the first principle and warns against the confusion between them.

Let us also not forget that arguments from principles differ from those which lead to principles. Plato, too, was right when he raised this problem and inquired whether the right way to proceed is from the principles or towards the principles. (Aristotle 1975, p. 4)

This distinction, however, engenders another problem; that is, the problem of closing the gap between the knowledge needed to discover the first principle and the knowledge justified by the principle. Since the knowledge to identify the principle is yet to be justified by the principle, how can it be identified as the knowledge to establish the principle?

Traditional metaphysics overcomes this problem by positing the self-referential principle as the first principle; for example, Aristotle writes:

It is in this manner that Thinking is the thinking of Himself through all eternity. (Aristotle 1966, p. 210)

Hegel tackled a similar problem. He considered the conflict between romanticism and enlightenment to be underlying the issues prevalent in his time. Enlightenment takes earthly, experiential, and finite things as the absolute, seeks truth in them, and excludes divine and infinite things from human cognition. In contrast, romanticism transcends the

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realm of the impure experiential world to understand divine and infinite things by means of intuition or inspiration. However, enlightenment and romanticism presuppose each other, as both assume a divergence in the reflective culture. Hegel took it upon himself to overcome such situations and developed a dialectic that enables human consciousness to reach absolute spirit. Through this dialectic, he offered a way to connect empirical consciousness to absolute consciousness and systematize various forms of consciousness. (Shibata 2020, Chap. 2.)

However, Marx criticized Hegel and said, “the life process of the human brain, i. e., the process of thinking, which, under the name of “the Idea”, he even transforms into an independent subject, is the demiurgos of the real world, and the real world is only the external, phenomenal form of “the Idea”.” (Marx 1996, p. 20)

When it comes to “thought” and “language,” according to Hegel, both are the power of the spirit which sublimate the immediate and show the substance of the objects.<sup>1)</sup> Language and thought are, therefore, mutually inseparable and “the forms of thought are initially shown and laid down in human language [die Denkformen sind zunächst in der Sprache des Menschen herausgesetzt und niedergelegt].” (Hegel 1969, S. 20) Human beings describe the substance of things with language energized by thought, and thought can be thought of in the original sense only by means of language.

Hegel says, “the logical (= thought and language) is so natural to him (= man), or much more: it is his peculiar nature itself [so sehr natürlich ist ihm (= dem Menschen) das Logische (= das Denken und die Sprache), oder viel mehr: dasselbige ist seine eigentümliche Natur selbst].” (Hegel 1969, S. 20) For him, language and thought are the most profound elements of the human condition.

This view of language is, however, now being criticized, especially after the cognitive revolution in the late 20th century. Contemporary researchers of cognitive semantics say that the tradition of Platonic philosophy, which considered the human body as a prison for the soul, was perfectly in sync with the theology of Christianity, and both established the basis for the elimination of the human body as stemming from the quest for the foundation of language.

Cognitive semantics, which Johnson and Lakoff proselytize (see Johnson 1987; Lakoff 1987; Johnson and Lakoff 2003), has contributed to changing the study of metaphors from the study of mere rhetoric to the thought process underlying the system of concepts. In Platonic philosophy, metaphor was confined to language and was never thought of as being the dominating entity underlying thought. Metaphor has been considered as a

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1) Hegel says “language is the destruction of the sensible world in its immediate existence [die Sprache ist Ertötung der sinnlichen Welt in ihrem unmittelbaren Dasein]” (Hegel 1970b, S. 52) and, on the other hand, “thinking is essentially the negation of something immediately present [das Denken wesentlich die Negation eines unmittelbar Vorhandenen].” (Hegel 1970a, S. 57)

figure of speech rooted in the poetic usage of language, and the distinction between the object of rhetoric and ordinary language should be clarified for human communication.

In this paper, I clarify the problems of the views of language propounded by Plato and how cognitive semantics and Marx have overcome such problems.

## Chapter 1. Reality and the Literal Sense of Language

### Section 1. Plato's Ideas and the Literal Sense of Language

It is well known that Plato criticized the use of poetry in explaining the theory of ideas in *The Republic*. Plato affirms the educational benefits of poetic language but criticizes it as an approach to truths. The language used by poets is inappropriate for describing truths.

In Book II of *The Republic*, Socrates describes the importance of imitation in the first stage of education for national guardians in general. He categorizes education into "physical training for bodies and musical training for the soul" (Plato 2004, p. 56) and insists that musical training should precede physical training and stories should be included under musical training. We must, however, carefully choose the stories for education, as Socrates says:

So, our first task, it seems, is to supervise the storytellers: if they make up a good story, we must accept it; if not, we must reject it. We will persuade nurses and mothers to tell the acceptable ones to their children, and to spend far more time shaping their souls with these stories than they do shaping their bodies by handling them. Many of the stories they tell now, however, must be thrown out. (Plato 2004, p. 57)

In Book III, the focus shifts to mimesis. Socrates distinguishes narration into three types: "narration alone, narration through imitation, or both," and then poses a question:

We need to come to an agreement about whether to allow our poets to narrate as imitators, or as imitators of some things, but not others — and what sorts of things these are; or not to allow them to imitate at all. (Plato 2004, p. 75)

He answers the question affirmatively and summarizes the importance of imitation to the musical aspect of the first stage of education for national guardians in general. He emphasizes that one's environment is of paramount importance for the training of personality and says:

Is it only poets we have to supervise, then, compelling them either to embody the

image of a good character in their poems or else not to practice their craft among us? Or mustn't we also supervise all the other craftsmen, and forbid them to represent a character that is bad, intemperate, illiberal, and graceless, in their images of living beings, in their buildings, or in any of the other products of their craft? And mustn't the one who finds this impossible be prevented from practicing in our city, so that our guardians will not be brought up on images of evil as in a meadow of bad grass, where they crop and graze every day from all that surrounds them until, little by little, they unwittingly accumulate a large amount of evil in their souls? Instead, mustn't we look for craftsmen who are naturally capable of pursuing what is fine and graceful in their work, so that our young people will live in a healthy place and be benefited on all sides as the influence exerted by those fine works affects their eyes and ears like a healthy breeze from wholesome regions, and imperceptibly guides them from earliest childhood into being similar to, friendly toward, and concordant with the beauty of reason? (Plato 2004, p. 84)

The mimesis, which is later ousted in Book X, is highly appreciated and urged here. Socrates explains the effect of imitation, saying, "imitations, if they are practiced much past youth, get established in the habits and nature of body, tones of voice, and mind." (Plato 2004, p. 77)

By contrast, Book X starts by reaffirming a primary deficiency in poets. Their products "maim the thought of those who hear them," which is now connected to the development of the allegation that poets do not know what they are talking about. (Plato 2004, p. 306) Socrates posits that there are Ideas of beds and tables, the maker of which is God. There are imitations thereof, namely beds and tables, produced by craftsmen who behold the Forms. Moreover, there are imitators of the products created by the craftsmen, who, like painters, create a kind of image of these objects in the world of becoming. The tripartite schema presents the interpreter with many problems. The poets are, therefore, "at the third generation from nature" or "third from king and truth" (Plato 2004, pp. 300-301).

Let us focus on one of the implications of this schema, about which Socrates is quite specific. The poets are not aware of the originals of (i.e., the truth about) the subjects of discourse; they appear to be ignorant of that fact, and even worse, just as a *trompe-l'oeil* painting can deceive the naïve onlooker, so too those who read poetry believe they are being told the truth.

What, apart from their own ignorance of the truth, governs their very partial perspective on the world of becoming? Socrates implies that they pander to their audience, to the *hoi polloi* (Plato 2004, pp. 304-305). This links them to rhetoricians as Socrates describes them in the *Gorgias*, the Socratic dialog. Meanwhile, rhetoricians take advantage of the human faction that governs the *hoi polloi*; here, Socrates attempts to bring his discussion of psychology, presented since Book III, to bear. The ensuing

discussion is remarkable in the way it elaborates on these theses.

The word “poetry” in Platonic Greek comes from the word “to make” (poiein), a fact upon which Socrates remarks in the Symposium. Making occurs in and contributes to the world of becoming. Philosophers, by contrast, are presented as being committed to the pursuit of truth that is already “out there,” independent of the mind and the world of becoming. Their effort has to do with discovery rather than making.

Ideas are universal. Truth is not something to make but something to discover. The poet is a creator who seeks to create the truth and is denied. Proper use of words is essential to the quest for ideas. This has, in the past, led to the advancement of formalization and mathematics of language (search for a language suitable for the search for truth). One should have no doubts about the directing power of natural language. This is the very reason why Plato disliked and outcast poets from his Republic.

## **Section 2. Wittgenstein's Attempt: The Relationship Between Ordinary Language and the World**

Wittgenstein understands language as a map of reality in his *Tractatus* (Wittgenstein 1950). According to him, the mapping relationship is established when the world and the language share a logical form; however, there is no proof of the sharing. This is because it is necessary to remain on the outside of the world to capture the logical form. We cannot prove the existence of the logical form within the language.

Most of the book is concerned with the nature of language and its relation to the world, which had been Wittgenstein's primary philosophical interest throughout his life. The central doctrine it conveys is the famous picture theory of meaning. According to this theory, language consists of propositions that picture the world. Propositions are the perceptible expressions of thoughts, and thoughts are the logical images of facts.

3.5 The applied, thought, propositional sign is the thought.

4 The thought is the significant proposition.

4.001 The totality of the proposition is the language. (Wittgenstein 1950, p. 60)

Propositions and thoughts are images in a literal sense. Ordinary English sentences do not look much like pictures, but this is because language disguises thought beyond all recognition.

4.002 Man possesses the capacity of constructing languages, in which every sense be expressed, without having an idea how and what each word means — just as one speaks without knowing how the single sounds are produced.

Colloquial language is a part of the human organism and is not less complicated than it.

From it, it is humanly impossible to gather immediately the logic of language. Language disguises the thought; from the external form of the clothes one cannot infer the form of the thought they clothe, because the external form of the clothes is constructed with quite another object than to let the form of the body be recognized.

The silent adjustments to understand colloquial language are enormously complicated. (Wittgenstein 1950, pp. 61-62)

4.011 At first glance the proposition — say as it stands printed on paper — does not seem to be a picture of the reality of which it treats. But nor does the musical score appear at first sight to be a picture of a musical piece; nor does our phonetic spelling (letters) seem to be a picture of our spoken language. And yet these symbolisms prove to be pictures — even in the ordinary sense of the word — of what they represent. (Wittgenstein 1950, p. 63)

According to the *Tractatus*, any picture must have something in common with what it depicts, even if the depiction is incorrect or inaccurate. Wittgenstein refers to this irreducible shared minimum as the “logical form.” Propositions, generally, do not have a common spatial form with the situation they depict, but any proposition must have a logical form in common with what it depicts. It is because of this shared form that propositions can truly be called images.

2.18 What every picture, of whatever form, must have in common with reality in order to be able to represent it at all — rightly or falsely — is the logical form, that is, the form of reality.

2.181 If the form of representation is the logical form, then the picture is called a logical picture.

2.182 Every picture is also a logical picture. (On the other hand, for example, not every picture is spatial.) (Wittgenstein 1950, p. 40)

Ordinary language conceals the logical form of thoughts, and there are many reasons for this. One is that many of our words signify complex objects. All propositions are analyzed into an ultimate proposition, that is, an elementary proposition, which focuses on the inarticulate structure of propositions. There appears to be no end to this further rewriting, or analysis, of the proposition until we reach symbols that denote entirely non-complex objects. Thus, a fully analyzed proposition will consist of an enormously long combination of atomic propositions, each of which will contain names of simple objects, names related to each other in ways that will picture, truly or falsely, the relations between the objects they represent.

According to this theory, an important connection between language and the world is

made in the correlation between the ultimate elements of thoughts and the simples or atoms that constitute the world. How the correlation between the thought-elements and the world-atoms is established, Wittgenstein does not reveal. Much of the *Tractatus* is devoted to demonstrating, with the aid of various logical techniques, how propositions of many different kinds are to be analyzed into atomic pictures and their combinations.

Now, let us reflect on the discussion so far. To begin with, Wittgenstein breaks down the world into units. The world consists of "facts." Facts consist of established "situations," and situations are established as links between "objects." Wittgenstein defines the situation and the object as the units of the world and then focuses on language and defines the "name" and the "elemental proposition" that share the logical form with the object as the units of language.

Since Plato, efforts have been made to ensure the uniqueness of words through correspondence with reality. In other words, the concept of literalness was at the heart of the true condition of the language. Since Plato, the central task of epistemology has been to secure the relationship between cognition and reality, independent of cognition, and to develop semantics under such assurance. However, the linguistic theory, which entails a strict correspondence theory, is criticized as objectivism by cognitive semantics and cannot secure a foothold to establish the truth of language. Cognitive semantics and Marx's dialectical methodology, as discussed below, are attempts to overcome the difficulties accompanying objectivism and offer such a foothold.

## Chapter 2. Cognitive Semantics and the Embodiment of Meaning

### Section 1. Objectivism in the Philosophy of Language

In recent years, a new research field called "cognitive semantics" that straddles multiple areas of linguistics, cognitive psychology, and philosophy is on the rise. Cognitive semantics understands our linguistic activities as part of cognitive activities in a broad sense and states that a provocative and conceptual meaning, which objective semantics has been traditionally solely focused on, has a pre-conceptual and physical basis. (Lakoff 1987)

#### 1. Semantics of Objectivism

To start, let us clarify the comparison between objectivism and non-objectivism described by Johnson and Lakoff. According to objectivism, the world consists of objective objects, the properties of the objects, and the relationships between the objects. Here, "objective" means "independent of our mental and physical activities." Also, according to this perspective, language itself comprises arbitrary signs without meaning, and linguistic activity is the manipulation of such signs. A language that lacks meaning in itself acquires meaning by responding to an entity that exists independent of our

cognitive function. Therefore, the meaning of a sentence (or remark) is a condition that makes the sentence true (or satisfied). The meaning of the sentence is atomistic. That is, it is a function of the meaning of its components. Moreover, since the literal meaning is the true meaning, any semantic analysis must ultimately reach the literal concept and proposition. Finally, for objectivists, our understanding is not essential to objectivist semantics since meaning is the correspondence between sentences and objective reality. (Cf. Johnson 1987, xxii-xxiv; Johnson and Lakoff 2003, Ch. 25-27; Lakoff 1987, Ch. 11-13)

The above-mentioned viewpoints taken by objectivists are universally valid, transcending the limited viewpoints we take, which have physical structure and are subject to various restrictions. Our physical activity plays no role in the objectivist meaning. In short, objectivism ignores the body. Johnson, Lakoff, and others disagree with such an objectivist view of meaning. Let us review their claims below and explore their implications.

## 2. Image Schema

In *The Body in the Mind* (Johnson, 1987), Mark Johnson advocates the concept of “image schema” to clarify the physical basis of meaning and rationality. An image schema is a recurring pattern found in perceptual interactions and motor programs (Johnson 1987, p. 14). We are constantly experiencing something, but without a certain pattern to these myriad experiences, we would not be able to understand them in the first place. An image schema brings such patterns to experience. Our experience is structured and, therefore, comprehensible by the repeated appearance of such patterns resulting from the interaction of the body and the object. Therefore, the image schema is based on the physical experience. However, it is not the experience itself but the pattern that appears within the experience. Therefore, it has a more abstract and general structure than the experience itself (perception and image).

“...image schemata have a certain kinesthetic character — they are not tied to any single perceptual modality” (Johnson 1987, p. 25)

In this respect, the image schema can be said to be synesthesia.

Image schemata are more abstract than images and perceptions, but conversely, they are less abstract than concepts. Since the image diagram occupies such an intermediate dimension, it can mediate the concept and the image. In this regard, Johnson’s image schema is inspired by Kant’s “schema,” as he himself clearly states. (Johnson 1987, Ch.6). Johnson’s embodied image schemata are non-propositional “schematic structures that are constantly operating in our perception, bodily movement through space, and physical manipulation with objects” (Johnson, 1987, p. 23). This has the important consequence of the image schema being non-propositional. In other words, the image diagram has an



internal structure, but the structure does not consist of discontinuous components (words, etc.), like a proposition or a sentence.

Also, the image diagram structure is flexible and dynamic (Johnson 1987, pp. 100-102). The schema is, in part, dynamic in that it implies the structure of activities that we organize to comprehend our experiences. Schematics are also dynamic in that they undergo deformation when embodied in different cases in different contexts.

According to Johnson, we use such non-propositional schemata to understand our experience. One of his central claims is that without such a schematic structure, experience would be chaotic and incomprehensible.

Image diagrams are easier to understand than to define (in fact, they are difficult to define). Johnson discusses various diagrams, such as the road diagram, container diagram, balance diagram, periodic diagram, etc., but here let us take the "inside and outside" diagram as an example.

The basis of the "inside and outside" diagram (orientation) is the primitive experience of inclusion that one physical thing is inside another physical thing (container). In our daily life, we have innumerable repeated the experience of going in and out of such a container.

You wake out of a deep sleep and peer out from beneath the covers into your room. You gradually emerge out of your stupor, pull yourself out from under the covers, climb into your robe, stretch out your limbs, and walk in a daze out of the bedroom and into the bathroom. You look in the mirror and see your face staring at you. You reach into the medicine cabinet, take out the tooth paste, squeeze out some toothpaste, put the toothbrush into your mouth, brush your teeth in a hurry, and rinse out your mouth. At breakfast you perform a host of further in-out moves — pouring out the coffee, setting out the dishes, putting the toast in the toaster, spreading out the jam on the toast, and on and on. Once you are more awake you might even get lost in the newspaper, might enter into a conversation, which leads to your speaking out on some topic. (Johnson 1987, pp. 30-31)

A pattern arises from the repetition of these experiences. This is the "inside-outside" schema. Furthermore, the experience of other (non-physical, abstract) areas is understood using this pattern. Psychological states, groups, events, discussions, etc., are also structured according to this pattern. Thus, the meanings of the words "inside" and "outside" are considered to be based on the structuring of the experience graphically, not only in the area of the physical object but also in the area of the abstract object.

The meaning created by the schema is by no means arbitrary, as it is based on physical activity and is constrained by the structure of our body and environment. For example, "above" is always associated with abundance, fun, and dominance. That is because the

meaning of “above” is based on physical and physical experiences, such as seeing things increase in height as they grow, sadness and drooling, and wrestling opponents to the ground in battle. (Johnson and Lakoff 2003, Ch.4)

In addition to highlighting the dimension of gestural meaning, the image schema reveals how gestural meaning creates conceptual meaning. Johnson explains this point using a conceptual device called “metaphorical projection” (Johnson 1987, pp. 191f.), an image schema. The metaphorical projection of an image schemata is the metaphorical projection of the structure of the source domain (usually the one of physical experience) onto the target domain (the target domain abstract, the domain of conceptual experience). “Metaphorical” refers to being projected from the source area to a different type of target area.

Furthermore, the pre-conceptual pattern (internal structure) of the image schema has logical implications described propositionally. For example, some implications can be drawn from the “inside and outside” schema. For example, what is inside the container is usually hidden and invisible from the outside. From this, the implication that going out is to make it public, to make it widely available, and to make it noticeable, is derived. Thus, we give the abstract experience of exposure, presentation, etc., the structure of the physical experience of “going out,” thereby understanding the non-physical experience. We try to metaphorically project the meaning of physical and perceptual balance into the psychological and abstract realms to structure and understand the experience. Therefore, the image schema and its metaphorical projection make us understand the relationship between the physical domain and the abstract domain. It is important that the above expressions play a constructive role in structuring experience, not just a rhetorical means. Thus, we cannot understand the experience of other areas in the first place without using the structure of physical and perceptual experience because we must structure it to understand the experience and make it our starting point. This is because the structure of the experience is nothing but the structure of the area of physical interaction.

In addition, the reason the above analysis is considered to be more explanatory than the meaning of objectivism is as follows. The meaning of these various nomenclatures (“outside,” “inside”) cannot be explained by some general, abstract, and literal concepts as objectivism envisions. First of all, it is impossible to come up with a literal concept that includes all the characteristics of “inside” and “outside.” Such abstraction cannot include the wide variety of cases listed above. Nor can we explain the relationships between those questions. Image diagrams can be used to flexibly connect these different meanings. Because of this advantage over objectivism, the above ideas cannot be regarded as mere expedients of explanation. Thus, the diverse meanings of balance form a category, not because they have a common core literal meaning, but because they are structured by the same (but flexible) image schema that is transformed by the context.

Cognitive semantics argues that conceptual structures arise from preconceptual structures based on physical experience. The concept at the basic level is the basis of the conceptual system in the sense described above, and the higher-level abstract and general concepts are also formed from this. Therefore, after all, the abstract concept has a gesturally meaningful mother body. In Lakoff's words, "conceptual structure is meaningful because it is embodied."

## Chapter 3. Inter-objectivity and Consciousness

### Section 1. Consciousness in Neuroscience

We can learn a lot from the findings of recent advancements in neuroscience. According to these, there is no dictator who makes decisions in our brain, and consciousness plays a passive role in brain activity. Neuroscience can investigate the brain using functional magnetic resonance imaging, which allows for a non-invasive investigation of the brain and has put forth interesting findings. Freud used free association to explore the unconsciousness, which is different from the consciousness, from the words spoken by the patient. However, neuroscience today explores our brain's unconscious activity using more natural scientific methods. Eagleman gives several examples of the unconscious brain in action. (Eagleman 2016, Ch. 3) For example:

. . . getting the cup to my mouth is no easy feat. The field of robotics still struggles to make this sort of task run without a hitch. Why? Because this simple act is underpinned by my brain. (Eagleman 2016, p. 79)

We have acquired such behavior over long years of training and made the necessary neurocircuit in our brains. In this way, "the unconscious machinery of our brains is at work all the time, but it runs so smoothly that we're typically unaware of its operation." (Eagleman 2016, p.82) Consciousness appears only on special occasions:

Consciousness gets involved when the unexpected happens, when we need to work out what to do next. Although the brain tries to tick along as long as possible on autopilot, it's not always possible in a world that throws curveballs. (Eagleman 2016, p. 99)

Eagleton refers to another occasion when consciousness plays a role. There is no dictator in the brain, so decision-making must result from the reconciliation of the conflicts of several parts of the brain.

I think of consciousness as the CEO of a large sprawling corporation, with many

thousands of subdivisions and departments all collaborating and interacting and competing in different ways. . .

A CEO is a company's most abstract view of itself. In terms of the brain, consciousness is a way for billions of cells to see themselves as a unified whole, a way for a complex system to hold up a mirror to itself. (Eagleman 2016, p. 100)

Consciousness is not the dictator of the brain and body; however, it appears at times of need as a kind of phenomenon and covers only a small portion of the brain and body. It is the result of the neuroscientific investigation of the brain.

The rescinding of the privileges of consciousness as the independent and dictating mind is accepted by modern philosophy. Heidegger takes a critical view of modern reason and science and denies the human subject as being an absolute spirit like Hegel. He is skeptical about systematic knowledge of natural science or Hegelian philosophy and focuses on the horizon on which all things are unconcealed, a move that recalls the history of the obvious.

Human beings are essentially historical. Heidegger's statement that "The essence of Dasein lies in its existence" means that our lives do not express a pre-given, timeless human nature. We are that nexus of practices, assumptions, prejudices, habits, and traditions that make up the everyday experiences and actions in which we find ourselves. However, the "world" in which we find our existence is not static. Basic attitudes and assumption change in ways that cannot be calculated or predicted. It is for this reason that Heidegger thematized "the history of being" or "deep history." (Shibata 2020, p. 115)

Heidegger emphasizes the historicity of human beings, denies static human nature, and investigates the deep history of existence. Conversely, Sartre concentrates on the synchronism of the world and the subject and disagrees with Heidegger in his view of the ego as the "I," as a subject that governs consciousness and activities. Sartre understands the "I" of the modern individual not as a subject but as an object that coexists with the world. This enables him to go beyond the dualism of subject-object.

Sartre denies the existence of an absolute human nature. The dualism of subject and object is the result, for Sartre, of the affirmation of the existence of such human nature. However, for Sartre, human nature constitutes the overcoming of the situation and the self-building of the human or project:

... we mean to say that man primarily exists — that man is, before all else, something which propels itself towards a future and is aware that it is doing so. Man is, indeed, a project which possesses a subjective life, instead of being a kind of moss,

or a fungus or a cauliflower. Before that projection of the self, nothing exists; not even in the heaven of intelligence: man will only attain existence when he is what he purposes to be. Not, however, what he may wish to be. For what we usually understand by wishing or willing is a conscious decision taken — much more often than not — after we have made ourselves what we are. I may wish to join a party, to write a book or to marry but in such a case what is usually called my will is probably a manifestation of a prior and more spontaneous decision. (Sartre, 1955, pp. 27–29)

The projection presupposes the fundamental contradiction that human beings share with nature. Human beings' freedom implies a fundamental contradiction with nature. Nature originally took the instinct out of human beings and ejected us from its own world. Fortunately, human beings discovered food and shelter and developed strategies to survive; however, they have struggled with nature since that moment in history.

## Section 2. Inter-objectivity and Contentless Consciousness

While both Marx's and Hegel's dialectics attempt to overcome dualism, Hegel's dialectic proves that the object of consciousness is a constituent of consciousness, dismantles it, assimilates it into the consciousness, and creates the system which develops from experimental consciousness to absolute knowledge (Shibata 2020, Chap. 2). In contrast, Marx's dialectic views consciousness as a result of inter-objectivity in the real world and view it as contentless, like the impersonal, absolute consciousness of Sartre, and concentrates on inter-objectivity between objective materials. (Shibata 2021, Chap. 4.) Marx criticizes Hegel in *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law*:

But an explanation which does not provide the differentia specifica is no explanation. The sole interest is in rediscovering "the idea" pure and simple, the "logical idea," in every element, whether of the state or of nature, and the actual subjects, in this case the "political constitution," come to be nothing but their mere names, so that all that we have is the appearance of real understanding. They are and remain difficult to comprehend because they are not grasped in their specific character. (Marx 1975a, p. 12)

Marx clarifies the difference in his attitude to the reality with Hegel and says, "sole interest is in rediscovering "the idea" pure and simple, the "logical idea," in every element, whether of the state or of nature, and the actual subjects, in this case the "political constitution," come to be nothing but their mere names. . ."

So, the truly philosophical criticism of the present state constitution not only shows up contradictions as existing; it explains them, it comprehends their genesis, their

necessity. It considers them in their specific significance. But comprehending does not consist, as Hegel imagines, in recognizing the features of the logical concept everywhere, but in grasping the specific logic of the specific subject. (Marx 1975a, p. 91)

In this quote, Marx clearly says, “grasping the specific logic of the specific subject.” Marx has reached such a standpoint by profoundly criticizing the political economy of his time. At the beginning of his critique of the political economy, he says:

Political economy starts with the fact of private property; it does not explain it to us. It expresses in general, abstract formulas the material process through which private property actually passes, and these formulas it then takes for laws. It does not comprehend these laws, that is, it does not demonstrate how they arise from the very nature of private property. Political economy throws no light on the cause of the division between labour and capital, and between capital and land. When, for example, it defines the relationship of wages to profit, it takes the interest of the capitalists to be the ultimate cause, that is, it takes for granted what it is supposed to explain. Similarly, competition comes in everywhere. It is explained from external circumstances. As to how far these external and apparently accidental circumstances are but the expression of a necessary course of development, political economy teaches us nothing. We have seen how exchange itself appears to it as an accidental fact. The only wheels which political economy sets in motion are greed and the war amongst the greedy — competition.

Precisely because political economy does not grasp the way the movement is connected, it was possible to oppose, for instance, the doctrine of competition to the doctrine of monopoly, the doctrine of the freedom of the crafts to the doctrine of the guild, the doctrine of the division of landed property to the doctrine of the big estate— for competition, freedom of the crafts and the division of landed property were explained and comprehended only as accidental, premeditated and violent consequences of monopoly, of the guild system, and of feudal property, not as their necessary, inevitable and natural consequences.

Now, therefore, we have to grasp the intrinsic connection between private property, avarice, the separation of labour, capital and landed property; the connection of exchange and competition, of value and the devaluation of men, of monopoly and competition, etc.— we have to grasp this whole estrangement connected with the money system. (Marx 1975b, pp. 270-271)

Marx notes, “we have to grasp the intrinsic connection between private property, avarice, the separation of labour, capital, and landed property; the connection of exchange and

competition, of value and the devaluation of men, of monopoly and competition, etc.— we have to grasp this whole estrangement connected with the money system.” To that end, we begin with the fact of labor under private property and reach the four provisions of alienated labor. In other words, it is alienation from labor products, alienation from labor itself, alienation from species-being, and alienation from humans.

Next, we examine how Marx understands the relationship between the concept of private property and alienated labor.

Private property thus results by analysis from the concept of alienated labour, that is, of alienated man, of estranged labour, of estranged life, of estranged man. True, it is as a result of the movement of private property that we have obtained the concept of alienated labour (of alienated life) in political economy. But analysis of this concept shows that though private property appears to be the reason, the cause of alienated labour, it is rather its consequence, just as the gods are originally not the cause but the effect of man's intellectual confusion. Later this relationship becomes reciprocal. (Marx 1975b, pp. 279–280)

Therefore, Marx's grasp of private possession is based on the concept of alienated labor, but it is in his analysis of alienated labor that Marx pursues so-called historical materialism. In other words, he attained a materialistic understanding of history. This is most apparent in the third provision of alienated labor.

We have still a third aspect of estranged labour to deduce from the two already considered.

Man is a species-being, not only because in practice and in theory he adopts the species (his own as well as those of other things) as his object, but — and this is only another way of expressing it — also because he treats himself as the actual, living species; because he treats himself as a universal and therefore a free being.

The life of the species, both in man and in animals, consists physically in the fact that man (like the animal) lives on organic nature; and the more universal man (or the animal) is, the more universal is the sphere of inorganic nature on which he lives. Just as plants, animals, stones, air, light, etc., constitute theoretically a part of human consciousness, partly as objects of natural science, partly as objects of art — his spiritual inorganic nature, spiritual nourishment which he must first prepare to make palatable and digestible — so also in the realm of practice they constitute a part of human life and human activity. Physically man lives only on these products of nature, whether they appear in the form of food, heating, clothes, a dwelling, etc. The universality of man appears in practice precisely in the universality which makes all nature his inorganic body — both inasmuch as nature is (1) his direct means of life,

and (2) the material, the object, and the instrument of his life activity. Nature is man's inorganic body — nature, that is, insofar as it is not itself human body. Man lives on nature — means that nature is his body, with which he must remain in continuous interchange if he is not to die. That man's physical and spiritual life is linked to nature means simply that nature is linked to itself, for man is a part of nature. (Marx 1975b, pp. 275-276)

The reason why such a magnificent argument on human nature was necessary is, of course, to posit and relativize modern civil society, based on private property, in history. Marx elucidates the relationship between human beings and nature in greater detail.

Man is directly a natural being. As a natural being and as a living natural being he is on the one hand endowed with natural powers, vital powers — he is an active natural being. These forces exist in him as tendencies and abilities — as instincts. On the other hand, as a natural, corporeal, sensuous, objective being he is a suffering, conditioned and limited creature, like animals and plants. That is to say, the objects of his instincts exist outside him, as objects independent of him; yet these objects are objects that he needs — essential objects, indispensable to the manifestation and confirmation of his essential powers. To say that man is a corporeal, living, real, sensuous, objective being full of natural vigor is to say that he has real, sensuous objects as the object of his being or of his life, or that he can only express his life in real, sensuous objects. To be objective, natural and sensuous, and at the same time to have object, nature and sense outside oneself, or oneself to be object, nature and sense for a third party, is one and the same thing. Hunger is a natural need; it therefore needs a nature outside itself, an object outside itself, in order to satisfy itself, to be stilled. Hunger is an acknowledged need of my body for an object existing outside it, indispensable to its integration and to the expression of its essential being. The sun is the object of the plant — an indispensable object to it, confirming its life — just as the plant is an object of the sun, being an expression of the life-awakening power of the sun, of the sun's objective essential power.

A being which does not have its nature outside itself is not a natural being, and plays no part in the system of nature. A being which has no object outside itself is not an objective being. A being which is not itself an object for some third being has no being for its object; that is, it is not objectively related. Its being is not objective. A non-objective being is a non-being. Suppose a being which is neither an object itself, nor has an object. Such a being, in the first place, would be a unique being: there would exist no being outside it — it would have a solitary existence.

For as soon as there are objects outside me, as soon as I am not alone, I am another — another reality than the object outside me. For this third object I am thus



a different reality than itself; that is, I am its object. Thus, to suppose a being which is not the object of another being is to presuppose that no objective being exists. As soon as I have an object, this object has me for an object. But a non-objective being is an unreal, non-sensuous thing — a product of mere thought (i.e., of mere imagination) — an abstraction. To be sensuous, that is, to be really existing, means to be an object of sense, to be a sensuous object, and thus to have sensuous objects outside oneself — objects of one's sensuousness. To be sensuous is to suffer.

Man as an objective, sensuous being is therefore a suffering being — and because he feels that he suffers, a passionate being. Passion is the essential power of man energetically bent on its object.

But man is not merely a natural being: he is a human natural being. That is to say, he is a being for himself. Therefore, he is a species-being, and has to confirm and manifest himself as such both in his being and in his knowing. Therefore, human objects are not natural objects as they immediately present themselves, and neither is human sense as it immediately is — as it is objectively — human sensibility, human objectivity. Neither nature objectively nor nature subjectively is directly given in a form adequate to the human being. And as everything natural has to come into being, man too has his act of origin — history — which, however, is for him a known history, and hence as an act of origin it is a conscious self-transcending act of origin. History is the true natural history of man (on which more later). (Marx 1975b, pp. 336–337)

The “natural history” in the sentence: “History is the true natural history of human beings” that appears at the end is the meaning of the “natural history process” mentioned above. Because “nature does not exist directly in conformity with human existence, either objectively or independently,” “human objects are natural objects as they are given directly.” Nor is human sensation, as it is, human sensibilities or human objects, as it is, “so humans must work on the object and process it, thus” natural. Everything must be produced, and thus “human beings also have their own generation act, history, just as all natural things must be produced.”

Returning to Marx's view, the third provision of alienated labor is stated based on the aforementioned ontology.

In estranging from man (1) nature, and (2) himself, his own active functions, his life activity, estranged labor estranges the species from man. It changes for him the life of the species into a means of individual life. First, it estranges the life of the species and individual life, and secondly it makes individual life in its abstract form the purpose of the life of the species, likewise in its abstract and estranged form.

For labor, life activity, productive life itself, appears to man in the first place

merely as a means of satisfying a need — the need to maintain physical existence. Yet the productive life is the life of the species. It is life-engendering life. The whole character of a species, its species-character, is contained in the character of its life activity; and free, conscious activity is man's species-character. Life itself appears only as a means to life. (Marx 1975b, p. 276)

Therefore, the third provision of alienated labor is commonly referred to as further alienation from species-being. To put it politely, it is to first separate and alienate the life of a species-being and their personal life. Furthermore, it is to make the life of a species-being a means of one's personal life. That is to say, alienating the life of a species-being and their personal life implies the separation of the two, and it is the most fundamental principle underlying the formation of the individual in modern civic society. Subsequently, the individual is abstracted, and at the same time, the life of the genre is also abstracted. Needless to say, the abstraction here is not an abstraction of thought but an objective and realistic situation. Marx argues more deeply that a "productive life is a kind of life. It is a life that produces life."

The animal is immediately one with its life activity. It does not distinguish itself from it. It is its life activity. Man makes his life activity itself the object of his will and of his consciousness. He has conscious life activity. It is not a determination with which he directly merges. Conscious life activity distinguishes man immediately from animal life activity. It is just because of this that he is a species-being. Or it is only because he is a species-being that he is a conscious being, that is, that his own life is an object for him. Only because of that is his activity free activity. Estranged labor reverses the relationship, so that it is just because man is a conscious being that he makes his life activity, his essential being, a mere means to his existence.

In creating a world of objects by his personal activity, in his work upon inorganic nature, man proves himself a conscious species-being, that is, as a being that treats the species as his own essential being, or that treats itself as a species-being. Admittedly animals also produce. They build themselves nests, dwellings, like the bees, beavers, ants, etc. But an animal only produces what it immediately needs for itself or its young. It produces one-sidedly, whilst man produces universally. It produces only under the dominion of immediate physical need, whilst man produces even when he is free from physical need and only truly produces in freedom therefrom. An animal produces only itself, whilst man reproduces the whole of nature. An animal's product belongs immediately to its physical body, whilst man freely confronts his product. An animal forms only in accordance with the standard and the need of the species to which it belongs, whilst man knows how to produce in accordance with the standard of every species, and knows how to apply everywhere

the inherent standard to the object. Man therefore also forms objects in accordance with the laws of beauty.

It is just in his work upon the objective world, therefore, that man really proves himself to be a species-being. This production is his active species-life. Through this production, nature appears as his work and his reality. The object of labor is, therefore, the objectification of man's species-life: for he duplicates himself not only, as in consciousness, intellectually, but also actively, in reality, and therefore he sees himself in a world that he has created. In tearing away from man the object of his production, therefore, estranged labor tears from him his species-life, his real objectivity as a member of the species, and transforms his advantage over animals into the disadvantage that his inorganic body, nature, is taken from him.

Similarly, in degrading spontaneous, free activity to a means, estranged labor makes man's species-life a means to his physical existence.

The consciousness which man has of his species is thus transformed by estrangement in such a way that species [-life] becomes for him a means. (Marx 1975b, pp. 276-277)

## Conclusion

Investigating the relationship between language and the world and the relationship between subject and object, assuming that they are independent of each other, brings various difficulties. As demonstrated in this paper, from ancient philosophy to Wittgenstein, such quests have created irreversible difficulties in justifying the means of the quest.

Hegel tried to overcome this dualism by proving that the object was composed of the conscious subject and by making subjective consciousness the essence of the object. However, this was restricted to his own consciousness; that is, the problem was solved only in his consciousness, not in the real world.

Cognitive semantics and Marx's dialectic overcome this difficulty by seeking the essence of human activity in the real world, allowing subjective consciousness to be correctly understood as an attribute, not an entity.

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