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A PRE-STRUCTURAL CENTER: DECONSTRUCTING CLASSICAL SOCIAL THEORY

by

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ABSTRACT

For theory and literature to evolve parallel to the subject matter which it associates, it recurrently progresses through admittance of variably incremental, yet critical, entries. This is the nature of modernism. This thesis reflects on one important point in the life of modernism, the advent at which society is first formalized and assimilated into theory: the origin of social theory, a point indisputably influential to twentieth century philosophy, but just eclipsed by one of that century's most noticeable theoretical features. The past century saw the rise and fall of a universalizing framework called structuralism. Informing the disciplines, especially the social sciences, on unearthing matters of the unconscious, structuralism occupied a place of knowledge-generation in a world entering its atomic youth. The heirs of this framework are the poststructuralists, and my paper applies poststructuralism to pre-structural social theories. The purpose of this activity is to articulate the value dormant in these dated theories by recontextualizing their abstracted elements for a world ready to use them. The developed world has acquired a postmaterial status in regard to the necessities of survival, as Inglehart explains, while the developing world burdens to address materialist concerns in close contingency to cultural and traditional concerns. This opens up the discussion to a greater postmodern debate, one involving politics, economic status, cultural difference, and more. The international stage has consolidated a considerable level of liberty, but the semantics are often neglected in light of the success of convention. The purpose of this thesis is then to make an interdisciplinary, holistic attempt to reconstruct, exposing the relevance and potential of the deconstructed.

Dedicated to my grandmother, Aloo, a retired typewriter

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this paper is not only to depict manifestations of two intertwined concepts, dialect and dialectic, but also to portray those manifestations as possible compositions, possible configurations, of these two concepts at play. More specifically, those manifestations will be set in pre-structural frameworks found in the late-nineteenth century to the early-twentieth century. This time period enumerates the tense collisions of late modernity and the distancing variations of high modernism, and historically spans the widespread adoption of the industrial revolution through to the world wars, arguably the most tumultuous turns that the world and its social spaces had yet faced. The focus in this illustration will be the classical social theorists and their elemental understanding of society, specifically what made it "modern". The assertions made for what definitively classify a society as modern is the most problematic aspect of these frameworks; in defining *modern*, the truly comparative component implicit to the social sciences is nearly lost to the historical partition. Resultingly, a structure emerged that held the potential to dissociate peoples on subjectively designated lines of societal arrangement. It is at this dissociation, or rather at the need for its reversing, that deconstruction becomes relevant. By deconstructing classical social theory, a poststructural practice is brought to pre-structural theories, taking the theories out of posterity and staging their potential integration into contemporary theory. With the postmodern debate as a foundation, its relativist underpinnings and reconstructive conclusions will help to expose the dilemmas of applying dialectics to materialism, especially socially. I employ metaphor, nearly metonymy, to make succinct this paper's thesis; I refer to a society, or a type of society, as a dialect, and discuss classical social theory as a dialectic of dialects in need of reappraisal.

To situate this interdisciplinary array of late-nineteenth, early-twentieth century thought, I introduce both conceptually and linguistically *dialect* and *dialectic*. From there, I recount the classical social theories of Karl Marx (1818-1883) and Max Weber (1864-1920), emergent and critical theorists of *die Moderne* (Jameson 100), and contextualize them within my own framework. With the classical social theory's footing being caught in materialist struggle for power and security in a nationalizing world, and with postmodern discourse emerging from postmaterial desires to uproot impersonal convention (Inglehart 36), the ultimate consistency of these social frameworks is bound to vary in its configuration.

1.1 Of dialects and dialectics

A pair of terms that exemplify the point of this paper are certainly *dialect* and *dialectic*. These terms will be illustrated in this section, and will form the basis of the argument for the remainder of this paper. While this section remains abstract and speculative, it does so in order to expose the etymological significance otherwise latent in the terms. The rest of the paper is more concrete but fundamentally depends on what is stated here.

Dialect, the locality of language use, is something every person inherits from their surrounding world, an implicit force in their regular communication, and an unmistakable part of their identity. It is ultimately the manner by which we express our thoughts using language. There are seemingly countless dialects in existence, but still an indiscernible amount more have existed and been forgotten. Varying organically from place to place, dialects can be contingent enough to their neighbors to be rendered mutually compatible. Traditionally, peoples of a common language but different dialects have common ground to initiate a peaceful discourse.

The word *dialect* comes to English through the French *dialecte* or the Latin *dialectus*, from the Greek διάλεκτος, "conversation, way of speaking", itself from the Greek verb διαλέγεοθαι, "to converse", literalized as δια-, "through, across", λέγειν, "to speak" ("Dialect, *N.*" 599). So, we ultimately have as the word's abstracted meaning, "to speak across" or "to speak through". What is certain is that a reference to difference exists. With having "to speak *across*" borders (however arbitrary they may be), it can be assumed that there are in fact borders (of some form or another) to transgress.

What is also present is a more implicated, more semantic, potential meaning that beckons to the notion of *incorporation*. To expand on the infinitive λέγειν, there are two other primary meanings to the Greek word that nuance its usage: they are "to gather" and "to count" ("λέγω" 1033-1034). Both definitions seem to involve the incorporation of parts of a plurality, which itself implies that there definitively is a plurality. The connection between these two definitions and the one of central focus is one of proximity and can be elucidated through an elementary lesson from Aristotle's O*n Interpretation*; in speech, sentence formation requires the incorporation both of nouns and verbs (16b25-17a1); that is, in order to converse, one must step *over* boundaries of *incorporated* parts of speech. A matter may look one way to one person but another way to another person; the subject can be predicated differently. This is where this excursion gains its substance.

Dialectic, an epistemic concern, plays a more distant role in people's lives than does dialect. It involves criticism, either of personal opinions or, in the Kantian sense, of conceptual principles. To Kant, dialectics are extremes that do not compromise halfway, but instead remain irreconcilable. There is also a Hegelian sense of the word that pertains to the life of oppositions, be it historical or physical, at play. Ultimately, dialectics do not yield themselves readily to our senses, yet they are everywhere.

The word *dialectic* has a slightly different etymology than *dialect*, so I will address it here. *Dialectic* comes to English from the Old French *dialectique*, from the Latin *dialectica*, from the Greek notion of ἡ διαλεκτική τέχνη, "the art of discussion or debate" ("Dialectic, *N. 1* and *Adj.*" 599-600), itself from the Greek adjective διαλεκτικός, "pertaining to discussion" ("Dialectic, *N. 2*" 600). To continue, I will focus on the Greek notion that meant "the art of discussion or debate", because this usage articulates the distinction between dialectic and dialect.

Where dialect is organic and sociable, dialectic is conditioned and removed. Whereas dialect is studied through linguistics and discourse analysis, dialectic comes to be understood through philosophy and logic. A notion of difference exists in dialectic, as I said of the case with dialect, earlier. But, the difference that a dialectic deals with is different in nature in comparison to the difference that a dialect deals with. The difference within a dialectic is dualistic, whereas the difference within a dialect is part of a pluralism.

However, there is surely a shared space between the two concepts. It would be safe to say that, over the course of modernization, transcendental dialectics, concerning itself with ideals compatible almost exclusively with theological epistemologies, seems to be typically rendered illegitimate to most contemporary philosophers. It is next to impossible to find a philosophy that takes certain truths as indisputable without expanding on their justification; the point of philosophical works is to develop knowledge, not conceal it. So, as rationalism developed well into the early stages of late modernity, it unbound itself from the ties of its origin, the divine logos, and convened on a still more rational, discursive, rhetorical logos. Darwin, Freud, and even Einstein are major influences of this tendency, seeing as their theories have reshaped society's, and so philosophy's, conceptions of reality toward a much more mundane and physicalist

direction. But even in postmodernity, the authority of dialectics is further disputed through the poststructural rejection of discursive binaries.

In the case with dialects, as we turn back to the consequences of modernization, there is a considerable decline in their diversification. Colonialization, as well as sudden decolonization, can have devasting impacts on the original diversity of native languages. The persistent pressure that an empire places on a locale can marginalize and diminish the native culture there, just as an unforeseen power-vacuum can devastate any fragile stability of some transcultural region. And neocolonially, languages and their dialects are constantly threatened by predominantly monolingual globalization, and this has spawned a postcolonial branch of linguistics, called language ecology, to study such endangerment of language diversity (Crystal 98).

Though the teleological rationalization of modernity's vacillating epistemes has staggered the stride of both dialect and dialectic, the two persist today despite. The concept of a world without dialect, one with only a single language, appears only in contemporary fiction, where it is the most appalling aspect of that world. Similarly, a world without dialectics, or knowledge of them, would mean for a world without opinion, the notion making its way into the same subgenre of fiction with the same stopping effect. We cannot step away from them either, though this may not be our intent in the first place; whether geographically or psychologically predominant, they are integrated into difference itself, forming the smallest units of our thought.

Our social spaces are governed by these units in that our interpersonal transactions are both self-produced and context-driven; they require an interplay of agency *and* structure, making both relevant to sociology. From as early as its disputative beginnings in mid-nineteenth century continental Europe, social theory has contributed an explication of social structure, enabling it to better inform social progress. Classical social theory attempted to look comparatively at a cross-

section of peoples ultimately concluding that there are definitive differences among peoples, and that these differences are simple enough to be housed within a dialectic. As we will see, this theorization proves inadequate for, and potentially dangerous to, a truly comparative understanding of peoples.

1.2 Dialectics of dialects: Classical social theory

Consider dialectics to be dynamic dichotomies, the constituents of which are two inseparable opposing binaries that interplay along some dimension, such as time or reasoning. Such dualistic tendencies often cast quite visible constellations of ideas that can be analyzed on simple grounds: that what is being witnessed is not truly as picturesque as it appears, that there is a definite reality beyond what is being witnessed, and that it appears in such a fashion because of the positioning of the observer. These conditions are created by the vast amount of space between the observer and each point in their sky. Stepping out of the analogy, there are certain fundamental, philosophical bylaws that must be addressed in order to compensate for the gap existent between epistemology and ontology, between the conception and object. Next, consider dialects to be the divisions of a language, organically differentiating as a people of a source language separate in space and time. Peoples take dialects with them as they might move about in spaces, whether geographical, ideological, economic, or any other type of space. Consequently, a discussion of something abstract like a dialectic comprised of dialects, would therefore be inclusive of the vastly differing tendencies of culture and society.

Classical social theory, especially that of Marx and Weber, is grounded in a manner that allows for such a discussion. For these early theorists, the modern era is of primary focus. Marx's

radical views criticized bourgeoise culture for their monopolization of industrialized economic spaces and vowed that eventually the dutiful proletariat will supplant the contradictory system as part of their world-historical mission. Weber held that society is pulled between two potential courses, one of communality and one of dexterity, the former generally exposing that scientific pursuit disenchants the world while the latter typically defending that science enhances the world. All in all, both classical social theorists hypothesized that there is something dichotomous about modernity, something which both divides and interferes with human beings on their pursuit to discover, understand, and develop their inner nature. I will continue to dissect these elements in the theories of Marx and Weber so as to reveal how each engages *die Moderne*'s recurrent impasse: an enveloping materialist dilemma calling for a resolution that each theorist placed in metaphysics.

CHAPTER 2: THE PRE-STRUCTURAL CENTER OF SOCIAL THEORY

2.1 Marx

The original Marxian schema seeks nothing other than to liberate the working-class from an oppression that capitalists placed upon them through their contradictive ideology. To Marx, the constituents of any social space primarily invest themselves in economic ties to other parts. The economy has bound people, places, and resources inextricably together since the beginning of human history and will continue to do so regardless of the society under examination. In the capitalist economy of Marx's day, one in which monopolistic capitalists were able to indisputably control the means of production, workers formed the popular majority of the social space. This alienated those that labored from reaching their deeper humanity, seeing as they were not in control of how they labored or of receiving their fair share of the enterprise. The logic of capitalism, Marx argued, was rudimentary enough to admit an accumulation of resources and laborers on behalf of the capital it created for the bourgeoisie. This same accumulation of the means of production would ultimately become capitalism's downfall; this oppressed working-class, secured in number, would eventually hold the potential to overthrow the morally unjustified, politically contradictive authority. (Royce 21-53). This proletariat would seek to sever their unnecessary dependence on the bourgeoisie and establish a democratized economy (Royce 213).

So we may observe in Marx's social theory that a largely materialist dialectic plays out between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. This may very well owe itself to the influence that Hegelian logical dialectics had on Marx and European thought as a whole (Cuff et al. 9). Humanity to Marx, however, was not centered in intellectual pursuits, as it was to Hegel, but instead in economy; and so, Marx proposed that there existed a materialist dilemma in which disparity

prevented human beings from attaining their connection to humanity. The danger of this alienation would subside after communism is instated.

Marx's materialist dialectic is a history of the past, in that it accounts for recurrent conflicts and tensions presented by historians, and it is a foretelling of the future, in that it predicts a revolutionary change. Up to the hypothetical point when the proletariat is to establish a socialism, the participants of history remain mostly complacent about their roles in society; other than short-sighted rebellions and sparse liberational political revolutions, the groups of people that assumed the qualifiers "proletariat" or "bourgeoisie" had not yet entered the synthesis phase of a dialectical relation. The synthesis phase would not occur until the proletariats surmounted bourgeoise control, an event designated to some point in the future. For the time being, the two factions, like peoples of different dialects, would have to continue to live adjacently, inhabiting the same region, at least in a metaphorical sense, and sharing a core language.

In terms of co-inhabitance, Marx's vision of radical social change on a worldwide scale, one which involved a world without national borders or currency, seems to inevitably lead to a deleterious amount of upheaval, as twentieth-century world history has shown, and greatly contrasts with any mainstream liberal consensus in international relations theory. In other words, it is a shrouded path to achieving a new world order built on peace, equality, and governance on a global scale. Not only does there exist disagreement on precisely where the destination lies, but getting there all together seems to be an impossible task. Any hitherto employment of Marxism does not exact in fullness Marx's ideals because the end has never been reached, only mirrored on a smaller scale. The *materialist* portion of *materialist dialectics* becomes ever more relevant when it is considered that, to the human being, space and time are finite, and the question of teleology becomes a conundrum: should the means meet the ends or should the ends meet the means? Where

is the compromise to be made? For the most part, a people's history can only go one way, so the question of the correctness of any current path must be raised. More on this can be found in this work's epilogue, where the postmodern debate is addressed. For now, however, it becomes clear with the classical social theorists, positivist as they might seem, that the physical sciences will not be able to solve problems of inequality, political difference, demographical struggles, and the like. Instead, it is common among these theorists to turn focus to an aspect of metaphysics, which, like the materialist dilemma, breaks off into a dialectic.

For Marx, the remaining dialectic exists between *mythos* and *logos*. Communism is often termed a *world-historical* mission. It is an exodus from a conformed way of life to one of uniformity. Its teleological ends can only be ascertained with monumental effort. This is why, Marx and his followers have often been depicted as Promethean; their ambitious attempt to acquire power for themselves and mankind is likened to the protest put up by the titan Prometheus in his stealing fire from Zeus for mankind. In his book *Prometheus Bound*, Leonard Wessel explains that Marx was a man of science but had generally mythic ambitions. More specifically, Marxism, sourced in a historical context, employs "a dramatic archetype of salvation in [its] socioeconomic terminology". (38).

Mythos and *logos* have been, throughout modernity, isolated from one another. This is a source of great focus in the Romantic period; the Romantic tradition announces regrettably that *logos* has replaced *mythos* (Waterfield xi). Modern anthropology gives credit to *mythos* for being systematic like *logos*, but the two are distinct modes of thought owned by differing peoples: primitive and modern, respectively (xxiii). Structuralism gives a more relativist, yet universalist, outlook to the matter, placing both on the balance and calibrating. But classical social theory, preceding the widespread adoption of Saussurian thought, did not have the luxury of addressing

"sign systems" this way. These emerging theories would draw clear lines in the sand, but then nonchalantly cross them.

What remains is another dialectic of dialects, one in which the answer to a materialist dilemma is a metaphysical escape. For Marx, this was a Promethean revolt against the bourgeoisie. When Marxism was picked up poststructurally, the line drawn in the sand had been effaced and people had been treading over it unassumingly. This means that Marxism has been readdressed, enabling fluid conversation between two previously bifurcated dialects: *mythos* and *logos*.

To recap, Marx's original concern, that human beings have been alienated from their potential humanity, takes on the form of a materialist dialectic between two interlocked factions: the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. My claim is that situating this conflict, occurring between parties of distinctive qualities, as a similar social divide, one between two peoples of contingent dialects, allows us to relativize the situation and permit a theoretical deconstruction of the essential Marxian characteristics. Marx's overstepping of the *mythos-logos* divide only reinforces our attempt to do so, because it encourages a convergent sociability between apparently differing conceptualizations, and so alleviating tension between peoples, albeit a different suit. This relation holds for the remaining classical social theorist.

2.2 Weber

Where Marx encouraged the dismantlement of capitalism, Weber applauded its success. To Weber, the logic of capitalism was not contradictory, as Marx saw it, but instead alternative to a tragic human history that was wrought with conflicting ambitions. Though capitalism was discernably a rationalizing order, Weber's sociology had great depth decentered from economy.

His theories were grounded in concepts already existent in German social thought, particularly *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*. The terms are generally translated to "community" and "society", respectively, and each classifies a type of group of people that is oriented toward that form of sociability. (Waters et al. 3-6).

However, literal translation yields different meaning, and since it tends to shine light on some nuance of key theoretical concepts to do so, I will embark on that brief excursion now. The first term, *Gemeinschaft*, doesn't hold a negative connotation in Weber's use of the term, but has potential for this when the word itself is analyzed. By itself, g*emein* is an adjective meaning a range of unfavorable descriptions, from "base, low, dastardly" to "lower-class", but can also have a more neutral connotation if used to mean "vulgar, common" ("Gemein" 485-486). The second term, *Gesellschaft*, is in opposite seating in relation to Weber; he holds that it can disenchant the world, but the literal translation has only positive connotation. The noun *Geselle* translates to "journeyman", "fellow", or "companion" ("Geselle" 500). Finally, *-schaft*, the ending for both terms, denotes categories of sorted popular groups; put simply, *-schaft* is a suffix that groups people ("-Schaft" 3313). Something to point out here is that the meanings of these abstracted definitions reflect general movements in German thought at the time. *Gesellschaft* was favored over *Gemeinschaft* by many German intellectuals preceding Weber (Waters et al. 3-6).

The majority opinion of Weber's modern time was that *Gemeinschaft* was the past and that *Gesellschaft* was the future. *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* were viewed differently in Weberian thought; instead of these being static states which a people could assume, they were considered directions on a spectrum. Weber even wrote of them as processes, *Vergemeinschaftung* and *Vergesellschaftung*. *Gemeinschaft* came to refer to a society where interactions are close-knit, prestige-based, and dependable. *Gesellschaft* came to refer to a society where interactions are

detached and mercenary. The notion that history could hypothetically sway to one end of the spectrum disconcerted Weber, who believed that modern society could fluidly move between these states and ought to if it desired to avoid the sort of collective depression he called disenchantment. To retain common human values, *Vergesellschaftung* had to be curbed. (Waters et al. 3-6).

"[The] process of becoming a rational *Gesellschaft* [*Vergesellschaftung*] has commonly reached far beyond the frontiers and boundaries of political communities, even when the reason for becoming a rational *Gesellschaft* was geared toward a joint use of military force [*Gewalt*]." (Weber 57).

Thus a serious materialist dialectic plays out between *Vergemeinschaftung*, the origin and means of all societal interactions, and *Vergesellschaftung*, the temporal and teleological end of all societal transactions. For Weber, almost writing wary of the nearing calamity of World War I, there was high exigence to depict society's humane roots as something significant enough to be saved from the brush of the political logos he considered *Gesellschaft*. The dilemma exists in the inability to reconcile or compromise between two social forces: that of community ties and that of rational teleology. The centripetal *Vergemeinschaftung* is entirely incompatible with the centrifugal *Vergesellschaftung*, yet both must neighbor uneasily, creating an unsettling perspective for any proximal observer.

The materialist dialectic is news of the present, in that it reports on a current state of matters. Unlike Marx's materialist dialectic, which was both a history of past and prophecy of future events, Weber's theory tells us that we hold a certain status at any given moment but does not formulate a chronology based in archetypes applicable to other time periods. It adjusts the meter of preceding German social thinkers by recalibrating to a new center, *Gemeinschaft*, thereby

establishing uncertainty in place of an assuming certainty. Most importantly, it presents coverage within one of two bipartible trends while exposing value in both, fulfilling the need for informative, neutral reporting. To the end, Weberian thought is captivated by the present and captivates those in the present with its insights.

Weber's theory is essentially an insociable dialectic consisting of ultimately sociable dialects. A neo-Kantian, Weber theorizes a dialectic of estranged constituents; like true Kantian dialectics, Weber's dialectic involves interaction without dissolution. Additionally, the social focus of this theory brings any ideological divide among people closer to the established metaphor of a divided language. Separated through the process of distancing, dialects create exclusory circumstances for those who approach their boundary. The very labelling of *Gemeinschaft* or *Gesellschaft* creates a false sense of inhabitance or exile, of inclusion or exclusion. This inherited conception does a disservice to social theory by unnecessarily formulating an indominable incompatibility.

Weber's social theory is a conflict theory. Like Marxism, it depicts a struggle between two "massive" bodies for dominance and predominance. With Weber's social theory came a new disposition, but it was a disposition nonetheless. Without a theoretical synthesis of its fundamental entities, i.e. *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, or an analysis that brings about reconcilable terms, a social theory, rather than raising liberational propositions, will only ever confirm a despondent news of the world's instability. With about a century of additional historical perspective, contemporary observers can attest to the dangers of committing to a worldview so divisive. To get to the root of this dilemma, attention should be turned to the source of his theory, which segues into his turning to metaphysics.

There is, as there was in Marx, a sort of allusion to Romanticist principles. The Romanticists progressively rejected the Enlightenment and its rationalistic underpinnings, blaming it for intentionally abandoning the natural currents that carried man to the shores of consciousness. They held *passion* in higher regard than they did *reason* (Peyre 1). In a sense, Weber followed in this tradition, doing so a good century after the first cohort had found its widespread success.

"Weber: Rationalization, disenchantment and charisma" is a chapter in Julian Young's book *German Philosophy in the Twentieth Century* in which it is stated that Weber is essentially a conduit for the Romanticist resistance against the rationalizing of society, and that Weber saw himself as occupying a historical moment at which point it had become necessary to revitalize freedom and meaning. The reason Weber opposes *Vergesellschaftung* is because its calculating of social spaces manifests as the deterioration of *Gemeinschaft*. As has been established, the trend in German social thought was to support *Gesellschaft* in order to rationalize society, and so Weber presented and represented a new turn in German social thought, one which sought to bring individuated *liberty* into terms with communal *fraternity*. To do this, Weber claimed that society must first overcome its collective depression, *disenchantment*, by embracing a charismatic authority. (7-18).

By placing his faith in charisma, Weber joins the classical social theorists in a flight from materialist obstruction. The flight takes them up to metaphysics and far from harmfully conventional viewpoints. In each classical social theory, there exists one materialist dilemma and one way out through metaphysics. Weber depicts the way out of the *Gemeinschaft-Gesellschaft* conflict as through charisma, an unexplainable attraction that the masses have for a political figure. Furthermore, there is a double dialectic occurring, as there was with Marx.

This dialectic occurs between charisma and scientific progress. The pursuit of genuine charisma, on the one hand, aims to sway large audiences into a livelier state; it makes use of rhetorical pathos. The pursuit of perfection in science, on the other hand, strives to bring individuals to a controlled enlightened state of mind; it makes use of rhetorical logos. Again, Weber was a neo-Kantian, so his dialectics do not involve synthesis. The logos-oriented science doesn't dissolve into the pathos-oriented charisma, but instead produces a disenchantment that requires the latter to manifest. Additionally, keeping to my assumption, the pieces of this dialectic, upon further analysis, behave like dialects. Compared to one another, they exhibit difference in underlying ideology, they delimit the extent to which knowledges may grow, and they produce exclusionary force at their lines of separation. Though these facts may produce an aura of emptiness, Weber actually suggests that we leave the half-full glass be, that is, we accept how far science has already come, and we begin to fill the half-empty glass, that is, we accept a new and quite mythic charismatic figure to lead us to political stability and happiness. In terms of dialects, this means postponing the growth of influence of a pervasive dialect for the continuity of the other. It is essentially a call for truce and cooperation at a crucial moment. This is where Weberian social theory can be abstracted to help mitigate divisive circumstances; by preventing convention from commanding society to perpetually drift in one direction or another, a regulatory agent can recurrently recalibrate in accordance with the welfare of societal types.

To recap, Weberian social theory keeps a safe distance from what it perceives as a threatening influence, *Gesellschaft*, and desires to harbor the affected victim of the historical drama, *Gemeinschaft*. It becomes clear upon analysis that this materialist dialectic is problematic at its core; the citizen of the future should not have to choose between two fundamentally opposed ideals but instead be given a chance at progression to a more stable future. Explicitly favoring one

materialist entity over another will not get either party very far. However, if being devoid of change means the deterioration of one materialist entity, change by one side or another will surely be underway. To ensure welfare is brought to the social types, it is important that the deteriorating entity begin again to receive its fair share. In attaching the dialect metaphor to the dilemma, it becomes amply evident why such a welfare would work in everyone's favor.

CHAPTER 3: EPILOGUE

3.1 Conceptual difference

Difference reaches all spheres of existence. When difference polarizes, we often find ourselves reflecting on a dialectic. When a dialectic takes on a materialist guise, its constituents are polarized. The composition of a society can appear unstable when opposing values are found within close quarters of each other. Integration and synthesis have often been suggested by sociologists as correctional measures, but they largely overlook the most basic tenet of what is studied by the humanities: belief. Tolerance serves humanity well, but the implicit certainty arising from cultural beliefs may not always be a privilege that we are granted; to solve an array of disasters, crises, and tensions, a sober rationalism may be in our best interests. Should we too hastily rise to the task, convincing ourselves that we work contingent to a true teleology, we forget our original intentions, whether cultural or political, and in an exercise of autonomy circumvent our values. To go *beyond* the *physical*ist shortcomings of a rationalist overstepping would mean, to some, to reassume a *metaphysics*, returning us safely to a cultural beginning, should politicization of the social domain not have censured this refuge. Alternatively, endorsing postpositivism would create a mediary between human values and scientific knowledge, at the cost of culturally founded belief. An incessant series of categorical overturnings is bound to ensue if some mitigating factor does not enter the scene, yet it is improbable that rescue will arrive from an external source. To overcome the discussed materialist dilemmas philosophically, critical theory has aimed to philosophically amend otherwise divisive social theory. This paper has discussed dialectics in terms of dialects, so it seems fitting to conclude by readdressing them conceptually and linguistically.

3.2 Conclusory thoughts

Toward the beginning of this paper, I had discussed *dialect* and *dialectic* as concepts and words. After isolating a stage in the development of dialectics, a very important one in German modernity (*die Moderne*), it is important to set those prior-standing definitions against what has been discovered. Structuralism, after all, was sourced in linguistics and held that concepts, or rather utterances (*énonciation*), have centers; and poststructuralism, far from dismissing structuralism, critically readdressed the nature of those centers (Lyons 6; Angermuller 2). With dialectics having a history within German philosophy, it is only fitting to regard dialectics as a center. In answering, "What is a dialectic?", I did so in context of answering the question, "What is a dialect?", only to reveal the sharp contrast between the usage of the two given their overlapping linguistics. Ultimately, the dialectics of classical social theory cannot accommodate for what *dialectics* itself acknowledges unless they are deconstructed; proletariat-bourgeoisie and *Gemeinschaft-Gesellschaft* do not "pertain to discussion" or "speak across" difference until center is recognized as play, encouraging perpetual resurfacing and subduction by means of flowing currents capable of such regulation, a conception that has gone largely unarticulated but with further attention can help address coherence in a gravity generated by polarity.

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