

## The Unity of the Old and New Contradictions: Feuerbach's Materialism

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### Abstract

The basic category of Feuerbach's philosophy is based on natural "person". The intention of natural-based "people" deny Hegel's absolute concept and insist on materialism; use the natural basis of the "human" to deny the Christian God, insist on atheism; from nature-based "people" starting to expounded his social ethical thought, so Feuerbach's philosophical system called "Humanism." Feuerbach can not persist the dialectics in the field of historical view, materialist unity stems from its old intuitive materialism. Scientific answer Feuerbach materialism in what sense is a question of the old materialism has important Significance to understand the Feuerbach materialism.

**Key words:** Feuerbach; New philosophy; Human-oriented; Old materialism

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### INTRODUCTION

Scientific answer to Feuerbach's materialism in what sense belongs to the old materialism, not only to restore the true nature of Feuerbach's philosophy has significance of general research on the history of philosophy, but also to re understand the essence of the revolution of Marxist

philosophy has significant effect. This article overturned a traditional understanding: Feuerbach's materialism, because it is vested in the old metaphysical Materialism. He pointed out that the materialism of Feuerbach is not metaphysical but dialectical materialism; materialism of Feuerbach fundamental flaw is not in its "metaphysics", "but in their intuition."

### 1. NEW PHILOSOPHY": FEUERBACH'S MATERIALISM

Feuerbach in the book *The Future Philosophy Principle* set forth a "new philosophy" of the basic principles of what he wants to build. He believes that the new philosophy is based on a unique philosophy of man and nature is the highest object, only human thing is the real reality of things, but a rational human scale. "I am human, and I have people all have" (Feuerbach, 1955) is the slogan of the new philosophy. The new philosophy is based on the sense of truth and only in the sense that among individual things that have absolute value. The new philosophy is the realization of the former philosophy and the negation of philosophy before the new philosophy. Feuerbach said in his old philosophy, especially in contrast to Hegel's philosophy set forth his "new philosophy".

#### 1.1 The Principle of "Humanism" Theory of Materialism

Feuerbach's "humanism" materialism principle—"perceptual intuition"—both of spiritualism religious theology and critics of Hegel's objective idealism and a critique of subjective idealism these all sorts of idealist philosophy of transcendence, according to Feuerbach own title is *New Philosophy*. As Marx said, "Religion in the suffering" is "a reflection of the reality of suffering" (Marx, 1962) (*Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right Introduction*); Feuerbach in the *Essence of Christianity*, a book, it is revealed the essence of religion is essentially

a real reflection of the world, that is about the relationship between the reality of the real world upside down and objectification. He saw that the essence of man who had been given to the essence of God was essentially rooted in the reality of man, so that the essence of God was taken from the hands of Feuerbach and handed over to the people, to prostrate to God who liberated on the knees of God. In addition, for the idealistic views of Hegel and Powell were held in terms of Feuerbach is the “upside-down view of the world upside down and then reversed back.” Feuerbach, starting from the principle of materialism of “perceptual”, ontologically, the origin of the world from “God”, “absolute spirit”, “self-consciousness” idealism category changes for the category of “perceptual object” materialism and found the “holy family secret is secular family”. He put idealism regarded as secondary something as fundamental first things, and the idealism regarded as the first thing as secondary things. Meanwhile, in terms of epistemology, the idealism purely speculative, abstract cognitive activities to beat around the bush in the concept and category of the shift to “perceptual intuition” materialism epistemological point of view.

## 1.2 The Principle of “Human -Oriented” Theory of Humanism

In terms of the logic of the development of materialism, Feuerbach thinks that his “humanism” materialism is the sublation of all previous materialism. Verily, Feuerbach’s materialism of humanism theory, will the people’s problem as a central concern, not the people as mechanical materialism that will be regarded as a machine with a bunch of proteins and cells. As he himself says, “essence of man is man himself”, as compared to the purely materialist materialism, the material for the big standpoint, Feuerbach did find people, found living perceptual intuitive person.

Feuerbach is “pure materialism” of the world (and people) views at odds. As Marx in *German Ideology* elaborated, “Feuerbach than the ‘pure’ materialists have great advantages: he admitted that man is ‘perceptual objects’.” Pure materialism to people, animals, such as the nature of all things as a purely natural material, that is to say the origin of the world in pure materialists, there is lifeless inanimate of specific things. As those mechanical materialists who will be regarded people as a mechanical or a bunch of human proteins and cells, pure materialism repeatedly stressed the material of people, where they are dead a world of lifeless, who became something else manifestation. As Marx put it, “materialistic people become hostile.” Feuerbach, however, because from the perspective of people to focus on the whole world and people’s status were highlighted out. Because, he found the world, first started with found people that because the world is “perceptual intuition” and “personal experience” by people. Thus, “the sensible and objective of the human

existence” has become a criterion of truth materialist principles. So, Feuerbach said, “people are people own works, it is a product of culture, of history,” “the essence of man is man himself.” Thus, the person as a “perceptual object” get rid of the fate of “parts” and “protein” and he asked to pay attention to people, attach importance to as material. It can be said, to some extent, Feuerbach found a man, is no longer found other things (material) manifestations of people, found as a “perceptual object” and “perceptual intuition “ of the people which to progress more than a purely materialistic. Is also Feuerbach’s humanism principle—that “humanism” point of view to achieve a major breakthrough in the history of materialist ideology.

## 2. THE “OLD MATERIALISM “: WORKS OF MARX MATERIALISM

Marx’s *The Outline of Feuerbach* in Feuerbach’s materialism still attributed to “the former materialism”—the “old materialism. The main drawback of the old materialism is that it is only from the object or the intuitive form to understand the “object, reality, “perceptual”, and failed to turn it as perceptual person’s activities, as practice to understand, did not go from the main aspects of subject to understand. Therefore, in the natural, human and understanding of the relationship between man and nature, Feuerbach still hold the old materialistic point of view.

### 2.1 Non Practice of the Perspective of Epistemology

Pure natural view. Whether is the ancient Greek natural philosophy and modern mechanical materialism epistemology philosophy, Feuerbach, or so-called “unfinished materialism (essentially still the old materialism)”, with the objective nature is objective theory of objectivity. Through Feuerbach “perceptual intuitive” perspective, we can see the natural is still comfortable with the reality of real person not tied and phase separation with people’s nature. As Marx mentioned in *The Outline of Feuerbach*, “not accepted them as perceptual activity, as a practice to understand, not to understand” from the aspects of main body of the objective world. In Feuerbach’s head is only from the “perceptual intuition” to understand nature and this will lead to the nature of the Feuerbach are nothing to do with people’s field of vision, lack of subjective dynamic role, also can is not from the way of practice to understand the nature. In today’s words, Feuerbach’s view of nature is “Wild Nature”, that have nothing to do with people’s view of nature with wild Marx’s criticism is, “he separation of human nature for people who is not existing”, only the reality of the people who practice inclusion among nature, can only realize the true reality of humanized nature in order to truly understand the nature, and also to understand itself.

Just like animals, “real people.” Precisely because of Feuerbach’s humanism theory, he asked the emphasis on “people themselves.” Not only believe that “man is the highest product of nature”, but also “Man is his own work, a culture, a product of history.” It is true that Feuerbach’s theory of human is a great progress compared to pure materialism, but still see it from Marx Feuerbach’s “perceptual intuitive” in *The Outline Feuerbach* in it is still essentially “old materialism.” First of all, starting from Feuerbach’s perceptual intuition, people also become “perceptual object”, is passive to accept the nature of stress reaction. Just as, in the case of acid purple litmus solution turns red, paramecium obstacles encountered stress response would like to retreat. From this point of view, people are not free to speak of, people are as animals are generally determined by the external affairs of the outside world. Thus, the man had disappeared from the “perceptual intuitive” and can’t see the real person, nature is natural, people and nature are seamless up. Well, where did Feuerbach find his “intuitive people”? Marx in *German Ideology* in talking about, Feuerbach with somewhere between “ordinary intuition” and “philosophical intuition” of “double intuition” to direct to the “work” of the people and found that “man is the highest product of nature”, which apart from the rest of the product of man and nature. Thus, Feuerbach with “double intuition” or even “philosophical intuition” such idealistic logic—the “class intuition”—the people pulled up from the animal’s quagmire. But this is as true materialist Feuerbach cannot do, just as Marx said, “When Feuerbach is a materialist when history beyond his vision; and when he went explore the history of the time, he never was a materialist” (Marx, 2003).

Free nature and the nature unrelated to history. Perspective from nature old materialism of Feuerbach departure, their true reality of man is essentially invisible. Precisely because of this, materialistic reality in Feuerbach, where is only animals in general, is a perceptual intuition to the people; and Feuerbach confirm their “man as man” again by Feuerbach’s idealism abstract logic to “lock in the heaven”. No matter what kind of person, Feuerbach people are nothing to do with the nature of. From the standpoint of Feuerbach, one person is present in nature, and nature is in a state of naked undifferentiated comfortable; the other hand it seems, “Class intuitive” who is no interference with nature absolutely separate existence. Obviously, Feuerbach’s old materialism is essentially no real relationship between man and nature. Because, as we cannot exclude a tree in the forest as a natural, because it belongs to nature itself, is nature itself. So, what you see is a natural tree, natural fish, and the nature and nature is not in practice as the intermediary of the natural persons who are directly from the nature.

## 2.2 The Essence of Idealism

Attributed from Feuerbach’s materialism principles—“perceptual intuitive”—point of view, Marx believed that the materialism of Feuerbach still the old materialism. Feuerbach will “perceptual intuitive” as a specific measure things the basic standard is not particularly specific, realistic or unrealistic, as a result, Feuerbach admitted for all things originate from perceptual intuition, and he admitted that the same is true of perceptual intuitive people.

Feuerbach in about the understanding of the people, is through the perceptual intuitive of perceptual activity of people, real people. At the same time, people and animals are generally at this time, they were determined by the nature of the people. Such a point of view of course has great limitations, can not see the person’s main body status, kill the man’s subjective initiative, but after all the people were saved from the depths of God and idealism, holding a materialist position and integrity.

However, with the further analysis and confirmation of the concept of people— where is the perceptual intuitive from to separate people and things? And where is the perceptual intuitive of people nature of the problem is from? Feuerbach from distinguishes the characteristics of people to focus on “human nature” when he turned to seek “the highest intuitive” and “the equality of class” to understand. So perceptual intuition here rose to an entity of the “class intuition”, the class intuition has become a measure of the human and human history of the truth. From materialist “perceptual intuition” to the “perceptual intuition” which is the use of the expansion, “class intuition”, in the field of Feuerbach is essentially the natural materialism of perceptual intuition into “perceptual intuition” of over history in human society. But essentially this “intuition” no longer “perceptual”, and to inspire people to produce this “class intuition” is no longer thinking about the perceptual but rational thinking. Thus, in the materialization of the “class intuition”, in the field of human history, Feuerbach and back into the morass of idealism. As Marx said, “When Feuerbach is a materialist history beyond his vision; and when he went to investigate the history of the time, he never was a materialist (*German Ideology*)”. Due to excessive emphasis on perceptual intuition, forced the perceptual intuition to the social and historical areas, in which the objective reality and subjective consciousness are difficult to be self- consistent, and eventually put “perceptual intuition” to the God, this is the “perceptual intuition” became God, which is similar to the “absolute spirit” of Hegel’s philosophy. So “perceptual intuition” into a “class intuition” This is essentially the product of speculation over history, Feuerbach still think is perceptual materialism directly determines the kind of existence of people, so in the field of human society he completely degenerate to Hegel on the “absolute spirit” decided all the objective idealism to the.

### 3. FEUERBACH IN THE CRITICISM OF THE SPECULATIVE PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGIOUS THEOLOGY

Humanism is the core of Feuerbach's new philosophy. Feuerbach in the criticism of the speculative philosophy and religious theology concluded that theology is the secret of the speculative philosophy, theology is the secret of the humanism; the subject of God is rational, rational subject is a human, the subject of God is rational, rational subject is a human. Feuerbach thought "the man who is based on nature" is the highest object of philosophy. The task of new philosophy is to recognize people and their essence. People really just an object in his reality as the basis, "people are understanding their essence from the object, the diversity of objects decides the diversity of human nature. This is the starting point to understand Feuerbach and the principles of human and nature. Meanwhile, the man is the highest product of nature, "the origin of life in nature" and "human nature is based on". Therefore, nature is the basis for human survival, it is the first and fundamental human dependent objects. Because man is a product of nature, it is a part of nature, and thus the essence of human nature is its first property, that is, people are physical, physiological, who are emotional entity of flesh and blood. In this sense, Feuerbach stressed that people and nature in essence is the same, "people are what people eat".

However, Feuerbach did not simply put people and nature exactly the same. He clearly pointed out: "the person who is directly produced from the natural world is the essence of pure nature, not human. Man is the product of culture and history." Therefore, only the society's talent is human. Obviously, Feuerbach is not only on the biological significance of the study, but to see the people's social attributes, that is, people are social, historical, cultural products. Feuerbach is also pointed out: "An isolated, individual, whether as a moral entity or as thinking entity, did not have the nature of people. The essence of man is included in the group and in the unity of

the people, but the unity is based on self of the difference between the above with you," this shows that Feuerbach actually from the perspective of social relations between people to examine people.

Marx had given a positive evaluation on this. For speculative philosophy understood as a spirit entity's point of view, Feuerbach stressed that person is perceptual entities, "people is the nature of perceptual, rather than illusory abstraction, spirit". "Man's existence only attributed to the perceptual. He thought that is the stuff of substance and spirit of the real, non-imaginary, the unity of the reality; therefore, perceptual also is the reality. Because as the main body of the people is a flesh and blood, can feel the thought perceptual entities, people can know the nature and understanding person.

### SUMMARY

Feuerbach about the nature of human existence and its doctrine is based on the materialist view of nature. He understood the perceptual entity as the reality, but not the abstract spiritual entity, which has the positive significance to the denial of religious theology and philosophy. However, his understanding of the essence of man is metaphysics, because he put the essence of man as the abstract concept of "class", which as a "single individual inherent abstraction". As Marx pointed out, due to the reality of Feuerbach did not criticize human essence, therefore, nature can only be understood as "class", as an intrinsic, silent, linking many individuals naturally universality.

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