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DIALECTICS AS SEMANTICS

*Abstract*

In my paper *Dialectics as Semantics*, I infer from Hegel's classical idealistic metaphysics a theory of meaning, profitably comparable with contemporary logical research and philosophy of language.

Using Emanuele Severino's interpretation of the dialectic method, as mainly exposed in his *La struttura originaria*, I examine Hegel's dialectics as a semantic theory: precisely, as a radical form of *holism*, asserting the implication, which I call *fundamental semantic relation*, between the meaning *A*, its contradictory non-*A*, and thus the whole semantic field. As semantics, the dialectic method consists first of all in a critic of the abstract semantic positions: it remarks and solves a particular logical contradiction, the *dialectic contradiction*, which is produced by the logical isolation of the meaning in general. Logical isolation is the essential operation of Hegel's *Verstand*, and also what Severino, in *La struttura originaria*, calls "the abstract concept of the abstract".

I propose, then, a typical pattern of the application of the dialectic-holistic method, by treating Russell's paradox as an example of dialectic contradiction. Providing the *Aufhebung* of any antinomy produced by logical isolation, the dialectic semantics also requires the overcoming of such semantic theories as Tarski's, in so far as they are based on the theory of types in its various formulations and, thus, on the isolation between linguistic and meta-linguistic aspects of semantics. According to the dialectic method, in fact, semantic determination has to take place holistically, with meanings determining each other *within* the semantic field as a whole.