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Remarks on the Language of Love: A Semantic Exploration
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ἐὰν ἀγάπην μὴ ἔχο, οἰδὴν εἶμ (I Corinthians, 13: 2). ¹

1.0. Introduction

1.1. Love questions all of us concerning our humanity, the quality of being human. It has been the mother of virtues² and the root of all virtues,³ and has been the very basis for moral principles and natural law and a persuasive force for peace and unity throughout human history. Nowadays, however, the noblest raison d’être of love is gravely diminished under the inhuman powers⁴ represented by such as AI (Artificial Intelligence),⁵ which will unquestionably overtake human intelligence in the very near future, become humans’ biggest existential threat,⁶ gradually devalue and dehumanize humans,⁷ and eventually compel humans to redefine what being human is.

1.2. Love essentially requires individuals to build up a substantial and interpersonal relationship, while the inhuman,

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² ‘Caritas dicitur finis aliarum virtutum quia omnes alias virtutes ordinat ad finem suum. Et quia mater est quae in se concepit ex alio, ex hac ratione dicitur mater aliarum virtutum’ (Aquinas S. T. (1952) Summa Theologiae. Taurini: Marietti, II-II, q. 23, art 8, ad 3 sol).

³ ‘Caritas comparatur fundamento et radici’ (Summa Theologiae. II-II, q. 23, art 8, ad 2 sol).

⁴ ‘Medical science has long since introduced the inhuman into the human (think of heart pacemakers, to take an uncontroversial, and widely used, example of the conjunction of man and machine, or kidney dialysis machines)’ (Sim S. (2001) Lyotard and the Inhuman. Duxford, Cambridge: Icon Books. p. 8). Sim asks: (1) Do we become less than human if key parts of our bodies are not ‘natural’ tissue? (2) How many synthetic body parts can we tolerate without losing ‘what is “proper” to human kind’ in the process? (ibid., p. 21).


whose nature is in its function,\(^8\) promotes the uniformity of all and drags them into a social system, in which a totalitarian dystopia is overwhelming.

1.3. The central issue -- and this includes everything humans are concerned about, not excepting scholarly works\(^9\) -- of the inhuman in the present capitalistic system, in which AI is awesomely functioning, seems to be gravely affected by the idea of investment and efficacy, whose catchphrase is: *Will it be a profitable project?* Love is also severely affected by the idea of profit-and-loss calculation and self-interest. Considering such human conditions, it will be quite natural to ask: *Can love, a proof of being human, endure?*

1.4. In this essay, I therefore would like to reconfirm the significance of *love* in the system of Christian language, examining (1) its syntactic and semantic characteristics so as to give a special emphasis to the *Johannine* documents which most scholars date to about 90-100 CE\(^10\) and (2) how the semantic force, which the language of love creates, persuades each individual to take an existential response. And in this I will examine the works of Dostoevsky, because he is still a contemporary in the sense that he had the same critical mind concerning the possibility of love as people of today have. I will look at his masterpiece *The Karamazov Brothers* published between 1879-1880 and his diary under the date of 16 April 1864,\(^11\) in which his existential questions about the possibilities of love are markedly reflected.

2.0. Syntax and semantics of the language of love

2.1: 1 John 4: 7. ἀγαπητοί, ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους, ὅτι ἡ ἀγάπη ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστίν, καὶ πᾶς ὁ ἀγαπῶν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται καὶ γινώσκει τὸν θεόν. (Carissimi, *diligamus* nos invicem: quia *caritas* ex Deo est. Et omnis qui *diligit*, ex Deo natus est, et cognoscit Deum. \(^12\) Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and everyone who *loves* is born of God and knows God.)

2.12. Syntax

2.12.1. ἀγαπητοί, ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους: ἀγαπητοί (N. m. pl. vocative) + ἀγαπῶμεν (subjunctive. 1\(^{st}\) person pl. present.

\(^8\) ‘Es funktioniert alles. Das ist gerade das Unheimliche/ Everything is functioning. That is precisely what is awesome’ (Heidegger M. (1956), S. 206; Richardson W. (1981), p. 11).

\(^9\) Lyotard J-H. (1984) *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. tr. by Bennington G. and Massumi B., Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, p. 46. Lyotard further says: ‘in the discourse of today’s financial backers of research, the only credible goal is power. Scientists, technicians, and instruments are purchased not to find truth, but to augment power’ (p. 45-6, cf. pp. 48-9).


\(^12\) Vulgata: *Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*. (1975\(^{rd}\)) Stuttgart: Württemberger Bibelanstalt, vol., II.

exhortation: let us love + ἀλλήλους (pl. accusative of ἄλλος: other), ὅπτε (Conj. as a causal particle: for that, because) + ἦ (Art. f.) + ἀγάπη (N. f. sg. nominative: love) + ἐκ (Prep. used with the genitive case) + τοῦ (Art. m. genitive) + θεοῦ (N. m. sg. genitive) + ἐστιν (V. 3rd person sg. present). Syntactically, the subjunctive use of ἀγαπάω with ἀλλήλους (1st Person. pl.) expresses an earnest exhortation urging someone to do something or to take an action.

2.122. ὅτι ή ἀγάπη ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστιν: ὅτι (Conj. as a causal particle: for that, because) + ἡ ἀγάπη (N. f. sg. nominative: love) + ἐκ (Prep. used with the genitive case) + τοῦ (Art. m. genitive) + θεοῦ (N. m. sg. genitive) + ἐστιν (V. 3rd person sg. present). Syntactically, the subjunctive use of ἀγαπάω with ἀλλήλους (1st Person. pl.) expresses an earnest exhortation urging someone to do something or to take an action.

KJV and NRSV interpret the preposition ἐκ in the because clause, ὅτι ή ἀγάπη ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστιν as of (Love is of God), and C. H. Dodd as belongs to (Love belongs to God); however, as R. E. Brown points out, ἐκ evidently denotes that ‘the origin of love is primary’. It should be simply translated into from (Love is from God). The same interpretation is found in the ESV (English Standard Version) and NIV (New International Version).

2.123. In the Vulgata, the Latin version of the Bible, ἀγάπη is usually translated as caritas, which is sometimes replaced with dilectio. In 4:7, for example, ἀγαπῶμεν (subjunctive. 1st person pl. present. exhortation: let us love) is translated as diligamus (V. 1st person pl. of diligere).

2.124. ἅπας ὁ ἀγαπῶν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται καὶ γινώσκει τὸν θεόν: ἅπας (Determiner: all, every) + ὁ (Determiner, Art. m. sg) + ἀγαπῶν (ptc. m. sg. act. nominative of ἀγαπάω). ἅπας here functions as a universal quantifier, therefore ἅπας ὁ ἀγαπῶν, [N[O πᾶς][L ὁ][N ἀγαπῶν]] is translatable into: omnis qui diligit (Vulgata); every one that loveth (KJV); whoever loves (ESV); and everyone who loves (NIV and NRSV). However, he who loves in RSV (Revised Standard Version), which takes no account of the syntactic role of ἅπας, is not acceptable. γεγέννηται (perfect. passive of γεννάω) + γινώσκει (3rd person. sg. present. indicative of γινώσκω) + τὸν (Determiner. Art. m. sg. accusative) + θεόν (N. m. sg. accusative of θεοῖς).

2.13. Semantics

The semantic domain of the language of love is where it holds its own authentic meaning, that is, the referential system of Christian language. Lexically, the word love in that system is derived from the Greek word ἀγάπη that means Christian love, mainly of God or Christ or fellow Christians and that is generally contrasted with ἔρως (L.

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15 KJV, NRSV (2010+).
amor), earthly or sexual love\textsuperscript{23} in the New Testament Greek.

2.131. It is syntactically very clear that ἄγαπεῖς (Let us love) resulted from the semantic force the language of love creates, (in this case, ὁτι ή ἀγάπη έκ το τθεο δ στιν). That is, ἄγαπεῖς ή, ἄγαπεῖς ἄλλης resulted from ὁτι ή ἀγάπη έκ το τθεο δ στιν. This reveals that love is a given or, in the words of E. R. Brown, ‘a reality from above’.\textsuperscript{24} It is neither what humans learned from experience nor the consequence they have finally attained by scientific or philosophical arguments. This means that the language of love is, from the first, only object-linguistically referable in the system of Christian language (cf. 2.223f).\textsuperscript{25} This gives the reason why Aquinas (c. 1225-74) states in his work \textit{Quaestiones Disputatae de Caritate}: (1) Caritas hominibus a Deo infunditur (Love is founded in humans by God).\textsuperscript{26} (2) Caritas non est aliquid creatum in anima, sed est ipse Spiritus Sanctus mentem habitans (Love is not something created in the soul, but is the Holy Spirit Himself [caritas increata: uncreated Love\textsuperscript{27} dwelling in the mind]).\textsuperscript{28} (3) It is the Holy Spirit that ‘moves a human’s soul to the act of love (Spiritus sanctus movens animam ad actum delectionis).\textsuperscript{29}’ (4) Actus caritatis in homine non ex aliquot habitu interior procedat naturali potentiae superaddito, sed ex motione Spiritus sancti,…(The act of love in a human does not proceed from an interior habit superadded to a natural potency, but proceeds from the movement of the Holy Spirit).\textsuperscript{30}

2.132. The very essence of the descriptions in ἑπας ο ἀγαπεῖς έκ το τθεο δ στιν resulted from the semantic force the language of the determiner ἑπας logically functions as a universal quantifier (cf. 2.124), can be rendered into the following logical formula: \(\forall x \text{ if x is a person who loves God} \rightarrow (x \text{ is born of God} \land x \text{ knows God})\). This means: in \(\forall x (x \text{ is a person who loves God} \rightarrow (x \text{ is born of God} \land x \text{ knows God})) / (\forall x) (Lxg \rightarrow (Bx \land Kxg)), (x \text{ is a person who loves God})\) is a sufficient condition for \((x \text{ is born of God} \land x \text{ knows God})\), and therefore if \(x \text{ is a person who loves God}, it is necessarily true that x is born of God and knows God.\)


not love abides in death. All who hate a brother or sister are murderers, since whoever hates his brother or sister is a murderer. (Nos scimus quoniam translati sumus de morte ad vitam, quoniam diligimus Deum: quoniam Deus caritas est).

2.1 John 4:8. (cf. 4:16). ὁ μὴ ἀγαπῶν οὐκ ἔγνω τὸν θεὸν, ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ἀγάπη ἐστίν. (Qui non diligit, non novit Deum: quoniam Deus caritas est.)

2.2 Syntax

2.2.1. ὁ μὴ ἀγαπῶν οὐκ ἔγνω τὸν θεὸν: ὁ (Determiner. Art. m. nominative) + μὴ (a particle of negation) + ἀγαπῶν (1st person. m. sg. participle of ἀγαπάω) + οὐκ (Adv. before vowel: not) + ἔγνω (3rd person sg. 2nd aorist. indicative of γινώσκω) + τὸν (Art. m. accusative) + θεὸν (N. m. sg. accusative). The syntactic structure of ὁ μὴ ἀγαπῶν οὐκ ἔγνω τὸν θεὸν: is: [ο [NP [Art θεόν N]] [VP ἔγνω [Adv μὴ [NP ἀγαπῶν] [VP τὸν [N θεὸν]]]]. Though ὁ μὴ ἀγαπῶν, [NP [Art θεόν N]] [VP ἔγνω [Adv μὴ [NP ἀγαπῶν]]] is literally translatable into he who does not love, as NRSV, ESV and NIV, we had better consider the context of the universally quantified statement, ὁ μὴ ἀγαπῶν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἀγάπην, and translate ὁ μὴ ἀγαπῶν into whoever/ everyone who does not love.

2.2.2. ὅτι οἱ ἀνθρωποκτόνοι εἰσὶν: [ο [NP [Art θεόν N]] [VP εἰσίν [Adv ὅτι [VP οἱ [NP ἀνθρωποκτόνοι]]]]]

ὅτι (Conj: because, for) + οἱ (Art. m. nominative) + ἀνθρωποκτόνοι (N. m. nominative) + εἰσίν (N. m. nominative) + οἱ (Art. f. sg.) + εἰσίν (V. 3rd person sg. present of εἰσίν). The Noun-phrase, οἱ ἀνθρωποκτόνοι functions as the subject. ἀγάπη (C)

31 NRSV (2010)
32 The original meaning of ἀνθρωποκτόνος is murdering men, a homicide (Liddell and Scotts (1899) Greek-English Lexicon. Oxford: Clarendon Press, p. 71r). In the context of 1 John 3:14-15, it is interpreted as murderers [N-Count].
34 Vulgata (1975[2008]), vol II.
35 NRSV (2010)
governed by $V$ ($\varepsilon$στίν) completes the meaning of the predicate. Here, the word ἀγάπη is not metaphorically but analogically used. ὁ θεὸς ἀγάπη ἐστίν is therefore an analogical statement\(^\text{36}\) which we can literally talk about.

2.2. Semantics

2.2.21. In connection with 2.132, what the author states in \(\text{ὁ} \; \text{μὴ} \; \text{ἀγαπῶν} \; \text{οὐκ} \; \text{ἔγνω} \; \text{τὸν} \; \text{θεόν} \) will be clarified: \(\neg \forall x \; (x \text{ is a person who loves God} \rightarrow x \text{ knows God})\)/ \(\forall x(Lxg \rightarrow Kxg)\), that is, the inverse of \(\forall x(x \text{ is a person who loves God} \rightarrow x \text{ knows God})/ \forall x(Kxg \rightarrow Lxg)\), which is the converse statement of \(\forall x(x \text{ is a person who loves God} \rightarrow x \text{ knows God})/ \forall x(Lxg \rightarrow Kxg)\), however, may or may not be true. In \(\forall x \; (x \text{ is a person who loves God} \rightarrow x \text{ knows God})/ \forall x \; (Lxg \rightarrow Kxg)\), knowing God is a necessary condition for loving Him,\(^\text{37}\) while loving Him is a necessary and sufficient condition for knowing him as stated in I John 4:7, \(\betaπᾶς \; \text{ὁ} \; \text{ἀγαπῶν} \; \text{ἐκ} \; \text{τοῦ} \; \text{θεοῦ} \; \; \gammaινώσκει \; \text{τὸ} \; \text{θεόν}\.\) Knowing God is, therefore, semantically not equivalent to loving Him; because knowing God does not necessarily lead humans to loving Him. This reveals that loving God, because it is ‘not measured by knowledge’,\(^\text{38}\) does not expect humans to be highly intellectual (cf. I Corinthians 8: 1).

2.2.22. The direct reason why the one who does not love does not know God (\(\text{ὁ} \; \text{μὴ} \; \text{ἀγαπῶν} \; \text{οὐκ} \; \text{ἔγνω} \; \text{τὸν} \; \text{θεόν} \)) is given in the subordinate clause \(\text{ὅτι} \; \text{ὁ} \; \text{θεὸς} \; \text{ἀγάπη} \; \text{ἐστίν}: \) it is because God is love or because He is love. We can trace this following the referential structure of I John 4:7–8: (A) \(\text{ὁ} \; \text{θεὸς} \; \text{ἀγάπη} \; \text{ἐστίν}, \) and (B) \(\text{ἡ} \; \text{ἀγάπη} \; \text{ἐκ} \; \text{τοῦ} \; \text{θεοῦ} \; \text{ἐστιν}\.\) That is why the statements: (C) \(\text{ἡ} \; \text{μεῖς} \; \text{ἠγαπήκα} \; \text{μεν} \; \text{τὸν} \; \text{θεόν}, \) \(\)ἀλλ’ \; \text{ὅτι} \; \text{αὐτός} \; \text{ἠγάπησε} \; \text{ἡ} \; \text{μας} \; \text{and (D) that πᾶς \; ὁ} \; \text{ἀγαπῶν} \; \text{ἐκ} \; \text{τοῦ} \; \text{θεοῦ} \; \text{γεγέννηται καὶ} \; \text{γνώσκει} \; \text{τὸ} \; \text{θεόν} \;\) are not absurd. This means: a loving activity itself is rooted in the divine love itself and a God-given authentic way of knowing God (cf. 2.221).

2.2.23. As I mentioned, love is only object-linguistically referable in the system of Christian language in 2.131. Also \(\text{ὁ} \; \text{θεὸς} \; \text{ἀγάπη} \; \text{ἐστίν} \) is a statement that is only object-linguistically referable. And the referential structure of I John 4:7–8 in 2.222 shows that \(\text{ὁ} \; \text{θεὸς} \; \text{ἀγάπη} \; \text{ἐστίν} \) works as an axiom like God exists, God is one \(\text{ὁ} \; \text{δὲ} \; \text{θεὸς} \; \text{ἑἷς} \; \text{ἐστιν} \) and God is good which requires ‘no formal demonstration to prove its truth, but, in the system of Christian language, is received and assented to as soon as mentioned\(^\text{39}\) and from which other statements can be, without any absurdities, deduced.

2.2.24. \(\text{ὁ} \; \text{θεὸς} \; \text{ἀγάπη} \; \text{ἐστίν} (4:8)\) is therefore the best available answer to Why does God love? That is, God is love because He is Love. God is Love is semantically equivalent to the following tautological statements: \(1\) God is love


because He is love or God is loving because He is loving. There is however a troublesome problem: the logical status of because is not generally considered to be a logical connective.

2.225. If ① and ② are semantically acceptable, they will, as W. V. O. Quine points out, ‘require not only truth of the components but also some sort of causal connection between the matters which the two components describe.’ The logical status of ① and ② can be, following Quine, made clear: firstly, each of them is considered to be a given truth in the indicative mood (cf. 2.212) and, secondly, gives a semantically acceptable causal structure to the statements, ① and ②.

2.226. Both ① and ② are tautological statements, which are not nonsensical but unconditionally true. Suppose p stands for God is love, then the logical formula of God is love because He is love is: p ≡ p. The tautological statement p ≡ p reveals: it is not a description of what the world would be alike, and the truth-condition it states does not depend on how the world is. The loving activity of God therefore does not depend on what the world would be like or how the world is. God loves regardless of how this world is and will be because loving is His nature. Giving Himself ceaselessly is of His nature. God is love because ‘His essence is to love.’ This is why Aquinas states: Deo non solum causaliter dicitur dilectio vel caritas,…sed etiam essentialiter (God is said to be love not only causally but also essentially). Hopsa essentia divina caritas est, sicut et sapientia est, et sic ut bonitas est (The Divine Essence Itself is love, even as It is wisdom and goodness). Deus diligit omnia ex caritate (God loves every [existing] thing out of love).

2.3. 1 John 4: 10: ἐν τούτῳ ἐστὶν ἡ ἀγάπη, οὐχ ὅτι ἡμεῖς ἠγαπήκαμεν τὸν θεόν, ἀλλ' ὅτι αὐτὸς ἠγάπησεν ἡμᾶς καὶ ἀπέστειλεν τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἱλασμὸν περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν. (In hoc est caritas: non quasi nos dilexerimus Deum, sed quoniam ipse prior dilexit nos, et misit Filium suum propitiationem pro peccatis nostris. /In this is love, not that we loved God but He loved us and sent His Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.).

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42 Morris L. (1981), p. 137; ‘Deus Omnia existential amat. Nam omnia existential, inquantum sunt, bona sunt (God loves all existing things. For all existing things, in so far as they exist, are good)’ (Aquinas S. T. (2012) Summa Theologiae, I, q. 20, resp).
45 Aquinas S. T. (1952) Summa Theologiae, II-II, q. 23, art 2, ad 1 sol, modified. This is because God is not only His own essence, but also His own existence. His essence is His existence. (ibid., I, q. 3, art 4).
47 KJV, NRSV (2010)
48 NRSV (2010)
2.31. Syntax

2.311. ἐν τούτῳ ἐστὶν ἡ ἀγάπη: ἐν τούτῳ ἐστὶν ἡ ἀγάπη.

ἐν (Prep. dative) + τούτῳ (indicative pron. dative) + ἐστὶν (3rd person sg.) + ἡ (Art. f.) + ἀγάπη (N. f. sg. nominative).

2.312. οὐχ ὅτι ἡ μεῖς ἠγαπήκας μεν ἐν τὸν θεόν:

οὐχ (Adv. before vowel: not) + ὅτι (Conj: that) + μεῖς (Personal pron. 1st person pl.) + ἠγαπήκας (3rd person sg. perfect act. indicative of ἀγαπάω: He loved). θεόν (N. m. sg. accusative).

2.313. ἀλλʼ ὅτι αὐτὸς ἠγάπησεν ἡ μᾶς:

ἀλλʼ (Conj. before vowel: but) + ὅτι (Conj. that) + αὐτὸς (Personal pro. 1st person sg: he) + ἠγάπησεν (3rd person sg. aorist. act. indicative of ἀγαπάω: He loved). ἡ μᾶς (Personal pron. pl. accusative of ἐγώ).

2.32. Semantics

2.321. Love has its origin in God Himself who is essentially love (cf. 2.226). God loved us (αὐτὸς ἠγάπησεν ἡ μᾶς) expressed in the aorist tense reveals that the divine love for human has a temporal precedence over humans’ love for Him (cf. οὐχ ὅτι ἡ μεῖς ἠγαπήκας μεν ἐν τὸν θεόν). The Vulgata therefore, considering this, translates ʼslaughtʼ ὅτι αὐτὸς ἠγάπησεν ἡ μᾶς as follows: sed quoniam ipse prior dilexit nos (because he hath first loved us).

In this context, it becomes clear that love is in origin not a virtue of humans considered as human but of humans considered as becoming through participation in grace, like to God and the Son of God (Caritas non est virtus hominis in quantum est homo caritas non est virtus hominis in quantum est homo, sed in quantum per participationem gratiae fit Deus et filius Dei).
2.3211. Concerning the temporal precedence of divine love over human’s love for Him, see John 15:12-13 (cf. 13:34): ‘Ἄφηγε ἐστὶν ἡ ἐντολὴ ἢ ἐμῆ, ἵνα ἅγαπήσητε ἀλλήλους ἑαυτῶν ἡγάπησα ὑμᾶς (Hoc est præceptum meum, ut diligatis invicem, sicut dilexi vos! This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you).

2.3212. Syntax: Ἀφήγε ἐστὶν ἡ ἐντολή ἢ ἐμή: ἀφήγε (Demonstrative pron. f. of οὗτος: this) + ἐστίν + ἢ (Art. f. nominative) + ἐντολή (N. f. sg. f. nominative: commandment) + ἢ (Art. f. nominative) + ἐμή (f. sg. nominative of ἐμος), ἵνα ἅγαπήσητε ἀλλήλους καθὼς ἡγάπησα ὑμᾶς. [ς[Ἀναθίσα]καθὼς[[ΝΠΗΙΝ (ἐγώ)]]]ηγάπησα[[ΝΠΗΙΝ ὑμᾶς]]: ἵνα (Conj.) + ἅγαπήσητε (subjunctive mood. 2nd person pl. of ἅγαπάω) + ἀλλήλους (cf. I John 4: 7) + ἑαυτῶν (Adv: as, just as) + ἡγάπησα (1st person sg. aorist. indicative. active of ἅγαπάω) + ὑμᾶς (Personal pron. accusative, pl. of σύ). The conjunction, ἵνα ‘takes the place of the epexegetic (an additional word to clarify meaning) infinitive,’ which enables us to translate Ἀφήγε ἐστὶν ἡ ἐντολή ἢ ἐμή into: This is my commandment. ἡγάπησα (1st person singular. aorist. indicative of ἅγαπάω) usually does not contain any reference to duration or completion of the action, but describes a series of actions or is considered to be aorist perfect, which means ‘a true resultative perfect denoting a past action of which the results still vividly survive.’ In either case, ἡγάπησα can be interpreted as I have loved in English tense (cf. ἡγάπησαν: 3rd person sg. aorist of ἅγαπάω).

2.3213. ἀλλὰ ὅτι αὐτὸς ἡγάπησαν ἡμᾶς καὶ ἅγαπήσετεν τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἰλασμὸν περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν confirms the reality humans have to face up to is sin, which is contrary to love. Though ‘the perfection of love requires that humans be entirely free from sin (Perfectio caritatis requirit quod homo sit omino absque peccato),’ it is [however] not possible in this life (hoc non potest esse in hac vita).

2.3214. Nevertheless, what ἅγαπήσετεν τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἰλασμὸν περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν indicates is that the divine love towards human existence is bottomless (cf. 2.26). In the words of Aquinas, ‘God loves sinners insofar as they are existing natures (Deus peccatores, inquantum sunt naturae quaedam, amat),’ for ‘their existing is His love in operation’.

3.0. How the semantic force, which the language of Love creates, actually works upon us
3.1. In this section, how the semantic force, which the language of love creates, persuades each individual to take an existential response will be investigated, taking Dostoevsky’s masterpiece The Karamazov Brothers and his diary as examples. In these two works his main ideas about humanity, the world (the earth) and God and their interrelationships are clearly manifested.

3.2. In the system of Christian language, well-known spiritual counsels such as (1) ἀγαπήτων ἀλλήλους (Beloved, let us love one another) (2.1 and 2.121, and I John 4:11); (2) ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον (Art. + πλησίον: one’s neighbour, friend) σου ὡς σαυτόν τίς (You shall love your neighbour as yourself); and (3) ἀγαπήσει τοὺς ἐχθρούς ὑμῶν καὶ προσάγησθε ὑπὲρ τῶν δικαίων ὑμᾶς (Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, pray for those who persecute and insult you.) are, as mentioned previously (cf. 2.1, 2.122, 2.131, 2.225-6, 2.312-3), all originated from the semantic force the language of love creates, more specifically the semantic force of ὁ θεός ἀγάπη ἐστίν, [σπ[Ἀθ ὁ][Ν θύ̃ς][Ν ἔστε][σπ[Ν ἐγρή̇π]]] creates (cf. 2.122, 2.222-2.223 and 2.131).

3.3. How did the semantic force the language of love creates actually work upon Dostoevsky? To investigate this question, the following passage from The Karamazov Brothers is noteworthy:

…there was absolutely nothing in the whole world [earth] to induce [compel] men [human beings] to love their fellow men, that there was absolutely no law of nature to make man love humanity, and that if love did exist and had existed at all in the world up to now, then it was not by virtue of the natural law, but entirely because man believed in his own immortality. He (Ivan) added as an aside that it was precisely that which constituted the natural law, namely, that once man’s faith in his own immortality was destroyed, not only would his capacity for love be exhausted, but so would the vital forces that sustained life on this earth. And furthermore, nothing would be immortal then, everything would be permitted, even anthropophagy. And finally, as though all this were not enough, he declared that for every

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[59] Matthew 5: 44. Aquinas says: (1) ‘diligere inimicum videtur impossibile, cum sit contra inclinationem naturae (to love an enemy seems to be impossible, since it is contrary to the inclination of nature)’ (De Caritate, art. VIII, ad 13). sol. (2) ‘diligere inimicum, in quantum inimicus est, est difficile, vel etiam impossibile; sed diligere inimicum propter aliquid magis amatum, est facile; et sic id quod in se videtur impossibile, caritas Dei facta facile (To love an enemy as enemy is difficult, even impossible. But to love an enemy because of some greater love is easy. That is why the love of God makes easy that which seems to be impossible in itself)’ (ad 13. sol). (3) ‘amicitia caritatis se extendit etiam etiam adinimicos, quos diligimus ex caritate in ordine ad Deum, ad quem principaliter habetur amicitia caritatis (The friendship of love extends even to our enemies, whom we love out of love in relation to God, to Whom the friendship of Love is chiefly directed)’ (ibid., art. IV, ad 4. sol).

[60] As MacIntyre A. pointed out in his insightful book After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory (London: Duckworth, 1985), ‘charity [love] as a theological virtue was about which Aristotle knew nothing. ‘Aristotle in considering the nature of friendship had concluded that a good man could not be the friend of a bad man; and since the bond of authentic friendship is shared allegiance to the good, this is unsurprising. But at the centre of biblical religion is the conception of a love for those who sin. . . . in the culture of the Bible, in contrast to that of Aristotle, an alternative response became available, that of forgiveness’ (p. 174). ‘Charity [love] is not of course, from the biblical point of view, just one more virtue to be added to the list. Its inclusion alters the conception of the good for man in a radical view; for the community in which the good is achieved has to be one of reconciliation’ (ibid., p. 174). [All italics and insertions are mine.]

[61] The words enclosed with square brackets are all quotations from Dostoyevsky F. (2003), p. 94.
individual, such as you and me, for example, who does not believe either in God or in his own immortality, the
natural law is bound immediately to become complete opposite of the religion-based law that preceded it, and that
egoism, even extending to the perpetration of crime, would not only be permissible but would be recognized as the
essential, the most rational, and even the noblest raison d’etre of human condition.\(^6^2\)

3.31. Dostoevsky also stands in the same position as stated in 2.1f, 2.131 and 2.222-3: Love, a given or ‘a reality
from above’ is neither what humans learned from experience or the consequence they have finally attained by
scientific and philosophical argumentations. Love is, in other words, neither the one deducible from a social contract
among humans nor the ideal humans had actualized by appealing to the law. Dostoevsky ‘denies that there is in
human natural ground for love’ (cf. 2.211f, 2.331).\(^6^5\) On the contrary, love is the very basis of all of moral principles
and natural law.\(^6^4\)

3.32. Rearranging Dostoevsky’s main argument in the form of the present tense, it will be as follows:
① There is absolutely nothing in the whole world to compel humans to love their fellow humans.
② If humans love their fellow humans, it is because of faith in their own immortality.
③ Therefore, if once humans’ faith in their own immortality is destroyed, nothing will be immoral,\(^6^5\) then, everything
will be permitted, even anthropophagy.

\(^6^2\) Dostoevsky F. (2008), p. 87; cf. p.71, 168-169, 330, 398,739, 744, 758, 793, 813. (All italics are mine.) The very essence of this
passage was already stated in his Writer’s Diary in December, 1876: (1) ‘the fundamental and the loftiest idea of human existence
is the necessity and the inevitability of (p. 733) the conviction that the human soul is immortal. Underlying this confession of a man
who is going to die “by logical suicide” is the necessity of the immediate conclusion, here and now, that without faith in one’s soul
and its immortality, human existence is unnatural, unthinkable, and unbearable. …Faith in immortality does not exist for him’
‘Neither a person nor a nation can exist without some higher idea. And there is only one higher idea on earth, and it is the idea of the
immortality of the human soul, for all other “higher” ideas of life by which human might live derive from that idea alone’ (ibid. p.
734). “[L]ove for humanity is even entirely unthinkable, incomprehensible, and utterly impossible without faith in the immortality of the
human soul to go along with it. The result, clearly, is that when the idea of immortality is lost, suicide becomes an absolute and
inescapable necessity for any person who has even developed slightly above the animal level. On the other hand, immortality,
promising eternal life, binds people all the more firmly to earth. Without the conviction of his immortality, the links between the
person and the earth are broken; they grow more fragile, they decay, and the loss of a higher meaning of life (experienced at least in
the form of unconscious anguish) surely brings suicide in its wake….my October article: “If the conviction of immortality is so
axiomatic that without love of others there are no moral standards, since love (p. 16) of others is the

\(^6^3\) Scanlan J. P. ‘Dostoevsky’s Argument for Immortality,’ The Russian Review, January 2000, 59, No. 1, p. 15. Scanlan continues
that Dostoevsky ‘rejects as plainly as one could wish the Enlightenment thesis of the “natural goodness” of man – he does not, of
course, mean that man is incapable of love or of the cooperation and social order that love makes possible. He means only that such
things do not come “naturally,” are not products of man’s participation in the material world. Humans also have a spiritual
character, which one is affirming when one accepts the thesis of immortality’ (ibid. p. 15).

\(^6^4\) “…in political and legal philosophy and theology, doctrines based on the theory that there are certain unchanging laws which
pertain to man’s nature, which can be discovered by reason, and to which man-made laws should conform [to obey a rule, law, etc/
to agree with or match something]; freq. contrasted with positive laws; also (with hyphen) attrib./as implanted by nature in the
human mind, or as capable of being demonstrated by reason’ (ORD 2009, 2nd edition on CD-ROM, v. 4:1:0).

\(^6^5\) “…without love there is no morality – is for Dostoevsky simply a corollary of his ethical theory. For Dostoevsky it is essentially
axiomatic that without love of others there are no moral standards, since love (p. 16) of others is the sole moral standard; without it,
“everything is permitted.” Ivan’s argument, then, presupposes Dostoevsky’s ethical theory and can be no more convincing than that
theory’ (Scanlan J. P. (January 2000), pp. 15-6).
3.33. J.P. Scanlan abridges the logic of Dostoevsky’s argumentation: ‘immortality and morality are connected through the explicit mediation of the concept of love. Without immortality there is no love; and, without love there is no morality (“everything is permitted”). On the tacit assumption, then, that the denial of morality is an “absurdity,” the truth of immortality follows by reductio ad absurdum’.66

3.34. How does the truth of immortality, namely, Without immortality there is no love; and, without love there is no morality follow by reduction ad absurdum in Dostoevsky’s argumentation? To answer this question, firstly we need to take the following steps:

3.341. Immortality, that is, the immortality of the human soul presupposes that God is immortal, because the immortality of the human soul is possible only insofar as the human soul can participate in the immortality of God. To deny the immortality of the human soul is therefore to deny its precondition, God is immortal.

3.342. The precondition that God is immortal (cf. I Timothy 6: 16: ὁ μόνος ἐχων ἀθανασίαν, [S[NP[Art ὁ][N μόνος]][VP[V ἐχων][NP[N ἀθανασία]]]) (qui solus habet immortalitatem/ the only one who has immortality) can be logically translatable to: There is exactly one God, and God is immortal: (∃x∀y (x = y ≡ x is God) ∧ ∀x (x is God → x is immortal)).

3.343. Then, it becomes possible to examine the semantic structure of If God is not immortal, everything is permissible. However, it is false that everything is permissible. Therefore it is false that God is not immortal (a method of proving the falsity of a premise by showing that its logical consequence is absurd or contradictory).68

3.344. Suppose P/(∃x)Ig stands for God is immortal; Q/(∀y)Py for Everything is permissible; ¬Q/ ¬(∀y)Py ≡ (∃y)¬Py for It is false that everything is permissible; and ¬(¬P)/ ¬(∃x)¬Ig for It is false that God is not immortal. The semantic structure of If God is not immortal, everything is permissible. However, it is false that everything is permissible. Therefore it is false that God is not immortal will be expressed as ((¬P → Q) ∧ ¬Q) → ¬(¬P) or ((¬(∃x)Ig → (∀y)Py) ∧ ¬(∀y) Py) → ¬(∃x) ¬Ig.

3.345. Finally, we can consider the following indirect reasoning:

67 μόνος with the preceding article ὁ (m. sg. nominative) can be translated into the only one who (Bauer W. et al. (19792nd), p. 527).
(¬P → Q) ∧ ¬Q) → ¬(¬P)

(1) Impl(f)
(2) Conj(t) Neg Neg(f)
(3) Impl(t) Neg(f)
(4) Neg(f) t

3.346. On level (1), we assume the main truth-value of the Implication (→) to be f, since its antecedent, ((¬P → Q) ∧ ¬Q) is true but its consequence, ¬(¬P) is false. This is indicated on level (2): the truth-value of Conjunction (∧) to be f, and P with double Negation (¬¬) to be f. Level (3) shows that the truth-value of the Implication and Q with single Negation (¬) to be t and f, respectively. On level (4), the truth-value f must be assigned to P with single Negation (¬), and t to Q. However, as level (3) and (4) show, the truth-value of Q is both t and f. That is, the first assumption whose truth-value is f leads to a reductio ad absurdum. This means: ((¬P → Q) ∧ ¬Q) → ¬(¬P), which is a tautology, is unconditionally true. 69

3.4. The last step to be taken is to examine the semantic structure of Without immortality there is no love; and, without love there is no morality which can be reformulated to: If immortality exists, then love must exist; and if love exists, then morality exists. Suppose A stands for Immortality exists ((∃x)Ei); B for Love exists ((∃y)Ec); and C for Morality exists ((∃z)Em), then ¬(A ∧ ¬B) ∧ ¬(B ∧ ¬C) or (¬((∃x)Ei ∧ ¬(∃y)Ec) ∧ (¬((∃y)Ec ∧ ¬(∃z)Em))).

3.41. Does ¬(A ∧ ¬B) ∧ ¬(B ∧ ¬C) or (¬((∃x)Ei ∧ ¬(∃y)Ec) ∧ (¬((∃y)Ec ∧ ¬(∃z)Em))) lead to reduction ad absurdum?

¬(A ∧ ¬B) ∧ ¬(B ∧ ¬C)

(1) Conj(f)
(2) Neg(f) Neg(f)
(3) Conj(t) Conj(t)
(4) t ff t ff

3.42. On level (1), we assume the main truth-value of the Conjunction (∧) to be f, since the truth-value of Negation (¬) before each of (A ∧ ¬B) and (B ∧ ¬C) is f, which is indicated on level (2). Level (3) shows that Conjunction (∧) in each of the Conjunctions (A ∧ ¬B) and (B ∧ ¬C) is t. Level (4) shows: the truth-value of A, Negation (¬),

69 Here, I am indebted to Allwood J. et al. ((1997) Logic in Linguistics, pp. 53-5) for the description of indirect reasoning.
and B inside \((A \land \neg B)\) is \(t, f, f\), respectively; the truth-value of B, Negation \((\neg)\), and C inside the Conjunction \((B \land \neg C)\) is \(t, f, f\), respectively. As level (4) shows, the truth-value of B is both \(f\) and \(t\). That is, the first assumption whose truth-value is \(f\) leads to a reductio ad absurdum. That is, \(\neg(A \land \neg B) \land \neg(B \land \neg C)\) is logically consistent.

4.0. Actual human conditions under the semantic force the language of love creates

4.1. In his diary\(^{70}\) written on the occasion of his first wife’s death (16 April 1864), Dostoevsky, who is our contemporary – in the sense people today are excessively self-conscious and obsessed by egoism and cannot sacrifice themselves in love to others – reveals the actual human conditions under the semantic force the language of love creates. He writes:

To love a person as oneself, according to Christ’s commandment, is impossible. The law of individuality on earth binds, while the Self\(^{71}\) hinders. Only Christ could do it, but Christ was of eternity, was an eternal idea towards which man strives and, according to the law of nature, must strive. Nevertheless, since the appearance of Christ as man’s ideal in the flesh, it has become as clear that the highest, final development of the individual must be a stage (as the ultimate conclusion of that development, as the point of achievement of that goal), where man recognizes and is convinced with the full strength of his nature, that the highest use man can make of his individuality, of the fullness of the development of his Self, is just this – to annihilate this Self, to give it up altogether, undividedly and unconditionally, to all and every one. And that is the greatest happiness.\(^{72}\) [“Love everyone as thyself.” This is impossible on earth because it contradicts the law governing the development of the individuality and the attainment of that ultimate goal by which man is bound. Consequently, the law is not, as the anti-Christs assert, an ideal one, but is the law of our ideal. \(^{73}\)]...

Thus, on earth man strives toward an ideal which is opposed to his nature. If a person does not comply with the law of striving for the ideal, that is to say, does not sacrifice one’s Self in love to others or to another creature (Masa\(^{74}\)), the person feels suffering and calls this condition sin. Thus, we must incessantly feel suffering which is counterbalanced by the paradisiacal joys of complying with the law –through sacrifice. It is in this that earthly balance is found. Otherwise life would be senseless/meaningless.\(^{75}\)

4.2. Putting Dostoevsky’s argument into shape, it becomes clear that his argument consists of the following main


\(^{71}\) Here, the Self can be paraphrased as the ego or I. All italics are mine.

\(^{72}\) Linnér S (1967), p. 90.

\(^{73}\) Linnér S (1967), p. 91.

\(^{74}\) Masa is the nickname of Dostoevsky’s first wife, Maria Dimitrievna Isayeva.

\(^{75}\) Linnér S (1967), p. 92, modified. All italics and the insertions [ ] are mine.
statements:
① To love a person as oneself is to sacrifice one’s self in love to others.
② To love a person as oneself is opposed to human nature and therefore impossible.
③ This is why humans feel suffering and call this human condition sin (cf. 2.132, 2.3213). (This means: sin is the human condition against God Who is Love and Who sustains human beings in love.)
④ It is however in this that earthly balance is found. If not, human life would be meaningless.

4.3. The point of crucial importance in his argument is deep-rooted in his assertion: Without immortality there is no love; and, without love there is no morality \((\neg(A \land \neg B) \land \neg(B \land \neg C))\). This leads to a reductio ad absurdum (cf. 3.4 – 3.42). Without taking this procedure, it is utterly meaningless to refer to the earthly balance between what the semantic force of the language of love persuades humans to do and the reality of their human condition (cf. ① and ③ in 4.2).

4.31. What Dostoevsky focuses on is: why it is meaningful that humans approach the ideal of love throughout their earthly lives (cf. 2.122, 2.131, 2.226). That is, without this approach, humans will lose (a) the place where they can actualize their existential possibilities of staying human, and (b) eventually will face the dystopia where ‘nothing would be immortal [and then] everything would be permitted, even anthropophagy’\(^76\) (cf. 3.3ff).

5.0. Concluding remarks

*Love, a given,* is objective-linguistically referable language in the system of Christian language (cf. 2.131, 2.226) and closely interwoven with Christian belief, in the immortality of the human soul (cf. 3.32ff). In this system, the semantic force, which the language of love creates, works as the moral and spiritual strength that illumines the real state of humans. This questions every person of their humanity/ what being human is and shows them a way of self-transcendence to participate in immortality through their own earthly life. This is in which every person can be selflessly concerned for the well-being of others struggling with their egoism/ egotism that deters them from loving others. This is how the semantic force, which the language of love creates, breaks through the power that dehumanizes humans.

\(^76\) Dostoevsky F. (2008), p. 87.