

【英汉对照全译本】

THE PHILOSOPHY OF MONEY

货币哲学

[德]格奥尔格·西梅尔 著

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The Philosophy of Money

By *Georg Simmel*

English Translation

By *David Frisby*

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CHAPTER 1

Value And Money

I

Reality And Value As Mutually Independent Categories Through Which Our Conceptions Become Images Of The World'

The order in which things are placed as natural entities is based on the proposition that the whole variety of their qualities rests upon a uniform law of existence. Their equality before the law of nature, the constant sum of matter and energy, the convertibility of the most diverse phenomena into one another, transform the differences that are apparent at first sight into a general affinity, a universal equality. Yet on a closer view this means only that the products of the natural order are beyond any question of a law. Their absolute determinateness does not allow any emphasis that might provide confirmation or doubt of their particular quality of being. But we are not satisfied with this indifferent necessity that natural science assigns to objects. Instead, disregarding their place in that series we arrange them in another order – an order of value – in which equality is completely eliminated, in which the highest level of one point is adjacent to the lowest level of another; in this series the fundamental quality is not uniformity but difference. The value of objects, thoughts and events can never be inferred from their mere natural existence and content, and their ranking according to value diverges widely from their natural ordering. Nature, on many occasions, destroys objects that, in terms of their

第一章 价值与货币

第一节

实在和价值作为彼此独立的范畴,通过它们,我们的观念成为世界的图像

事物作为自然实体而被置于其中的那种秩序,是建立在如下假设基础之上的:事物特性的多种多样决定于存在的一种同一不变的规律:事物在自然规律面前的平等性,物质和能量的不变的总量,相去甚远的现象彼此间的可转换性,把初看起来明显的差异性转变为某种普遍的近似性、某种普遍的平等性。但是更进一步观察,这又仅仅意味着,自然秩序的产物超越了对一种规律的任何设问。它们的绝对确定性不允许有任何可能对强调其独有特性的存在提供证实或表示怀疑。但是我们并不满足于自然科学为事物设定的这种不置可否的规律性,相反,我们不考虑事物在那个系列中所处的位置,而是将其放置在另一个秩序,即价值秩序中进行考虑,在这个秩序中平等性被完全消除、某个点的最高层面与另一点的最低层面相毗邻;在这个系列中,基本的性质不是一致性而是差异性。客体、思想和事件的价值从来不可能仅仅通过它们纯自然的存在和内容来推断,它们依据价值的排序与其自然的排序有很大差别。在很多情况下,自然

value, might claim to be preserved, and keeps in existence worthless objects which occupy the place of the more valuable ones. This is not to say that there is a fundamental opposition between the two series, or that they are mutually exclusive. Such a view would imply a relation between the two series; it would establish, indeed, a diabolical world, determined by values, but with the signs reversed. The case is, rather, that the relation between these series is completely accidental. With the same indifference, nature at one time offers us objects that we value highly, at another time withholds them. The occasional harmony between the series, the realization through the reality series of demands derived from the value series, shows the absence of any logical relationship between them just as strikingly as does the opposite case. We may be aware of the same life experience as both real and valuable, but the experience has quite a different meaning in the two cases. The series of natural phenomena could be described in their entirety without mentioning the value of things; and our scale of valuation remains meaningful, whether or not any of its objects appear frequently or at all in reality. Value is an addition to the completely determined objective being, like light and shade, which are not inherent in it but come from a different source. However, we should avoid one misinterpretation; namely, that the formation of value concepts, as a psychological fact, is quite distinct from the natural process. A superhuman mind, which could understand by means of natural laws everything that happens in the world, would also comprehend the fact that people have concepts of values. But these would have no meaning or validity for a being that conceived them purely theoretically, beyond their psychological existence. The meaning of value concepts is denied to nature as a mechanical causal system, while at the same time the psychic experiences that make values a part of our consciousness themselves belong to the natural world. Valuation as a real psychological occurrence is part of the natural world; but what we mean by valuation, its conceptual meaning, is something independent of this world; is not part of it, but is rather the whole world viewed from a parti-

破坏了那些依据其价值本来可能要求被保留的物体,而把那些毫无价值的物体保存下来,并占据了更有价值的客体的位置。这并不是说这两个系列之间是一种根本对立的关系,或者说它们是彼此排斥的。这样的观点意味着两个系列间的一种关系,甚至会建立一个由价值决定的、具有相反迹象的糟透的世界。我们宁愿认为事实是:这两个系列间的关系是完全偶然的。自然时而为我们提供价值非常高的客体,时而又拒绝给予。很明显,系列间偶然的融洽、源于价值序列的要求通过实在序列得以实现,说明了它们之间没有任何逻辑关系,反之亦然。我们可能意识到同一生活经验既实在又有价值,但是这一经验在两种情形下会具有极其不同的意义。自然现象的系列可以不涉及事物的价值而描述出它们的全部内容;然而我们的价值尺度仍然有意义,无论其客体在现实中经常出现还是从不出现。就像光和影子一样,价值是被完全确定的客观存在的增加物——它并不是事物本身固有的,而是来自于另外的源头。但是,我们要避免一种曲解,即价值观念作为一种心理学的事实,它的形成与自然形成过程是截然不同的。一种超人的意志,可以通过自然规律理解世界上发生的每一件事,也能够理解人们具有价值观念的事实。然而对于一个超越它们心理实在性、仅仅从纯理论角度来考虑它们的人来说,这些将没有任何意义或有效性。价值观念的意义被自然看作是一种机械的因果系统而被否定,但与此同时,使价值成为我们意识一部分的精神体验本身却属于自然世界。评价作为心理上发生的真实事件,是自然世界的一部分;但我们通过评价所指的含义、其概念上的意义,是独立于这个世界的;它不是自然界的一部分,从一个独特的视角来看,甚至可以说它就是整个世

cular vantage point. We are rarely aware of the fact that our whole life, from the point of view of consciousness, consists in experiencing and judging values, and that it acquires meaning and significance only from the fact that the mechanically unfolding elements of reality possess an infinite variety of values beyond their objective substance. At any moment when our mind is not simply a passive mirror or reality – which perhaps never happens, since even objective perception can arise only from valuation – we live in a world of values which arranges the contents of reality in an autonomous order.

Thus, value is in a sense the counterpart to being, and is comparable to being as a comprehensive form and category of the world view. As Kant pointed out, being is not a quality of objects; for if I state that an object, which so far existed only in my thoughts, exists, it does not acquire a new quality, because otherwise it would not be the same object that I thought of, but another one. In the same way, an object does not gain a new quality if I call it valuable; it is valued because of the qualities that it has. It is precisely its whole already determined being that is raised to the sphere of value. This is supported by a thorough analysis of our thinking. We are able to conceive the contents of our world view without regard for their real existence or non-existence. We can conceive the aggregates of qualities that we call objects, including all the laws of their interrelation and development, in their objective and logical significance, and we can ask – quite independently of this – whether, where and how often all these concepts or inner notions are realized. The conceptual meaning and determinateness of the objects is not affected by the question as to whether they do exist, nor by the question whether and where they are placed in the scale of values. However, if we want to establish either a theory or a practical rule, we cannot escape the necessity to answer these two ques-

界。从意识方面来看,我们很少意识到这样一个事实:我们的整个生活是由价值体验和价值判断组成的,而生活获得意义和重要性的唯一来源是——现实所机械地展现的元素超出了它们的客观物质性,由此拥有了一个无限多样的价值。在任何时候,只要我们的头脑不再仅仅是简单的消极反映现实的镜子时——或许这从来未曾发生,因为客观感知只有从评价中才能发生——我们便生活在一个以某种自主的秩序来排列现实内容的价值世界里。

因此,从某种意义上来说,价值是存在的对应物,并且作为世界观的一个广泛形式和范畴,它与存在是可比较的。正像康德所指出的那样:存在并不是客体的性质,因为即使我指出一个迄今只存在于我的思想当中的客体,它也并不会因此而获得一种新的性质——否则的话,它就不是我所想的那一个客体,而是另一个了。同样的道理,如果我称一个客体是有价值的,它也并没有因此获得一种新的性质;它之所以拥有价值是因为其本身的性质。正是客体整体被确定的存在,使它能够在价值领域中出现。这一点可以通过对我们思想的彻底分析得到证实。我们可以构思我们世界观的内容,而不用考虑它们是不是真的存在。我们可以设想我们称之为客体的性质的集合,包括客观和逻辑意义上的所有相互关联和发展的规律,并且我们可以询问,所有这些概念和内在观念是否可以实现、在什么地方实现、以怎样的频率实现。客体概念上的意义和确定性不会受像“它们是否存在”,或者“它们是否存在于价值范围内以及处于价值范围内的什么位置”这类问题的影响。但是,如果我们想要建立一种理论或实践标准,我们就无法回避

tions. We must be able to say of each object that it exists or does not exist, and each object must have a definite place for us in the scale of values, from the highest through indifference to negative values. Indifference is a rejection of positive value; the *possibility* of interest remains inactive but is always in the background. The significance of this requirement, which determines the constitution of our world view, is not altered by the fact that our powers of comprehension are often insufficient to decide upon the reality of concepts, or by the fact that the range and certainty of our feelings are often inadequate to rank things according to their value, especially in any permanently and universal fashion. Over against the world of mere concepts, of objective qualities and determinations, stand the great categories of being and value, inclusive forms that take their material from the world of pure contents. Both categories have the quality of being fundamental, that is irreducible to each other or to other simpler elements. Consequently, the being of objects can never be inferred logically; being is rather a primary form of our perception, which can be sensed, experienced and believed, but cannot be deduced for somebody who does not yet know it. When this form of perception has once grasped a specific content – by a non-logical act – it can then be interpreted in its logical context and developed as far as this logical context reaches. As a rule, we are able to state why we assume the reality of a particular phenomenon; namely, because we have already assumed another phenomenon with which this one is connected by its specific characteristics. The reality of the first one, however, can be shown only by tracing it in similar fashion to a more fundamental one. This regression requires a final member whose existence depends only upon a sense of conviction, affirmation and acceptance, a sense that is directly given. Valuation has exactly the same relation to objects. All proofs of the value of an object are nothing more than the necessity of recognizing for that object the same value as has been assumed, and for the time being accepted, as

这两个问题了。我们必须确定一个客体存在还是不存在,每个客体必须在价值圈内有一个对我们而言是确定的位置,从最高价值到中立再到负价值。中立是对积极价值的一种拒绝,但它保持着虽然不活跃却始终存在于背景之中的兴趣的可能性。这一决定着我们的世界观构成的要求的意义不因下述事实而有所改变:我们的理解能力通常不足以决定概念的现实性,我们感觉的范围和确定性通常不足以根据其价值来排列事物——尤其是以任何永恒的普遍的方式来排列。在纯概念性世界、客观性和确定性世界的对面,有着存在与价值这两个重要的范畴,它包括了从纯概念世界获取原料的形式。这两个范畴都具有作为客观存在的基本性质,即不可以彼此相互简化或简化为其他更简单的元素。因此,客体的存在从不能被逻辑地推断出来;毋庸说存在是我们感知的初级形式,可以被感觉、被体验、被确信,但是对一些尚未了解它的人而言是不可推断的。一旦这种感知形式通过某种非逻辑的行为抓住一个特定的内容,它便可以在其逻辑语境中得到解释,并发展到逻辑语境延伸得到的任何地方。作为一个规则,我们能够阐明我们为什么假设一个独特现象的现实,原因即是——我们已经假设了另一个通过独有的特征与其相联系的现象。然而,第一个现象的现实性只有在类似的形式中被追溯成一个更基本的现象才能得以显现。这个演化要求一个最终的项,它的存在仅仅依赖于一种深信不疑的感觉、肯定和接受的感觉,一种直接给予的感觉。评价对于客体有着非常相同的关系。关于一个客体价值的所有论据,都只不过是必须承认客体的价值与预先设定的一样,在其被接受的时候,客体的价值与另一客体的价值不

indubitable for another object. We will later analyse the motives of this action. Here it will suffice to say that what we consider a proof of value is only the transference of an existing value to a new object. It does not reveal the essence of value, or the reason why value was originally attached to the object from which it is transferred to others.

If we accept the existence of a value, then the process of its realization, its evolution, can be comprehended rationally, because in general it follows the structure of the contents of reality. That there is a value at all, however, is a primary phenomenon. Value inferences only make known the conditions under which values are realized, yet without being produced by these conditions, just as theoretical proofs only prepare the conditions that favor the sense of affirmation or of existence. The question as to what value really is, like the question as to what being is, is unanswerable. And precisely because they have the same formal relation to objects, they are as alien to each other as are thought and extension for Spinoza. Since both express the same absolute substance, each in its own way and perfect in itself, the one can never encroach upon the other. They never impinge upon each other because they question the concepts of objects from completely different points of view. But this disjunctive parallelism of reality and value does not divide the world into a sterile duality, which the mind with its need for unity could never accept – even though its destiny and the method of its quest may be to move incessantly from diversity to unity and from unity to diversity. What is common to value and reality stands above them; namely the contents, which Plato called ‘ideas’, the qualitative, that which can be signified and expressed in our concepts of reality and value, and which can enter into either one or the other series. Below these two categories lies what is common to both: the soul, which absorbs the one or produces the other in its mysterious unity. Reality and value are, as it were, two different languages by which the logically related contents of the world, valid in their ideal unity, are made comprehensible to the unitary soul, or the languages in which the soul can express the pure image of these contents which