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## EPISTEMOLOGY IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF REALITY

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**Abstract.** Contemporary cognition theory claims to be a separate branch, separate from philosophy. Would that mean that the other major pillar ontology would also become independent? What will be left of the philosophical body in that case? This, however, will not be a topic to be dealt with here, but only with this side of epistemology that is relevant to anthropology and the social sciences. The context of anthropology will give another status of knowledge theory to the human world, which is socially constructed. The problem of reality and truth will be related to what people believe and adhere to.

*Keywords:* Epistemology; Anthro-po-epistemology; social construction

The term epistemology is of Greek origin and comes from the word episteme – letter, knowledge and logos – principle, knowledge, word. It is defined as a science of knowledge and of how we know it. Every modern science uses the universal principles of verification and refutation that characterize scientific knowledge, according to the classifications of neopositivism (Carnap and Popper). According to these authors, we can say that every science or epistemology has its own or has its own epistemology.

Rudolf Carnap and Karl Popper are the most prominent representatives of the school of neo-positivism in the philosophy and methodology of science. Their concepts of what scientific knowledge separate the fundamental metaphysical concepts from the scientific. What is new in them is that they do not propose to raise scientific excellence in the rank of absolute truth. What can be verified, refuted or replaced in the course of research and reasoning (fakes or replacements – Popper) will be scientific knowledge.

The introduction of the term “epistemology” is attributed to the Scottish philosopher J. Ferrier, which separates the philosophical knowledge of ontology and epistemology (Filatov, & Malahov, 1993). At the beginning of the scientific reasoning on this occasion, probably the father of epistemology is Plato, who defines knowledge as proof of the “true” belief in the things that

really exist, and for him it is the world of “ideas”. The most important account of the epistemology of Plato’s theory is that we can not express our faith and / or assertions in anything until we prove its truthfulness and credibility.

An ill person can not express an optimistic view that he will be healed until he is treated by the appropriate authority, and so his belief that he will recover has the appropriate justification. Knowledge is therefore a kind of justified belief in something, and most epistemological theories deal with how justifications can be justified, such as beliefs in actually existing things. We can only believe what we know and know about reality. Knowledge is treated in an epistemological context as a theory of proof.

Christian or medieval philosophy has its own specificity, going along with theology. Knowledge has continuity and we need to look for its roots in the long period of development of the religious worldview. The classical theology, considered in the modern times, as a science in the face of the cataphatic and apophatic theological point of view, and is well before the positivist and the neo-positivist definition of science. According to her, the deity (or what “really exists”) can be defined in two ways, by affirmation (cataphatic) and negation (apophatics).

The first determines God to be reduced to human knowledge by attributing qualities such as wisdom, love, and so on, and the second way is to negate the same or an inability to bring it to none of these notions. But should we still have a concept? One of the possible epistemological consequences of the development and continuation of apophatic theology will attain an atheistic position, affirming the empirical (scientific) point of view. Atheism is not only a denial of the deity, but a consequence of impossibility, it is to be known by means of a certain cognitive instrument, namely that of science and philosophy. Atheism means that a substitute must be found to be traditionally attributed to the deity, not only on the path, but also on the affirmation. Faith will give way to Mind.

Historians of epistemology determine the importance of knowledge as what we could express with “absolute” confidence, while the fewer statements of confirmation are sent in the sphere of “probable affirmations”.

According to James Maffie, philosopher Bertrand Russell (Maffie, 1993) in his *Philosophical Problems* writes that the so-called “logic of reason or causality” has lost confidence in himself. Irrational or anti-scientific currents (existentialism, phenomenology) define the basis of knowledge as irrational, and mysticism claims that the basis of reality and the human knowledge of it are irrational meanings – such as faith, emotion or intuition.

If someone rejects part or all of reality and maintains the thesis that knowledge does not need solid grounds, he is defined as a skeptic. There are skeptics who, on a philosophical basis, accept causality, but only that based

on logical arguments. If it does not, then it can not get confirmation and the knowledge goes to a subsequent regression.

When knowledge is given a special status (or it acquires it as a result of its own self-development), this leads in parallel to a certain fundamentalism, as is the case with most philosophical doctrines.

In any case, however, in epistemology and modernity, epistemology will also focus on the problem of knowledge in terms of its purpose, construction, and social affirmation. Also important are the ways in which unanimity is achieved among its creators, bearers and agents. In modern philosophical tradition, for example, with writers such as Michel Foucault (1975), he will interpret discourse as a sort of “unanimity”, and Habermas (1971) will say that “...truth is a matter of consensus”.

Neo-positivism or logical positivism in the face of Rudolf Carnap and Karl Popper poses epistemological problems and, in particular, scientific knowledge under the principle of refutation and “falsification”. According to this principle, any particular scientific knowledge contains within itself the principle of being tested and refuted, and that is the path of its development. The opportunity for knowledge to be periodically “replaced”, which will in turn give way to the doctrine of “paradigms” – the basic scientific patterns that are changing in the epochs of the historical development of societies. Changing paradigms is the core of scientific revolutions (Kuhn, 1970).

Examples of such developments, such as Thomas Kuhn, are: the Ptolemy model and the heliocentric system, and the other example of Lobachevsky’s Euclidean and Non-Euclidian Geometry.

The persistence in the interpretation of epistemological issues and theories of truth is dictated by scientific and social revolutions over the last two hundred years, where knowledge is no longer the priority of a handful of dedicated and well-chosen people, but becomes accessible to the public and is therefore probably highly relativistic.

Today, accessibility to education (mostly humanitarian and social) makes possible an increasing plurality of beliefs in both scientific and everyday consciousness. The observation of processes of mutual penetration of scientific disciplines, the emergence of interdisciplinarity, as well as the dialogue between cultures complicate and significantly enrich the cognitive processes of social agents.

The search for the foundations and foundations of beliefs, knowledge and beliefs becomes more and more difficult on absolutist – fundamentalist points of view, which is embodied in some theories, as ideologies of a totalitarian type.

Post-modern age and the information society make it increasingly difficult to apologize to „the same,“ Levinas argues, and the achievement of established patterns risks drowning in the chaos of the super-speeds of transmitting

information that is in a constant dynamism that is increasingly identified with knowledge and thought ultra-fast movement of information).

The constant attack on the senses from the means of transmitting information associated with the process of knowledge accumulation is a constant racing with time is also the result of the stress of the inability to clarity and clarity so dreamed of by the French philosopher René Descartes, centuries ago.

Perhaps there is no other epoch in human development, as the modern one in which the impossibility of the “logic of reason” referred to above is not so endangered.

The thesis that stands out here is that of Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann that reality is socially constructed.

Fundamentalist concepts are a fragmented and formalized way of conceiving human knowledge. Social construct can unite these concepts into the meanings of social interactions. Fundamentalism is the root of the “rhetorical illusion” (Bourdieu, 1994), and if it is entangled in the social context, it can be dealt with in a more special sense of power interactions.

It does not matter what the world is, but who determines it, who will express its meaning, especially at a worldly level, by priests and priests, and today by philosophers and theoreticians.

Most theories today are geared towards the “dynamics” of the mind and the creative potential of human consciousness, based on the inability to fully formalize the natural language. The “reflective” functions of reality are displaced by the imaginary – constructive aspects of the consciousness inherent in individuals.

One of the main pillars of philosophy needs change and redefinition to save epistemology, or, as Maffie contended, sociology needs not only history but also sociology.

The justification of true convictions or what classical epistemology seeks to prove in its entirety will be replaced by what social agents support and live with. Classical epistemology relies on an abstract subject, and the idea here is to replace it with a real social agent(s).

The sociological alternative to classical epistemology is not simply the “injection” of sociology as a life-saving obsolete epistemological body element. It aims to put a fresh start on the consideration of knowledge problems in an anthropological context.

It seems to us that the natural next step knowing and recognizing in the social fields of meanings will be the real epistemological successor of a new look at the problem of knowledge.

Scientists are those social individuals who possess a large set of cognitive assessments. The ability of agents to make an epistemological assessment will be a necessity and necessity related to human activity in the general sense.

Reconsidering the issue of social beliefs and knowledge from the point of truth and fault will increasingly be in terms of criteria that the agents build on their own. This will be the most important issue for social construction of reality. Creating social criteria for authenticity and credibility by the agents themselves is the subject of anthropo-epistemology.

Similar processes form in social agents symbolic (linguistic) universes of a new type. The results of this will be the formation of more specific criteria for truth, probation and error. Agents will accept not all apparently at first sight true, but from the point of view of the survival of beliefs and beliefs in a more utilitarian sense. It has long been talked about the existence of not only scientific but also social rationality. The idea here is to specify and develop to the highest degree the significance of this rationality, in the context of anthropo-epistemology.

Re-identification of the problem of truth and error in the logical relationship between judgments to the beliefs and beliefs of the people is the outcome of the crisis in which epistemology has entered. Criteria of truth will come to the level of everyday consciousness and will be interpreted in a socio-cultural and anthropological context.

Anthropoepistemology studies the character of human epistemological actions in the behavior of social agents. Such will be the task of a social epistemology that will expand its own scope. The syntheses between science and socially active knowledge – a cooperative behavior among them will be the basis of the formation of criteria for truth and fault on a daily basis.

This is a new epistemology that preserves only one thinking skeleton of the previous one by bringing it into the broad social, sociological and even anthropological context, since the sciences are social, they are actually a product of human activity.

It seems that everything comes to the end of an era, considering knowledge as self-sufficient only on its own justification. The presence of a context of “this” or “who judges, judges or names”, social agents who build their own criteria of truth is the contribution to contemporary anthropological epistemological theory.

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