SAYING THE WORLD OR THE STRUCTURAL ISOMORPHISM OF LANGUAGE AND THE WORLD?

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Summary:

If it's true that language is innate to man, it's not spontaneously established that everything in language is structured and ordered, as the Greeks thought of the *cosmos* or *the universe*. On the contrary, in the eyes of its users, language appears to be a place of conflict and controversy. In proposing to question, among others, MOULOUD and WITTGENSTEIN on language and the world it is supposed to reveal, we would like to show that, beyond the frictions and ambiguities of all kinds that it carries, human language, like the world, possesses a logical structure, reflecting order, measure and clarity.

Key words: Saying, language, world, representation, structure.

Introduction

Does language enable us to describe or say the world, or on the contrary, is it the world that structures our ability to think and therefore to say things? In either case, something appears to be fundamental to the ability of language to tell the world, or conversely, of the world to be represented by language. This thing, we might say, is structure. What, then, is structure? How, then, does it enable language and the world to reveal each other? Various approaches are possible. Among them, those developed by MOULOUD, WOLFF and WITTGENSTEIN are of particular interest in this reflection.

I- From the need for conceptual clarity to the elucidation of the status of human language

A coherent discourse on language in philosophy is nothing new. What is new is the possibility of a historical and critical analysis of the question: "Does man possess language?" and the question: "Is its use by man acquired or innate? Reflections on

language have existed since the earliest days of philosophical thought, and seem to have crossed all epochs, right up to. If the history of science and knowledge is to be believed, philosophers were the first to take an interest in language issues.

1-1. Definition by the origin and historicity of language

The origin of human language has always been of interest to thinkers. However, the question of the origin of language is not a completely straightforward one. It gives rise to a number of reasoning options. Some would argue that man was born or appeared with language. But this view is not shared by all. Reflection on the origin of language goes back a long way. As far back as antiquity, Aristotle paid particular attention to the question of language. Language is said to be a faculty or attribute unique to man. Aristotle defined man as "the living being who possesses language". In other words, linguistic capacity seems to belong uniquely to man. According to him, language is the specific difference of the human species. It is at this price that man becomes the *Çœov Aoyov s'xov.* The translation of this expression makes man a rational animal, a reasonable animal. Better still, man is the animal that has speech (ARISTOTE, *Metaphysics,* r, 5, 1009 a 16-22). It is language, in fact, that enables man to think and communicate his ideas.

In *The Cratylus,* one of Plato's dialogues composed between the V^{e} and IV^{e} centuries BC, we see Socrates trying to determine whether language is a system of arbitrary or natural signs demonstrating an intrinsic relationship with what they represent (Cf. KEDE, 2022-2023). For Socrates, words are instruments that enable us to name reality. This enables them to weave a relationship with that reality. Indeed, for him, everything has a consistency of its own, and the actions that flow from it cannot depend on us. In Plato's *Cratylus,* language is linked to reality. But speaking is an act (Euthydemus, 2008, p. 2204), and this act is undoubtedly proper to the subject.

In addition to the period of the Ancients, the question of the origin or historicity of language has recently taken on considerable importance. It revolves around comparative, linguistic, typological, pragmatic, sociological, ethnological, genetic and archaeological approaches. For this reason, it's important not to mix the

perspectives of knowledge in relation to the two independent themes: the origin of language and the origin of languages. For languages can also be vehicles of knowledge.

Many modern thinkers have taken it upon themselves to reflect on the historicity of language. Among these is Christoph Wulf, for whom language has "always been considered the *conditio humana* par excellence, which distinguishes it from other living beings" (WULF, 2013, pp. 233-237). For evolutionists, language is something acquired only recently. Eors Szathmâry and John Maynard Smith argue that the appearance of language is the most recent of the eight transitions[1] in the process of life. It is thanks to these eight transitions, which are unique to humans, that we can observe the emergence of human societies (Cf. MAYNARD, SZATHMÂRY, Oxford 1998). This would mean that language is unique to man, as the Aristotelian conception would have it. The Greeks, for their part, called man *"an-thropos"*, due to his upright position, which was a condition for the development of language. This position set in motion the body's other organs, such as the hands, directly linked to the brain, and enabled the development of the phonation and hearing systems. So, for them, language was born of a need to know and *"appetitus noscendi"* (WULF, 2013, pp. 233-237). Historically, the speed with which language was acquired led us to believe that it was a faculty of the mind.

It's not worth defining human language as Popper's ability to communicate. Because animals, too, do communicate with each other. In other words, the ability to communicate is not what is absent in animals. So, if for René Descartes the difference between human and animal language lies at the level of thought, for Popper what animal language lacks is the descriptive function that enables it to describe reality, i.e. the world. What's more, animals lack the ability to put forward "arguments" (ZARADER, 2002). Animal communication therefore remains imperfect compared to human communication. This implies that animals can only

[1] These include: the origin of life, unicellular prokaryotes and eukaryotes, asexual and then sexual reproduction, the transition to the multicellular state, cooperation at all levels, organelles, cells, organisms and even societies, including our own.

act by instinct.

1-2. The structure: its types or forms

From the Latin *"structura"*, "structure" means "arrangement", "disposition". In a broad sense, structure is a "set of parts or elements such that each has meaning and can be defined only in relation to the others" (MORFAUX, 1980, p. 344). According to the Dictionary of Philosophy, in the field of the human sciences, it designates a system or model of abstract, non- empirically graspable relationships that renders intelligible the functioning of human activities or organizations (Cf. RUSS, 1991, p. 276). The notion of structure already existed in antiquity. Indeed, the question of structure came to the fore among the Ancients, in the field of architecture for example. We can also see the application of the notion of structure in Aristotle's view that society is structured, even hierarchical (man is a political animal). We can therefore say that the notion of structure has permeated the history of mankind. For man has always had to make use of structure in everything he does. So, everything man does follows and is done according to structure. We can dare to say that man is a being of structure, indeed, a structured being. All human action is therefore structure. Man, for example, possesses the faculty of speech. As a result, no language can exist without structure. Now, beyond the ancient arts, ancient thinkers made use of speech, language and language. And there can be no speech, language or language without structure.

In contemporary times, Lévi-Strauss sees the notion of structure as a system that remains identical through transformations (RUSS, 1991, p. 277). For Jean Piaget, structure means a system of transformations with laws as a system. In his work *La pensée scientifique moderne* (ULLMO, 1993, p. 99), Jean Ullmo states that:

> "a structure is a set of relationships considered as characteristic between elements whose identity and even nature is, up to a certain point, indifferent, and which can subsequently be changed or replaced by other similar or indifferent elements without the structure being altered".

Furthermore, with Noël Mouloud (1969, p. 15), we understand the term structure in our context to mean "systems of relationships and operations by which these

relationships are transformed according to certain rules".

As for the different forms it takes or can take, let's point out that, as a set of relationships within a system, structure can be a whole made up of interdependent phenomena, such that each depends on the other and can only be what it is in relation to it. There are several types of structure. The structure of an organization can be defined as the set of rules for distributing authority, tasks, control and coordination. Henry Mintzberg, in his work *Organizational Structure and Dynamics,* defines organizational structure as the sum total of the means employed to divide work into distinct tasks and then to ensure coordination between these tasks. There are five main types of organizational structure: hierarchical, functional, divisional, staff and line, and matrix. We also have the data structure. This is a special format for organizing, processing, extracting and storing data.

Data structures are generally used to implement the physical forms of abstract data types. A data structure can also be a logical structure whose function is to contain (mathematical) data. We can distinguish between the following types of data structure: arrays, which store a group of elements in contiguous memory locations. This makes it easier to calculate or retrieve elements of the same type in the same location. In this way, there's a mathematical structure. In mathematical logic (and therefore in analytic philosophy), a structure is a set with functions and relations defined on this set. Natural structures are types of structure that escape all human intervention. A tree and an apple, for example, are forms of natural structure. Artificial structures, as opposed to natural structures, are built by humans. Examples of artificial structures include a chair, a television, etc. Finally, a social structure describes the organization of societies.

To talk about language in relation to the world is to talk about the structures and levels of which language and the world are made. If language is the most appropriate of all the means by which humans communicate, then we can conclude that none of language's productions escape this natural imposition. Conceived in this way, to deal with the relationship or structure of language and the world is also to deal with concepts related to cognitive activity, which falls within the domain of

epistemological knowledge. Man says and is said through language. Language is the vehicle of being, i.e. of the world and of man. By and through language, the world is revealed.

The structural point of view is philosophically recommended for reflection on the dimension of objectivity that language introduces into thought. However, so as not to transform structures, it is very important for us to specify how they inform meanings without interrupting the life of meaning, and how this mutual existence of form and meaning appears in the various exercises of the function of language. In the field of the exact sciences, symbolism intervenes to communicate representations or meanings formed without it. It itself contributes to the construction of objects. The mathematician's formal, symbolically-formulated concepts build a bridge between the various fields of mathematical objects that intuition or representation could not. Moreover, science attests to the power of objectivity that lies in its own language. Wittgenstein wanted to mark this objectivity when he defined "science by structure-to-structure correspondence between formal language and states of affairs, making economy of the representations that sustain knowledge" (MOULOUD, 1969, p. 153). But the philosopher of knowledge is called upon to make sense of this metaphor. This implies that the objectivity of scientific language cannot be explained by an unconditioned property of symbolic structures that may reflect the order of things. Rather, it can be explained by the very operation of this language, which calls upon the order of objects to manifest itself.

For many reasons, the symbolism of science lends rational thought a force of objectivity all its own. In other words, it imposes itself through the internal coherence of its systems, and also because it creates a link between the minds that contribute to the work of science. Better still, it contains the elaborate conventions of the scientific city. For these reasons, a philosophy of consciousness or representation cannot fully illuminate the forms and stages of the fixation of rational discourse. Nevertheless, this kind of objectivity does not cut symbolism off from the dynamics of rational projects. For "scientific language is born or reborn from

the confrontation of formulas with experience, of systems with systems, from the confrontation of minds that renew the conventions of science" (MOULOUD, 1969, p. 155).

Language structures provide thoughts and representations with an "objectivity argument", and this is done in different ways depending on the case. Firstly, when it comes to the systematic language of science, language has an objectifying power because it helps to distance the design of construction, communication and verification from all the constraints of immediate experience. Secondly, when it comes to the spontaneous language of cultures, its "objectivity" means something quite different: "expression is anchored in a lived reality, a shared existence that precedes everything that can be signified" (MOULOUD, 1969, p. 161).

II- World and language: structure as the logical link between language and knowledge of the world

In the history of science, and more specifically in the quest to know what can be designated as true in the field of science, mankind has come to lay down foundations that are intended to be scientific. In other words, statements that must first be sifted through the sieve of reason before being considered as truth. The purpose of these foundations is to see what rationality can be found in man's scientific endeavours towards true knowledge. We see this clearly in the radicalism of the ancient thinkers who opposed the myths by proposing their thinking from other paradigms. In other words, we're talking more explicitly about the transition from myths, which are tales of a legendary nature, to reality, which is more a reflection of a type of rational discourse (logos).

2-1. From the rationalism of structures in science to the truth of knowledge according to Mouloud

From its Latin etymology *rationalis*, meaning "endowed with reason, reasonable" (RUSS, 1991, p. 240), rationalism is a doctrine that gives primacy to reason, or according to which human reason can lead us to the truth. In other words, it is a

doctrine for which everything that exists has a reason for being, and can therefore be considered intelligible. Thus, for this doctrine, all certain knowledge must come from reason. Moreover, experience is the organization that reason imposes on empirical data. As for truth, its Latin etymology "*veritas"* designates "the true", "reality". Something can be said to be true when it conforms to reality. So, for Saint Thomas in *Summa Theologica,* truth could be defined as the conformity of thought and reality. In other words, it is the conformity of mind and things. That is, when the mind is adequate to things, according to the received expression, it possesses truth (Cf. DURKHEIM, 1884, p. 14 PDF Version). Hegel, in his work *Philosophical Propaedeutics,* conceived of truth as the agreement of the concept with its objectivity. That is, only when the concept and its objectivity are compatible with each other can there be truth. On the strength of the foregoing, we might ask what is meant by structural science, whether there is reason in structural science, and whether this could lead to the acquisition of true knowledge.

Structural sciences can be understood as those sciences whose applications are more focused on formal processes and logic. We can distinguish the following as structural sciences: mathematics, logic, chemistry and so on. Is there anything rational about structural sciences? As for the term structures, our author defines them as "systems of relations and operations by which these relations are transformed in compliance with certain rules" (MOULOUD, 1969, p. 15). This means that in systems, we can witness sequences that form the structure by following certain precise rules. For Noël Mouloud, mathematics is the prototype of the structural and symbolic sciences, developing all types of pure structures[2] . In the usual sense, it is also the ability to reason, i.e. to justify what we say with logic. Whereas mathematics, in the broadest sense of the term, is the science of calculation. Subsequently, when we say "mathematics", we mean "reason" or "calculation" in one way or another, depending on the context. Mathematics is our guide to understanding the unifying, possibilizing and objectifying functions of structures. And this is only possible with the help of reason and logic (coherent

[2] These include: sets, groups, ordinations, topological correspondences, etc.

reasoning). Modern physics defines its objects in terms of structural properties such as "electrons", which are quantified states composed of stable energies of the atom. And if it has reached this stage, it is thanks to its use of reason.

Rational values predominate in these sciences, leading to a certain idea of rationality. Indeed, the imposition of the notion of structure on modern thought has very complex reasons, both scientific and philosophical. From this point on, structure can be likened to the application of new methods to the objects of exact knowledge. To better understand it, we need to know what is characteristic of these scientific procedures, and how they can influence the conception of knowledge of truth. Moreover, if structural characteristics mark the objects themselves to which mathematical schemes are applied, it is obvious that the physicist's atom is called "structure" in the sense that the physical changes it undergoes can be controlled by transformation rules derived from mathematical groups. The insistence on the most exact uses of the notion of structure is what achieves the unity of the scientific method, since it enables mathematics to be applied to reality. These uses have influenced the method of both "deductive" and "inductive" sciences. While the pure sciences freely construct similar systems, the empirical sciences are obliged to specify and respect the correlation between systems. What's more, sciences that reach a high structural level constantly mediate the concrete through the abstract, and the object through symbol links. This certifies the rational activity that exists in structural sciences.

2-2. The relationship between world and language according to Ludwig Wittgenstein

The first question that comes to mind when we want to clarify the role of language in order to avoid misuse and misunderstanding, as was our author's project, is the following: is ordinary language ordered or not? Does it have a logic or not? Is it already logically constituted, or must we invent an order, a logic for it? Wittgenstein's first answer to this question is "yes", but he then goes on to see from the structure of language that it is already sufficiently ordered. It is at this level that Wittgenstein's question of the relationship between language and the world is best

exposed.

2-2-1. The function of language according to the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*

The presentation of language we have just given does not yet help us to define the function or role of language in Wittgenstein's philosophical doctrine. To understand its legitimate function, we need to recall a few characteristics

- ✓ Language can be defined as a set of propositions: Is it a tautology to say that language is made up of propositions? It would seem so,
- ✓ It follows that to account for language is to make explicit the concept of proposition, and to discover the essence of language implies elucidating the essence of proposition. We know that "the proposition is an image of reality, the proposition is a transposition of reality as we think it" (4.01).

This correspondence enables language to describe reality. And this is the essential function that Wittgenstein assigns to the proposition or language: language serves to describe. This is what he affirms when he writes:

> "Reality must be determined by the proposition, either yes or no. To do this, it must be fully described by the proposition. For this to happen, it must be fully described by the proposition. The proposition is the description of a state of affairs. Just as we describe an object according to its external properties, so the proposition describes reality according to its properties. The proposition constructs a world according to the logical scaffolding, and this is why we can recognize from the proposition how everything that is logical behaves when it is true. We can draw conclusions from a false proposition" (4.023).

The proposition thus represents the state of things a s they can be when they make sense. The state of things is revealed in the proposition as it is:

> "In the proposition, a state of affairs is composed, so to speak, in a demonstrative manner. Instead of saying: this proposition has such and such a meaning, we'd better say: "this proposition represents such and such a state of affairs" (4.031) and "the general form of the proposition is: it is so (things present themselves in such and such a way)" (4.5).

The essential function of language is to describe the world as it is. From this we can

conclude that there is a structural isomorphism between the world and language:

2-3-2. Structural isomorphism between world and language

The world of discourse is structured on the world of reality or the universe. Facts are described by propositions, just as names signify objects. The number of elements in the structure of the world corresponds exactly to that of the structure of language: "In the proposition, one must distinguish just as many elements as the state of affairs it represents. Both must possess the same logical (mathematical) multiplicity" (4.04). Each element of language corresponds to an element of reality. Thus, molecular propositions correspond to complex facts. Elementary propositions represent states of affairs, and objects are drawn by words or names.

For language to describe the world, there must be an internal relationship between the two realities that binds them together. It follows that there is a structural isomorphism, or at least a structural homomorphism, between the world and language. Wittgenstein likens this relationship to the internal relationship between sheet music, notes, melody and sound waves, and what links them, what they have in common, is logical form," he writes;

> The phonograph record, the musical thought, the notes, the sound waves - they all find themselves, in relation to each other, in this internal relationship of representation that exists between language and the world. The logical structure is common to them all. (4.014)

One of the most important theses of the *Tractatus* is *bild-theorie* (in German) or*picture- theorie* (in English) or théorie de l'image or théorie-image (in French). However, a few clarifications *and/or* reminders will help us to better grasp the thesis of the "*proposition-image "* (2.12); the picture is a transposition of reality (2.12); as in reality. We'll call the connection between the elements of the picture its structure, and the possibility of its structure, the form of representation (2.15).

The logic of the *Tractatus* is founded on the idea that it is possible to conceive of a theoretical model that highlights the articulation of the representation of reality through language. In other words, an abstract model free of empirical connection

that obeys only the laws of logical syntax and the transcendental conditions of the possibility and expression of meaning in a certain way, we can say that *bild-theorie* is the thesis that signifies or highlights the structural isomorphism that exists between language and the world. We already know that the aim of the author of the *Tractatus* is to determine the presuppositions and conditions of possibility of an ideal language, free of all misunderstandings, ready to express reality *as* clearly and unambiguously as possible, thanks to logical scaffolding.

Thus, the primary function assigned to language by Wittgenstein is to describe reality in such a way that logico-linguistic propositions represent in the world the states of affairs to which they correspond. Wittgenstein's concern is to uncover this figurative function through a rigorous treatment of language: logical analysis. This consisted in breaking down the proposition into its constituent, original elements. To better explain the intimate relationship between reality and language. Wittgenstein devotes much of his work to this, using the image of the picture (bild). What the picture deals with is the representational relationship between proposition and state of affairs, between language and reality.

Being a painting implies that there is something common and even identical (cf. 2.161) between the painting and what it represents (2.16), and this something is the form of representation (2.17). However, the painting cannot represent its own form of representation: it merely shows it (2.172), (emphasis added). The picture represents its object from the outside (its point of view constitutes its form of representation), which is why the picture represents its object accurately or falsely (2.172), and i t is this representation that reveals its meaning (cf. 2.22).

The picture, however, cannot present itself outside its representational form (2.174), for every picture is also a logical picture (2.182), and the logical picture can represent the world (2.19). The tableau therefore represents reality, because it represents a possibility of the existence or non-existence of states of affairs (2.201). It represents what it represents independently of its truth or falsity, by means of its form of representation.

In this way, the representation of the world by language takes place in an internal relationship through the law of projection, which projects similarly to the projection of sympathy in the language of notes. The possibility of all similarities, of all figurative representation of our mode of expression, lies in the logic of representation. (4.045): hence, finally, propositional theory.

III- Rational structure and reality: the applicability of the relationship between language and knowledge of the world

Earlier, we had to prove that rationality exists in the structural sciences. We argued that it is the nature of rational activity that makes possible the construction and realization of structures, which combine the formal and objective conditions of knowledge. However, if we were to pause here, our point of view would still remain in an abstract, theoretical sphere. We would now like to show how rational activity within structures has a reality.

3-1. Language and knowledge

Indeed, as we have seen, no matter how technical the sciences may be, they are not disconnected from reality. This is why the pressure of reality on rational constructions and formalizations is exerted in all types of science, from the moment they seek their content in nature or in history, i.e. in the concrete. There are many examples of this in the natural sciences. Physics is a case in point.

From Maxwell to the present day, we have seen that physics deals with questions of energy and its relationship with matter, and that it cannot be satisfied with the ideal, abstract models of mechanics, since the analysis of concrete processes leads it into mathematical domains. This renewal of models in contact with reality means that the relatively abstract time of mechanics is not enough to control the actual duration of physical processes. And yet, the physical process has certain characteristics of a "history" that orders successive emergences. But when we turn to the human sciences, and more specifically to philosophy and sociology, we find that the encounter with a more complex reality possesses all the dimensions of duration and history, calling into question models that are too abstract and

schematic.

The question of the relationship between language and knowledge of the world is also of interest. For Plato, already in antiquity, the question of language and knowledge of the world are correlated. Indeed, language is the medium of knowledge. In other words, it is the vector of knowledge. We can never access knowledge unless we have mastered the appropriate language, in other words, what we want to understand. So language is not in itself devoid of knowledge. Nevertheless, the question of language and knowledge of the world is highly complex, in that each of the two terms contains a certain autonomizing singularity, i.e. a certain particularity. In order to know, we are obliged to use language. What's more, although human society evolves, language always adapts to the reality of its time. So, like knowledge, language is constantly evolving. In view of all the above, we can see that language and knowledge or revelation of the world are complementary.

3-2. Structural philosophy and humanistic philosophy: means of knowledge of the major sciences.

Among the sciences that attach great importance to knowledge are structural philosophy and humanistic philosophy. Here, we will address the question of modern and humanistic sciences. Better still, we'll start with what characterizes structural philosophy and humanistic philosophy, and end with what they have in common.

We cannot deny that the modern sciences have made important contributions to the emancipation of science. These include anthropology, linguistics, sociology, psychoanalysis and so on. Indeed, the natural and human sciences have now reached a stage where they study structures, well-defined complexes of conditions and relationships. This is due to a natural development of their method, which does not stem from any previous philosophy. But the results they find are likely to influence philosophy itself, which in turn depends partly on their conceptions and partly on the testimony of science. On the one hand, it has enabled the latter to

provide insights into the philosophy of knowledge and reason. And on the other hand, they present us with reality, whether natural or human (MOULOUD, 1969, p. 125).

What characterizes the method of structure-based sciences is that their object is the abstract, the formal, the mathematical schemes they use to analyze and organize experience. To speak of an extension of structural methods to the human sciences does not allow us to see a close and extensive solidarity between the research of the mathematician and the naturalist. To this end, we can concede that the structural sciences strongly associate abstract conditions with the concrete conditions of knowledge, and that they use the capacity of mathematical combinations and transformations to analyze with great care the relationships offered by the contents of experience. However, on the basis of their common character, we can say that "structural sciences think in terms of organized, systematized truths, and thereby dominate empirical knowledge" (MOULOUD, 1969, p. 128). This is only possible because they rely on the coherence of symbol systems, and distance themselves from the intuitive data of experience. We can therefore conclude that the structural sciences reinforce the objective character of their knowledge through their exact language and precise notations, while at the same time setting aside knowledge that is linked to the subjectivity of understanding.

What's more, the modern scientist has become accustomed to thinking within mathematical models, from which he or she can envisage the links between observables, experimental data and possible models. This is what gives scientific knowledge its systematic character. This changes Auguste Comte's classical positivist conception of knowledge, which proceeds from empirical law to empirical law, from a particular law to a general law. This implies that science closely associates rational and experimental values, using mathematical schemes. Moreover, to say that the structural sciences adopt mathematical models is also to say that they increasingly rely on the accuracy of symbols and relationships between symbols, that symbolic expressions are gradually replacing descriptions based on intuitive representations. Thus, for Noël Mouloud, generalizing the use of

symbols "not only opens the way to calculations for the scientist, but also replaces the vague intuition we have of relationships between facts with definite concepts that formulate these relationships".

It has to be said that the role played by symbolic entities as a link between the mathematical system and experimental measurements, shows us in a concrete way that structural sciences increase the "objectivity" of our knowledge. We could say that they give this "objectivity" a new meaning. To this end, knowledge is "subjective", in the fundamental sense of the term, when what we assert depends on our psychological capacity to understand, or interpret, the facts of experience. Thus, a historian's understanding of a fact, based on the information of living witnesses, and inspired by the opinions or values prevalent at the time, will indeed be "knowledge". For it will indeed have a fairly methodical and considered character. However, it will be based on "appreciations" and "interpretations", and will thus remain in the sphere of "subjectivity".

However, as structural science fulfills its program, it will reduce the subjective factors of "intuition" and understanding. For Noël Mouloud, structural science undoubtedly rests on two foundations: observation guaranteed by technical instruments, definition and mathematical calculation. On the other hand, this observation is devoid of factors of "appreciation", and this intelligibility of mathematical formulas is free of factors of comprehension or interpretation. In this sense, it can be said that a structural science achieves a maximum of "objectivity".

Moreover, we cannot deny that modern structuralist doctrines have been profoundly influenced by linguistics, which since de Saussure has been committed to proving that our representation of the world, the distinction of things, ideas and values, is dependent on the articulation of our language and the distinctions of our vocabulary. This would mean that semiology, which according to Ferdinand de Saussure is a "science that studies the life of signs within social life" (F. de SAUSSURE, 1981, p. 33), is moving from an old empiricist conception of the doctrine of sensations and images to a doctrine of language. According to our author, the structural sciences can initiate a new philosophy both through the

method they employ and the knowledge they provide about man. Better still, if we were to indicate the features of a "philosophy of structures", which would be the interpreter of structural sciences, we could attribute to it the general objective of "concretizing" the meaning of thought and action. In other words, it cannot conceive of the work of knowledge without linking symbolic and technical structures. This may allow us to see the project of a "structural philosophy" as an attempt to extend and renew the themes of a humanist philosophy.

Secondly, humanist philosophies show the relative status of truths and values. They relate to the progress and stages of a task that man accomplishes in the world and in history. However, the orientations of a structural philosophy and those of a humanistic philosophy seem to diverge. Firstly, structural philosophy does not give primacy to the "thinking subject", but rather to the "determinism" of experimental logical systems. Secondly, it does not emphasize the free subject, but rather the functional arrangement of the conditions of action. It is the philosophy of certain "objectivities", whereas humanism is above all a "philosophy of the subject".

Conclusion

In short, we have tried to highlight the opposition between the theses of structural philosophy and humanistic philosophy, by seeking to contrast the "objective" and "subjective" points of view of these sciences. But we need to return to what offers us possible mediations between the two points of view. In short, the major theme of our argument was not the opposition of subject and object, of sense and nonsense; it was, more precisely, the opposition of the abstract and the concrete, of the ideal and the real. To this end, if a "structural philosophy" can challenge or rectify certain themes of philosophical humanism, it is insofar as it rejects the abstract use of the idea of thought, of freedom, which would be envisaged outside any defined conditions. This means that the act of knowledge cannot take place outside determined logical and technical structures, and, similarly, activity is bound up with a real organization, made up of behaviors and expressions that are in touch with the real context: nature, society and history. Finally, to say that science "objectifies" human facts does not mean that it excludes the subject and meaning, it means above

all that it concretizes or conditions their situation. It forces philosophy not to use terms evoking human freedom as if they signified an overcoming, a negation of reality and time, but to think freedom and reality, project and situation, together. In view of all the above, we can rightly assert that structural philosophy is fundamentally based on "objectivity", whereas humanistic philosophy is based on "subjectivity", and that both enable man to gain access to knowledge.

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