

“DEL OTRO LADO DEL ESPEJO” (FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MIRROR).

REFLECTIONS ABOUT KNOWLEDGE AND SOCIETY

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Abstract

The intellectual role still has a powerful calling because the sacred fire of mankind has not been vanished: the action of discussing problematic issues. In fact, there is a minimum of cognitive grade, included in the most degraded analysis.

This particular wandering of the spirit, or the exercise of intellect, may be defined as every process which can be used to record a human experience. The best metaphor to characterize it could be a travel. Even there is no a spatial movement from a place to another, but there is an imaginary movement, in which the wiser, without moving of this place, constructs a space from a present situation. He travels in a land imagined by the concepts, the abstractions which make him transcend his specific conditions (Ortiz “Taquigrafiando lo social”) (Taking the social in shorthand).

This present article will be used as a pretext to think some of the paradoxes that show the intellectual task. We will expose below about the partial understanding of the cognizing subject and the social origin of cognition; then we will make some considerations with respect to the history and social production of the intellect; and, finally, we will refer to the language as a constructor of reality.

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1. Searching for knowledge

The search for knowledge that makes every intellectual awake implies certain contradictions. As Bauman (2007) remarks, it is often dealt with a failed effort to

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comprehend, i.e.: the failed understanding. But the author considers that the fact occurs neither as a reason of the complexity of universe nor its notorious amenability to contradictory interpretations. He only highlights the partiality of intellect itself. Consequently, the intellectual sets about its work loaded with its own past: capacity to discover. And it is noticed that he is limited to perceive-record the human experience.

In “*La busca de Averroes*” (The Averroes’ Search), Bauman (2007) explains that Borges makes reference to an effort to comprehend which has been defeated. And, thus, he reveals that any intellect, however powerful, bears “partiality” (p. 217). There is an important contradiction here: thank to its past, the intellect is able to see; because of it, it is bound to remain partially blind. And here is the concept of past that must be understood as synonym of history. The term “past” states that the cognizing subject is a product of the “social fabric” where has been constructed as a member of a specific society. In order to provide more consistence to what was mentioned above, we have to review the fictional narrative.

The Averroes short story arises specifically the case of a man who had proposed a goal that was not prohibited to others, but it was forbidden to him solely. Although he was a scholar- Bauman (2007) insists- he was limited to discover. The problem is, according to the author, that the tradition which constituted his intellect offered him no object to which to refer the meaning of an alien cultural product. In his labour of translating an Aristotle’s text, hard he tried to understand what the two strange words used by the Greek philosopher mean: tragedy and comedy. But the meaning of these terms was unfamiliar for the translator enclosed in the Islam. The Borges’ story simply deals with a valid judgment for any time of the history.

For Ibn Rusd, alias Averroes, the Hispano Arabic physician and one of the most important philosophers of the Middle Age, the things were of the following way: “Aristú (Aristotle) gives the name of the tragedy to panegyrics and that of comedy to satires and anathemas. Admirable tragedies and comedies abound in the pages of the Koran and in the *mohalacas* of the sanctuary”. (Borges, 1989, p. 587). When we know that panegyrics are statements or speeches in praise of someone; satires, poetic compositions which aim is to expose and criticize people’s stupidity or vices; and anathemas, death penalties to people or things caused by a curse (DRAE, 2015). According to Bauman (2007), the Borges’ message intends to explain that the meaning is accessible only when the subject may establish a bridge with the experience. Thus the

meanings – the author underlines- support a double bond: imposed by both the text and the author.

In spite of his knowledge, Averroes did not understand the concepts because the Islam did not know the theatre. And the wisest became a prisoner for having made of certain fabric. It means: the Islamic tradition of Averroes' intellect did not offer any object to which refers to the meaning of a strange cultural product: the terms “tragedy” and “comedy”. Bauman (2007) finishes as follows: “Words, when we comprehend them, tell us how to go ahead. But Averroes had nowhere to go” (p. 218).

There is no understanding without experience to which the object may be referred. (Bauman, 2007; Marro y Dellamea, 1993). In turn, the different experiences also offer different meanings. Moreover, this process of redefinition or production of sense appears determined by the specific society where the human being has been socialized. Thus, Žižek (2004) affirms that: “There is no perspective which has not been modelled by a specific historical horizon of ‘previous knowledge’”. (p. 29)

The short story named “*Pierre Menard, autor del Quijote*” (Pierre Menard, author of the Quixote) constitutes another example of thinking exposed here. Now, we should consider the substantial aspect of this Borges' creation. Bauman (2007) explains that the character Pierre Menard writes one by one the text “*Don Quijote de la Mancha*” (Don Quixote of la Mancha). But as he wrote it in other century and place, the meaning is different. Again the social and historical dependence which has each intellectual product has been highlighted; since the social conditions amalgamate it in the space and time coordinates in which it was conceived. (Bauman, 2007; Heller, 1994)

According to Borges (1989), Menard had decided to produce a few pages of Don Quixote, which would coincide, “word by word and line by line” with those of Miguel de Cervantes (p. 446). The performed task – Bauman says (2007) - represented a great challenge: to continue being Menard and to reach the Quixote written by Cervantes in 1602, but through Menard's experience, Symbolist of Nimes who lived since 1918. To such an extent, the author remarks that it was the only thing that he might have done and finally he did. “The second text was product of Menard, made by means of Menard's experience” (p. 219). In the facts there were two different texts separated for more than three centuries.

The evidence is visible. The Menard's Quixote shows neither “band of gypsies, conquerors, mystic people”, nor the figure of the King “Phillip II”, nor the “auto-da-fé”

(Bauman, 2007, p. 219). As the author said, all these “masks” that Cervantes would not have discarded by the simple reason that they had been placed in other time, a long time after the Spanish writer’s death. The sociologist explains that the old phrases have been given new meaning by the sheer act of their being seized by a new philosophy.

The Menard’s story is a product of the imagination of the great Argentine writer - Bauman noted (2007)- but it is not the product of the mentioned problem, which shows a second subject matter in the search of knowledge: “the endemic fluidity of meaning”, which is proper and exclusive to specific socio-historical realities (p. 221). The meaning is a part of the reader’s world so it is considered as significant only inside this world. Furthermore, meaning keeps changing together with the reader’s social background since this latter is not less free than the author to establish the sense. However, it has only the capacity to comprehend everything. This comprehension implies its intrinsic variability of the possible meanings and its interpretations. The author specifies that the subject is only capable of comprehending everything that is permitted by its knowledge; and it results from the specific social conditions in which the actor was conceived; or, from a reading in semiologic key, from the codes and subcodes (language and culture) which reach him (Eco, 1987).

We have to insist on this point of view: the Pierre Menard’s limitations go to underline unequivocally the social nature of the whole comprehension. So the individual’s full understanding may not miss something for which the possibility has no conscience. As for any intellectual, the search of knowledge for Averroes will continue being more than evasive and cunning. The ignorance veils persist in concealing “the social” presence.

2. How do we know?

The world which is displayed in front of the exercise of the intellectual role is a world of culture because, from the beginning, the world of everyday life is considered as an universe of meaningful for individuals, i.e., a sense texture that they will have to interpret to guide and move around the world. Unlike what happens with the realm of nature, Schutz (1974a) explains that such texture is originated in and has been instituted by human actions, their contemporaries’ and predecessors’.

To come to the point about the subject matter, we have to make an analogy. In the “Alegoría de la caverna” (Cavern Allegory), Plato (1998) refers that most part of the

reality that we know seems to lead to a reality which is understood by the shadow of the artificial objects. In the same way, men enchained to the rhetorical figure, depend on the light projection in order to construct images about reality for which they may not accede directly, but they have to limit to see the “shadows” of the true facts. Thus, the social patterns and samples are equal to the ideas and, in such sense, permanent and immutable, plenty immaterial; while the acts imitate the types and they are not confused with them. The human being is taught how to define the environment and typical constructions have to be formed in accordance with the system of relevances accepted from the anonymous unified point of view of the in-group. This highlights the social and contextual character of knowledge which appears in everyday situations.

Regarding to Schutz (1974a), we have to start establishing that the primary knowledge is the total sum of all knowledge known about a social world. In other words: a group of mottos, morals, little stones of proverbial wisdom, values and beliefs, myths, etc. And this knowledge is transmitted to the human being through a primary socialization process (family) and a secondary socialization process (school, mass media, etc.) The individuals are taught how to define the typical features of the natural aspect of the world prevailing in the in-group as the unquestioned but always questionable sum total of things taken for granted until further notice; as well as how typical constructions have to be formed in accordance with the system of relevances prevailing in the linguistic in-group which found the named thing significant enough to provide a separate term for it. However, Schutz (1974a) states that knowledge not only has a social origin but it is socially distributed. Thus, different individuals and types of individuals have it in different grades. The human being does not know everything what other people know, and vice versa, and the distribution finishes with very complex and esoteric systems of aptitude. So, knowledge distinguishes among the following categories: the layman, the well-informed man, and the specialist. There is an important social division of labour of epistemological character. And this division is settled on a social distribution of knowledge that structures the society and the social roles which perform their actors. The author highlights the fact that is translated into a deep separation and inequality in the whole society. Experts form one of the institutional causes of change of power concentration.

With respect to the common-sense thinking in their everyday life, men know these different dimensions of the social world where they live. Schutz (1974a) points out that

the stock of actual knowledge at hand differs from individual to individual, and common-sense thinking takes this fact into account. Not only “what” an individual knows differs from what his neighbour knows, but also “how” both know the “same” facts. It happens because knowledge has manifold degrees of clarity, distinctness, precision and familiarity. If we take as an example James’ well known distinction (1994) between “knowledge of acquaintance” and “knowledge-about” – the author explains – that it is obvious that many things are known to an individual just in the dumb way of mere acquaintance, whereas “his neighbour” knows “about” what makes them what they are, and vice versa. Someone may be an “expert” in a small field and “layman” in many others. Likewise, it is necessary that this knowledge is not only fragmentary, since it is limited to certain areas of this world; also it is often contradictory in itself and it has all degrees of clarity and distinction, from the full understanding or “knowledge about”, passing by the “knowledge of acquaintance” or mere familiarity, to the blind belief in assumed things (pp. 97-99).

We will insist of this point: knowledge and society are deeply linked. Knowledge, both special and general, comes from a matrix of action and experiences shared and conditioned by others. Every interpretation of the world of the everyday life is based on a stock of past experiences of it, those inherent to the individuals and those which have been transmitted by their parents or teachers that function as scheme of reference as knowledge at hand. Although individuals define the world from their own perspective; they are social human beings, rooted in an intersubjective reality.

Different from the nature world that, as the Natural Science specialist studies, does not “mean” anything for the molecules, atoms and electrons, Schutz (1974a) underlines that the observation field of social reality has a specific meaning and a structure of relevances for the human beings who live, act and think about it. Through a series of common sense construction, they have made selections and previous interpretations of this world that experiment as the reality of their everyday lives.

Due to this instance, it is proper to make some remarks with respect to the intellect role. Paraphrasing Schutz (1974a), the thought objects that the intellectual constructs to grasp the social reality have to be founded upon the thought objects constructed by the common-sense thinking of men, living their daily life within their social world. The construction of social science consists of a construction of the constructions made by those who act in the social life (Bourdieu, 1991). Likewise, the interest selective

function organizes the world in strata from more to less meaningful. The same observed behaviour (for example, an initiation ceremony as we have seen in films) may have for the social actors a very different meaning. The only interesting thing for a Social Science specialist is to know how to deal with a rite of passage, a war dance or something similar. The social reality has elements of beliefs and convictions that are true because they are defined by the participants, and they escape from sensorial observation. To such extent, the author highlights that knowledge, both special and general, is made of a matrix of action and experience shared and conditioned by others. Finally, a remark that we have already said but we need to remember: society and search of knowledge, or task typical of the intellectual role, take part two categories deeply linked. But in fact, there is another aspect that goes through this linking and we may not avoid: history. In such sense, Durkheim (2002) considers that society has an “immemorial” origin or, more exactly, constitutes a base that is the memory of the last generations. Although the author explains that it deals with a particular past whereas it may not be seen by us. And when we begin to think in a conscious way of our reality, we have already been constructed by it in its own way.

3. The contemporary cage

To think that the Faustian man may know everything through their mind represents other of the paradoxes of the intellectual role. To believe that the Social Sciences are nomothetic and may create universal and no historical laws is not more than example of a false solution. In *“Políticas de la posmodernidad”* (The Postmodern Political Conditions), Heller (1994) explains that the individual is captive in a contemporary prison. Definitely, modernity has given samples of illusory escapes. So we have to learn to live with the contradiction.

The modern man is a being who may transform the nature according to his needs and reason. However, even it would seem that he may know everything by means of using with his understanding; he will be subject to history. All knowledge will be conditioned by history. Thus, we consider that the infinite capacity of knowing that modernism has stated is a fallacy. The intellectual’s attitude in view of his task consists of living with the “paradox”, without attempting to overcome it: because human beings may not leave their time.

Within the Heller's perspective, there is another relevant point in regards to the task that the intellect has: the relation between truth with capital letters and true knowledge. For the prestigious Hungarian philosophy seems unlikely to reach the absolute truth. In fact, the absolute truth establishes the life in an absolute way and causes a very powerful impact on the whole existence. But it depends on the particular and subjective belief of each person. Instead, the true knowledge is relative and objective since it may be asked for discussion. What I have said implies to admit the confrontation. If there is a Social Science, some empirical acknowledgement, some criteria of truth must validate the search of knowledge. Likewise, if there are several interpretations, it will be rich and useful (Heller, 1994).

Diversity is rich as long as it avoids relativism (infinite interpretations) and the accurate positivism (an interpretation). But if we say that interpretation is valuable, it will not mean that any interpretation is valid. There are interpretations which are not supported. In any case, there is no possibility of giving definitions about concepts totally finished, therefore they will be given according to a specific point of view.

In order to follow a possible path to bring the cognoscible object closer, Heller (1994) appeals to the metaphor of the "nucleus" and the "ring" to highlight two levels of the true knowledge and, this way, to summarize what it means to theorize about social science (pp. 64-65). Thus, the nucleus is represented by a group of empirical data with which we are going to agree. For example, a document is contrastable, and in general it does not generate important discussions. If there was no nucleus, Social Science would lose solidity. Instead, the named ring gives testimony of the researchers' perspective. Its issue consists of the different perspectives about the mentioned nucleus. Likewise, it is the place of creativity and interpretation. For the Lukács' disciple, it is the richest space that has the social study. To such an extent, the equation that it can be seen immediately is the following: if there was some nucleus, it would be boring but true. But if the relation was inverse, i.e., if there was an excess of ring, we would fall into the rhetoric. Therefore, knowledge would not be sustainable.

The author proposes a balanced combination between creativity and solidity. It means that the theoretical critic has to be able to capture the good interpretations. So the pure ring implies a big risk: that Social Science will be become literature or ideology. Thus, it is necessary to look for equilibrium between nucleus and ring. This sensitive equilibrium is achieved through *phronesis*. This ethic virtue that, for Aristotle, consists

of being prudent, avoiding the extremes and pursuing the middle point. In this case, the true knowledge would be work of prudence and the researcher's ethics. A concrete expression of this art would be, for example, not to treat to the interviewers as means. All that is in relation with one of the Kantian imperative that says: People must not be considered as means but as ends in themselves.

The intellectual must leave apart the existence from an Archimedes-based point which questions the reality. It implies that it will not be supported in a secure starting point which permits to avoid the relativity of interpretations and create a definitely true and closed knowledge from discussion, as a dogma. It would not be more than a false exit to the paradox since it is impossible to give complete definitions. From a closer point of view, Gadamer (1998) explains that any interpretation comes from a spiral and, thus, it is not possible to reach a concluding interpretation because there are prejudices. And there is an insurmountable distance between the individuals and their texts which is fed from values and history.

Before leaving this paragraph to reflect about other two aspects of the intellectual role, it is proper to have into account a warning made by Giddens (1987) in relation with the hermeneutics of the social science. The famous sociologist starts with the idea that every generalized theoretical scheme, within the Natural or Social Science fields, is to a certain measure “a way of living in itself”, whose concepts must be controlled, as a practical work, causing particular types of descriptions. “That it is already a hermeneutic task, it is demonstrated clearly in the ‘new philosophy of science’ by Kuhn and others” (p. 165). Nevertheless, the author supports that the concepts of the social field obey to what he names a “double hermeneutics”.

This double hermeneutics is very complex, because its connection is not merely unambiguous [...]; there is a continuous ‘movement’ of the concepts created in sociology, through which individuals appropriate of them for the analysis of whose behaviour were originally created, and therefore they tends to become integral features of this behaviour modifying potentially, thus, their original use within the technical vocabulary of Social Science (pp. 165-166).

Interpretation is a spiral game that never dies. However, it is possible that the intellectuals may create a true knowledge in the field of Social Science. And in the dialectic framework, it is also possible that the intellectual may work hard searching for the truth. It permits the acknowledgement of the social studies as a science. Although they are very different to the formal sciences due to its central nucleus is the meaning.

And because, the intellectual role in this field refers to reconstruct, recreate and create. Otherwise, we remember that proposition of Wittgenstein (2003) when mentions that if a concept depends on a pattern of living, so it is important to wait a certain lack of definition of it.

4. The veils of the *Lebenswelt*

The first attribute of a society consists of its capacity of self-construction and projection over the years; and after the construction of other social facts. Among the different theoretical forms that deal with the theme, Luhmann (1968) explains that the societies may be reproduced themselves in their condition of autopoietic social systems. Berger and Luckmann (1979) maintain a similar sense when they support that the reality is socially constructed. Other aspects are fed with other authors' contributions, among them we may mention to Schutz (1974b), Berger and Luckmann (1979), Castoriadis (1993), Habermas (1984), Giddens (2007), Labourdette (2003, 2011), etcetera. All these authors have given, in their diversities, similar supports about the role of society to produce several social constructions.

People create, through the subjective sense that is attributed to their different everyday actions, a reality. But this same reality is imposed simultaneously and they are transformed in members of this world (Labourdette, 2003, 2011). As Berger mentions (1971): "In other words, the world created by the man reaches the character of objective reality" (p. 21). However, we have to remark that the statement which explains as the human being is formed by self, does not mean in any way to adopt a species of "Promethean vision" of the solitary individual. Likewise, the human being as a self-producing being is always and necessarily a "social institution" (pp. 71-72).

Society is a human product and anything more than a human product, but it reacts in a permanent way on its producer. It is about a historical construction formed by objective and subjective aspects, which interact in a dialectic and mutual movement (Berger, 1971). Thus, Berger and Luckmann (1979) affirm that: "Both by its genesis (the social order is a result of the past human activity), and by its existence in any period of time (the social order only exists meanwhile the human activity continues producing it), it is a human product" (p. 73).

Regarding this aspect of the reality, the society evidently has an “objective facticity”. And society, also evidently, is constructed by an activity that expresses a “subjective meaning”. For Berger and Luckmann (1979) it is precisely the dual character of society in terms of objective facticity and subjective meaning that makes it “reality sui generis”. The subjective meanings become objective facticities; moreover: the human activity (Handeln) produces a world of things (choses). The adequate understanding of the “reality sui generis” of the society requires an inquiry into the manner in which reality is constructed. (p. 35)

The reality of everyday life is not only filled with objectivations; it is only possible because of them. The authors note that we are constantly surrounded by “objects” which “proclaim” the subjective intentions of their fellowmen; although they may sometimes have difficulty being quite sure just what it is that a particular object is “proclaiming”, especially if it was produced by men whom they have not known well or at all in face-to-face situations. The common objectivations of everyday life are maintained primarily by “linguistic signification” (pp. 53-55). Since everyday life is, above all, life with and by means of the language we share with our fellowmen.

Berger and Luckmann (1979) support that a social world at all, in the sense of a comprehensive and given reality confronting the individual in a manner analogous to the reality of the natural world. For that matter, they conclude: “as” an objective world, and only this way, can the social formations be transmitted to a new generation. Through the process by which the externalized products of human activity attain the character of objectivity is objectivation. And despite the objectivity that marks the social world in human experience, it does not thereby acquire an ontological “status” apart from the human activity that produced it. It is important to highlight the paradox that man is capable of producing a world that he then experiences as something other than a human production will concern us.

Society constitutes a reality both subjective and objective. It means: specific practices are produced as a daily interaction with different social actors. After, this same praxis is given by people with a type of objectivation that considers that there is no problem, leaving it secure of eventual questionings. And, finally, the concepts are internalized and they form a pattern of culture with a naturally appearance (Berger and Luckmann 1979; Labourdette, 2003, 2011).

This relationship between man, the producer, and the social world, his product, is and remains a “dialectical” one. That is, man, (not in isolation but in his collectivities) and his social world interact with each other. And the product acts back upon the producer. “Externalization” and “objectivation” are moments of a “continuing dialectical process”. “Internalization” is the other moment of this process. Through this, the objectivated social world is retrojected into consciousness in the course of socialization. That is: the “apprehension or interpretation” of an “objective event” as expressing meaning, i.e., as a manifestation of another’s subjective processes which thereby becomes “subjectively meaningful” to any individual. In first place, the internalization is the basis for an “understanding” of one’s fellowmen. And, in second place, for the apprehension of the world as a “meaningful and social reality”. In the complex form of internalization, not only understand the other’s momentary subjective processes, but understand the world in which he lives, and that world becomes ones’ own. Berger and Luckmann (1979) point out that we not only live in the same world, but we participate in each other’s being. The fact is that every individual is born into an “objective social structure” within which he encounters the significant others who are in charge of his socialization and, in turn, these significant others are imposed upon him. Their definitions that his situation are posited for him as “objective reality” (pp. 164-166).

According to Berger and Luckmann’s words: “Society is a human product. Society is an objective reality. Man is a social product” (p. 84). Each one of this three dialectic moments of the social reality establish a relevant relation and each one of them correspond to a basic characterization of the social world. We summarize: both the subject who leads the intellectual role, and the practice itself that looks for discovering the object of knowledge, make aware of a social construction that results from the process that we are exposing.

Berger (1971) emphasizes that within the society framework where the individual becomes a person, acquires and maintains an identity and carries out different projects that form his life. In short: the society is a building company of worlds. In fact, this building also occurs through the infinite range of senses that may be exhibited in the intellectual production. And by other hand, they reveal the creation of the mentioned worlds, also called “life world”.

The notion of “life world” o *Lebenswelt* has a famous lineage in the field of philosophy, sociology and anthropology especially. This aspect rests in the last Husserl and in his

phenomenological successor Schutz. Both authors mark again and rediscover the social and moral value that has the capacities to construct reality, truth, and everyday life in human communities.

The everyday life world constitutes this realm of reality, in which man engages himself restlessly, in modalities that are at the same time inevitable and ruled. Schutz and Luckmann (1973) understand that:

is the region of the reality in which man can engage himself and which he can change while he operates in it by means of his animate. At the same time, the objectivities and events which are already found in this realm (including the acts and results of the actions of other men) limit his free possibilities of action. (p. 25).

When we analyze the first constructions of thinking of common sense in the everyday life, Schutz and Luckmann (1973) agree to mention that it is not possible to act as if it was “my private world” and as if we are allowed to miss that we are in front of intersubjective cultural world. This fact is supported by the following reasons: it is intersubjective because the individual lives within it “as men among other men”; since, from the beginning, the “everyday life world” constitutes an universe of meanings for the human being, i.e., a texture of sense that must be interpreted and in order to conduct and guide it. And the matrix of this texture of senses dwells in the human actions and has been established by them, by themselves and by their fellowmen, contemporaries or predecessors (p. 41).

It is important to mention that people create doing, with the subjective sense that is given to their actions, a world that simultaneously may be imposed to them and transform them in members of this world. The preceding indicates a particular interrelation. In fact, there is the subjective weight of the individual supports that social actors incorporate to their variety of personal production; but there is also the objective weight of this sociological creation that models to their supporters slowly and surely. Therefore: reality is a “social construction”. And this reality represents a human construction that has raised a grade of objectivity that impels the individual to acknowledge as such (Berger, 1971; Labourdette, 1999).

As we have already mentioned, among the realities produced socially, the intellectual is considered as one of them. And, in this dialectic game, also constructs knowledge displaying, this way, in its noble job of uncovering. Thus, to construct an object is considered as social demonstration in the intellectual field. As Foucault (1992) teaches

us: every story is produced from a particular place; and it implies to become aware of this place and of the modes of production of wisdoms.

We have described a part of the intellectual role: as it is a social construction of the other social construction (called society), that permits to see a knowledge crossed by the social wrap, in which are inserted the thinking and intellectual categories. That person who wants to reach the “*aletheia*” or uncovering of the truth.

5. The man' dwelling

Every thinker is a prisoner of his own social condition. Therefore, Durkheim (2002) explains that most of our ideas and tendencies – as those ideas and tendencies of any society with respect to how understand the reality and its different aspects- come from a historical and constructed externality which has been imposed. Moreover, the issue is founded on that which has been constructed artificially is a product of language: the big tool constructor of realities. According to what we have already mentioned, other of the paradoxes is revealed to put the intellectual role under analysis.

The human language is a phenomenon so internalized by the human being that it is not taken into account. It is the symbolic expression of a determined society, of the social fabric. And as Aristotle teaches, it is the most visible human distinction since it represents the leap of the realm of animal to the human.

The intellectual's task consists of constructing wisdoms and communicating, it is only possible based on the existence of a symbolic language that permits the transmission, the first tool of the cultural creation. Thus, the most interesting of the human language is that may carry a world without having to transport it. That is, this is an unique wealth: the capacity of abstracting and symbolizing.

The society creates a language, through which is transmitted all the wisdom and the doing accumulated, from history, in the culture. And this social production represents the marvelous of the social creation, besides of generating the individual and society (Labourdet, 2011). Thus, it acquires an essential role in the searching of knowledge and, in itself, forms a social fact of first order; constructed in the course of this long “conversation” that is life (Berger, 1971). The word has the property of starting the human being the eternal present characteristic of the animal given him or her power for the thinking. Without it there would not be any possibility of producing knowledge in

the intellectual field. This is one of the reasons why we are interested in emphasizing the importance of language as a constructor of human reality.

As a symbol system, Berger and Luckmann (1968) indicate that language constructs immense buildings of symbolic representations that appear to tower over the reality of the everyday life gigantic presences from another world. In the same way, language builds up semantic fields and zones of meaning, a great selective accumulation determining what will be retained and what will be forgotten of the total experience. In a similar sense, Gadamer (1998) teaches us that the word has a collective meaning. Since the word that is said to a person, also the word that is granted to ones' or someone says referring to a promise, it is not only referred to the individual word, but also it implies a social relationship (p. 16).

In summary: the language makes us capable of symbolizing. And, however, this capacity is enclosed in certain limits that the social fabric establishes. Thus, with all his knowledge, Averroes does not achieve to understand the concepts of tragedy and comedy simply because Islam did not know the theatre. By his part, the character Pierre Menard, symbolist of Nimes who lived in 1918, he only reaches out to the Quixote through Menard's experiences, the only possible way.

The facts show that the individual is a prisoner of a socio-personal or historical wrap. Since due to language, that is product of a determined society, the human being is transformed into a species of historical chrysalis. Even the human being is unable to move the wings towards the infinite like a butterfly.

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Nobody may think, discuss problematic issues or construct knowledge if they are lack of language. And, paradoxically, this same language is what does not allow us to think, discuss problematic issues or construct knowledge when we want to be free of our chrysalis. *When, as in a Faustian attempt, we want to put our heads out from the other side of the mirror.*