COGNITIVE AUTOCRACY OF THE OBJECT AS A THEORETICAL PRESUPPOSITION OF FOUNDATIONAL ANALYSES IN EPISTEMOLOGY: A HISTORICAL REVIEW

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Abstract*: A historical review of epistemology was carried out. The objective of the study was to demonstrate through historical data that the underlying presupposition that rules epistemological analysis is the cognitive autocracy of the object. To achieve this objective, the method of content analysis with a special focus on the traditional historical method was adopted for the study. With the application of the historical method to the data of study, it was easy to demonstrate the validity of the thesis that epistemology is bedeviled by the cognitive autocracy of the object. It was concluded that the problem associated with the presupposition could be obviated if behavioral constructivism as a new approach to epistemology could be switched for rational reductionism.*

INTRODUCTION

Every piece of research is predicated on some theoretical presuppositions, irrespective of whether such presuppositions are correct or not. Such presuppositions could be in the form of the validation of a research method, the acceptance of a grand theory as a legitimating myth or the decision to be guided by some unjustified theoretical assumption during the research. Apart from these evident presuppositions, there are many other background theories that are taken for granted in daily life that affect how research is conducted. One of such background theory, Quine (1969) points out, is the theory concerning how the meaning of language is to be determined. Given that the use of language is crucial to research, presuppositions about its usage equally affect research. It would, however, not be out of place to argue that researchers value these presuppositions, which is why they permit them to form motivations for their studies. Hence, all research is value-laden. Max Webber argues that these values do not affect the outcome of the process, because apart from the initial bias, every other part of the process obeys the rules of logic or the scientific method (Urry & Keat, 1975). Epistemology as academic research programmed, it is not free from this academic gale of presuppositions in its research projects.

It is the thesis of the paper that one of the most basic presuppositions that underlie epistemological analysis is the assumption of the validity of the cognitive autocracy of the object in matters of the possibility of knowledge. Cognitive autocracy of the object is the theoretical assumption that the cognitive object of experience provides conclusive grounds for the possibility of knowledge in total exclusion of the

cognitive subject (Akpan, 2017;2022). Hence, the search for the foundations of knowledge is often reduced to the search for the object. The paper demonstrates the tenability of this thesis by tracing how this presupposition has featured in epistemic analysis from ancient to contemporary epistemology.

The method adopted for the study is content analysis with emphasis on the traditional historical method (Lorenz, 1994). The sources of data include texts on the history of philosophy and original texts by philosophers. It has been shown in the study how the presupposition of cognitive autocracy of the object has had an enormous influence on the nature and outcome of epistemic analysis.

Some of the major concepts that appear in the work include: the cognitive object, the cognitive subject, and ontological convenience. The concept of the cognitive object is used in the essay to refer to the entity or the individual substance that is said to be known. Within the context of the proposition, it refers to the subject of the proposition. For instance, in the proposition *S is P*, the object known is the subject of the proposition *S*. What is known about the subject, which is here referred to as the object of knowledge, is the predicate *P*. The cognitive subject, on the other hand, refers to the agent of knowledge or the individual that knows the object. There is also the concept of the fallacy of ontological convenience that appears in the paper. This is a fallacious orientation in epistemological analysis, according to which epistemologists are prone to positing putative entities as ontological satisfaction of the proposition, where no external objects could be called upon to do so.

Cognitive Autocracy of the Object in Ancient History of Epistemology

Epistemology is concerned with the foundations of knowledge. Knowledge is a claim to the possession of certain truths. Truth can be defined as the correspondence of a statement and its referent, in the face of a definite experience, to a statement and its referent for such a pattern of experience, set as a standard in the foundational linguistic permutations of ontology within any language. It is not completely a problem of language. Language is a symbolic referential tool in a constative context for communicating facts. When querying truth, the querying is done within language in relation to the object under the presupposition of the becoming of statements. The proper transition from language to the real data is a necessity and is even presupposed in the investigation of truth properly carried out. Within such an investigation, the realm of the real is presupposed as actually primary to language. But since inter-subjective cognitive communication and investigation are not possible, the search for the correctness or appropriateness of judgement turns into the search for truth, which is a property of language. The practical cognitive inquiry in the search for truth is as follows: given the subject's abilities and the nature of the object, does so and so satisfy the condition for being so and so, or is that reality such and such? That problem translates into the problem of language because of the perceptual difficulties of the inter-subjectivity of cognitive life.

The necessity of the transcendence of language in the search for truth led the traditionalists to assume a picture theory of language and the

objective theory of truth. Parmenides stated that:"... being is absolute, that being is not divisible, and since all beings are alike … all are full of being. Therefore, it is altogether continuous that being is close to being "(Stumpf, 1982, p.16). This ran contrary to the nature of human experience, which Heraclitus identified with "flux" (Stumpf, 1982, p.12). To arrest the problem of foundations arising from this, Parmenides proposed the realm of gods or goddesses, who were the preservers of the real pictures. He claimed that he was"... borne upon the wings of a goddess that reveals truth to him. This goddess reveals two ways: the way of opinion and the way of truth "(Ozumba, 2001, p.68). The implication of Parmenides' claim is that statements picture reality because they are the words of the true photographers of the real; the gods and goddesses. The positing of God ontology became a necessary ideological strategy of the object's cognitive autocracy. It was a sort of *'deus es machina'* for Parmenides. The problem of Parmenides could be interpreted as the need to establish an immutability that corresponds to the nature of knowledge claim. Knowledge claims are necessary and universal, yet the immediate data (i.e., human experience) is fleeting. The search to reconcile the nature of knowledge with the properly empirical has created serious problems in philosophy. David Hume in the modern period appears to be one of the most affected by this problem in the history of philosophy. The conspicuous nature of Hume's predicament is founded on the character of his analysis of the correspondent framework in his investigations. The Sophists and Socrates were in no way better than Hume. The skepticism of the sophists,

especially Gorgias and Protagoras, is not quite far from the same cognitive autocracy of the object. Gorgia gave so much power to the object and discovered that the undermined subject is cognitively incompetent to offer the super picture. So, he argued that "nothing exists... if anything exists, it is incomprehensible …." (Stumpf, 1982, p.32).

Protagoras alternately emphasized what looks like an autocracy of the subject, which is not. Such emphasis was a mark of objective frustration. In short, it was skepticism of knowledge as a justified true belief. A vivid demonstration of this is in Protagoras' argument that what prevents knowledge are many things; "the obscurity of the subject, and the shortness of human life" (Stumpf, 1982, p.31). The implication of this is the autocracy of the object in cognitive exercise.

The Socratic quest for essences in language appears to give a picture of an elevation of the speaker of language, the subject. But a critical look could spot a representational semantic orientation. Socrates favored definition but did not demonstrate the subject's contribution to logic. To be sure, Socrates ended up striving to show how language pictures the world.

The problem of traditional epistemology became alarming in the Platonic system. The need to reconcile necessary and universal features of knowledge with foundational, fleeting experiences led to the skepticism of experience. Kant came close to solving the problem posed by Platonism, but he failed and became just another footnote to Plato, as Whitehead would argue. Being a footnote to Plato, is not contained in the acceptance of the proposal of the forms, both in trading

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within the same framework within which the forms were made possible. Such a frame is the absolute objective standpoint in foundational analysis. Thus, understood, it could be argued that the foregone analysis demonstrates that the cognitive autocracy of the object goes far beyond Plato to his predecessors. But Plato blew it open and fancied it with elaborate demonstrations. The search for an absolute objective standpoint, for the justification of knowledge claims, led not only to the skepticism of experience, due to its inadequacy, but it also gave rise to the fallacy of ontological convenience, expressed in the postulation of the Platonic forms. Hence, the condition within which the Platonic forms become possible is not religious but epistemological.

Aristotle was quick to depart from Plato (Stumpf, 1982, p.79). But as Samuel Stumpf (1982) argues, "the degree of difference between Plato and Aristotle is a matter of sheer interpretation" (p.79). The Aristotelian epistemology gave a completely empirical foundation to all of knowledge. Even logic, which is a cognitive tool, was painfully given by Aristotle to the extra-mental world. Frederick Copleston (1962) puts it thus: "The categories, however, were not in Aristotle's mind simply modes of mental representation, mounds of concept: they represent the actual modes of being in the extra-mental world, and form the bridge between logic and metaphysics (which latter science has substance as its chief subject)" (p.22). This reduction of logic to the empirical world is a cognitive autocracy of the object.

Ancient skepticism was a consequence of undermined confidence in the subject. Pyrrhonism represents a lack of confidence in the subject. Accordingly, "they claim that... our sense, our memory, and our reason can provide equally good evidence for or against any belief, against what is non-evident" (Klein, 1993, p. 457). The problem with pyrrhonists is that the subject has no ability to produce knowledge beyond what the object offers. Klein writes thus: "even the Pyrrhonist sceptics who held that we should refrain from assenting to any non-evident proposition had no such hesitancy about assenting to the evident" (Klein, 1993, p.459). Thus, the bulk of ancient epistemic analysis is vitiated by the cognitive autocracy of the object and its attendant epistemic consequences.

Cognitive Autocracy of the Object in Medieval History of Epistemology

Medieval philosophy represents a confluence between philosophy and theology (Stumpf, 1982). The confluence became completely unfavorable to philosophy, which was reduced to the status of a sub-science, the handmaid of theology. The duty of philosophy was to "supply religious thought with a reasoned account of its various doctrines" (Stumpf, 1982, p.197). The objects of theological doctrines are unempirical objects, which can never ever be given to the senses. The claim to revelation as a source of cognitive data, necessarily, gave being to the possible elliptical spaces of language. The concept of "is" became understood as a verb meaning "to be", representing being. Thus, in medieval grammar, language was viewed as expressions that possess mental sense or referents that picture the objective referents. The ontological implication of this is the possibility of all the beings referred to in language. Within this

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frame of mind, the mediaeval God and heavenly beings were protected. This necessary existence of reference for language gave rise to an indiscriminate imputation of being, against which William of Ockam reacted with the razor. Thus, he contended that what can be explained on fewer principles is overcomplicated by more (Stumpf, 1982). These principles could be otherwise stated as follows: entities need not be multiplied beyond necessity. Quine feels that those who posit and support Plato's Beard are dulling the edge of this razor' (Quine, 1971, p.2). But the beard itself is occasioned by the cognitive autocracy of the object.

The consequence of this autocracy for mediaeval science is demonstrated in its foundation of "concept words." The problem of universals found its root in mediaeval philosophy (Quine, 1971). The various solutions given to this problem were conditioned by the cognitive autocracy of the object. Thus, they were solutions based on the absence of the object. Realism was a form of Platonism (Stumpf, 1982). Conceptualism was a form of mental realism (Stumpf, 1982). Nominalism was skepticism of objects (Stumpf, 1982). Thus, like ancient epistemology, mediaeval epistemology also suffered the consequences of the cognitive autocracy of objects.

Cognitive Autocracy of the Object in Modern History of Epistemology

The systematic development of the science of the foundations of knowledge is rooted in the modern epistemological project. The critique of classical science by Bacon was crowned by the proposal of the inductive method, according to which knowledge can be based on particulars. The return to particulars was an emphasis on the objects of cognition, over and above the subjects of cognition. The subject of classical learning was accused by Bacon of having been bewitched by fears of prejudice and impatience (Stumpf, 1982). The implication of this for understanding is the distortion of truth. The only solution to distempers was the cleaning of the mental state. Thus, Bacon's method and his hope were to make the mind's surface clean and smooth and to supply it with new and adequate instruments (Method), so that it could observe and understand the universe accurately (Stumpf, 1982, p.213). The idea of the mind or the subject implied in Bacon's analysis is that of the passive epistemic subject. Bacon, like all other traditional epistemologists, extolled the object to the detriment of the subject. Thus, he suggested the principles of induction by simple elimination.

The origin of British empiricism could be identified with Bacon's science. The whole empiricist project is the legitimation of the basis for justification, as the empirical world. The denial of content and logic to the mind in Aristotle came to fruition in Locke. Locke argued that the human mind is a blank slate (Copleston, 1964). All ideas have their foundation in experience. Thus, in knowing, Locke presumes, like Aristotle, that the intellect becomes the thing known. The implication of this is that of the conformity of the intellect to the object. The essence of Locke's empiricism was the world of experience. The blank mind only captured ideas of the primary qualification from the world of experience. Complex ideas are a consequence of the relation of primary or simple ideas. Locke believed that the mind, not things, contributed to the

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concept of relation (Copleston, 1964). Relation as such is also an idea and not a tool. Locke is better understood as the forerunner of Kantian epistemology. The absence of relations as an active object caused a lot of disaster for Locke's epistemology. Not only was it made extra-mental, the use of the tool suffered skepticism. Thus, substance became the 'I know not what'.

Berkeley's empiricism came with the goal of establishing an immaterial substance that would justify the empiricist project. But its spiritualistic phenomenalism became refuted by the '*ungodded'* Hume, who sought to wipe science clean of all supra-sensible concepts. The foundation of Hume's science was the empirical world. All the objects of speech are sought in the world of experience. But embarrassingly, Hume spared no class in his empiricist campaign against metaphysics. Quine (1971) justifies this act in contemporary times based on pragmatism (p.18).

The result of the phenomenalism of British empiricism became clear in the mind of Hume's and haunted him fatally throughout his entire epistemic project. Experience did not contain the basis for the necessary connection. As a result, Hume's impression was formed in isolated and discontinuous structures. The problems of universality and necessity cannot be properly addressed by experience. Hume sadly went about the world of experience in search of all the contents of knowledge. He only experienced the nakedness of reality and not knowledge. What he experienced was an atomized and discontinuous experience. Hume sought union in his perception, but it was not forthcoming. He called on his psychological inclination to unite reality, but it was all a figment of his imagination. The great Hume had a painful experience. The empiricist campaign did not include the annihilation of physics. Physics is true. But Hume's epistemology made science impossible except based on psychology. Unable to face the nakedness of reality, Hume saw no meaning in the world and called for suicide. But suicide was not forthcoming. Atomization was not merely the theme of Hume's philosophy. Isolation and atomization were things that he personally and painfully experienced. Thus, Hume (1965) writes: "I call upon others to join me, in order to make a company apart; but no one will hearken to me. Everyone keeps a distance... " (p.634). "Hume knew only atomized existences, atomized causes and effects" (Curran, 1996). The dreaded atomization of Hume's world resulted from the investigation of foundation by the exclusion of the subject.

Continental rationalism is not free from the problem of the absolute objective standpoint. Cartesians was an epistemologically civilized version of Neo-Platonism. The foundation of knowledge was given to the realm of ideas and reality was representational. The truth emerges, as does the district's perception of ideas. Descartes assumed that we possess certain innate ideas, in the sense that we are born with a certain disposition or propensity for contracting them (Stumpf, 1982).

The return to ideas as the mediator between reality and knowledge was due in part to belief in the epistemic incompetence of the subject's organs. The undermining of confidence in the subjects and a later desire to reinstitute it as a necessary agent of knowledge is responsible for the inconsistencies in the Cartesian epistemological leap (Stumpf, 1982).

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In the spheres of the Cartesian physics bodies did not impact on one another or cause motion in one another. Precisely as he mathematized bodies, Descartes rendered the world of bodies immobile. Faced with isolation and discontinuity, Descartes finds solace in a mechanistic God, who is the cause of motion and an honest being (Curran, 1996).

Cartesian epistemology, properly understood, is founded on the synonymy of concepts. It gave rise to what was later to be described by Leibniz as the truth of reason (Quine, 1971). Contemporary philosophy understands it as a realm of meaning. These meanings are independent and constitute the foundation of knowledge.

The epistemic problem of Cartesian thought is that there is a certain objectivity to that picture of reality. The art of speaking a language without contributing turns man into a completely passive speaker. Speaking in Descarte, as such, became an art totally dependent on the reality that gives concepts their true functional impetus.

Spinoza sought consistency in rationalism and was faced with a total insolation of substance. Leibniz refuted Spinoza, but he gave the realm of truth not to experience and the subject but to monads. Thus, in the spheres of Leibnizian science, truth is divided into two, namely, "truths of facts and truths of reason" (Qunie, 1971, p.20). But truth as perceived by God and occasioned by monads in their pre-established harmony is only analytic. Monads, as such, have pragmatic purposes in Leibniz's epistemology, but their reality is doubtful.

Kant sought to normalize matters in the sphere of epistemology. Thus, he proposed a revolution that was unsuccessful. The Kantian-Copernican man was intended to be an aggressor. But he never was. Rather, Kant created a realm of aggression and cognitive activity among queer entities that resembles the Platonic forms.

The idea of knowledge as a cooperation of the subject and object has a place in Kantian science. The denial of nature in Hume's epistemology became a threat to Kantian peace. Kant's claim is that 'Synthetic a priori knowledge is possible'. But how was it possible to become a big project to address? Rationalism denies empirical evidence. Empiricism was limited to such evidence. Hume, who sincerely represented empiricism, denied the logical content of knowledge. But Kant felt he had a cure for Hume's predicament. The problem of both empiricism and rationalism were identical. They both sought the necessity of knowledge in the empirical objects. Rationalism was caused to fly into mentalism, whereas empiricism became consistent and skeptical.

To address the problem of knowledge, Kant had to cause a revolution in the understanding of foundations. The Kantian Copernican revolution was to be the annihilation of the autocracy of the object and the consequent establishment of the rule of the subject. What is implied here is that we stand in empiricism to affirm a priori knowledge and in rationalism to affirm empirical contributions to knowledge. It was mediation. Thus, the general problem of Kant's critical philosophy became the possibility of a priori knowledge (Copleston, 1964). In a much more particular way, it was the possibility of synthetic a priori knowledge.

The importance of synthetic judgement a priori is that it is the

criterion of the *scientific* of any project and the determinant of the scientific extension of the knowledge of reality. All paradigm science, therefore, must contain synthetic a priori propositions. The quest for the possibility of pure mathematical science, pure natural science, and metaphysics as a natural inclination (Copleston, 1964) could be reduced to an inquiry concerning the possibility of synthetic a priori propositions in these fields of human endeavor.

According to Kant, synthetic a priori judgement is possible by virtue of the a priori conditions of sensibility and understanding. Kant's treatment of space and time as forms of sensibility is conceptualistic (Kant, 1965). The data received in sensibility is thought to be understood. The science of the laws of understanding is logic. The logic in question is not tool-oriented logic. It is a transcendental logic which is concerned with the a priori concept and principles of understanding as necessary conditions for objects being thought (Copleston, 1964). However, Kant's introduction of the realm of concepts fails to overcome the autocracy of the object. Properly understood, the Kantian concepts are the rationalist's innate ideas that form the foundation for necessity and universality. Thus, conceived, Kant was influenced by the traditionalist framework of the cognitive autocracy of the object.

Cognitive Autocracy of the Object in Contemporary History of Epistemology

Contemporary epistemology climaxed in logical positivism and Quine's naturalism. The logical atomism of Russell and Wittgenstein was significant for the project of logical positivism. The representative theory of meaning that was central to logical atomism was fundamental to logical positivism. Though the positivists did not re-examine their fundamental semantic assumptions, they dragged common sense under the illusion of uncritical semantics. Thus, Carnap discarded semantic questions as unimportant in logical analysis. He accorded importance only to syntactical questions. It could be argued that the implication of this for Carnap was in his belief that Russell and Wittgenstein had answered the semantic questions.

"The logical positivists had already decided in the Vienna circle to be loyalists of Hume and not of Comte" (Stumpf, 1982, p.424). "Russell was taken as a representative of logicism in mathematics, and Wittgenstein because of his demarcation between science and metaphysics" (Gillies, 1993, p.19). It is noteworthy that the agenda of the Vienna Circle was to oust metaphysics. It was a continuation of Hume's empiricist campaign. Hence, the positivists identified Hume as an intellectual warrior to fight against metaphysics. They equally incorporated logic into their analysis. But their logic was also a body of language that depended somehow on reality.

Carnap argued that the goal of analysis was to discover the meaning of propositions, which was the method of their verification. The fundamental assumption was that only statements of natural science and mathematics (logic) were meaningful. Every other statement was non-cognitive. They were emotive or nonsensical. These include statements on metaphysics, ethics, and religion.

Carnap, arguing for the physicalistic language of science, states that "it is the only form of language into which meaningful statements or

sentences could be translated" (Stumpf, 1982, p. 426). Carnap divided significant statements into two classes; the analytic and synthetic statements of physical science, which were observation statements or at least could be translated into observation statements, and were synthetic. All forms of tautologies or statements, depending on the meaning of terms for their truth, are analytic. Any statement outside this was meaningless, because the positivists thought that the metaphysics would never speak in empirical terms.

The total reduction of knowledge to language and later to experience or physical objects is the bane of positivism. The inadequacy of the project became clear when the verification principle became queried against experience.

Williard Quine was schooled in Carnap's philosophy until he established his independence. He began by rejecting the positivist argument that all meaningful statements are reducible to statements about immediate experience and analytic statements. According to Quine (1971), the argument is "ill founded" (p.20). Thus, he argued that:

Taken as a whole, science is dependent on both language and experience. However, this duality is not easily traceable in scientific statements... We have drawn our grid too finely, even in taking the statements as a unit. The unit of empirical significance is the whole science (Quine, 1971, p.42).

Hence, "the totality of our so-called knowledge or belief, from the casual matters of geography and history to the profoundest laws of atomic physics or even pure mathematics and logic, is a man-made fabric, which impinges on experience only along the edges" (Quine, 1971, p.42). The consequence of the argument is the impossibility of a one-to-one correspondence between language and experience. Quine argues that reference is inscrutable. There is nothing to refer to. The experience that occasioned the linguistic behaviour is no more (Ruggiero, etc., 2018). It all happens in an instant. Thus, he writes: "I have argued in defence of the behavioural philosophy of language; Dewey's that the inscrutability of reference is not the inscrutability of a fact; there is no fact of the matter (Quine, 1969).

Quine (1969) argued in his articles on "Naturalized Epistemology" that the input is so meagre when compared to the torrential output. Thus, the duty of the epistemologist is to detect the difference between input and output as what the subject contributes to knowledge. His naturalism involves the investigation of conceptualization. Yet Quine feels that despite that realm, there is regress in foundational analysis. Thus, he argues that we end the regress of background languages in discussions of reference by acquiescing in our mother tongue and taking its words at face value (Quine, 1969).

The linguistic ontological implication of Quine's thesis is demonstrated in his ontological argument that "to be is to be the value of a variable" (Quine, 1971, p.15). Quine argues that ontological questions translate into semantic questions. One is then committed to an ontology of the objects which he allows his bound variable to range over. Based on this, Quine refused to commit himself to the ontology of universals.

One would have thought that the man who proposed naturalism would have been patient enough to state foundations based on discovery. But

Quine joined the traditionalists to seek absolute reference in the objects. Faced with the reality of incomplete matching, he flew into language.

Evaluation

The above exposition of the history of epistemology, from the basic musings of Parmenides to the grandiose submission of Willard Quine, has shown that the business of the search for the foundations of knowledge claims has basically been reduced to the search for the object of knowledge. This search for the object is predicated on the erroneous unstated assumption that the proposition is a report on the ontological state of the object. Such a theoretical assumption would find no justification for the nomenclature of the proposition as a *judgement*. Calling the proposition, a judgement would simply amount to an alternative representation, not an essential characterization of the entity. But if the proposition were just a report on the state of the object, then on which part of the object would the description of relations be found? For instance, how does one discover the physical existence of a *dress* and its *redness* on a red piece of dress? Such a discovery is far from being possible, despite Aristotle's claim that properties exist in substance. To determine such inherence is to do so through judgment, which is the cognitive act of the subject. Besides, the universe of concepts or relations is not given in the object, but is derived from judgement based on experience of the object. Moving from a report on judgement about the object to seeking the same object without the mediating judgement as the foundation of the report is an unnecessary analytic leap. Hence, to say, for instance, that *so* and *so* is *such* and *such* is to give a report on the state of judgement about the object, not a report on the state of the object, because it is impossible to go beyond judgement about the object to make claims about the object itself, without such judgment. This is exactly where epistemologists make mistakes.

A logical corollary of the first assumption is the presumption that the configuration of the proposition is the configuration of reality (Wittgenstein, 1961). The proposition is pictured in such a configuration as a nexus of parts (Wittgenstein, 1961). Earlier philosophers did not explicitly state these facts, but they were implied in their programs; otherwise, there would not have been reasons for theories like Platonism, empiricism, rationalism, etc., which sought to satisfy the structure of the proposition by different forms of reductionism. However, determining the exact configuration of the proposition is difficult. For instance, what would be the configuration of the proposition that *S is P*? Assuming the concept of configuration to imply shape or structure, what is the structure of *S is P*? What specific reality would the structure of *S and P* represent? The problem associated with this type of argument is that of a leap in analysis; a leap from the proposition to the object in total exclusion of the activity of judgment provided by the cognitive agent.

Besides, there is nothing in the object to justify the necessity and universality conferred on judgement through induction. Hence, universal, and necessary truths cannot be satisfied by the search for an object. A comprehensive foundation of knowledge is, however, attainable if knowledge is first understood as a product of the interaction between the cognitive subject and the object and thereafter justified on such a basis. This

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type of epistemology cannot be attained through rational reductionism alone. It must come through some form of behavioral constructivism, where knowledge must be studied by investigating knowing. The resources of cognitive science would be of great benefit to epistemology in this project.

CONCLUSION

The problem that bedevils traditional epistemology, as shown in the historical review, is the problem of cognitive autocracy of the object. But this problem could be resolved if the epistemologists would reconsider the programmed of rational reductionism, which is the primary methodological predisposition of the discipline. A more inclusive approach to the project would be attained if epistemologists would be willing to embrace behavioral constructivism, which conceives judgement as a construct of the cognitive subject, using its cognitive abilities as instruments, but not as pre-existing concepts, to construct judgment, based on what is presented to experience by the cognitive object.

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