

# Paul Natorp and the psychologismus-streit

## Paul Natorp e o psychologismo-disputa

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### ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to exhibit the core of Paul Natorp's criticisms of psychologism. We expose the arguments that lead Natorp to conclude that knowledge cannot have a subjective foundation but must have an objective grounding. We argue that, according to Natorp, the problem of psychologism is fundamentally methodological. Psychologism confuses the study of the laws of knowledge with the study of the legality of psychical life. Thus, the problem of the genesis is confused with the problem of validity.

**Keywords:** Natorp. Psychologism. Method. Subjectivity.

### RESUMO

O objetivo deste artigo é expor o cerne das críticas de Paul Natorp ao psicologismo. Expomos os argumentos que levam o Natorp a concluir que o conhecimento não pode ter fundamento subjetivo, mas deve ter fundamento objetivo. Argumentamos que, segundo Natorp, o problema do psicologismo é fundamentalmente metodológico. O psicologismo confunde o estudo das leis do conhecimento com o estudo da legalidade da vida psíquica. Assim, o problema da gênese se confunde com o problema da validade.

**Palavras-chave:** Natorp. Psicologismo. Método. Subjetividade.

## Introduction

The Psychologism dispute (*Psychologismus-Streit*) was one of the most heated debates of the late nineteenth century. As a reaction against speculative idealism, a group of thinkers emerged in search of a scientific philosophy. Wundt, Beneke, and Helmholtz, among others, found in a theory of the mind a method that would allow philosophy to return to a scientific approach to the problems it faces. According to these philosophers, a theory of knowledge is developed on the basis of the theory of mind. The problem of knowledge is solved by making explicit the way in which the subject knows. The basis of the theory of knowledge is psychology. Therefore, the task of philosophy is to exhibit the way in which representations are generated in the mind.

Paul Natorp, a representative of the Neo-Kantian Marburg school, was one of the first philosophers to develop systematic criticisms of the attempt to ground the problem of knowledge in psychology. Natorp was one of the most influential philosophers in the dispute over psychologism. First of all, his contributions in relation to this issue had an effect on the evolution of the Neo-Kantian Marburg school. Second, his pronouncements had a great impact on the phenomenology of Heidegger and Husserl. Third, Natorp's arguments against psychologism were highly influential in analytic philosophy. Both Carnap and Frege argued on the basis of Natorp's developments on the issue.

In this context, the aim of this paper is to exhibit the core of Paul Natorp's criticisms of psychologism. We will study the arguments that lead Natorp to conclude that knowledge cannot have a subjective foundation but must have an objective grounding. We will argue that, according to Natorp, the problem of psychologism is fundamentally methodological. The main confusion of psychologism is due to a methodological error. The problems of this perspective are grounded on the assumption of the subjectivity standpoint. Psychologism takes subjectivity as the starting point of the investigation and considers the object as what is opposed to it. As we shall exhibit, psychologism starts from an incorrect understanding of the philosophical method. Particularly, the mistake of psychologism consists in grounding logic on psychology. Psychologism confuses the study of the laws of knowledge with the study of the legality of psychical life. Thus, the problem of the genesis is confused with the problem of validity.

First, we will examine the emergence of the debate on psychologism in the nineteenth century. Our goal is to show the relevance of Natorp's position in the philosophical debate of the time. Second, we will study the main arguments of the psychological tendencies. We will focus on Beneke's thesis. Beneke was one of the first philosophers to argue that the problem of knowledge is solved by analysing the way in which the mind generates representations. Moreover, Beneke is considered one of the pioneers of the 'back to Kant' movement. One of the challenges of Neo-Kantianism was to show that Kant had been misinterpreted by philosophers like Beneke. Third, we will study Natorp's objections against the subjective method. We will show that due to methodological errors, subjective tendencies are unable to explain the problem of knowledge.

## 1 The *Psychologismus-Streit*

Natorp's criticism of psychologism is framed by what was known as *Psychologismus-Streit*. The debate on psychologism was one of the most important disputes in German philosophy at

the end of the 19th century, and it is concomitant with the emergence of psychology as a scientific discipline independent of philosophy<sup>1</sup>.

By the end of the nineteenth century, philosophy is experiencing a crisis. This is recognized both by numerous philosophers of the time (KÜLPE, 1907, p. 11; CASSIRER, 1950, p. 3ff; WINDELBAND, 1903, p. 511; 513; 519; HEIDEGGER, GA1, p. 5; HELMHOLTZ, 1950, p. 147) and by contemporary scholars (DUFOUR, 2003; KUSCH, 2005, p. 2; GONZÁLEZ PORTA, 2005, p. 36ff; BEISER, 2014, p. 15). Philosophy had an "identity crisis"<sup>2</sup>. On the one hand, philosophy experiences a strong rejection of post-Hegelian speculative idealism, which is in decline after Hegel's death. There is a generalized rejection of all forms of purely abstract speculation. For the philosophers of nature, the Hegelian philosophy represented a 'complete nonsense' (HELMHOLTZ, 1950, p. 147). On the other hand, the evolution of particular sciences led to a reconsideration of the task of philosophy. For many thinkers, the return to Kant was motivated by the loss of credibility suffered by philosophy which started with this fall of speculative idealism<sup>3</sup>. Natorp shares this vision of the state of philosophy. In *The Logical Foundations of the Modern Mathematics*, he considers that philosophy abandoned the sobriety that for many centuries it had shared with the exact science, ending up falling into empty speculation opposed to the rigorous thinking of mathematics (NATORP, 1901, p. 177). The return to Kant was a reaction to the challenge presented by, on the one hand, the fall of Hegel's speculative idealism, and, on the other, the total emancipation of the sciences with respect to philosophy.

Hence arises the question of the relationship that philosophy has with the emerging scientific disciplines that are now emancipated from it. Philosophy faces two dangers. The first danger is to fall into a speculative metaphysics that cannot give a proper explanation of any fact. As Ernst Cassirer explains, some thinkers argued that philosophy does not contribute to the development of science. Moreover, philosophy could be an obstacle to its progress (Cf. CASSIRER, 1950, p. 4). The second problem that philosophy has is to be reduced to a particular area of positive science. Philosophy is not only faced with the problem of justifying its method, but it must also give an account of what its proper object of investigation is. Thus, while philosophers must dispute their objects of study to positive science, some scientists of nature consider that philosophy is not only useless but harmful to the progress of knowledge (HELMHOLTZ, 1950, p. 147). In this context, empirical psychology emerges as a science, and with it the philosophers who seek in this discipline a kind of refuge from the end of speculative idealism<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Windelband considers the separation of psychology from philosophy as one of the paradigmatic scientific facts of the 19th century (WINDELBAND, 1903, p. 519). Külpe, on the contrary, considers that by that time there still had not taken place a total separation between psychology and philosophy. (KÜLPE, 1921, p. 76ff).

<sup>2</sup> This expression was first used by Herbart Schnädelbach (Cf. BEISER, 2014, p. 15).

<sup>3</sup> Oswald Külpe argues: „Als dann mit dem Niedergang der Hegelschen Philosophie das Vertrauen zu dieser Wissenschaft überhaupt erlosch und eine gründliche Emanzipation der Einzelwissenschaften von ihrer Führung und Bevormundung einsetzte, da schien den Philosophen keine bessere Hilfe möglich zu sein, als die Rückkehr zu Kant“ (KÜLPE, 1907 p. 11). Following the line of Külpe, Martin Heidegger holds in one of his first published works: "When, with the decline of Hegel's philosophy, the particular sciences energetically freed themselves from the tutelage of philosophy and threatened to repress it completely (with positivism the precarious situation and the philosophy-dependent task was noticed), the only salvation was seen in the 'return to Kant'" (HEIDEGGER, GA1, p. 5).

<sup>4</sup> As Beiser explains: "The sciences now seemed to cover the entire *globus intellectualis*, so that there seemed no special subject for philosophy" (BEISER, 2014, p. 16).

## 2 Beneke's psychologism

Some of these thinkers take psychology as a new fundamental branch of philosophy (Cf. ANDERSON, 2010, p. 288). Friedrich Beneke is one of the main representatives of this current. Beneke believes that philosophy is the first science, the science on which the rest of the sciences depend. This *science of science* is ultimately called psychology. Psychology is the starting point of all philosophy (BENEKE, 1933, p. 2). Psychology is the grounding science of philosophy. Logic, ethics, and aesthetics are applications of psychology as a fundamental science. However, the incipient institutionalization of psychology as a science must be distinguished from the accusation of psychologism. The term *psychologism* was first used by Eduard Erdmann in 1866 as an accusation towards Frederick Beneke (Cf. KUSCH, 2005, p. 98). His criticism points to the attempt of some thinkers to make psychology the grounding science of philosophy and science in general. This term denotes rather a "philosophical accusation" (JACQUETTE, 2003, p. 4)<sup>5</sup>.

Beneke has been considered the pioneer of the "back to Kant" (BURKE, 1895, p. 29) and, consequently, as the founder of the Neo-Kantian tradition (SIEMSEN, 2019, p. 3503). Paradoxically, he was the first philosopher accused of psychologism. For Beneke, the starting point of philosophical research is the reflective moment of self-awareness. Man is conscious in the reflection of the mental acts that he carries out to obtain knowledge. This awareness of mental acts is the foundation of the possibility of psychology. The psychology that describes the processes found in self-perception is empirical psychology. Empirical psychology is the basis of philosophy (MESSER, 1920, p. 92). The possibility of obtaining knowledge should be sought in the mental mechanisms that allow the formation of representations. Beneke believes that philosophy must identify the origin of the formation of representations. Being is being represented (BENEKE, 1840, p. 67). The truth is based on mental representations. Then, philosophy must study how representations are generated in the soul of man. Beneke believes that logic is certainly the core of philosophy. However, logic depends on psychology (BENEKE, 1842, p. 21). Psychology will be responsible for explaining the principles that govern the formation of knowledge in mental representations. The generation of mental representations requires two conditions: a) a soul that has the senses as instruments, b) an affecting object. The sensations are the first elements in the elaboration of the representation and, therefore, the starting point of the investigation (BENEKE, 1871, §2). The intuitive moment is required for the explanation of the process of knowing because it is the first required moment in the genesis of the representation.

Psychology reveals the conditions that lie in the mind for the formation of these representations that constitute knowledge. Thus, Beneke proposes a foundation of philosophy in psychology. Through the psychological foundation, philosophy is prevented from the two dangers outlined above. On the one hand, philosophy avoids empty speculation. On the other hand, it follows the method of natural science. This path initiated by Beneke, as a continuator of the currents of modern empirical psychology, is deepened in subsequent years<sup>6</sup>. With the growth of the institutionalization of psychology as a science, the theoretical interference that psychology has on the philosophical level also increases. Beneke thought that psychology, as a grounding science of philosophy, should follow the method of natural sciences. Later, many authors will deepen this conception. Thus, arises physiological psychology. Not only were the

<sup>5</sup> This controversy on the theoretical level has deep consequences in the institutional sphere. The problem was not only theoretical but also the university positions in the faculties were at stake (Cf. KUSCH, 2005, p. 186ff; BEISER, 2014, p. 18).

<sup>6</sup> Oswald Külpe sees in Beneke a developer of the studies initiated by Tetens in the eighteenth century (KÜLPE, 1921, p. 82).

foundations of logic sought in the life of consciousness but, more particularly, in the physiological processes that are carried out in the formation of mental representations. Regardless of the differences, for all these thinkers, psychology is the grounding science of all the rest of the branches of philosophy. As we shall exhibit, this conception fails to give a proper account of the philosophical problems due to methodological error, which leads to a confusion between the problem of the validity of knowledge with the problem of its genesis.

### 3 Natorp's critique of psychologism

The work of Natorp *On the Objective and Subjective Basis of Knowledge* (1887) is the first *manifesto* of the Neo-Kantian school against psychologism (Cf. EDGARD, 2008, p. 54)<sup>7</sup>. Even though Cohen had already raised some objections against the subjective orientation of knowledge, it is Natorp who systematically develops for the first time the problem of the subjective path of the foundation of knowledge. Natorp incorporates these arguments into his *Introduction to Psychology*, a work published the following year of this research. As noted, this work is influential in the dispute over psychologism. In his *Logical Investigations*, Husserl highlights the influence that Natorp's arguments had on his own productions. Husserl expressly refers to *Social Pedagogy*, the *Introduction to Psychology*, and the article published in the *Philosophische Monatshefte*, *On the Objective and Subjective Basis of Knowledge*. Husserl emphasizes that it was these last two works that had the greatest impact on his thinking (HUSSERL, Hua XVIII, 160. A, 56).

Natorp shows that psychologism confuses a particular science, psychology, with a fundamental science, logic. The problem of knowledge should not be studied according to its genesis in the consciousness of the individual. On the contrary, one must seek a fundamental science that proceeds in such a way that it can guarantee the legitimation of knowledge in general. The subjectivist perspective takes as a starting point of the investigation what is immediately given to intuition. The intuitive aspect of the process would involve this relation to something that is immediately given in natural experience as an external element to thinking. This requirement emerges as a consequence of the subjective point of view. Psychologism confuses the problem of the genesis of the representation with the problem of the validity. This methodological error, as we shall see, will lead to the loss of any notion of objectivity. Natorp will show that objectivity can only be guaranteed if it is exhibited how the thinking process can produce its objects. The mind constructs the cases in the creation of laws. An idealistic conception of the law will be defended as opposed to the naturalistic notion of psychology.

The problem that Natorp introduces in *On the Objective and Subjective Basis of Knowledge* concerns the foundation of the method of logic. The question is whether the foundation of logic should follow a subjective path or an objective path. The problem is to determine if the starting point of the investigation should be oriented to the subjective pole, to the agent of knowledge, or to the objective pole, to knowledge as a result. As we observed, the defenders of psychologism, even with their multiple differences, agree that the foundation of knowledge must be found in the subject. These thinkers agree that the problems posed by logic can be solved by attending the subjective processes that give rise to the act of knowing. The central problem is whether, in the foundation of knowledge, the determining factor is the subjective or the objective. The subjective side represents the

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<sup>7</sup> According to Courtine, the target of criticism is Mach's positivism (COURTINE, 2011, p. 30).

subject of knowledge, it is the activity or experience of the subject. A subjective study of knowledge investigates the factual experience of the cognitive agent. The objective side represents what is known, the content of knowledge. The product is the objective side while the agent of the process is the subjective side (NATORP, 1985, p. 16).

Natorp begins his argument by accepting that knowledge has two dimensions. On the one hand, knowledge is an objective determination. It means what must be known. In this sense, knowing means the objective relation of thought to an object. On the other hand, knowledge is also an activity, an experience of the subject that carries out the knowledge process. Knowledge includes these dimensions that are correlated. These two dimensions cannot be separated. However, the problem is to establish the path for the foundation of knowledge. Knowledge means both: the process of knowing and the result (NATORP, 1887, p. 260).

Natorp explains the reasons why the subjectivist conception is untenable. First, the foundation of subjective knowledge constitutes a *metabasis eis allo genos*, a change to another genus<sup>8</sup>. There is a confusion of the levels of knowledge. The subjectivist position confuses the grounds and what is grounded. The ground is the objective and the subjective is what is grounded. Logic is a fundamental science, psychology is derivative. Psychology is a special science. Logic is the science of science. These two levels cannot be mixed. There is a gap between logic and psychology. It can be conceded that knowledge is made up of a subjective and an objective side. However, logic deals with the objective laws of knowing. It does not study the individual subjectivity. The problem of the ideality of the law cannot depend on a psychic process (NATORP, 1887, p. 262). Second, after all, the subjective foundation leads to the abandonment of any idea of objectivity<sup>9</sup>. Grounding logic in psychology also implies abandoning the very idea of objectivity of knowledge. Objectivity would not be properly objectivity if it were grounded on the process that each individual subject performs. The choice of a subjective path makes all objective validity a mere subjective validity. Universal and objectively valid knowledge depends on a process that is valid only from the point of view of the subject. Then, the very concept of objective validity is abandoned if the science that should give the conditions of universal validity can only provide the subjective mechanisms of the formation of representations. Thirdly, subjective foundation falls into a vicious circle. Logic must explain the problem of the objective validity of knowledge. If logic depends on psychology, this science of consciousness lacks the necessary parameters to establish whether its arguments are valid or not. The task of finding the ultimate foundation of logic implies the grounding of objective knowledge that psychology itself cannot offer. To ground the logic in psychology, psychological legality should have a foundation that guarantees the objectivity of its propositions, even the thesis that the parameter of truth depends on the psychic processes (NATORP, 1887, p. 264). Psychology aims to state true propositions. The claim that the truth is based on psychic processes must be true as well. However, psychology depends on a certain conception of the truth that validates this statement. Natorp acknowledges that this argument is insufficient since logic must also prove the truth of its propositions 'logically'. Similarly, the dependence of logic on psychology implies the abandonment of the possibility of logic in general (NATORP, 1887, p. 264). Logic must be grounded on itself. It must have an immanent foundation. All other sciences must be based on it because logic is the science of sciences. If logic is grounded on

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<sup>8</sup> This expression was also used by Kant and Husserl. Originally, the expression comes from Aristotle (in *Posterior Analytics* I.7., 75a 38) (Cf. O'CONNOR, 2008).

<sup>9</sup> As Edgard clearly explains: "as Natorp sees it, accepting a psychologistic or subjective method for logic entails giving up the very idea of objective knowledge" (EDGARD, 2008, p. 57).



psychology, it is not logic anymore (NATORP, 1887, p. 264). The objective truth of the principles of knowledge cannot be based on the subjective experience of the cognitive subject; since if we make logic depend on psychology, the very claim to find the legal foundation of knowledge is suppressed. Therefore, "logic has nothing to say about thinking as a fact, or as a psychological process" (NATORP, 1910, p. 99) because what must be found are the fundamental concepts and principles that give this first science autonomous validity. In this sense, logic is the opposite of psychology. The latter deals with the empirical aspect of the subjective process while the former seeks the principles of the general validity of objective knowledge. Only then, "the autonomous and purely objective foundation of truth" (NATORP, 1887, p. 148) can be guaranteed. The subjective path would lose the very meaning of the concept of truth since objective validity cannot depend on empirical subjectivity. Then, the possibility of determining the objective validity of knowledge depends ultimately on the possibility of establishing an objectivity at some point independent of subjectivity.

Natorp identifies the type of independence required. There are two possible senses of such independence. Psychologism considers that the independence of the object is based on its exteriority with respect to thought. According to them, objects are completely exterior to the mind. They become objects for thinking only in a second stage. Objects are independent because they exist before knowledge. For Natorp, this conception would invalidate the very concept of objectivity since being an object is to be a term of an act of thinking. Objectivity is nothing but the correlation of the act of thinking. Thinking is a discursive process. It implies establishing relationships. The terms required by the concept of relationship are nothing outside it. The terms do not precede the relationship, but they are established by it as requirements (NATORP, 1910, p. 99). The object, as a term of the relationship that represents knowledge, is nothing outside of this relationship. The object is placed in front of knowledge and, nevertheless, is grounded by it. Certainly, one could ask how the object can be independent of the act of knowledge and, at the same time, be grounded by it. Natorp answers that this independence is generated by virtue of the process of establishing laws.

The establishment of laws involves a process of abstraction. However, the abstraction does not depart from a given *sensa data*. From this perspective, the process of abstraction consists in disregarding certain marks of the objects that are given to senses and taking into consideration only certain determinations in order to form a concept. The abstraction depends on the object that is given to the senses. This was the perspective of psychologism, which defines the process of abstraction explaining the genesis of the representation. According to Natorp, on the contrary, abstraction must be defined entirely positively as the choice of a point of view that guarantees the unity of determinations. This is the only legitimate way to interpret the concept of abstraction. The process of concept formation involves neither disregarding marks nor the removal of marks of a given object to intuition. The negative definition of abstraction is misleading (NATORP, 1887, p. 270). The positive definition of the notion of concept must show the parameter that allows articulating the multiple determinations of the object, that is, the unity of the determination. This unity of determination allows us to establish in advance what elements will be considered in the object of knowledge. The choice of the point of view determines which marks are parts of the object. This point of view establishes the selection of determinations and the relationship among them. The object is nothing but this complex of relationships that are determined by the choice of the point of view. Abstraction is not a process in which a mark belonging to the object is eliminated but the choice of a determining unity that defines which marks constitute the object under consideration and their forms of relationship. This articulating unity of

multiplicity is the law (NATORP, 1887, p. 271). The multiplicity of the marks that define the object is only the correlation of the unity that articulates it. The required abstraction is found in the concept of law. In this way, the law can guarantee the independence of the object of knowledge. Likewise, the law can be related to the singular case without losing its universality. The law produces its instances, and the object of knowledge is produced by the law. For idealism, the meaning of the case is only to be an instance of legality. The case is not only the subjective appearance but precisely, the particular with respect to the universal that is the law (NATORP, 1887, p. 278). The correlate in the subjective pole is the appearance. The appearance of the phenomenon is always changing. It changes according to the variations of the state of the subject. On the contrary, the law forms its case in such a way that the object constructed by it is a unity completely independent of any subjective state. This abstraction of the law guarantees its validity regardless of any modification in the state of the subject. The objectively valid is, precisely, what was articulated by the unity of the law (NATORP, 1887, p. 273). The subjective point of departure leads to conceiving the data of immediate experience as the first in the order of knowledge. It considers that what is given to perception is the most objective since it is what subsists regardless of the act of knowledge. The data is the ultimate goal, and its independence is only guaranteed by its reduction to the law. Objectivities are nothing but the products of laws-construction. It is only the unity of the determination of the law that determines the reality of phenomena (NATORP, 1985, p. 13).

According to Natorp, this mistake of psychologism consists in a misunderstanding of the meaning of the concept of law. Due to a methodological misconception, the psychologist's account cannot trace a distinction between laws and states of facts. A law can be considered a fact only if by facts it is understood 'being the case', something that could be verified. In this general sense, the law can be considered a fact. However, the problem is to identify the law with a temporarily determined event. The expression:  $2 \times 2 = 4$  is a fact in the sense that it is the case. However, in no way does this imply that the operation entails a temporary character. The law is not a general expression for facts if we define facts as temporarily determined phenomena (NATORP, 1899, p. 18).

The laws of nature depend on the laws of logic, but logic does not depend on any other science. The laws of logic are constructed without being events in time, that is, events determined by the law of causality. This does not mean that the laws of logic do not apply to temporary events but that temporary events presuppose the laws of logic. The determination of events in time presupposes the laws that regulate all determination in general. For example, any temporary determination implies the possibility of determining the event as identical to itself, that is,  $A = A$ . This logical law, the law of identity, grounds the event that takes place. However, no fact of nature can ground this fundamental logical law. This does not imply denying the temporal nature of the thinking process. Indeed, the process of thinking can be considered a phenomenon in nature. Thinking can also be studied as long as it is conditioned by causal laws. It is not denied that there is a process that takes place. It is affirmed that the validity of the laws of logic does not depend on the legality of the generation of representations. The establishment of laws that regulate how the process of thinking is consummated is a problem of a different field. Logical laws have universal validity while the legality of the succession of representations is limited. The legality of the thinking process is conditioned while the laws of logic have unconditional validity (NATORP, 1899, p. 19).



## Final remarks

We can summarize Natorp's criticisms of psychologism as follows:

First, Natorp's criticism is based on the distinction between the logical and psychological aspects of cognition. To be a grounding science of knowledge, logic must be an objective science. Logic does not deal with the process of knowing. Its task is to find the laws that govern knowledge as a result. Psychologism confuses the laws of knowledge with the rules that regulate the psychic life of empirical subjects. Consequently, it aims to legitimize a fundamental science (logic) in a special science (psychology). This conception is circular. Psychology cannot provide by itself a definition of truth, but it requires a concept of truth that legitimizes its own propositions. In its rejection of the definition of truth offered by logic, psychology becomes circular. This error leads to confusing the problem of genesis with the problem of validity. The foundation of knowledge does not require an explanation of the way in which knowledge is generated but should explain the way of legitimization of cognitions. Second, we showed that this methodological mistake leads psychology to take the object of knowledge as something given. This mistake is the product of "naive thinking" that considers objectivity as something that is given to the mind. From this perspective, the completely determined object is given to sensible intuition, and the mind generates its concept by a process of abstraction. The object is what is given to intuition and the concepts are constructed by abstracting certain marks from the objects. Natorp shows that thinking does not require anything external to itself in the construction of its object. On the contrary, the objects of cognition are generated, they are produced and not given. As we explained, this process of production of objects is the generation of laws. The law is not an abstraction of concrete cases but produces its instances. Knowledge seeks to establish the case as an instance of the law. There is no element given to thinking. Having started from the subjective point of view, psychologism considers the immediate data as the paradigmatically real, as the first for the act of knowledge. According to Natorp, the conception of psychology leads to the loss of the concept of objectivity as it makes logic dependent on psychology. For Natorp, the validity of knowledge is precisely independent of the mental processes of factual subjects. Thus, on the one hand, the object is in some sense the most dependent, since it is nothing more than a construction of thinking expressed in the law. However, as opposed to mere appearances, the fact is also independent. The law guarantees its independence from all subjective consciousness. In fact, the only guarantee of independence, required by the object of knowledge, is its foundation in the law. The laws of logic are not facts conditioned by time. On the contrary, temporary events involve the laws of logic. The facts, the temporarily determined events, suppose the laws of thinking. As it was exhibited, the methodological errors of psychologism led to these misconceptions. Psychologism starts from the methodological error of taking the subject as a starting point and the object as what is contrasted as part of psychic life. Therefore, an accurate approach to the problem of the foundation of knowledge necessarily demands the abandonment of this point of view.

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