

A Contribution to Epistemology: Immanency in Saussure and Hjelmslev

As it was noticed by later attempts to reconstruct Saussure's ideations, the reading of the *Cours de Linguistique Générale* (CLG) should not be limited just to Bally and Sechehaye's 1916 version (which is ironically captioned by Bouissac (2010) as "The honest forging of a legacy"). If so, some problematic issues about the possibility of a science of language, which are aroused, despite of CLG, within *Courses of Lectures on General Linguistics* (CLGL) (especially the Third) and within *Writings in General Linguistics/ Écrits de linguistique générale* (WGL/ELG), lead us – even more sensible than before– to the Greimas's verdict that "[Hjelmslev is] the true and perhaps only successor of Saussure who has been able to make his intentions explicit and formulate them definitively" (Dosse, 1997, p.68). It is in Hjelmslev's Glossematics that we would engage with a deep and broad idea of 'Immanency', building an onerous algebraic foundation for a science of language accommodating the Saussurian intentions –for example, we can mention such words by Saussure: "[i]n the system of language there is no logical starting point, no fixed beacon that could guide our steps" (ELG, p.40); "[A] day will come when it will be recognized that the fundamental nature of the entities of *langue* and their relations owed to be expressed by mathematical means." (ibid, p.206)

Extracting (and perhaps modifying) general ideas of immanency from Saussure could and would lead us, not to a binarism of the kind that is found in Jakobson and Lévi-Strauss (which can be seen as an eclectic of declined Hegelian dialectic), and absolutely not to a binarism of American/Chomskyan approach (which is reproducing old-fashioned Cartesian), but to a Holism and non-binary (or binary-free) approach which is formulated by Hjelmslev in a pseudo-Spinozan way. The possibility of such a non-binarism is attained by virtue of Hjelmslev's early notions of 'participation' and 'sublogic' with a fundamental acceptance and modification of Levy-Bruhl's 'prelogic'. The other essential component to be mentioned would be his approach to the experience, which could not, in any sense, incline to naïve realism.

We also can mention, among other elements, to the ones playing main rules in his theorizing, which make certain contributions to the general epistemology: disembarassing from the traditional distinction between 'form' and 'content' by introducing a matrix of entities (expression, content; form, substance); the privileged necessary ability for self-analyzing (which can be called 'reflexivity'); and the foremost conquest for extending the perspective to the whole sphere of knowledge by introducing layers of analyses, making Glossematics an immanent algebraic glottocentric general science.

This lineage of Saussurian heritage, which have had a sad (hi)story, can be seen as an advantageous and –even nowadays– a new paradigm in linguistic and semiotic thinking, and generally in general epistemology, which is worth to be practiced and to be engaged with.