

PHILOSOPHICAL OR THEORETICAL PSYCHOLOGY? A CONTRIBUTION TO
THE IDENTITY OF THEORETICAL PSYCHOLOGY

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As is commonly said, Psychology, like other sciences derived from Philosophy. Geometry was the first one to achieve its independence. Physics, Chemistry and Astronomy became independent more than 1000 years later. Psychology, Sociology and other human sciences, and more recently, Logics, are generally considered the latest offsprings of that common mother. Incidentally, I would not totally agree with and I would like to qualify this proposed derivation of the modern sciences. To put it in a few words I would say that there is not, strictly speaking, any area of human reflection or of knowledge which possesses such characteristics that it can be considered opposed to another area commonly called scientific. What I have just said is the basic premisses which underlies the theme of the title of this paper.

Philosophy and science are commonly opposed. According to the author's opinion, the reasons called for in order to justify this separation are not justified. These reasons contribute to caricature the two so considered different human activities: Philosophy and science.

It is commonly said, for instance, that philosophers think or reflect while scientists do research. This cannot be admitted because both have to deal with facts and concrete events. Both have to observe, to criticise what is observed and to reflect about what is implied in observing and in what is being observed.

The distinction between these two human activities is generally only an administrative one. One should be careful not to separate *de jure* that which is separated only *de facto*. Thus, there is not a philosophical psychology that would be different from a theoretical one. Theoretical Psychology (TP) reflects and does research about facts, about concrete events in the domain of Psychology. Its main method is induction. Its main activity is categorization. It does experimentation, although mentally. This is its strength and also the source of possible mental accidents. But it pays off. The difference between what is called scientific psychology and TP is, in spite of common stereotypes, fundamentally a difference in number of facts which are manipulated by both specialists. It cannot be said that a scientist does not reflect about what he does. There are between these two workers differences in skills, aptitudes and interests.

In conclusion, TP can have interdisciplinary contacts with what is called Philosophy, but it has to introduce experienced contents in each of the philosophical labels. Otherwise it runs the risk of the centuries old *flatus vocis*. TP is not in any inferior position regarding Philosophy or Philosophical Psychology. TP is Philosophical Psychology and both are scientific in the sense of reflections about concrete events.