

LUCA F. TUNINETTI, *Persone che giudicano: Lineamenti di epistemologia*. Rome: Urbaniana University Press, 2016, 312 pp. ISBN: 978-88-401-7054-1.

Persone che giudicano (PCG) is a rich text for an epistemology course. Luca F. Tuninetti states in the preface that PCG is a fruit of his ten-year experience of teaching epistemology at the Urbaniana University. This explains the expertise, clarity, choice of examples and the language used in this book. The book displays a rich heritage from the Aristotelian – Thomist tradition. One can also notice the influence of John Henry Newman on the author. Even if the author says that the PCG is an introduction to the subject intended for beginners in the field (12), experts and experienced epistemologists can draw much from the illuminating approach and direction that the book gives to the subject. The rich section of elaborate bibliography enables both beginners and advanced researchers to dig deeper into the subject.

To introduce the beginner to epistemology, Tuninetti presents a brief history of the epistemological development in western philosophy. He shows how different epistemological questions have been addressed at different times and how various philosophers have contributed to the development of the discipline that we call epistemology. I believe this brief discussion can stimulate the student to understand the perennial and at the same time changing questions that have been raised at different epochs. Tuninetti shows that the questions addressed at various epochs are not isolated one from another, but connected in such a way that one leads to another either as an alternative or a refusal. In all these, he shows that no single approach has been able to respond sufficiently and exhaustively to these questions.

In the second chapter, the author makes a very important and, I believe, an original distinction between the adjectives epistemic and epistemological. The former concerns knowledge while the latter concerns the reflection on knowledge (55-56). This distinction is vital in the entire PCG. Knowledge does not begin

with the reflection or the study of knowledge. In fact, before such a study on knowledge, one knows a lot. Therefore, the study of knowledge does not substitute knowledge, nor can it substitute it. He writes: "*l'indagine epistemologica non sostituisce la conoscenza e neppure può precederla*" (57). It is after knowing that man can reflect on knowledge. This distinction gives a new direction to many of the epistemological debates.

Knowledge is a relation between two terms: the subject who knows and the reality known (60). Knowledge is an end of human activity. Someone can claim to have arrived at knowledge only when one asserts something, i.e., when one makes a judgment. To believe is to give a judgment. Whoever claims to know (through perception, memory and inference) makes a judgment that things are in such and such a way. This judgment is the point of arrival of the complex cognitive activity. He who claims to know also wants others to recognize that he knows and to share his knowledge claim. But before others can accept or refuse that knowledge claim, they must know how one arrived at that claim and whether it is worth believing. This gives rise to the epistemological dialogue, a concept that Tuninetti develops in the subsequent chapters.

The third chapter demonstrates how the various sciences have contributed to the study of the cognitive activity. Each of the various sciences has helped to explain how we come to know what we know. It brings out a rich compilation and discussion of the various research experiments in psychology and other related disciplines. This chapter could benefit those interested in cognitive psychology.

Like Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas, the author affirms that any philosophical reflection on knowledge requires the study of the faculties of the soul. To study these faculties, it is necessary to study the corresponding acts and to distinguish the various acts, it is necessary to distinguish the various objects. For example, seeing an apple is different from desiring it. This permits the author to explain how the different species of acts correspond to different objects that move the faculties of the soul. Hence, we have the sensible objects that move the senses and the intelligible objects that move the intellect. This distinction is not meant to show that the faculties act in isolation. The faculties move together. Here again, Tuninetti underlines the act of judgment when he says that perception and conceptualization find their meaning in judgment (119).

Judgment is possible because we are endowed with the faculties of the soul (the senses and the intellect). These faculties operate when they receive the corresponding forms (species) of the known object, which forms become the principle of the knowing subject. He says: "*il soggetto della conoscenza si manifesta nella persona che giudica*", i.e., the subject of knowledge manifests itself in the person who judges (125).

Discussing the role and validity of sensory knowledge, in the fifth chapter, the author asserts that in perception, the subject is directly in contact with reality. There is no mediation. Perception is different from judgment. Judgment presupposes the possession of concepts. This concept of judgment allows the author to respond to those who doubt the validity of sensory knowledge due to the errors. For Tuninetti, even if some of the errors depend on the malfunction of the sense organ or on the conditions under which it works, many are errors of judgment whereby the person who judges takes one thing for another. Perception as such does not give us knowledge of the truth. This is given in judgment. But judgment is based on perception such that without the perception, we would not be able to know reality.

Already in chapter five, the author makes reference to the role of the intellect in relation to the sensory knowledge. He discusses this role fully in the sixth chapter. As the senses receive the sensible form of the known object, so the intellect receives the intelligible form and recognizes it as a form of something (139). The intellect has two roles, namely, apprehension and judgment, i.e., forming a concept and attributing it to something. This permits Tuninetti to bring out his central point that "*sole chi giudica può dire di conoscere la verità*," i.e., only the person who judges can know the truth (139).

Judgment is the second operation of the intellect by which we attribute or deny a certain determination to something (157). In making a judgment, one forms a proposition as one conceives the truth. The person who judges is thus very important as the title of the book indicates. As a technical epistemological term, judgment is to be distinguished from its common use in legal and moral matters. Epistemically, judgment refers to the mental act or the result of such an act by which a predicate is united to the subject. It is in judgment that we can talk of truth or falsity. All our cognitive activity such as perception, conception and reasoning, is directed toward judgment. Reasoning presupposes judgment and from there we can formulate other judgments. What follows judgment is reflection on that judgment.

Reflection in this sense means giving a judgment on one's own or on another's judgment. Reflection is necessary because whoever expresses a judgment claims to know the truth. Reflecting, one assesses the legitimacy of such a claim. The content of the judgment is expressed in a proposition or an assertion, and the position of the one who judges is expressed in terms of assent. But he who judges does not reflect on the proposition before he gives his assent. Rather, he gives his assent in the very act by which he establishes that things are in a certain way (162). This is what John Henry Newman refers to as simple assent in his *Grammar of Assent*.

To show the difference between judgment and reflection, Tuninetti invents what he calls the epistemological dialogue between two persons, X and Y. X

claims to know that p and invites Y to share his knowledge claim. But Y asks X to explain the reasons for believing that p . Y's intervention comes only after X's assertion. Hence, X and Y have different roles: X judges and Y reflects on the judgment of X. These two roles can be performed by the same person. But, of course they are played at different times.

Reflection on judgment is connected to certainty. He who expresses a judgment seems to be certain. Where one is not certain, one doubts. Doubting, one cannot affirm or negate a proposition. Keeping the distinction between the person who judges and the person who reflects, Tuninetti also distinguishes between the first person and the third person perspectives. The person who judges always has that subjective or psychological certainty that accompanies every judgment. While from the third person perspective it is possible to say that X is certain that p but p is false, it would be absurd from the first person perspective to say that I am certain that p but p is false (175). Reflection on one's judgment corresponds to the third person perspective.

Again, to emphasize the centrality of judgment and the persons who judge, Tuninetti asserts that reflection cannot be superior to the judgment and cannot substitute it. Reflection cannot be the beginning. Hence, he who judges has an indispensable role. He has the first and the last word. Who judges is indispensable because every judgment is necessarily a judgment of a person. Every individual is indispensable qua person who judges (177-178).

The role of the persons who judge is repeated also in the ninth chapter that treats the truth of judgment. Truth is not a thing but a property which propositions can have or lack. Truth is not a sequence of words or an abstract assertion. Tuninetti says: "*l'enunciato che è vero o falso non è una sequenza di parole che può essere usato da diverse persone in diversi contesti, ma l'enunciato prodotto da una determinata persona in un determinato contesto*", i.e., the assertion that is either true or false is necessarily an assertion of a particular person in a particular context (193). Hence, we know the truth of a proposition if we know the person who asserts it. This could create an impression that the truth of a proposition is subjective. However, in clear terms the author explains that truth is objective and does not depend on what a person thinks. It depends rather on how things are. For Tuninetti, relativizing truth is to destroy the very concept of truth (210). This comes out clearly in his discussion of the concept of truth in Thomas Aquinas.

The last chapter deals with the concept that has occupied contemporary epistemologists in the last decades. This is epistemic justification. The author presents this concept in the context of judgment. He points out that in the internalist-externalist debate, the latter lays emphasis on the objectivity of truth while the former emphasizes the role of the believing subject. As a solution, Tuninetti proposes the distinction between the one who judges and the one who reflects

on that judgment. The epistemological dialogue between X and Y brings out the difference in roles.

PCG remains a rich text that throws light to many of the contemporary as well as the classic questions in the philosophical study of knowledge. It brings out the outstanding and unique role of the knowing subject, who is referred to as the person who judges. I highly recommend the translation of this text book in other languages. I cannot wait to see it in English.

Mugagga Tamale
Seminario Mayor Nacional de Katigondo
mugagga78@yahoo.co.uk