A Science of the Probable; epistemological inventiveness according to Diderot

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Abstract
In *Thoughts on the Interpretation of Nature* (1753), Denis Diderot discusses what may be the novelty of a science of becoming and morphogenesis, consequent with the autopoietic of nature. Far from arriving at a positivist conception, as is common among materialistic philosophies, the author projects a science of the probable, the contingent, the transitory, which requires the combined efforts of all capacities of the knowing subject to carry out the ceaseless dialectic between the two poles of observation and interpretation. Imagination, intuition, prospect, and conjecture are summoned to accompany experiential activity, introducing an inventive dimension in science, whose freedom contributes to subverting the epistemological canon, blurring the rigidity of disciplinary boundaries, intensifying scientific discovery, and giving meaning to the cluster of research. Consequently, science becomes a plurality of texts, intersecting facts and conjectures, data and metaphors, protocol rigour and rhetorical procedures. The unusual character of this exuberance has led the main commentators on the work to presume that it is the fruit of philosophy’s intervention, to which it would be fitting to add the step of creativity, unfeasible in scientific methodology. In contrast, we argue that, for the philosopher, those various processes are constitutive of the same scientific research, which finds in judgment the central faculty and in abduction the privileged process of discovery.

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