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# **ALFRED SCHÜTZ'S SOCIOLOGY AS A NAIVE SCIENCE**

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## **ALFRED SCHÜTZ'S SOCIOLOGY AS A NAIVE SCIENCE**<sup>2</sup>

Alfred Schütz has paid considerable attention to the position of scientist in the world and particularly to that of social scientist. His analyses make extensive use of phenomenological concepts and contain detailed descriptions of scientific cognitive style in its relation to the everyday life. However, Schütz is surprisingly silent on the motives that could justify quitting the ordinary 'world of working' and entering the scientific attitude.

This paper discusses whether the Schütz normative justification for science can be deduced from Husserl's philosophy of science. It is argued that despite the fact that Schütz was in fact considerably influenced by Husserl's system of science suggested in 'Ideas II', the two thinkers diverge radically on the cultural mission and methodology of science. While Husserl advocates the critical method of reduction as the sole way to pursue genuine science, Schütz in fact explores the possibility of building a 'naive science'. He accepts relying on ordinary knowledge in social science and ends up by rejecting the methodology of reduction in general.

Schütz's opposition to the idea of science contained in Husserl's phenomenology, together with his neglect of normative grounding of science, suggest that he considered the value of science as laying beyond rational philosophical justification.

JEL classification: Z

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## Introduction

In 1953, Harold Garfinkel, unsatisfied with the dominant definitions of sociology and struggling to discern the peculiarity of sociological outlook, came up with the notion of 'sociological attitude'. It was meant to describe the specific mode of treating reality that differentiates sociology from both natural attitude of everyday life and other types of theorizing, including the philosophical mode. Being heavily influenced in this epistemological enterprise by Alfred Schütz, Garfinkel sent him the manuscript of the paper on sociological attitude and received a warm reply testifying that the new notion wholly grasps Schütz's own approach to the place of sociology in the world (save for Schütz's preference to call it the 'attitude of social scientist') (Psathas, 2004: 17). The term 'sociological attitude' develops Schütz's conception of science as characterized by a specific cognitive style (Schütz, CP I: 230)<sup>3</sup> that can be, in principle, further fragmented into multiple directions of attention, which would differentiate between various sciences.

Schütz's favourable reception of the idea of sociological attitude is also understandable, since it perfectly expresses his understanding of social science as staying within the limits of natural attitude. From his early works onwards, Schütz repeatedly stresses that his sociological research pertains to the domain of phenomenological psychology, 'constitutive phenomenology of the natural attitude', which means that it doesn't need to perform the operation of transcendental reduction (Schütz, 1972: 44; CP I: 49). It implies that Husserl's detailed analysis of transcendental-phenomenological attitude is irrelevant for sociology, while the notion of natural attitude is too vague to account for the social science that operates within a specific 'finite province of meaning' (Schütz, CP I: 230). According to Schütz, a social scientist has his own attitude that differentiates him not only from laymen and other scientists, but also from philosophers (phenomenologists).

Given these differences between attitudes, one is prompted to ask what precisely drives somebody into sociological mode. Why do some people partake, at least temporarily, in this specific way of seeing the world? Strangely enough, it wouldn't be easy to find a clear answer in Schütz's writings. Having developed an elaborated positive theory of what kind of practices scientists (and sociologists, in particular) are actually involved in, Schütz says almost nothing about the normative dimension of social science. Schütz clearly dealt with the foundational phenomenological problems of social sciences; why did he never engage in providing them with a justification?

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<sup>3</sup> Henceforth, references to Schütz's Collected Papers appear as 'CP' followed by the number of the volume.

It would be tempting to suppose that since his analysis of sociology as a specific attitude is essentially phenomenological, Schütz simply subscribes to the view of science professed by his mentor in phenomenology, Edmund Husserl, and doesn't want to waste time on reiterating Husserl's reasoning. In such case, Schütz's description of sociological attitude should be regarded as a phenomenological justification for social science, as Helmut Wagner, for instance, tends to see it (Wagner, 1970: 48). The problem, however, is that Husserl's understanding of science is inseparably related to transcendental phenomenology and overcoming the naivety of natural attitude with the aid of phenomenological reduction. 'Genuine life of reason and in particular genuine scientific research and action must completely overcome the stage of naivety by means of radically clarifying reflection' (Hua VII: 12)<sup>4</sup>. Since naivety is closely associated with natural attitude in which we don't question the pre-given life-world, Husserl demands that scientific enterprise accomplishes a radical break with all self-evidences of our ordinary life. From this viewpoint, it appears that sociological attitude falls short of justifying sociology as a science – or, at least, it is limited to justifying something like a 'non-genuine', 'naive science' in the Husserlian sense. If Schütz wasn't able to rely on phenomenological understanding of science, what is his own conception of science and where does it come from?

In this paper, I shall argue that these divergences between Husserl and Schütz reveal fundamental differences in the understanding of science and of its essence in relation to human nature. In order to do this, I will briefly summarize in the second section Husserl's theory of attitudes that was employed to obtain a complete system of sciences. Then I will turn to Schütz's attempts to embed sociology in Husserl's system of sciences and show that even though his own notion of cognitive style bears obvious resemblance to Husserl's concept of attitude, there are radical discrepancies between the two. The third section concentrates on divergent paths that Husserl and Schütz took on the idea of science. It discusses Schütz's critique of Husserl's methodology of reduction and demonstrates that Schütz operates with a completely different conception of science. I conclude by asserting that Schütz's own understanding of science remains implicit because it considers science to be a non-justifiable choice and denies the possibility of rational discussion about the legitimacy of social science. Schütz's naive social science lacks normative phenomenological justification and is unable to fulfil the task of objectifying the self-evidences of the pre-given world.

## **Notion of 'attitude' in Husserl's system of sciences**

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<sup>4</sup> Henceforth references to English translations of Husserl's appear as standard references, while references to the volumes of Husserliana appear as 'Hua' followed by the number of volume.

Husserl's phenomenological project was, to a large extent, an undertaking in reforming and justifying sciences. Witnessing the growing disappointment in science at the turn of the century, in the period of the most impressive scientific and technological progress, Husserl aimed to restore the faith in reason by providing sciences with new legitimacy. Starting from his 'logical investigations' that appeared in 1900/1901 (Husserl, 2001) he was convinced that modern science is in trouble because it lacks a guiding principle and, as a result, applies its method unselectively. The main danger consisted of blind naturalization of psychology that pretended to explain consciousness with psycho-physiological means. Husserl's book played an important role in the anti-naturalist campaign (Kusch, 1995).

However, it was only later that Husserl started to seriously consider the fundamental problems of the theory of sciences (*Wissenschaftslehre*). For a long time he was discussing the relationship between natural sciences, psychology and philosophy without suggesting any clear conception of science. It is significant that in his famous article 'Philosophy as Rigorous Science' Husserl starts with complaints about philosophy being unable 'to satisfy the claim to be rigorous science' (Husserl, 2002: 249) as though it was self-evident what is meant by 'science'. He is certainly driven by his mathematical background, his never-ending strive for apodictic knowledge and the feeling of being the successor to Ancient Greek philosophy (Marbach, 2009: xvi-xx; Pažanin, 1972: 1-9), but he doesn't explain what is the science that he is willing to pursue.

Husserl's first attempt to develop a systematic theory of science is related to his participation in famous debate on the division of sciences. The aim of the discussion consisted in drawing the limits of natural sciences and thus providing philosophical justification for human sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*), or cultural sciences (*Kulturwissenschaften*)<sup>5</sup>. Husserl's approach to the problem consisted in discriminating between nature and spirit as different sorts of subject-matter (*Gegenständlichkeiten*) that require different methodologies. Nature and spirit cannot be studied by the same methodological tools because they differ in the mode of givenness (Husserl, 1980: 17-18). The 'nature' of natural scientists is given to them in a quite peculiar way: it consists of the objects treated as 'things' that occupy their places within common time and space (*res extensae*) and are related to each other by the laws of causality (Husserl, 1989: 44-46). On the contrary, my

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<sup>5</sup> Husserl became actively involved in the justification of human sciences around 1910 and continued working on this problem until the end of his life. Even though he arrived at the battlefield when the whole controversy was almost over (Wilhelm Dilthey died in 1911, and his main Neo-Kantian opponent, Heinrich Rickert, at this point was turning to metaphysics), he considered it to be of paramount importance to develop the phenomenologically justified criterion for differentiation between sciences. He started working on the phenomenological approach to systematizing scientific knowledge in his 'Ideas,' which was conceived as a multi-volume project. The second part of it was planned to be dedicated to concrete phenomenological analyses of intentional objects that would lead to clarifying the constitution of subject-matter for different classes of sciences. Husserl never accomplished this second volume. It appeared posthumously in two parts, known as 'Ideas II' and 'Ideas III'.

spiritual world is directly given to me without any special additional operations<sup>6</sup>. This world is endowed with practical meaning; I never approach it neutrally, as a system of interconnected material things, as it happens in natural science. Whereas nature is endowed with mechanical causality, the spiritual world is permeated with motivational connections. Accordingly, natural sciences seek to explain the causal relations, and human sciences aim at 'interpretative explanation' (*verstehendes Erklären*), which is so familiar to every sociologist (Hua XXV: 321)<sup>7</sup>.

Husserl thus takes over Dilthey's initial distinction between external and internal experience as a ground for differentiating between sciences (Dilthey, 1989), but argues that modes of givenness are themselves subject-matter for a separate scientific discipline: transcendental phenomenology. The modes of givenness are inaccessible to both natural and human sciences, since both of them already presuppose their subject-matters and never question their existence. By clarifying differences between various types of subject-matter, transcendental phenomenology provides all sciences with unconditional and universal grounds:

All kinds of consciousness must allow of being studied in their essential connection and their relation back to the forms of givenness belonging to them – just as under the title of 'knowledge' they are, so to speak, teleologically ordered and, more precisely, grouped in accordance with various object-categories (as the groups of cognitive functions corresponding specifically to them). It is in this way that the sense of the question of legitimacy to be posed to all cognitive acts must be understood, that the essence of well-founded proof of legitimacy and of ideal justifiability must allow of being fully clarified, and in fact for all levels of knowledge, above all for scientific knowledge.

(Husserl, 2002: 260)

The distinction between subject-matters is paralleled by the distinction between the modes of consciousness that constitute these subject-matters. The fundamental difference between nature and spirit arises from the fact that these are constituted in completely distinct ways. Every subject-matter should be conceived of as a mode of givenness to consciousness and none of them does exist independently of consciousness. Consequently, intentional phenomenological analysis can always lead back to the peculiar *attitude* of consciousness that is capable of constituting particular subject-matter with its essential characteristics. Even though the concept of attitude (*Einstellung*) plays crucial role in Husserl's philosophy of science, he has never defined it

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<sup>6</sup> In 'Ideas II' Husserl calls it 'Umwelt' and in later writings replaces this term with 'Lebenswelt'. On the identity between these two notions see Held (1991).

<sup>7</sup> Motivational connections pertain to the domain of intentional subject-object relationships, as opposed to relationships between objects that natural science is concerned with (see: Rang, 1973: 126-127).

clearly<sup>8</sup>. The following definition by Andrea Staiti summarizes Husserl's idea: attitude is 'a qualitative peculiarity of an act that determines which of the given properties of the object that appears in this act can be thematised and actively grasped, and which cannot' (Staiti, 2009: 221). Sciences thus differ not only in their subject-matter, but also in terms of the subject of knowledge: constitution of a legitimate scientific object requires specific constituent subjectivity or, in other words, an appropriate mode of consciousness.

Husserl calls the attitude of natural sciences *naturalistic*. This attitude is artificial, as shown by comparison with the attitude of human sciences. The latter perform no modification of the pre-given meaningful world and need no abstractions from it in order to constitute their object. According to Husserl, human sciences operate in the *personalistic* attitude. In this attitude I am a person and a member of the surrounding world, which is necessarily an intersubjective and social world (Husserl, 1989: 184). By virtue of being an active spiritual subject who possesses his own world, I am capable of understanding motivational connections in this world and, consequently, conducting a scientific study of it.

Both naturalistic and personalistic attitudes are called *special theoretical attitudes*. However, Husserl originally regards them as two versions of the broader *natural attitude*, the one that uncritically posits the being of the pre-given world and doesn't question the existence of the surrounding objects (Husserl, 1989: 189). They differ only insofar as the naturalistic attitude requires specific abstraction that allows for contemplating objects as material things and not meaningful parts of my world. Consciousness in a natural attitude is, of course, unaware of its naive belief in the surrounding world – it is never given to itself. It can be thematised only when we 'bracket' the existence of the objects given to us and the world in general – that is, put them to doubt. In other words, we suspend our belief in the self-evidences of the pre-given world, and accomplish phenomenological epoché that enables us to switch our attention from the given to the givenness (Husserl, 1983: 60).

As phenomenologists, we exchange the richness of the actual world for the opportunity to see that the world with its objects is constituted by consciousness, and we investigate the essential laws according to which this constitution can be accomplished. The reduction of the world to phenomena (or, at the limit, to the phenomenon of the world) enables us to abstract from all singular and contingent perceptions that depend on our unreliable sensibility, and stick to something strictly apodictical, to the givenness of the world. Due to this reduction, we are now in the *transcendental* attitude, and the difference between modes of givenness, such as nature and

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<sup>8</sup> The notion of attitude has been quite popular in psychophysiology at the turn of 20th century. Even though Husserl adopted it from rival naturalists, he used it without direct connection with original context (see Fischer, 1985).

spirit, is now given to us, so that we can clarify and justify other attitudes with their respective subject-matters.

According to Husserl, sciences are thus ordered in a hierarchical way according to the critical distance from reality. While empirical sciences, both natural and human, simply take the reality for granted, transcendental phenomenology is critical enough to disregard contingent facts and penetrate into the essence of the constitution of the world<sup>9</sup>. Transcendental phenomenology embodies the ideal of 'rigorous science', precisely because it practices scientific method in its most radical way, as a persistent doubt in everything uncritically posited including the world itself.

One major problem with Husserl's system results from inequality between two special theoretical attitudes. Whereas the personalistic attitude is truly natural in the sense that it requires no modification of a pre-given world, the naturalistic attitude is attained only at the expense of purifying things from their value predicates. This artificiality enables naturalistic attitude to see the things in a different light, to discover something that evades ordinary consciousness. The personalistic attitude, on the contrary, fully depends on preserving the uncritical self-evidence of the world that makes it understandable and clear for us. But what is then actually scientific about the personalistic attitude? Would it be justified to call this attitude theoretical, or scientific?

It has been demonstrated that attitude can be called scientific only insofar as it upholds the belief in what is naturally given – that is, performs a break with the natural attitude. Naturalistic attitude requires at least certain processing of the objects of the surrounding world, refining them from layers of meanings and treating them in a purely theoretical, disinterested way, devoid of any actual or potential practical involvement<sup>10</sup>. But the personalistic attitude of human sciences

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<sup>9</sup> There is also an intermediate level in Husserl's system: the level between empirical sciences and transcendental science. It is called the level of eidetic sciences, or regional ontologies. Nature and spirit as separate regions of being have their own structure independently from accidental facts; that is, they possess an inherent setting that is presented to us in its unconditional apodicticity. All concrete phenomena are pre-ordained by these immutable laws of respective regions, and the task of discovering these a priori principles of the constitution of regions is assigned to 'regional ontologies' (Husserl, 1983: 17-18). By grasping the essences of phenomena within a particular region, ontology reveals the conditions of all contingencies that could ever appear. As for nature as a region, its structure is shaped by the mode of constitution of objects as *res extensae*, hence the main discipline responsible for studying the ontology of nature is geometry (along with kinematics and 'the doctrine of time'). Geometry deals in an abstractive way with the length of the thing and its external spatiality (Husserl, 1980: 32). In the domain of human sciences, the task parallel to that of geometry is accomplished by 'rational psychology', or phenomenological psychology, in which

We therefore differentiate the 'possible' perceptions in general according to basic types; for each one we ask what belongs to it essentially and what it requires according to its essence as necessarily belonging to it, what changes, transformations, connections it makes possible purely through its essence, whether with phenomena of the same sort or with those of another sort, etc. Precisely the same problems result for recollections, phantasies, expectations, obscure ideas, processes of thinking of every sort, processes of feeling, of willing. They, like every not only experienceable or factually experienceable but generally experienceable being (or, as we can also say, every Objectivity of fundamentally possible experience), present their essence to us.

(Husserl, 1980: 35)

<sup>10</sup> Husserl even speaks of specific epoché of naturalistic attitude that enables to escape the ordinary life with its meaningful objects (Husserl, 1989: 29).

implies no modification of ordinary lived experience; it can understand the motivational connections precisely because it constantly resorts to the self-evidence of meaning in everyday life. As Paul Ricœur convincingly demonstrates, there is, in fact, no difference between the personalistic and the natural attitudes – the personalistic attitude is the attitude of naive belief in the existence of the objects that are given to me in my spiritual life (Ricœur, 2004: 155). Husserl is thus forced to admit the 'ontological priority' of spirit over nature and subordinate the naturalistic attitude to the personalistic (Husserl, 1989: 193).

Personalistic attitude is not a way to focus on a certain aspect of the world, but the mode of consciousness that corresponds to living an ordinary life in its concreteness and self-evidence (Melle, 1996: 33). What is the point in calling 'science' the understanding of meanings performed within the personalistic attitude? More precisely, if human sciences are limited in their understanding of motivational connections and meanings by the meanings available in natural attitude, how do they differ from ordinary understanding? For instance, if a human scientist faces an action with a meaning that she never came across previously in her natural attitude, is she capable of transcending her common sense and providing an interpretation of it? Husserl's justification for human sciences succeeds in differentiating them from natural sciences, but fails in separating them from ordinary, non-scientific knowledge.

### **Social science as 'sociological attitude'**

Despite its internal contradictions, Husserl's theory of sciences has provided the basis for Schütz's treatment of the relationship between phenomenology and sociology. According to Schütz, borrowing from phenomenology was necessary in order to strengthen sociological analyses. This made the question of the borderline between two disciplines an important issue for the Austrian. Following Max Weber's anti-metaphysical and value-neutral position, Schütz aimed at immunizing sociology from possible conflation with philosophy.

Already in 'The Phenomenology of the Social World' (1972 [1932]) Schütz has adopted Husserl's tactics of relegating human sciences to the natural attitude, even though, at this period, he probably wasn't aware of the details of Husserl's theory of sciences developed in 'Ideas II'. However, the idea of differentiating between sciences according to attitudes has been already prefigured in 'Ideas I', and Schütz referred to Husserl's 'Afterword' to it published in 1930 (Husserl, 1989: 405-430) to justify his decision to pursue the analysis within the natural attitude. According to Schütz,

The purpose of this work, which is to analyse the phenomenon of meaning in ordinary social life, does not require the achievement of transcendental knowledge that goes beyond that sphere or a further sojourn within the area of the transcendental-phenomenological reduction.

(Schütz, 1972: 44)

At this point, Schütz considers transcendental reduction as necessary only for the analysis of internal time-consciousness, while the study of meaning in everyday life should be carried within the natural attitude. However, he emphasizes that 'we do not set as our goal a science of the facts of this inner sphere of appearance, but a science of essence' (Schütz, 1972: 44). In Husserl's archaeology of sciences, this type of science corresponds to the regional ontology of spirit, the place occupied by phenomenological psychology that accomplishes eidetic reduction but stands short of transcendental reduction. Schütz expects this discipline to be 'a constitutive phenomenology of the natural attitude', borrowing a formula from Husserl (Husserl, 1989: 426)<sup>11</sup>.

Schütz continued to insist on the insulation of sociology from phenomenology in his later writings<sup>12</sup>. In the papers devoted to determining Husserl's importance for social sciences, Schütz is particularly clear in adhering to Husserlian theory of sciences. However, while the founder of phenomenology placed sociology among empirical human sciences along with history (which is understandable given the historicist origins of German sociology), Schütz chose another position for sociology within Husserl's system of sciences. Dissatisfied with eidetic analyses of such entities as 'community' or 'state' by Husserl's followers (Schütz, CP I: 140-141), Schütz still believed that phenomenological eidetic analysis presents a proper method for clarifying ordinary intersubjective life. Insofar as intersubjectivity is one of the principal traits of the mundane world, sociology occupies the position of regional ontology of spirit. Thus Schütz goes as far as arguing that sociology (at least, the non-empirical part of it) is just another name for Husserl's rational psychology:

[A]ll these phenomena of meaning, which obtain quite simply for the naive person, might be in principle exactly described and analysed even within the general thesis. To

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<sup>11</sup>Schütz, however, ignores that in the same passage where Husserl presents phenomenological psychology as the constitutive phenomenology of natural attitude, he complains about the fact that psychologists have misinterpreted his persistent differentiation between transcendental phenomenology and phenomenological psychology so as to mistakenly conclude that 'they don't need to address themselves to entire transcendental phenomenology of the "Ideas"'. As a result, 'they didn't recognize the radical psychological reform that was contained in transcendental phenomenology' (Husserl, 1989: 425).

<sup>12</sup>This is also the position taken by Thomas Luckmann, who claims that while phenomenology is a philosophical undertaking, sociology is a science. On these grounds, Luckmann interprets Schütz's phenomenological analyses as 'protosociology' that describes universal structures of the life-world (Luckmann, 1973; see also Eberle, 2012, on various to-date interpretations of the relationship between sociology and phenomenology).

accomplish this on the level of mundane intersubjectivity is the task of the mundane cultural sciences, and to clarify their specific methods is precisely a part of that constitutive phenomenology of the natural attitude of which we have been speaking. Whether one will call this science Intentional Psychology or, better, General Sociology, since it must always be referred back to mundane intersubjectivity, is a quite secondary question.

(Schütz, CP I: 140-141)

Schütz also endorses Husserl's architectonics of science in his detailed reviews of 'Ideas II' and 'Ideas III' (Schütz, CP III: 15-39, 40-50). Obviously, Husserl's project of ordering sciences represented for Schütz a crucial tool in discriminating between phenomenology and sociology and preserving the border between philosophy and human sciences. According to this project, there is a place in the system of sciences for a human science that would avoid reduction.

Since Schütz relies on Husserl's system of sciences, he has to remedy its fundamental flaw – to explain how social science differs from natural attitude. The solution suggested by Schütz consists of two parts and yields what Garfinkel would later call 'sociological attitude' (Garfinkel, 2006). First, Schütz differentiates science from everyday experience by discerning a 'specific cognitive style' that is proper to all scientists. Second, he differentiates sociology from other sciences by suggesting that sociology has its own way of building interpretive models that allow for understanding the meanings with which real actors imbue their social behaviour. Let us consider these two elements separately.

1. *The scientific cognitive style.* Drawing on William James' (1883: 920) notion of sub-universes Schütz claims that instead of one reality it makes sense of speaking of multiple 'finite provinces of meaning', since each of them has its own specific style of experiencing reality (Schütz, CP I: 230). These cognitive styles are characterized by distinct principles of constituting the reality; they are fundamentally irreducible to each other and moving between them requires a Kierkegaardian leap and activation of a specific epoché that suspends other layers of reality.

For Schütz, science is defined as a peculiar province of meaning, a specific cognitive style. This style includes the suspension of a subjective viewpoint and taking a disinterested stand towards the object. The leap from the everyday reality of working to the province of science implies switching-off several components of ordinary life: experiencing others as fellow-men, stratifying the world according to the manipulability of things, feeling fundamental anxiety about coming death (Schütz, CP I: 249). The disinterested observer no longer treats objects as though he was

practically involved in dealing with them. From now on, everything becomes thematised only within a specific system of relevances that organizes the reality of science. This universe is ordered according to the problems that are currently believed to be unresolved and the theoretical knowledge consisting of previous problems now sedimented. Most importantly, depending on the point of view, a scientist's action can be interpreted as a scientific work within the 'primordial' reality of everyday life *or* as a reasoning within the finite province of scientific meanings.

2. *Modelling with second-order constructs.* While the general theoretical cognitive style is common for all sciences, social sciences differ from natural sciences in that they operate with the world already structured and endowed with meaning by human beings. Following Weber's definition of sociology as interpretive science, Schütz considers it the main task of social sciences to build the models of common-sense meaningful interpretations of the world. Since the social world that we find pre-given in everyday life is structured by common-sense constructs that constitute the stock of 'knowledge at hand', studying this world requires the elaboration of second-order constructs:

By particular methodological devices, to be described presently, the social scientist replaces the thought objects of common-sense thought relating to unique events and occurrences by constructing a model of a sector of the social world within which merely those typified events occur that are relevant to the scientist's particular problem under scrutiny.

(Schütz, CP I: 36)

To a large extent, this methodology of second-order construct formation depends on the disinterested position of the scientific observer, the fact that he has no 'Here' perspective from which common-sense constructs are created. Adopting the panoptical view regarding the everyday world, a social scientist explains the observed behaviour of real human beings by creating the models of rational action. That is, instead of the real-world actors of flesh and blood, he deals with the artificial mental constructions, puppets that can be freely manipulated by theorist's thought. In the imagined world, all obstacles for rational action can be eliminated by the theorist's decision so that this universe is peopled with rational actors who behave in such a way as to be subjectively understandable for an observer. The latter uses the information about the imagined actors' backgrounds as a repository of meanings for reconstructing their actions.

It is precisely the combination of these two elements, the scientific cognitive style and the second-order models of puppets that Garfinkel has interpreted as sociological outlook, or, putting it in phenomenological terms, as sociological attitude (Garfinkel, 2006: 107ff.). But since this apparatus was meant to justify the position of sociology within the system of sciences, it would be reasonable to ask whether it corresponds to Husserl's understanding of the human-scientific attitude. In this paper, I shall leave aside the issue of second-order constructs and concentrate on the problem of science as a finite province of meaning and scientific cognitive style.

There are both similarities and differences between Husserl's phenomenological-theoretical attitude and Schütz's scientific cognitive style. Schütz obviously considered the position of the phenomenologist as described by Husserl to be a model for his own image of a scientist. A constitutive trait of both Husserl's phenomenologist and Schütz's scientist is their disinterestedness. While the interested being is captured by the cobweb of everyday life, reflection, on the contrary, arrests the attention and suspends practical involvement. As Levinas points out, being interested (*inter-esse*) means being situated among others, perceiving them directly as my immediate environment where I operate and intervene, and feeling others as opposed and perhaps even hostile to me (Levinas, 1974: 5). Escaping the involvement means that the subject is now regarding the flow of everyday life from the outside and no longer prefers some particular outcomes of practical activity to others. Husserl calls this subject 'impartial observer' (*unbeteiligter Zuschauer*) who puts out of play everything valid (*geltend*) for natural being (Hua XXXIV: 91). The metaphor of the play extensively used by Husserl emphasizes the condition of being oriented toward some particular valid outcome and participating in delivering it. The same idea is expressed by Schütz through the metaphor of drama: for a scientific spectator the observed situation

is not the theater of his activities but merely the object of his contemplation. He does not act within it, vitally interested in the outcome of his actions, hoping or fearing what their consequences might be but he looks at it with the same detached equanimity with which the natural scientist looks at the occurrences in his laboratory.

(Schütz, CP I: 36)

For both Husserl and Schütz, life-world is the pre-scientific basis from which the scientific observer initiates his detachment and suspension of interestedness. The difference, however, concerns the mode of escaping the involvement into the life-world. Schütz argues that switching between different provinces of meaning is accomplished through shocks shifting the accent of reality from one province to another. Entering every province requires experiencing specific

shock that operates as a gate to the particular sub-universe. Although Schütz (CP I: 233) admits that life-world of working is, in a certain sense, the basic reality and all other provinces are its modifications, he nevertheless indicates that life-world has a gate of its own. Schütz deliberately modifies the meaning of Husserl's concept of epoché arguing that every sub-universe is characterized by its own epoché. According to Schütz, life-world presupposes the 'epoché of natural attitude', the suspension of doubt and disbelief in the outer world (CP I: 229).

This treatment of epoché signals a radical departure of the Austrian sociologist from the founding father of phenomenology. Husserl's well-known conception of epoché directly relates it to putting out of action 'the general thesis', which is characteristic of the natural attitude (Husserl, 1983: 61). The Greek term *ἐποχή* comes from Pyrrhon's philosophy of scepticism and refers to methodical abstaining from judgement that enables a philosopher to distance himself from his natural pre-philosophical life and recognize the gap between the being and the appearance (Held, 2013: 238). Epoché is meaningful only as long as it is opposed to the initial state of naive belief in the existence of the world where the difference between being and appearance is neither thematised nor problematized. Pyrrhonian use of the term is meant to pave, for the philosopher, his way to *ἀπαραξία*, complete neutrality towards the natural worldliness (Sextus Empiricus, 2000: I 8). It is precisely in this sense that Husserl picks up the concept, albeit for him epoché is only the first step necessary for acquiring truly firm ground of transcendental ego, while for Pyrrhon, epoché was enough to attain the good life. In any case, Schütz's claim that there is a specific 'epoché of natural attitude' goes not only against both Pyrrhon's and Husserl's theoretical and practical intentions, but also against the original meaning of the term.

It would make sense to consider Schütz's misuse of epoché not simply as a conceptual mistake, but as an indication of quite a different view on the relationship between the life-world and alternative modes of life. Even though Schütz admits that the world of everyday life is the primary and basic reality, he doesn't seem to believe that leaving this world implies completely switching off the naivety of the general thesis. Rather, he regards the drift between provinces as an alternation of meanings, a reinterpretation of the intentional objects. Epoché (and for Schütz there are several different versions of it) is not a universal procedure of neutralizing the validities of everyday life, but a set of keys providing alternative tools for deciphering the world. Entering the finite province of meaning constituted by science demands from theoretician to use a specific key – to admit another system of relevancies suggested by 'the historical tradition of his science' (Schütz, CP I: 250). The very fact that Schütz calls the scientific province 'reality', albeit different from the reality of life-world, demonstrates that he is quite aloof from Husserl's

intention to bracket all the predicates of reality in order to grasp the phenomenal character of reality.

This conception of science as a peculiar province of meaning makes it more clear how Schütz manages to preserve the idea of social science within the natural attitude. Although the social scientist needs to perform a 'leap' from everyday life to start theorizing, this leap doesn't evacuate him from the natural attitude but rather allows for choosing a different perspective within it. This is why he is able to rely on 'his stock of pre-experiences', which he acquired while living in the everyday world (Schütz, CP I: 254), which would be totally impossible if he really put in brackets all the intentional objects posited within the natural attitude. Schütz's emphasis on disinterestedness certainly doesn't go as far as claiming that the scientific observer has to suspend his belief in reality of the objects that are given to him within the natural attitude.

The resulting conception of scientific cognitive style appears to be rather contradictory. On the one hand, Schütz follows Husserl in opposing the scientific attitude to everyday life by stressing the disinterested and non-participant stance of the theorist. On the other hand, the Austrian sociologist tends to portray the position of the scientist as resulting from a change of perspective rather than from a radical break with everyday reality. The scientific cognitive style is but one in a whole range of styles, among which are phantasm, dreaming and others, each of them characterized by its own entry rules. Even though the world of everyday life is called 'ultimate or paramount reality', it is, at the same, only a "finite province of meaning" among many others' (Schütz, CP I: 230), which is not particularly convincing.

It would be unjust to blame Schütz for the undecided relationship between the natural and the scientific attitudes, since, as I have shown earlier, this conflict is very much present in Husserl's theory of science. Husserl's idea of 'science within natural attitude' that Schütz would later take up for a model of social science, is itself an impossible combination of opposing science to the everyday world and reconciling them on a common ground. However, the difference between the German phenomenologist and his Austrian follower consists in the fact that Husserl, after all, has come to reject this doctrine in favour of radicalizing the break between science and everyday life. In contrast, Schütz sacrificed this break to preserve the conception of science as a mere change of perspective. In the next section I will explore this difference and demonstrate that it resulted in a stronger divergence between two thinkers, leading eventually to Schütz's sharp criticism of phenomenological reduction.

## **The methodology of reduction: radicalization or rejection?**

Husserl's intellectual development is characterized by his growing discontent with initial formulations of phenomenological reduction and laborious attempts to provide a substantive phenomenological description of the specific experience of the phenomenologist. This resulted in a theoretical enterprise focused on the situation of the subject who breaks through the chains of everyday life, the 'phenomenology of phenomenology' (Luft, 2002). Working on this project brought Husserl to a much clearer phenomenology of science. In Husserl's late texts, the concept of 'genuine science' comes at the forefront with the purpose of conveying the 'idea of science' attained by the means of philosophical reflection. 'Genuine science' doesn't refer to some particular existing science, but rather to a regulative ideal that is yet to be attained. 'Genuine science' should embody the spirit of science, its scientificity, which consists in searching for the final apodictic truths. It is only possible to accomplish this mission by breaking with the naivety of the natural attitude.

The main problem of special sciences, according to Husserl, consists in positing their subject in a non-critical way and thus remaining within the state of naivety. As a result, they are unable to grasp the meaning of their own concepts and find the right method to study their subject. This is why their great achievements are constantly followed by even greater disappointment, since they can produce no knowledge beyond the limits of pure technique and remain ignorant about their own meaning. Humanity's belief in sciences vanishes. The only workable solution consists of clarifying the meaning of basic concepts and subject-matters of special sciences by turning to the source of their constitution, to the life-world. However, this requires putting in doubt not only particular subject-matters, but also the life-world in general, since different subject-matters within the life-world intentionally presuppose each other and cannot be 'switched off' separately. It is only the science of the transcendental that can accomplish this task and this is 'eminently the only genuinescience and it can be called philosophy or universal science' (Hua XXXII: 17).

Husserl comes to the understanding that philosophy is the only genuine science precisely because it provides the opportunity of 'bracketing' the life-world. The path towards genuine science is not a path of gradual progress and accumulation of scientific knowledge, but the path of radical doubt in knowledge, which is necessary for self-understanding of the scientific spirit – the path of Plato:

With a radicalness that cannot be surpassed and is, for that very reason, exemplary for philosophy, the idea of genuine science as science grounded on an absolute foundation – the old Platonic idea – is renewed in full earnest; and the intrinsically primary basis already presupposed by any cognition, and therefore by the cognition belonging to positive sciences, is sought.

(Husserl, 1969: 6-7)

The Platonic overtones are highly present in Husserl's late workings. During the years of the work on 'Crisis' he tends to use ancient opposition of *doxa* and *epistēmē* for defining both genuine science and philosophy. On these grounds, he refuses to treat Eastern thought as scientific and philosophical: the disinterested theoretical attitude is only peculiar to the ancient Greek philosophy that learns how to raise itself above the self-evidences of naive consciousness, above the level of *doxa*, and cultivates critical consciousness. Husserl believes that modern European humanity has committed a terrible mistake in sacrificing this self-critical faculty for practical results brought about by special sciences which, in turn, emerged themselves due to the theoretical attitude. At some point the meaning of distinction between *doxa* and *epistēmē* has been lost and *doxa* of natural sciences has eclipsed the perspective of genuine science. The key task consists, therefore, in remaining faithful to the idea of scientific-philosophical cognition and radicalizing the break between the scientific and natural attitudes. This would enable scientific philosophy to perform the

universal critique of all life and all life-goals, all cultural products and systems that have already arisen out of the life of man; and thus it also becomes a critique of the mankind itself and of the values that guide it explicitly or implicitly.

(Husserl, 1970: 283)

Despite the emphasis on the opposition between *doxa* and *epistēmē*, the scientific-philosophical and the ordinary, Husserl's theory is, in a certain sense, a rehabilitation of *doxa* (Biemel, 1979: 13). It stresses the importance of *doxa* as a ground from which scientific endeavour starts: the genuine science is a science *about doxa* and *from doxa*, but it operates only by breaking with *doxa*, by means of the methodology of reduction. For Husserl, attaining scientific self-consciousness requires the critique of the self-evident presuppositions of ordinary life as the obstacles on the way to *epistēmē*. Taking the position of disinterested observer, liberating from the involvements of the life-world is necessarily a critical enterprise. It is only by the way of

universal phenomenological critique 'of mankind itself and of the values which guide it explicitly or implicitly' (Husserl, 1970: 283) that scientific impartiality can be secured.

Given its totalizing character, the natural attitude cannot be easily 'suspended'. Escaping the natural attitude is not a matter of free variation of realities, since ego is firmly trapped in the web of everyday life. Husserl develops a whole methodology of overcoming the obstacles of everyday life. It is not possible to analyse his account of phenomenological experience here in detail, but it should be pointed out that reduction is possible because there is a potential of installing a *partition* (*Spaltung*) within ego. As a result of partition, there emerges a temporal co-existence of the 'natural' ego and the reflecting ego. The reflecting ego is disinterested, which means that it is not interested in what the natural ego posits and believes in (Hua VIII: 88-96; see also Luft, 2002: 119ff.). Most importantly, the disinterestedness stems from the fact that the reflecting ego constantly thematises the natural ego, grasps its location and orientation within the life-world and thus 'arrests' its involvement (or, so to speak, takes it into account). The reflecting ego is disinterested not simply because it decided to halt its interest, but because it observes the being-interested of the natural ego. As Eugen Fink puts it, the production of transcendental spectator is far from being unproblematic; it is an act in which 'transforming himself through the deepest self-reflection, man transcends himself and his natural human being in the world' (Fink 1995: 10).

One important consequence of this is that there can be no scientific attitude that wouldn't reflect on the natural attitude that it started from. For the scientific observer, the world is not a stage play that he contemplates and orchestrates (as Schütz would suggest), but a play seen through the eyes of an actor who temporarily suspends his belief in reality of the drama. There is no panoptical viewpoint to reach; the only available perspective is the one of the reflecting actor.

Husserl's radicalization of the break between the naivety of natural attitude and the scientificity of the phenomenological attitude make it impossible to conceive of a 'naive science' or 'science within natural attitude'. The problem of the status of the human sciences that he left unresolved in 'Ideas II' is now overcome: the only way for human sciences to be genuinely scientific is to perform reduction. This is why Husserl calls phenomenology 'the universal human science'.

While Husserl subjugates his vision of the human sciences to his conception of reduction as the principal cultural mission of philosophy and eventually proclaims phenomenology the human science, Schütz insists on insulating phenomenology from social science. His attempts to avoid prescribing phenomenological reduction to social scientist demonstrate that his own understanding of science significantly differs from Husserl's. At the same time, Husserl's theory

of disinterested observer detached from the everyday world seriously influences Schütz's understanding of science. This is why Schütz attempts to combine different attitudes in his sociological analyses and conflates them, making a 'question-begging leap between the naive and philosophic levels of discourse' (Peritore, 1975: 134; see also Hindess, 1972; Welz 1996).

There is an inherent contradiction, however, between the idea of reduction as the key cultural tool for overcoming naivety, on the one hand, and the conception of social science without reduction, on the other. Schütz also recognized the necessity to eliminate this contradiction, albeit in a different way from Husserl. A considerable part of Schütz's late writings contains strong criticism of Husserl that demonstrates his unwillingness to pursue science in the Husserlian sense. Two aspects of this critique are particularly important: the problem of intersubjectivity and the rejection of reduction.

Schütz's discontents with Husserl's treatment of intersubjectivity are well known. A convincing phenomenological account of the constitution of the world must explain how joint constitution is thinkable, 'how is a common world in terms of common intentionalities possible?' (Schütz, CP I: 144). Husserl aimed at solving this problem in 'Cartesian Meditations' by justifying the transcendental intersubjectivity in several steps: first, reduction to the ego's 'primordial' sphere and second, appresentation of the Other, which subsequently leads to some kind of intermonadic coordination. In the articles written in his later years, Schütz concentrates on criticizing Husserl and attacks this solution for its inconsistency. Husserl seems to have effectively precluded the appearance within the primordial sphere of everything that is not strictly 'mine'; so how could it be that I recognize the Other in a human body that I have deliberately decided to regard only as a phenomenon constituted in my consciousness? Schütz infers from that that the attempts to answer the challenge of intersubjectivity in the transcendental sphere with the theory of transcendental ego and the method of transcendental reduction cannot succeed (Schütz, CP III: 55).

For Schütz this means that intersubjectivity is not something to be constituted and hence not something to be justified by means of phenomenological analysis of constitution – it is simply a precondition, a 'datum of the life-world' (Schütz, CP III: 82). And if there is a cornerstone in the life-world that cannot be reduced to the constituting ego, what is the point in developing the scientific philosophy that would put the whole world in doubt in order to trace its constitution as a phenomenon? Schütz's initial willingness to separate social science from the methodology of reduction gradually leads him to disputing the whole project of Husserl's philosophy based on reduction. In fact, Schütz never really identified Husserl's approach to philosophy with his own

and in the course of time came to realize that he is quite far from Husserl's philosophical intentions. As Srubar rightly points out, Schütz tended to believe that

the conception that aims at grounding the validity of the life-world within reduction and in reduction itself, leads completely away from the intersubjective grounds of this validity that are embedded in sociality, since it eliminates by means of epoché the socially imposed conditions of sense-making that appear in the form of systems of relevancies.

(Srubar, 2007: 178)

The distrust for epoché makes Schütz questioning the method of reduction in general. His strong emphasis on the transferability in the everyday life of the results achieved under reduction contrasts with Husserl's belief that the knowledge gained by science undergoes the same sedimentation as all other types of knowledge and turns into the unproblematic *doxa*. For Schütz, epoché makes sense only as a doorkeeper that separates different regions of meaning from each other, and not as a critical undertaking that leads to complete suspension of the life-world. For that reason it is not surprising that, at some point, he finally admits in his letters to Aron Gurwitsch that he got so heretical as to not understand anymore how reduction can be performed:

I am afraid that the artificial notion of phenomenological reduction conceals this situation. Because in fact intentionality is only possible within the life-world, insofar it is not reduced to a phenomenon. Even under the reduction the world remains preserved as 'sense', that is, as a phenomenon, as a world that appears to me and precisely in the way it appears to me. However, doesn't that change of the 'sense' of the world that happens during the transition into the phenomenological attitude, lead back to the situation when in the place of self-possession of 'being with the things' enters 'intentionality' (...)?

(Schütz to Gurwitsch; quoted in Srubar, 2007: 187)

While Schütz was reluctant to distance himself from Husserl in public, the study of his correspondence demonstrates that in his later years the Austrian-born sociologist tended to doubt the worth of the whole project of Husserlian phenomenological science (Barber, 2004: 205-206). Schütz's insistence on the preservation of self-evidences of the life-world in science (most importantly, the self-evidence of intersubjectivity) is an indication that his understanding of science, as well as his view on the position of the scientist, differs dramatically from Husserl's. While Husserl opens the way to questioning the most basic pre-givens of our life in the project of 'transcendental history', exemplified by his study of the 'origin of geometry', Schütz regards these

pre-givens as necessary conditions of socio-historical knowledge and blocks the way to putting them in doubt. His disinterested observer, despite some similarities, is completely another character than the transcendental spectator portrayed by Husserl and Fink. While the latter is in a constant struggle trying to discover the limits of his natural being and transcend them for the sake of the triumph of reason, the former is a moral relativist, an indifferent stranger playing with perspectives. Schütz's image of science is alien, if not hostile, to Husserl's critical science objectifying the prejudices and presuppositions of the ordinary life.

## **Conclusion**

The relationship between the world of the scientist and the ordinary life-world has been a central concern for Schütz at all stages of development of his thought. His analyses of scientific consciousness are a constant reflection on the position of the scientist in society. By comparing and contrasting intentional situations of the scientist and the layman, Schütz provides an image of a community of detached theorists who exist in a separate 'province of meanings'. What is lacking from these studies, however, is the normative philosophical justification of science. Despite his tendency to extensively use the conceptual apparatus of Husserlian phenomenology, Schütz doesn't subscribe to Husserl's understanding of the mission of the scientist; neither does he provide his own version of it.

While Schütz has been certainly sympathetic to Husserl's system of sciences as sketched in 'Ideas II', and particularly to the possibility of pursuing science within a natural attitude, the problem is that this system is fundamentally flawed. Both Husserl and Schütz seem to have understood that, but their reaction testifies to crucial differences in their self-comprehension. While Husserl recognizes the method of reduction as a key scientific tool and endows it with the civilizing mission of promoting reason, Schütz regards science as a perspective-changer within the everyday world and tends to reject altogether the reduction and its revolutionary pathos.

For one thing, this means that Schütz's use of phenomenological vocabulary doesn't make him share Husserl's understanding of vocation of scientific philosophy. For another, the concept of 'sociological attitude', as suggested by Garfinkel, may be misleading. Even though Schütz's notion of 'cognitive style' is obviously an heir to Husserl's theory of attitudes, it subjects the latter to such substantial modifications that reverse translation of 'cognitive style' into 'attitude' completely distorts the meaning of Husserl's term. There would be no place for a 'sociological attitude' in Husserl – either because sociological attitude is nothing but natural attitude, or

because genuine social science is only possible due to reduction, and thus requires a phenomenological attitude.

Normative theory of science is remarkably absent from Schütz's writings. If, as it has been shown, it is impossible to assert that he was operating with Husserl's phenomenology of science, a question arises as to the sources of Schütz's implicit beliefs about science. Answering this question requires exploring multiple philosophical influences experienced by Schütz and cannot be dealt with here in detail. However, sometimes his silence regarding the justification of science becomes telling, as it happens, for instance, when he considers the idea of science as technique:

Is not the ultimate aim of science the mastery of the world? Are not natural sciences designed to dominate the forces of the universe, social sciences to exercise control, medical science to fight diseases? And is not the only reason why man bothers with science his desire to develop the necessary tools in order to improve his everyday life and to help humanity in its pursuit of happiness? All this is certainly as true as it is banal, but it has nothing to do with our problem. Of course, the desire to improve the world is one of man's strongest motives for dealing with science, and the application of scientific theory leads of course to the invention of technical devices for the mastery of the world.

(Schütz, CP I: 245)

Apparently, Schütz accepts the technological grounding of science as 'banal'<sup>13</sup> and is unwilling to discuss the problem further. He chooses instead to provide the description of the situation of scientific theorist *provided that* he has sufficient motives to pursue theory, and this is important for reconstructing his unstated view of science. The readiness to banish the motives for scientific activity from the phenomenological analysis of science indicates that Schütz, in fact, doesn't consider the problem of motivation for science to be the subject of rational theoretical investigation. In his phenomenology of science, there is simply no place for the study of why somebody decides to make a 'leap' into the realm of science, because this motivation cannot be accounted for scientifically.

If some interpreters are right in claiming that Schütz's use of phenomenology is in fact subdued to his general Weberian framework (see, for instance: Hindess, 1972), then it would make sense to regard his rejection to provide a justification for science through the lens of Weber's position on this account. Weber's Neo-Kantian vindication of science is famous for his insistence on the impossibility to find rational grounds for pursuing science. Admitting technological worth of

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<sup>13</sup> One should compare this to Husserl's vehement objections to reducing science to technique.

science and its potential for providing clarity, Weber holds that there is no universal value in science, and affirming the value of science is always a matter of individual irrational decision.

Whether, under such conditions, science is a worthwhile 'vocation' for somebody, and whether science itself has an objectively valuable 'vocation' are again value judgments about which nothing can be said in the lecture-room. To affirm the value of science is a presupposition for teaching there. I personally by my very work answer in the affirmative.

(Weber, 1946: 152)

Weber's idea of irreconcilable conflict between values, the 'struggle of gods with one another', seems to be much closer to Schütz's worldview than Husserl's rationalism. As Schütz confesses in a letter to Eric Vögelin, for him 'in life as in science each works within the limits within which he or his daemon puts him' (Schütz to Vögelin; quoted in Barber, 2004: 126). Schütz inherits from Weber the image of multiple values governing our life, including our decision to pursue science. Since no universal ground can be found to judge between them, rational science has nothing to say in the dispute between daemons. Perhaps this refusal to bestow the responsibility for mankind on reason and philosophy made Schütz so flexible and adaptive to different environments and occupations. After all, for him it was simply the question of shifting between different systems of relevancies.

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