

Methodological Implications of Phenomenological Life-World Analysis

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Alfred Schutz's work is obviously multilayered and can thus be examined from a variety of perspectives. His central motive, however, was, without question, the contribution of an analysis of the life-world to the methodology of the social sciences. The avowed goal of his major work *The Phenomenology of the Social World* was to develop a "philosophically founded theory of method" for social scientific research (Schutz 1967: xxxi). Despite the various topical ramifications of his work, Schutz never lost sight of this goal. Accordingly, his blueprints for the structure of his planned opus *The Structures of the Life-World* features a chapter titled "Sciences of¹ the Life-World" (Schutz and Luckmann 1973: xxii) as a quasi-crowning conclusion. In this concluding work, the diverse facets of the phenomenological analysis of the life-world were therefore arranged to culminate in a philosophical founding of the sciences of the life-world. Since Luckmann decided to excise this chapter, when editing the *Structures* posthumously, interpreters of Schutz less familiar with the entirety of the corpus have sometimes lost sight of this fundamental objective. This article then looks to explicate and discuss some methodological implications of the phenomenological life-world analysis for the social sciences.

My line of argumentation goes as follows: In the first chapter I discuss Schutz's original plans for a philosophical foundation for the methodology of the social sciences. I begin with his reflections in *The Phenomenology of the Social World* and present his plan for the final, omitted chapter of the *The Structures of the Life-World* on the basis of his index cards. In the second chapter I briefly sketch Schutz's postulates of social-scientific constructs and focus in the third chapter on the postulate of adequacy which is the crucial one.

¹The English edition uses the expression "sciences *in* the life-world," but this is a mistake: in his German note-books Schutz explicitly refers to "sciences *of* the life-world".

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Many social scientists are not aware that the postulate of causal adequacy originated in statistics and jurisprudence and was introduced to sociology by Max Weber who analogously coined the postulate of meaning adequacy. In the first section (Sect. 3.1) I reconstruct the history and meaning of these two postulates in Weber's sociology. In the second section (Sect. 3.2) I describe Schutz's reflections on both postulates, his reasons for rejecting the postulate of causal adequacy and why he only adopts meaning adequacy for social scientific constructs of social actions. In Sect. 3.3 I propose a radicalization of Schutz's loosely formulated postulate of adequacy, a more restrictive interpretation that would allow it to be used as an effective criterion for evaluating research approaches as well as empirical studies. I use unpublished pieces of Schutz's correspondence in which he criticizes the approach of Austrian Economics, in particular of his mentor Ludwig Mises, and argue that Schutz would sympathize with such a radicalized interpretation, although he never admitted as much in public. In the fourth chapter I present some recent developments of qualitative research approaches that are based on Schutz's life-world analysis and which attempt to achieve *adequate* empirical research.²

1 Phenomenological Life-World Analysis as a Foundation of the Social Sciences

The Phenomenology of the Social World had a clear structure in this regard: In the "Statement of Our Problem" (first chapter) Schutz laid out his problem and adapted Max Weber's theory of action as a foundation for interpretative sociology, but also critically analyzed his notion of meaning since it is beset with ambiguities. Then, he formulated his intent "to determine the precise nature of the *phenomenon of meaning*, and to do this by an analysis of the constituting function" in order to "analyze step by step the meaning structure of the social world. By following this procedure we shall be able to anchor the methodological apparatus of interpretative sociology at a far deeper point than Max Weber was able to do" (Schutz 1967: 13). The second chapter elaborates on "the constitution of meaningful lived experience in the constitutor's own stream of consciousness", and therefore on the polythetic processes of the constitution of meaning and their temporality, the formation of contexts of meaning and experience, the attentional modifications of meaning, the composition of the world of experience and its ordering under interpretive schemes, the notion of action and its "in-order-to" and "because"-motive as well as the self-explication from a particular Here-Now-and-Thus. In the third chapter, Schutz delineates the "foundations of a theory of intersubjective understanding" in which he takes the step from transcendental to mundane phenomenology with the "general thesis of alter ego in the natural perception" and describes intersubjective understanding as a signitive apprehension of the other through signs and indications in acts of

²Parts of the following argumentation were published in Eberle (2010).

self-explication. At this point he introduces the distinction between subjective and objective meaning as well as the notion that complete understanding is not possible (because of the differing stocks of knowledge and relevance systems), rather only approximations to it are. In the fourth chapter, he addresses “the structure of the social world” and exposes how processes of understanding differ according to the mode of givenness of the alter ego: While we can engage with members of the realm of directly experienced social reality in face-to-face interactions and vis-à-vis situations, the realm of contemporaries and the realm of predecessors can only be grasped in the form of types. In the concluding fifth chapter Schutz reflects on “some basic problems of interpretative sociology” and draws a series of conclusions from his concept of proto-hermeneutics for the methodology of the social sciences. He elaborates on the method of the ideal type, the problem of causal adequacy and meaning-adequacy, the social scientist’s observation of the world of contemporaries, interpretative sociology’s preference for rational action types and the key problem of the social sciences: how objective meaning-contexts can be generated from subjective meaning-contexts.

The Phenomenology of the Social World is – in my view – Alfred Schutz’s key work. It lays the foundation for all further streams of reflection in his later works. Compared to the analytical depth and systematic approach of the analyses found here, some of his later examinations are less elaborate – this is especially true of his methodological considerations. On the other hand, he expanded the spectrum of his analysis with important additions, particularly through his contributions concerning the life-world as the unquestioned ground of science (subsequent to the *Crisis*-book by Husserl [1936] 1970), on multiple realities (referring to William James 1907) as well as through the distinction between the everyday world and the world of science and the elaboration of their interrelation. Because of this, two and a half decades later a more sophisticated view on the methodology of the social sciences had emerged. According to the outline of chapters for *The Structures of the Life-World* preserved in his index cards that has commendably been included in the appendix of the second volume of the *Structures* (Schutz and Luckmann 1989: 159–324), Schutz had intended the following structure for the systematical synthesis of his work:

1. The Life-World of the Natural Attitude
2. Stratifications of the Life-World
3. Knowledge of the Life-World. Relevance and Typicality
4. The Life-World as a Province of Praxis
5. The Transcendent Elements of the Life-World and Their Mastery Through Signs and Symbols
6. Sciences in the Life-World

Luckmann refrained from publishing this planned final chapter. He gave two main reasons for this: first, Schutz’s drafts did not seem to add much essential to his paper “Common-Sense and Scientific Interpretation of Human Action” (Schutz 1962a), which constitutes the most substantial methodological contribution after *The Phenomenology of the Social World*. Secondly, Luckmann explains that his

own intentions differed from those of Alfred Schutz and that due to the lack of directions, he could not have written this chapter true to Schutz's intent (Luckmann 1973: xvii). One can understand Luckmann's reasons for not including the chapter, but, as a result, the immanent interrelation of Schutz's analysis of the life-world and the methodology of the social sciences is easily overlooked. That the original index cards have not been reproduced in the new (German) edition of the *Structures* (Schütz and Luckmann 2003) could make matters even worse.

I will sketch out the structure envisioned by Schutz for the planned final chapter shortly and which arguments he formulated for it (Schutz and Luckmann 1989: 177–180):

- (a) *Life-world as the unexamined ground of all sciences*: Scientific research begins with what has become questionable, which has been taken for granted before, and is embedded in a horizon of what is taken for granted. As Husserl has shown in the *Crisis* ([1936] 1970), the life-world precedes all science; even the natural sciences take root in the life-world, and so does the genealogy of logics (Husserl [1939] 1973).
- (b) *On the phenomenology of the natural attitude*: Husserl's postulate to explicate the life-world through a phenomenological analysis of the constituting function would have been described and discussed here. Schutz agreed with Husserl's notion of "*Geisteswissenschaft*" and its role and critically discussed the eidetic analyses of social formations by his students Edith Stein and Gerda Walther. The central question was whether a real ontology of the social world would be possible in the form of an eidetic science. As we know, with his theory of the constitution of the social world, Schutz chose an alternative path to what he called a "picture book phenomenology."
- (c) *Natural science and social science*: In the first subchapter of this part, Schutz intended to resolve the alleged difference between the methods of the natural sciences and the humanities. Both work empirically and both strive for a logical consistency in their findings, yet the logical positivist presupposes precisely the subject-matter of the social sciences, namely the social world. The second subchapter addressed the topic of understanding and explaining. For Schutz, understanding is not a category of the social sciences, but a method of everyday practice in the life-world. Here, one needs to distinguish between self-explication by the actor, the intersubjective understanding by a partner who takes part in a social interaction, the understanding of an uninvolved observer in the everyday world and lastly the understanding of a scientific observer in the world of contemporaries. The postulate of the "subjectively intended meaning" implies that one needs to look for the meaning that the action has for the actor. The radical critique of behaviorism is accordingly deduced from this position. In the third subchapter, finally, the fundamental difference between the thought objects of the natural and the social sciences is elaborated: Unlike the world of nature, the social world is always meaningfully pre-interpreted. The two-level-theory follows from this: Social scientific constructs are second-order constructs that need to refer to first-order constructs.

- (d) *What is the subject-matter of social science?* Here, Schutz poses the question as to the relationship between the social sciences and the common-sense of the everyday life-world and asks what social reality actually is. Two things are central in this regard: first, foundation in a theory of action in the tradition of Max Weber and his methodological individualism, that is, in the attribution of everything collective to the actions of concrete individuals. And second, the distinction between common-sense and scientific interpretations of social actions.
- (e) *The social scientist and his situation:* In this section, Schutz first differentiates between scientific practice (in the everyday world) and the scientific attitude. He then describes what the decision to take this theoretical leap involves for the (social) scientist: He is a “disinterested observer”, who stands outside of the lifeworldly situation and brackets his biography and the relevance systems rooted therein. Instead, he orients himself according to the corpus of scientific knowledge and its relevance structures and the relevance of the present problem. This analytical differentiation between separate provinces of meaning which are often tightly interwoven in scientific work appears to be a bit artificial and has been frequently criticized – yet it has often been subject to misunderstandings as well.
- (f) *Life-worldly and scientific interpretation of the social world:* Since the life-world encompasses all provinces of reality the heading should really be “common-sense” as opposed to “scientific interpretation of the social world”. This chapter deals with the two-level-theory and the principles of model construction in the social sciences: Since all social phenomena have to be attributed to individual action, the scientist constructs homunculi that are endowed with consciousness and typical motives that match the observed types of action. The scientific problem is the “locus” of all possible construction relevant to its solution and is itself embedded in a horizon of the taken-for-granted (and especially of the scientifically accepted).
- (g) *Postulates of social-scientific construction:* Here Schutz states the postulates of logical consistency, of subjective interpretation, of adequacy and of rationality (in certain cases), focusing especially on the question of what rationality is. I will elaborate further on these postulates below.
- (h) *The unity of science and the problem of continuity:* Schutz accepts both the idea of the unity and of the continuity of science, but in his view they cannot both be based on a (natural scientific) logical positivism (as even contemporary critical rationalism holds). The “true unity” of science is warranted instead by its origin in the life-world. Therefore, it is not oriented by the natural, but by the social sciences in a Husserlian sense. For Schutz, only a phenomenological analysis of the constituting function can fulfill “the positivists’ justified postulate for ‘continuity’” (Schutz and Luckmann 1989: 180). However, Schutz added critically, it remains doubtful, “whether eidetic and transcendental phenomenology can fulfill Husserl’s hopes” (Schutz and Luckmann 1989: 180). Contrary to his conviction in *The Phenomenology of the Social World* he had grown skeptical as to whether a philosophical founding of the social sciences would be ultimately possible.

The scientific community usually reaches a consensus about the facts that the social world is always meaningfully pre-interpreted and that there is a difference between the natural and the social sciences. What we can infer from this, however, remains disputed. In the following I will concentrate on Schutz's postulates of social-scientific constructions.

2 Schutz's Postulates of Social-Scientific Constructions

The distinctive feature of the social sciences is for Schutz that they attempt to *understand the world of contemporaries*. They aim at theoretical contributions and do not study concrete types of persons like historical science does. This follows from *the distinct attitude of the scientist as a 'disinterested observer'*, whose interpretation of meaning is not bound to pragmatic motives but strives for truth. The boundaries of this quest are set on the one hand by the scientific relevance system, especially by the immediate problem, and on the other hand by the corpus of knowledge handed down within the respective discipline. Schutz subsumes the principles by which theoretical models should be construed under the following methodological postulates (Schutz 1962a, b, 1964a, b):

1. The *principle of relevance*: The scientific system of relevance determines the selection of elements, the breath of the perspective, the complexity of the model, etc. Therefore, every model carries the index of the particular problem at hand which suspends all other aspects as irrelevant through a *ceteris-paribus*-condition. Thus, one needs to take into account that changing the core topic automatically leads to a shift in the horizons of meaning of the terms used.
2. The *postulate of logical consistency*: The system of typical constructs designed by the scientist has to exhibit the highest degree of clarity and definiteness and must entirely conform to the principles of formal logic.
3. The *postulate of subjective interpretation*: As shown, explanations in the social sciences have to refer back to the subjective meaning of the action. This means that a homunculus is constructed based on typical properties of an observed course of action, a model of an actor to whom a consciousness with typical in-order-to and because-motives is attributed. Constructions on a higher level of aggregation (for example working with demand and supply curves) are acceptable; however they have to be conceived in a way that warrants the possibility of referring human action to the subjective meaning that action had for the actor whenever necessary.
4. The *postulate of adequacy*: The constructs of the social scientist have to be consistent with the constructs of common-sense experience of social reality, i.e. they have to be understandable to an actor and must be able to explain an action appropriately.
5. The *postulate of rationality*: Models of rational action are preferred since such action is especially evident and accordingly forms a reference point for the characterization of types of deviance. This postulate is not a mandatory requirement, although economics in particular continues to adhere to it.

3 The Postulate of Adequacy

The postulate of adequacy seems to me to be especially decisive! When can we take scientific constructs to be adequate?

3.1 *Adequacy on the Level of Meaning and Adequacy on the Level of Causality in Max Weber's Work*

Let us briefly return to Max Weber, from whom Schutz draws on this matter: Explanatory understanding in Weber's sense, which captures the actual as well as the motivational meaning, has to conform to the two methodological postulates of *adequacy on the level of meaning* and *adequacy on the level of causality*:

We apply the term '*adequacy on the level of meaning*' to the subjective interpretation of a coherent course of conduct when and insofar as, according to our habitual modes of thought and feeling, its component parts taken in their mutual relation are recognized to constitute a 'typical' complex of meaning. It is more common to say 'correct.' The interpretation of a sequence of events will on the other hand be called *causally adequate* insofar as, according to established generalizations from experience, there is a probability that it will always actually occur in the same way. (...) Thus *causal explanation* depends on being able to determine that there is a probability, which in the rare ideal case can be numerically stated, but is always in some sense calculable, that a given observable event (overt or subjective) will be followed or accompanied by another event.³ (Weber [1922] 1978: 11 – emphasis added by T.S.E.)

In other words, adequacy on the level of meaning is only reached if explanatory understanding is evident. But even an absolutely evident interpretation remains only a *hypothesis* as long as the criterion of causal adequacy is not fulfilled as well. Conversely, a statement that is causally adequate remains only a non-comprehensible statistical probability as long as the criterion of adequacy on the level of meaning has not been fulfilled (Weber [1922] 1978: 10, 12). Conclusion:

Statistical uniformities constitute understandable types of action, and thus constitute sociological generalizations, only when they can be regarded as manifestations of the understandable subjective meaning of a course of social action." (Weber [1922] 1978: 12) Such generalizations always exhibit a "correspondence between the theoretical interpretation of motivation and its empirical verification (Weber [1922] 1978: 11).

Weber coined the term "*adequacy on the level of meaning*" to parallel the notion of causal adequacy which had been long-established in the fields of political economy and law. With the notion of adequacy on the level of meaning, Weber tried to

³This excerpt follows the translation by G. Roth and C. Wittich (Weber [1922] 1978), except for the first phrase (until "insofar as"), where the translation by W. Heydebrand (in Weber 1994) was chosen as it seems to be closer to the original meaning. (The first chapter of *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* was as well published as a separate article in the *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre* and was thus later translated twice.)

stay true to Dilthey's intent within a neo-Kantian framework oriented by Rickert's works (Dilthey [1927] 2002; Rickert [1921] 1962, [1929] 1986). Without elaborating on its manifold facets, it is worth pointing out that Weber measures the degree of adequacy on the level of meaning "according to our habitual modes of thought and feeling" (Weber [1922] 1978: 11). By doing this, he brings in a statistical criterion which is not unproblematic with regard to adequacy on the level of meaning. The reason for this – in my view – is down to the fact that he formed the concept as a parallel to the existing concept of adequacy on the level of causality.

The notion of "*adequate causation*" can already be found in the works of John Stuart Mill (1943). A longstanding debate that began in the late 1880s in the field of law, however, was to exert much more of an influence on Weber's understanding. Decisive in this context was the "Theory of Adequacy" developed by the physiological psychologist and theorist of the foundations of probability Johannes von Kries (1886, 1888, 1889). Stimulated by von Liszt, Kries applied the theory of probability to the legal terms "causation and causal relationship" (Kries 1889: 531). In this way, he tried to generalize constant linkages as statistical regularities in order to use them as foundations for attribution structures. In doing this, he built on the notion of *objective probability* rather than subjective probability (while explicitly differentiating between the two). While subjective probability refers to the expectation of an individual concerning the occurrence of a certain event, objective probability concerns classes of events which occur independently of subjective expectations.

Kries sees the relevance of *general causal relationships* between actions and results for penological attributions since an action must be capable of evoking the respective result according to common (statistical) experience. An "adequate causation" can only be affirmed if this is the case. If, for example, a coachman falls asleep, causing him to run off the road and his passenger is subsequently killed by lightning, there is no adequate causation between his falling asleep and the death of the passenger, "since the sleeping of the coachman in general does not heighten the possibility of being killed by lightning, (that is) it is generally not capable of inducing it" (Kries 1889: 532). With the concept of general causation based on statistical regularity, Kries intends to explicate a norm on which "penal attribution depends in public legal thinking" (Kries 1889: 532). Thus, he does not assume that probabilistic statements can be applied directly to singular cases, but that judges as well as laymen – usually intuitively – are guided by such general assumptions in penal attributions.

Weber's discussion of causal adequacy was based on this debate. Weber was interested, however, not so much in jurisprudence, but in *history*. He saw the same logical structure in questions of historical causality as in the question of penal attribution. Unlike historical science, causal attribution in jurisprudence includes not only the objective causal attribution of a result to an action but also the question as to whether this attribution is sufficient to qualify as subjective guilt on the part of an individual. According to many legal norms, the attribution of guilt depends on subjective factors such as whether the actor committed his actions willfully, whether he could have foreseen the result of his actions, and so on. Common to both disciplines

is the fact that they are confronted with an infinite number of determinants of any concrete incident or course of actions and thus have to make a selection. Both apply a *principle of selection* in order to differentiate between essential and unessential factors: Which aspects are seen as relevant or irrelevant in a consideration of causes, is in Jurisprudence decided by the criterion of whether something can be subsumed under a certain legal norm, while in historical science it is determined according to the type of historical research interest involved. What Weber wants to stress here is that the construction of a causal relationship requires a number of “logical operations”, in particular, a “series of abstractions”, which superimpose categories on the actual course of actions and events (Weber 1949: 171).

“Nomological knowledge” is crucial for the considerations of Kries. It is composed of “certain known empirical rules, particularly those relating to the ways in which human beings are prone to react under given situations” (Weber 1949: 174). Since human beings tend to react differently each time and therefore divert from “empirical rules”, only probabilistic statements can be made about their actions. For this reason Weber takes up Kries’ notion of “*adequate causation*”: In relation to human action, the opposite of “chance” cannot be “necessity”, but only “adequacy”. Therefore, the construction of a causal relationship refers to the relative frequency of a type of action, in other words: to its objective likelihood. If such an interrelation cannot be “adequately” established, one needs to speak of “chance” causation (Weber 1949: 185). To clarify this point with an example: If the historian Meyer (1902) intends to clarify the “significance” of the battle of Marathon for the development of occidental culture, for Weber, this argument has to be stated in the following logical terms:

it is not the case that Persian victory *must* have led to a quite different development of Hellenic and therewith of world culture – such a judgement would be quite impossible. Rather is that significance to be put as follows: that a different development of Hellenic and world culture ‘would have’ been the ‘*adequate*’ effect of such an event as a Persian victory. (Weber 1949: 184f.)

Parallel to Kries’ theory of jurisdiction, Weber thinks it is possible, in principle, to determine the *adequacy of constructions of historical causations*. If this were impossible, we could not draw the distinction between the causally “important” and “unimportant” (Weber 1949: 184). That such a determination of adequacy in the framework of “fantasized” alternative scenarios and constellations must also be grounded in nomological knowledge has not been explicitly pointed out by Weber, but has been sufficiently substantiated by Kries, who exercised a considerable influence on Weber on this matter.

3.2 *Schutz’s Renunciation of Causal Adequacy*

As is generally known, Schutz dismissed the notion of causal adequacy. Already in his early notes written in Vienna, which have been published in German recently (Schütz 2007) one reads the following:

(...) the social sciences must reject the question of causality as inadequate in regard to the interrelations of their objects. The question of causality refers to the realm of mechanistic world explanations that will indeed – which can be shown a-priori – never be able to solve a single social-scientific problem, be it with the help of neurosciences, theories of psycho-physical parallelisms or any similar theories. (Schütz 2007: 227 – author’s translation)

And in *The Phenomenology of the Social World* Schutz states:

There are weighty objections against the use of the word ‘causal’ in sociological discourse. For when we formulate judgments of causal adequacy in the social sciences, what we are really talking about is not causal necessity in the strict sense but the so-called ‘causality of freedom,’ which pertains to the end-means relation. Therefore, one cannot really speak of a causal relation in the general sense postulated by Kries so long as one confines oneself to the external event, the objective context of meaning, and so forth. (Schutz 1967: 231)

Schutz is willing to follow Weber’s interpretation of causal adequacy, but not his specific wording. What Weber means by the postulate of causal adequacy, is for Schutz nothing other than “the postulate of the coherence of experience” (Schutz 1967: 232): for every typical construct it must be possible that “according to the rules of experience an act will be performed in a manner corresponding to the construct” (Schutz 1967: 232). Schutz, however, carves out another implication of the Weberian postulate of causal adequacy: The factual action which corresponds to the ideal type must be *iterative*. For the social sciences this means that “what we really have here is a heuristic principle based on the economy of thought” which limits the analyses to those acts occurring with a certain frequency (Schutz 1967: 232). This understanding of the principle corresponds to the concerns of sociology, but not of historical science.

If, however, causal adequacy means that the typical construct of a human act has to be consistent with the entirety of our experience and if every experience of human action implies its embeddedness in a meaning-context, “all causal adequacy which pertains to human action is based on principles of meaning-adequacy of some kind or other” (Schutz 1967: 233). For Schutz, *causal adequacy is only a special case of meaning-adequacy*. Subsequently, Schutz integrated both postulates into the *postulate of adequacy*.

Of course Schutz is correct in saying that it is problematic to speak of a cause-effect relation within the humanities, cultural studies, and social sciences. Without doubt, his concepts of because- and in-order-to motives are more appropriate to human constellations of motives: an in-order-to motive – the goal of an act – is never the effect of a given set of because-motives alone, they merely make up the “conditions of an act” which are themselves interpreted by the actor and still leave open a range of alternative actions to choose from. This holds true for individual courses of action just as much as for social chains of interaction: degrees of freedom always remain which are wiped out in the course of a causal reconstruction. In this sense, the notion of “causal adequacy” is indeed terminologically problematic.

First, what are lost sight of to a certain degree are the *consequences of acts* – which were at the very heart of the accounts of Kries and Weber. Death by lightning, the outcome of the battle of Marathon, a letter of cancelation, and so on are events with concrete effects. Of course those effects are not of a deterministic kind, but the

concrete events limit the flexibility of later actions. Those are the kind of topics that have been discussed in sociology in terms of the differentiation between “culture” and “structure”. Secondly, Schutz narrowed the meaning of the postulate of adequacy more and more to that of adequacy of meaning. In 1943, in conjunction with the remarks in the *Phenomenology of the Social World*, he still maintained that

The postulate of adequacy requires that the typical construction be compatible with the totality of both our daily life and our scientific experience. (Schutz 1964b: 88)

But it is precisely this aspect that he subsequently drops. The final version of the postulate of adequacy (that can indeed already be found in 1940) reads:

Each term in a scientific model of human action must be constructed in such a way that a human act performed within the life-world by an individual actor in the way indicated by the typical construct *would be* understandable for the actor himself as well as for his fellow-men in terms of common-sense interpretation of daily life. Compliance with this postulate warrants the consistency of the constructs of the social scientist with the constructs of common-sense experience of the social reality. (Schutz 1962a: 44 – emphasis by T.S.E.; analogous Schutz 1962b: 64; 1964a: 19)

The (emphasized) subjunctive makes us hesitate: clearly, only the consistency between scientific and common-sense constructs is addressed, while causal adequacy, that is, the conformity with experience, has been left out of the postulate. Now, the criterion of adequacy is already fulfilled if an action that coincides with the scientific construct *would be* understandable in the course of common-sense thinking – obviously it is no longer important whether this action does in fact occur empirically or whether it remains a mere model.

Schutz therefore reduced the postulate of causal adequacy to meaning-adequacy. This shift of focus, when compared with Weber’s concept, can in my view be traced back to his specific view of science which was profoundly influenced by his colleagues from the circle of von Mises who were economists. Mises, a prominent member of the second generation of the Austrian School of Economics advanced an approach to economics which confined itself to a-priori statements and distanced itself strictly from economic history and its exclusive task of the interpretation of empirical data. Schutz, like Weber, saw a-priori social science as merely a naturalistic self-misunderstanding and took sociology’s mission to consist in understanding and explaining empirical facts. However, Schutz hardly ever came into contact with empirical research. The impressive work of Fritz Machlup, with whom Schutz maintained close contact, consists mainly of those typical non-empirical economic models which are based on relatively simple assumptions in order to keep the theoretical complexity manageable (see Machlup 1978). If Schutz requires only the postulates of logical consistency, subjective interpretation and adequacy (Schutz 1962a: 43) but not any empirical reference for constructs of homunculi, then even economic models most aloof from empirical data correspond to these methodological principles. Schutz’s methodological postulates read like a description of the prevailing self-conception of the economics of the time (see Eberle 1988).

We should note here that Milton Friedman published the so-called Friedman-theorem in 1953 which found wide appeal among economists:

Truly important and significant hypotheses will be found to have ‘assumptions’ that are wildly inaccurate descriptive representations of reality, and, in general, the more significant the theory, the more unrealistic the assumptions (in this sense) (Friedmann 1953: 14).

For Friedman, it is not a problem at all if a theory’s assumptions are realistic or not – the only thing that counts is the success of the prognoses derived from it. But can a model that is based on unrealistic assumptions comply with the methodological postulate of adequacy? Interestingly, Machlup sides completely with Friedman on this matter, arguing that another great American economist – Samuel Samuelson – wrote his best works whenever he made *unrealistic* assumptions (Machlup 1964: 753). Machlup, however, holds the Friedman-theorem to be in need of development: the assumptions would not need to be realistic, but *adequate* (Machlup 1954: 17). But if mental images which are based on unrealistic assumptions are supposed to comply with the postulate of adequacy, then it must, obviously, be broadly defined. Machlup defines it – with reference to Schutz – in the following way:

The fundamental assumptions of economic theory are not subject to a requirement of independent empirical verification, but instead to a requirement of understandability in the sense in which man can understand the actions of fellowmen (Machlup 1954: 17).

Schutz’s self-conception as a methodologist has always been characterized by modesty: “Methodology is not the preceptor or the tutor of the scientist. It is always his pupil ...” (Schutz 1964b: 88) His conception of science was deeply influenced by the “method of imaginary constructions” (Mises 1949: 237ff.) of the Austrian School of political economy. This also holds true in regard to the conceptualization of rationality, in which he, nevertheless, takes the side of Weber against Mises. But the *postulate of rationality* that social-scientific models have to comply with is formulated subjunctively:

The rational course-of-action and personal types have to be constructed in such a way that an actor in the life-world *would* perform the typified action *if he had* a perfectly clear and distinct knowledge of all the elements, and only of the elements, assumed by the social scientist as being relevant to his action and the constant tendency to use the most appropriate means assumed to be at his disposal for achieving the ends defined by the construct itself. (Schutz 1962a: 45 – emphasis by T.S.E.)

Again, the subjunctive indicates that the scientific models form an (objective) possibility from which acts in the everyday world deviate more or less strongly. Earlier, Schutz had extensively elaborated the “paradox of rationality on the level of common-sense action” in the following way:

(...) The more standardized the pattern is, the less the underlying elements become analyzable for common-sense thought in terms of rational insight. (...) Only on the level of models of interaction patterns constructed by the social scientist in accordance with certain particular requirements defined by the methods of his science does the concept of rationality obtain its full significance. (Schutz 1962a: 33)

The postulate of rationality formulated in the subjunctive, however, can again be fulfilled by all economic models, as long as they are based on the *homo oeconomicus* – even if their assumptions are completely unrealistic. Schutz obviously employs his protosociological analyses of the life-world methodologically primarily in order to explicate

the *differences in orientation* between constructs of homunculi and actors guided by common sense – and therefore the *distance between a scientific model and the social reality experienced in the life-world*.

3.3 *Radicalization of the Postulate of Adequacy*

I have suggested applying the postulate of adequacy in a stricter sense:

Complete adequacy has been reached if the concrete orientation of meaning of actors has been grasped appropriately. With this, we declare the subjective perspective of the singular actor to be the *ultimate reference point* for social-scientific analyses. As Schutz has shown, understanding of the other can only be reached approximately; the perspective of the actor can be grasped only partly. Complete adequacy therefore remains an unattainable ideal. With such a radicalized version of the postulate of adequacy, however, it becomes methodologically necessary to account explicitly for the adequacy of scientific constructs (or reconstructions) by referring to phenomenological protosociology. Through this, the structures of the life-world not only serve as a protosociological frame of reference, as a ‘mathesis universalis’ (Luckmann 1983a, b), but it becomes necessary to reflect the relation to this framework by virtue of the postulate of adequacy. (Eberle 1999a: 115f.)

Social-scientific hermeneutics and interpretative social research approaches that adopted this stricter sense and built upon the world of meaning of the actors more closely (in opposition, for example, to the partly unrealistic models of economists) could be understood to be “more adequate”. And *Schutz’s structures of the life-world would provide a fruitful frame of reference for assessing the adequacy of scientific constructs*.

With a radicalization of the postulate of adequacy, economic imperialism could be brought to an end. In the *Phenomenology of the Social World*, Schutz calls the pure economics of Mises a “perfect example of an objective meaning-complex about subjective meaning-complexes” (1967: 245), and the law of marginal utility is interpreted as “a stipulation that merely marks out the fixed boundaries of the only area within which economic acts can by definition take place” (1967: 245). Unlike Kaufmann, whom he invokes, Schutz decouples this economic principle from the economic context and generalizes it formally. In this case, however, it can be applied to almost anything: not only to consumer choice, but also to love relationships, organizational relations and behavior within the family; Gary Becker (1991) won the Nobel-price for the corresponding analyses in “Treatise on the Family”. If one were to undertake closer empirical research of the subjective meaning connexions of the actors, one would most likely see that not all actors calculate cost-benefit ratios in every situation... Today, even economists argue that a *homo oeconomicus* modeled after a market environment must not be transferred seamlessly to the behavior of members of organizations because this might prove to be a self-fulfilling prophecy, encouraging self-interested behavior while undermining cooperative behavior (Osterloh 2007; Scherer and McKinley 2007).

The fact that Schutz as a methodologist never wanted to elevate himself to the status of teacher or tutor for the economists but rather to remain their scholar could

explain his reluctant formulation of the postulate of adequacy. The matrix of the analysis of the life-world remained the frame of reference within which a descriptive analysis of the economy was feasible, that is, a description of what economists do in their scientific province of meaning. However, Schutz was much more critical in his personal correspondence. In a letter to Adolphe Lowe, he criticized his teacher Ludwig von Mises in no less than three different respects:

1. “the decisive problem involved (in the process of choosing) is just taken for granted by Mises, that is, the problem how it comes that things stand to choice at all” (Schutz 1955b: 5–6);
2. “He overlooks also the difference which seems to be vital for me, namely, on the one hand choosing between objects equally within my reach and, on the other hand, choosing between projects of actions which have to be carried out by me” (1955b: 6);
3. “Mises is trying to develop a general praxeology which he identifies – erroneously, as I think – with the theory of economic action, namely an action according to the assumed scale of preferences of the actor. ... If this were the case there would be no human action whatsoever which was not an economic action” (1955b: 3).

The first two arguments point to the process of choosing in subjective consciousness and the third to the differentiation criteria of the subject matter of economics, which Schutz had already identified as being the principle of marginal utility in the *Phenomenology of the Social World*. He dealt with both problems in a longer manuscript in the mid 1940s. In the first part, he examined the act of choosing in everyday situations. In the second part he scrutinized how this act of choosing is constructed in a scientific model, using the example of theoretical economics. After having fallen between two stools with this attempt – “the philosophical part being of no interest to economists and the economic part of no interest to philosophers” (Schutz 1955a: 1) – he finally published the first part separately in a phenomenological-philosophical journal in 1951 (Schutz 1962c) and held back the second part until the end of his life (it was published posthumously by Lester Embree: Schutz 1972).

With his *analysis of the acts of choosing in the life-world*, Schutz hoped to be able to show that the utilitarian representations of acts of choosing are inadequate and that Mises’ praxeological model is in need of elaboration in several critical aspects as well (see Eberle 2009). A phenomenological description of the process of choosing must not be based on reconstructions of past experiences, but has to start right in the midst of the stream of consciousness. This prerequisite has been satisfied in the work of Husserl, Bergson, and Leibniz, whose findings Schutz combines for this reason. From Husserl, he takes the constitution of problematic options as the precondition to every possible choice, from Bergson the time perspectives implicated in the process of choosing, and from Leibniz the concurrence of volitional intentions which leads to the final ‘fiat’ of the decision. On this basis it becomes immediately clear that the utilitarian model of choosing and decision making is just an interpretation scheme for explaining because-motives of foregone actions which lacks the polythetic course of choosing (Schutz 1972: 573f.).

These statements by Schutz suggest that he also took the postulate of adequacy to be more restrictive than his definitions of it make it appear. Indeed, his lifelong effort to achieve a theory of the constitution of the social world would not have made much sense if he had not aimed at *contributing towards a more adequate methodology of social-scientific research*.

However, in his critique of Mises, Schutz persists with a conception of adequacy as a mere adequacy of meaning. With his analysis of life-worldly acts of choosing he wanted to demonstrate that corresponding model constructs have to take a conceptual approach different from that which economists had, until then, taken: The homunculus-constructs should grasp the orientation to meaning of actions in their timeliness and describe not only the because-motives, but also the in-order-to motives of actions. In other words, Schutz criticized those models which account for human action only in terms of the because-motives of foregone actions as being inadequate. His critique of Mises reveals then, that the postulate of adequacy means more for Schutz than just the requirement that the scientific constructs be *understandable* to common sense, they must correspond conceptually to the everyday orientation of meaning.

My radicalized version of the postulate of adequacy, like Schutz's earlier formulations, further requires that the scientific interpretation of meaning be *empirically correct*. With this, the aim of causal adequacy (that scientific statements must be empirically correct) which Schutz abolished, is preserved, but without reintroducing the problem of causal relations. For example, the economists' model that assumes that actors conduct cost-benefit calculations is, in some cases, empirically true. The problem lies rather in the generalized attribution of such calculations, that is, in the procedure of presuming actors' cost-benefit calculations even if the subjective meaning of a concrete action in reality is completely different. According to the radicalized version of the postulate of adequacy, scientific interpretations can only be taken as adequate, *if they are on the one hand designed according to the processes of meaning construction in daily life and if on the other hand they grasp the actual meaning constructions of actors in the concrete situation empirically correctly*. Reformulated like this, the postulate of adequacy could function as a *quality criterion of qualitative social research* and could constructively replace the concepts of validity and reliability which originated in contexts of quantitative research.

4 Life-World Analysis and Interpretative Social Research

I have proposed this radicalized version of the postulate of adequacy several times already (Eberle 1999a, b, 2000), but no one appears overly enthusiastic about it. There may be several reasons for this: first, many social scientists remain unconvinced that the phenomenological analysis of the life-world represents an appropriate and useful protosociology. Second, many question the value of a protosociology as a whole. Instead, as for example with the proponents of a rational-choice theory (Esser 1991), they argue that it is important to design the models as simply as

possible and only as complex as necessary. The necessity for complexity, then, is judged by relevance criteria of scientific model construction (for example the ability to be aggregated) rather than by the “real” diversity of meaning of the everyday world. Third, many take exception to Schutz’s action-theoretical premises and the postulated methodological individualism, especially to the postulate of subjective interpretation, which is tightly interwoven with the postulate of adequacy. Instead, they follow different philosophical positions and/or different theoretical presuppositions. Fourth, the question can be raised as to whether the postulate of adequacy actually provides useful reference points for empirical research practice. I will address this final question, in particular, in what follows.

Schutz tied his analysis of the life-world closely to Weber’s action-theoretical sociology, and his methodological arguments are oriented by Weber’s *Outline of Interpretive Sociology* (Weber [1922] 1978) as well as the Austrian School of the Mises-circle. This is an association by choice, not of necessity. The structures of the life-world are not just compatible with a distinct kind of sociology: First, as a *mathesis universalis* they form a framework in which, in principle, any kind of social science can be located. Second, as Garfinkel (2002, 2006) has shown with his Ethnomethodology, the analysis of the life-world can also be redrafted completely. Since the processes of the constitution of meaning form the core of the analysis of the life-world, they are, however, only compatible with an interpretive sociology and a hermeneutic approach to the social world. By now, a number of approaches to social-scientific hermeneutics (Hitzler and Honer 1997; Schützeichel 2007; Flick et al. 2004) have been developed, of which several return to Schutz’s analysis of the life-world in different ways.

But what does it mean to conduct “adequate” (in the sense of the radicalized postulate of adequacy) research in an empirical context? How can the concrete, subjective meaning of an action to the actor be grasped as empirically adequate? What Schutz explicated in detail was exactly how difficult such an undertaking is: he pointed to the manifoldly interlaced interrelations of meaning, to the undistinguishable, diffuse layers of meaning and the implicit horizon of the taken for granted, to the limits of what we are able to remember and the approximate character of the understanding of the other. Finally, he pointed to the “paradox of rationality” on the level of everyday actions which says: the more standardized a pattern of action is the less common-sense succeeds to analytically enlighten the underlying elements by way of rational insight. How can we, to stick to the example of acts of choosing in the life-world, empirically grasp the *petites perceptions* of other actors? Even if the hermeneutic approaches try to build upon the current subjective meaning constructions of everyday actors as closely as possible – complete adequacy remains an unattainable ideal to which only approximations are possible. Within these approaches, too, a certain distance between the subjective meaning constructions of everyday actors and their scientific reconstruction remains. Thus, Schutz’s analysis of the life-world rather conveys a fundamental awareness of the complexity of the subjective constitution and social construction of meaning, than instructions for adequate empirical research. No wonder literature offers itself as a welcome solution: the thoughts and experiences of the proponents of *Wilhelm Meister’s*

Apprenticeship and Journeyman Years (Schütz 2013) or in *Don Quixote* (Schutz 1964c) are available in detailed description. One gains access to the actors' subjective world through the author's descriptions and can explore it further analytically. The hermeneutical access to the *alter ego* in social reality however proves to be considerably more difficult.

The *structures of the life-world* represent *proto-hermeneutics* which reveal the basic operations of the constitution of meaning and of the interpretation of meaning as well as the fundamental problems of the hermeneutic approach. They do not, however, provide a practical handle to unlock the subjective meaning of social action empirically. Accordingly, the different approaches in interpretative social research begin with rather diverse premises: some rely exclusively on interview data which is then interpreted in a sequential analysis, others only trust audio-visual recordings of action- and interaction-sequences which are subsequently meticulously transcribed. Some reconstruct life-courses from biographical interviews, others regard them as pure narrations and solemnly examine the form of this narration or the structure of the discourse. Some want to research the content of subjective consciousness; others confine themselves exclusively to communicative practices. Some only trust data from focus-groups, others only the data of social processes in "natural" situations. Some swear by 'interpretive' interviews, others by the observation of real-time courses of action. Although Schutz's mundane phenomenology did not bracket the ontological assumptions of the natural attitude in everyday life (unlike Husserl's transcendental phenomenology), it did not provide concrete clues how such different types of data may be assessed and how we can deal with them in our research practice. Just like the accent of reality in a dream cannot be determined by a phenomenological analysis of the constituting function, but only through an empirical-historical reconstruction of social realities (Schnettler 2008: 44), the various approaches of scientific research differ in terms of their ontological, epistemological and value-theoretical assumptions, as well as their theoretical presuppositions. As the examples show, they further differ from certain presuppositions of the actors in the everyday world they examine. How empirical social research can be designed *adequately* is thus not only determined by the *structures of the life-world* but also by the respective additional theoretical premises. The "adequacy" of a study is accordingly judged by Ethnomethodologists⁴ according to completely different criteria than those used by proponents of Objective Hermeneutics, for example.

The rich and variegated nature of the *empirical research built on Schutz's analysis of the life-world* is evident today in the volumes edited by Dreher and Stegmaier (2007) as well as Raab et al. (2008). On the one hand, they manifest the enormous difference between today's social-scientific research and the role models that Schutz was oriented by in his era. On the other hand, they both confront us with the variety of empirical approaches to the social world that strive for adequacy. Most of them are ethnographic in character, that is, they conduct empirical field research by way

⁴On the concept of adequacy in Ethnomethodology, see Eberle 2008: 156f.

of multiple methods like observation, ethnographic interviews, or document and artifact analysis. One ethnographic approach that draws heavily on Schutz's mundane-phenomenological analysis of the life-world is the *life-world analytic ethnography* (Pfadenhauer 2008), earlier called "life-worldly ethnography" (Honer 1993), "ethnographic life-world analysis" or "life-world analysis in ethnography" (Honer 2004). On the one hand, in the course of such research, data is collected via participant observation, interviews, and the acquisition of field documents and interpreted hermeneutically, much like in other ethnographic approaches. Data collected in ethnographies is always data objectified in signs, symbols, or texts and thus becomes subject to hermeneutic processes (Soeffner 2004). On the other hand – and this is specific to this approach – the subjective experience of the researcher in the field is used explicitly and reflexively as an "instrument" of data generation and collection (exemplary: Honer 2008). The researchers thus do not rely solely on participant observation for their data collection, but also on *observing participation* in a field-specific role and subject their results to a phenomenological analysis. For example, a certain experience of wellbeing during a rave is not only researched through observation and interviews with other participants, but also through a systematic phenomenological analysis of the personal experience (Hitzler and Pfadenhauer 1998, 2003). The basic idea of this is that the genuine form of the experience is lost once it is brought into an objectified form, for example by transcribing and subsequently interpreting it hermeneutically. As a researcher, one should therefore use the immediate access to one's own subjective experience, for example of a rave, to conduct a methodologically controlled phenomenological analysis of the experienced – that is, the experiences and their correlates – through systematic reductions (or bracketing) (Hitzler 2005). In contrast to other ethnographic approaches, the "native's point of view" is not understood indirectly, but is complemented by an "existential view from the inside" (Honer 2004). The *structures of the life-world* as a *mathesis universalis* are not drawn into question but understood as the basis of sociological analysis through this approach. But the phenomenological life-world analysis is used not as a *method* to gain protosociological insights, but to describe "small social life-worlds", in Benita Luckmann's sense (1970), on the one hand as enclaves of consciousness and on the other as "cultural worlds of experiences" (Hitzler and Eberle 2000; Hitzler 2008).⁵

Yet another approach is the *Ethnophenomenology* developed by Hubert Knoblauch and Bernt Schnettler. In their research on near-death experiences (Knoblauch and Soeffner 1999) and visions (Knoblauch and Schnettler 2001; Schnettler 2004), both researchers realized that the egological analysis carried out by the phenomenologist remains tied to their specific biographic situation:

Mundane phenomenology can only describe one's own experiences. Therefore, phenomenologists cannot make any analytic statements regarding the constitution of transcendent experiences that they themselves did not have. This explains why the "multiple realities" of Schutz

⁵Here, we can find parallels to the method of auto-ethnography (Ellis 2004; Chang 2008), which – however – does not apply the systematic method of the phenomenological analysis of the life-world and which does not relate those results to ethnographically collected, objectified data, but rather introduces autobiographical accounts of the subjectively experienced.

remain incomplete... The term ethnophenomenology points to the observation that philosophical laymen are quite able to reflect on their own modes of experiences. (...) The attention of actors to the modes of their extraordinary experiences is called Ethnophenomenology by us. (Schnettler 2008: 145 – author’s translation)

The parallel with Ethnomethodology is obvious: ethnophenomenology looks to examine the structures of the actions and experiences of the members of a society empirically and describes the research approach as well as its subject matter. In contrast to Ethnomethodology, it is not methodologically produced, observable communicative acts that are empirically explored but rather non-observable, extraordinary subjective experiences of actors. Schnettler (2004) showed in his study of the experience of visions that, within the interview data, passages with ethnophenomenological descriptions of the form of experiences clearly differed from the descriptions of the content of the experiences – in fact, the content of what was witnessed was often of secondary importance in comparison with the extraordinary *mode* of the experience. Finally, he was able to elicit a number of recurring features of an Ethnophenomenology of visions of the future. Knoblauch and Schnettler carefully differentiated between the different reference levels of mundane phenomenology and Ethnophenomenology: While mundane phenomenology aims at establishing a protosociological general theory with a universal relevance by describing general forms of human experience, Ethnophenomenology sociologically and empirically reconstructs the communicatively conveyed descriptions of extraordinary experiences (for example of near-death experiences) by everyday people in a certain historical epoch and transforms their generalizations into theoretical notions of ‘medium range’ (Schnettler 2008: 142). By comparing Ethnophenomenology and life-world analytic ethnography, one can see that the former bases its empirical data exclusively on objectified data, that is, on communicatively conveyed subjective experiences. According to the view of life-world ethnography, Ethnophenomenology proceeds hermeneutically and abstains from a direct phenomenological analysis of one’s own subjective experience through participant observation. Naturally, there are practical reasons for this as well: only people who experience visions or near-death situations could undertake such an analysis (and this only retrospectively, as in the case of dreams). A phenomenological analysis of such experiences by the researcher is impossible.

A further combination of phenomenology and ethnography is proposed by Maragarethe Kusenbach (2003, 2008) in the form of *Phenomenological Ethnography*. Kusenbach agrees with Maso’s (2001) diagnosis that the method of phenomenological reduction represents an unattainable ideal due to the fundamental positionality and historicity of researchers. By trying to develop a phenomenological ethnography, she intended to transgress the boundaries of phenomenology as a purely philosophical discipline and to examine the phenomenological structures of everyday experience empirically (Kusenbach 2008: 351).⁶ Having expressed significant reservations

⁶In an analogous way, Psathas (1973, 1989) pledges for a “phenomenological sociology” (see Eberle 1993, 2012).

concerning participant observation as well as ethnographic interview during the course of her ethnographic research practice, Kusenbach recommends the ‘*Go-Along*’ as an alternative methodological procedure. The ‘going-along’ procedure is a more modest and more selective form of ‘hanging-out’, in which “field researchers accompany informants on naturally occurring outings and actively try to grasp the stream of experiences and actions by asking, listening and observing” (2008: 352). In this way, filters of perception and relevance structures can be examined in the course of their enactment and transcendent aspects of others’ experiences of the environment can be systematically revealed and compared (for instance, biographical experiences which are related to a certain place can be reawakened when one returns to the place). The *Go-Along* method facilitates authentic access to the experiences and practices of others in real places. For Kusenbach (2008), it can contribute to a phenomenological sensitization of the ethnographic research practice and expands the ethnographic “toolbox”.

Ethnography, however, is not the only way to combine phenomenology and empirical sociology fruitfully. For example, in a “parallel action” of phenomenological and social scientific research, as it was described by Luckmann ([1999]2007), Jochen Dreher (2008) tries to develop a “protosociology of friendship”. Based on concrete empirical forms of friendship in specific cultural and socio-historical contexts, “three protosociological levels of reduction are designed, in which the constitution of the phenomenon of friendship can be described” (Dreher 2008: 402): (1) the socio-eidetic reduction of the constitution of friendship, (2) the structural level of the symbolic constitution of friendship and (3) the reduction level of the sensuous perception of the corporeality of the other. Furthermore, phenomenology has proven fruitful for the empirical exploration of further manifold phenomena, be it in relation to visual phenomena (Raab 2008; Kurt 2008), music (Kurt 2007; Stascheit, forthcoming), odors (Raab 2001) or the orientation of blind actors (Saerberg 2006), to name only a few. Additionally, one has to agree with Endress (2008) that the theoretical-analytical potential of the sociological perspective established by Alfred Schutz and further pursued by Berger and Luckmann (1966) has still not been fully utilized. Although at this stage all talk of a “philosophical foundation” and a “fundament to the social sciences” has ceased and phenomenologists now accept and take into account the reflexivity of their method, the systematic combination of phenomenological analysis of the life-world and empirical sociology has consistently proved to be fruitful. Their relation, however, is no longer perceived as one-sided, but as mutual: phenomenological protosociology and sociology challenge each other alternately (Göttlich 2008). In this reciprocal relation, in which both are continuously engaged in the explication of their own procedures, a truly *reflexive sociology of knowledge* (Endress 2008) is constituted.

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Michael Staudigl • George Berguno
Editors

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