

**The limitations of phenomenology:
Alfred Schutz's critical dialogue with Edmund Husserl***

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The author of this essay is not a philosopher but a sociologist who has been introduced to phenomenology by Schutz. He has familiarized himself with Husserl's work but was guided in this by Schutz's perspective which resulted from his concern for the application of phenomenological insights to inquiries into the foundations of sociological reasoning.

The author does not claim that Schutz reading of Husserl is the 'correct' one; but he considers it a possible interpretation of his philosophy. This essay aims at presenting, to the best of the author's knowledge and ability, Schutz's understanding of the philosophy of Husserl and to trace the former's changing position from a cautious confidence into the potentialities of phenomenology to the critical inspection of ever-widening ranges of Husserl's thinking.

I

Schutz's was mainly concerned with the social sciences. After World War I, he studied law and economics in Vienna, absorbed the tradition of the *Geisteswissenschaften*, and accepted Max Weber's sociology of understanding. But he found that Weber's "subjective approach" to matters social was sketchy, inconsistent, and ambiguous. He set out to rectify these flaws and, most of all, to spell out the underlying pre-suppositions and to establish the metasociological principles for a sociology based on human actors, endowed with volition and given to interpretation of their actions and experiences.

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Needing a viable psychology of human consciousness for this purpose, Schutz resorted to Henri Bergson's theories of inner duration and memory. For four years, he worked on a book which was to provide a pheno-psychological basis for the sociology of understanding. At the end, he found himself in an impasse and abandoned this project.¹

Before turning to Bergson, Schutz had looked at Husserl's *Logical Investigations* and *Ideas I* but found that they would not serve his purposes. Now, he decided to try Husserl once more. He and his friend, Felix Kaufmann – both in full-time commercial jobs – spent two years together in studying, analyzing, and discussing Husserl's *Logical Investigations*, *Ideas I*, the *Lectures on Inner-Time Consciousness*, and the *Formal and Transcendental Logic*. Schutz used all of them when, after 1930, he wrote his basic study, *Der sinnhafte Aufbau der sozialen Welt*. The *Cartesian Meditations* appeared too late for integration into this book, but Schutz accounted for them in a series of footnotes.

After publication of *Der sinnhafte Aufbau*, Schutz mailed a copy to Husserl. He responded very favorably, seeing in Schutz a competent exponent of phenomenology in the fields of the social sciences and, in fact, asked him to come to Freiburg as his assistant.² Schutz had to decline but, forthwith, visited Husserl regularly about twice a year until shortly before his death. From this period stemmed the tremendous loyalty and admiration Schutz held for Husserl; he should preserve them through his life regardless of his growing critique of Husserl's philosophy.³

II

In his book of 1932, Schutz had clearly stated where, within the total scope of Husserl's philosophy, his own theoretical interests were located. In a two-page note, which he inserted into the galley proofs, he stated that his "analyses of the phenomena of constitution in inner-time consciousness" would have to be executed in the phenomenologically reduced sphere. But he stressed that he would carry out these analyses "only insofar as necessary" for the purpose of analyzing "the phenomena of meaning in *mundane* sociality." In this sphere, "we deal... solely with the corresponding correlates" of phenomenological reduction "in the natural stance."⁴ Accordingly, he described his place in the house of phenomenology as follows:

“In deliberate renunciation of the problematics of transcendental subjectivity and intersubjectivity, which indeed can become visible only after the execution of the phenomenological reduction, we pursue that ‘phenomenological psychology’ which – according to Husserl – is ultimately a psychology of pure intersubjectivity and thus nothing else but ‘constitutive phenomenology of the natural stance.’”⁵

Throughout the decades of developing his sociology of the life-world, he practiced this kind of phenomenological psychology. From Husserl’s article in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, he abstracted the idea of a structure of phenomenology. Husserl had divided phenomenology into phenomenological psychology and transcendental phenomenology. The first is eidetic; its substratum are “the objects posited in the natural attitude.” They also yield empirical “psychological data,” but their description remains outside of phenomenology. Husserl may have accorded an appropriate descriptive psychology the position of a hand maiden of eidetic psychology; he definitely did not view psychology as a precondition for transcendental phenomenology: the latter “could be developed independently of all psychology.”⁶

Originally, Husserl seems to have admitted a kind of genetic order between the psychological and transcendental levels of his philosophy: Phenomenological psychology was needed for developing transcendental phenomenology at all. Having developed the latter to a sufficient degree, however, allowed him to speak of having discovered “a remarkable thoroughgoing parallelism between a (properly elaborated) phenomenological psychology and a transcendental phenomenology. To each eidetic or empirical determination on the one side there must correspond a parallel feature of the other.” Consequently, transcendental phenomenology was to become “the exclusive ground for all philosophical knowledge.” (Hua V, 146f.)⁷ Henceforth, so to speak, it would be a waste of time to proceed from empirical and eidetic-psychological findings through further reductions to transcendental insights: the latter were to become directly accessible.

While Schutz knew about these statements, he should not react to them for long years. The years between Hitler’s ascent to power and the unleashing of the second world war were not conducive to philosophizing. Schutz was one of innumerable intellectuals caught in the nihilistic torrents of these years which, eventually and in the nick of

time, brought him to the United States. Resuming his scholarly work, he drew American thinkers into the realm of his attention, foremost among them William James. In one of his first American papers, he praised Husserl, Bergson, and James as thinkers who had “remodeled” the style of philosophizing. Further, he dwelled on “the common platform from which both James’s psychological research and Husserl’s phenomenological meditation begin: Personal consciousness and stream of thought and experience.” At the same time, he reaffirmed that his “chief interest” was directed upon eidetic rather than transcendental phenomenology.⁸ A few years later, he spoke of the convergence of “many features of James’s psychology, of certain basic concepts of Mead and of Gestalt psychology with phenomenological psychology”: There were no principal differences between the psychologies named and the eidetic approach; the latter was “no more than another methodological device.” American readers ought not to be put off by Husserl’s strange terminology: “Wesensschau,” “essence,” and “eidos” simply indicate that a phenomenologist “does not have to do with the objects themselves; he is interested in their *meaning* as it is constituted by the activities of our mind.”⁹ In a letter to Spiegelberg, he wrote that he was coming “more and more to the conviction that the Social has its origin solely in the natural but not in the transcendental sphere” (August 24, 1945).

Throughout his American work, Schutz focused on the natural stance. Long before the publication of Husserl’s *Krisis* studies, he had expanded this basic tenet of Husserl into an extensive theory of the life-world in all but in name. It had grown significantly beyond the form it had gained in Husserl’s late writings.

As discussed before, in 1932 Schutz had claimed a working place on the psychological floor of the multi-story building of phenomenology. At the time, he hoped that Husserl would succeed in solving the for him crucial problem of intersubjectivity on the transcendental level. Not concerning himself with the “constitution of the alter ego in the consciousness of the solitary ego,” he pointed to the fifth of the *Cartesian Meditations* where Husserl had “already offered the essential starting points” for the solution of this problem.¹⁰

In Schutz’s American work, Husserl remained of central concern: the one thinker to whom he referred hundreds of times in his essays, and to whom he devoted all or substantial parts of ten out of about 40 published articles, not to mention four items on the list of his unpublished

writings. His preoccupation with Husserl was mirrored in his correspondence, notably that with Eric Voegelin, Herbert Spiegelberg, Maurice Natanson, and most of all with Aron Gurwitsch. He was engaged in an ongoing *Auseinandersetzung*, a critical dialogue, with Husserl.

III

Schutz accepted the fundamental principles, the key method, and the eidetic structure of phenomenological psychology: the original phenomenological and the second (eidetic) reductions; the patterns of apperception and appresentation, of retention and protention, of noesis and noema; the horizontal structure of consciousness. He referred to them throughout his American work, and devoted one paper largely to eidetic psychology. It was a most affirmative statement about the whole apparatus of Husserl's eidetic method.¹¹

For Schutz, the sociologist, these concerns were propaedeutic. His developing sociology of the life-world called for a pre-eidetic psychology (descriptively generalizing, typifying) psychology. Schutz absorbed, expanded, and transformed those of Husserl's conceptions which form a bridge from the natural stance to the life-world. Through them, Schutz tied Weber's sociology of understanding to phenomenological psychology, transforming both and creating both the metasociological foundations and the theoretical outlines of his sociological approach.

Husserl had ascribed three "functions" to the life-world. Schutz found them particularly important for his sociology of knowledge: they provided a linkage between the forms of knowledge of everyday life and those of scientific thinking on the one hand, and between these two and the social-existential ground of human life on the other. In the nutshell, these functions are:

(1) The life-world is the seedbed of all practical intelligence; it provides the pragmatic roots for reasoning and logical thinking. It is only because they are embedded in the everyday settings and experiences of daily life that they can be separated from pragmatic purposes and systematized for philosophical and scientific purposes.

(2) The life-world is the breeding ground of all cognitive abstractions. In it occurs the conversion of the ordinary cognitive and apperceptive specificity of immediate experiences into the generalizations and typifications of everyday thinking and, with it, the creation and development

of languages as the socially objectified matrices of communication and collectively pre-established interpretation of in themselves always subjective experiences.

(3) The life-world serves as source and foundation of philosophy and the sciences.

Confining the discussion to the last of these points, I will remark that Schutz was convinced that its significance for the social sciences is by far greater than for the natural sciences. The subject matter of sociology consists of social actors whose conduct cannot be adequately explained by causal schemes; it has to be understood. Husserl, he felt, lagged the proper grasp of the differences in subject matter, tasks, objectives, and methods which workers in the two categories of science have to face. He, as he wrote in 1959, "was not conversant with the concrete problems of the social sciences."¹² This is one reason why Schutz's sociology of the life-world should not be called "phenomenological sociology." Its relationship to Husserl's phenomenological philosophy is indirect and complex.

IV

Schutz, the philosopher, felt compelled to ever widening his critique of Husserl's philosophy. His personal loyalty to Husserl never wavered; but his own integrity prevented him from converting his admiration of the philosopher into an orthodox acceptance of his writings. Both his sociological and pheno-psychological concerns bolstered his inclination to view phenomenology as method, as Husserl had claimed earlier, and to reject his later contention that it was to be idealistic philosophy. Thus, he could consider himself a phenomenologist by "thinking ahead" in Husserl's spirit, even if it meant to contradict some parts of his writings.¹³

Some of his scholarly friends pushed him in the same direction. Most notably were his ongoing discussions with Aron Gurwitsch; to a substantial part, they concerned Husserl's egology. In 1953, the publication of *Ideas II* and *III* evoked a discussion of the various ego concepts in Husserl's writings.¹⁴ Its results were precipitated in Schutz's reviews of the volumes. Husserl had introduced at least three different egos: ego as "I-man," the psychological ego, the transcendental ego, and possibly a fourth one, "the spiritual I, the person." Schutz wrote that these ego-

terms “oscillated” in *Ideas II* and insisted that Husserl had failed to establish a clear relationship between these different egos.¹⁵

Since Gurwitsch was fighting a running battle with Schutz about his conception of a non-egological theory of consciousness, he had stated the ambiguities of the ego conceptions in *Ideas II* and *III* “diverts great amounts of water upon my non-egological mills.” Thus, Schutz found himself in a position where he had to agree with his friend’s critique of Husserl’s egology while insisting on the necessity of a viable egological theory of consciousness.

At the Husserl Colloquium at Royaumont in 1957, Schutz pointed out that, in the *Cartesian Meditations*, Husserl had introduced, side-by-side, the “Identical I,” “my personal I,” and the “ego in full concreteness.” He considered this triple ego-theory as untenable on account of logical difficulties (“aporias”) and for “other considerations” which he had no time to elaborate.¹⁶

V

The difficulties, which Schutz found in Husserl’s egology as a whole, were crucial for him since they were inseparable from the problem of transcendental intersubjectivity. As shown, in 1932 Schutz was confident that Husserl was on his way toward a solution of this problem. Eight years later, he did no longer maintain this expectation. Instead, he announced his intention to write a critique of the *Cartesian Meditations*.¹⁷ His articles on Scheler’s and Sartre’s theories of the alter ego contained discussions of Husserl’s unsuccessful attempts at solving the problem of intersubjectivity. But he faced it fully only in the last part of the essay on “Multiple Realities” (1945). There, he discussed “the three paradoxes besetting the phenomenologist” according to Eugen Fink’s famous article in the *Kant-Studien* of 1933: (1) “After having performed the phenomenological reduction the phenomenologist finds himself in the difficulty how to communicate his knowledge to the ‘dogmatist’ who remains with the natural attitude.” (2) The “paradox of the phenomenological proposition” issues from the inadequacy of “all phenomenological reports because of the attempt to give a mundane expression to a non-worldly meaning...”. (3) The “logical paradox of transcendental determinations” puts in doubt “whether logic is equal to the task of solving problems arising in the determination of basic transcendental relations.”

Considering the first two of those paradoxes as forms of a “paradox of communication,” he questioned the formulation of the problem by Fink: “It is a serious question whether intersubjectivity is a problem of the transcendental sphere at all; or whether sociality does not rather belong to the mundane sphere of our life-world.” The paradox “exists only as long as we take... the finite provinces of meaning as ontologically static entities, objectively existing outside the stream of individual consciousness within which they originate.” All experiences in every possible province of meaning occur as “different tensions of one and the same consciousness.” They appear “within my inner time” and “can be remembered and reproduced”: “And that is why they can be communicated in ordinary language in working acts to my fellow-man.”¹⁸

An unpublished six-page fragment of Schutz – apparently removed from the essay on “Multiple Realities” – contains a refutation of one attempt of Husserl to establish a foundation for transcendental intersubjectivity. Schutz stated: “The transcendental ego... is mute.” Yet, Husserl had tried to free it from its solitary confinement by introducing a “community of monads.” Schutz pointed out that this assumption “requires additional metaphysical assumptions. Leibniz had postulated such a community by insisting that (a) all monads have bodies, (b) each of them mirrors the whole universe, and (c) “body and mind are in pre-established harmony and so is the community of monads.” The harmony was guaranteed by God. In this fashion, Schutz commented, “the phenomenological paradox disappears easily.” But Leibniz’s metaphysical subterfuge cannot be introduced into “a philosophy whose ideal it is to be a rigorous science.”¹⁹

Schutz’s review article of *Ideas II* (1953) closes with an “abridged catalogue of some open questions.” Among them are Husserl’s “least satisfactory” dealing with “sociality and social groups” and, in particular, the treatment of collectivities as “personal unities of a higher order”: These matters belong to the mundane sphere; they present forays of Husserl into the domain of sociology. Schutz took exception to the assumption of “personal unities of a higher order” and asked: did it have its roots in Hegel, in Durkheim, in the “organic school” of sociology, or in Rudolf Gierke’s legal theory of the “Soziale Verband” – “a term persistently used by Husserl.” He insisted that the “attempts by Georg Simmel, Max Weber, and Max Scheler to reduce social collectivities to the social interaction of individuals is... closer by far to the

spirit of phenomenology than the pertinent statements of its founder.”²⁰ From a Weberian perspective, all of the thinkers named as possible sources of Husserl’s notion of collectivities as persons have committed the fallacy of hypostatization, that is, the attribution of personal existence to abstract concepts.

In 1957, Schutz was ready to deal publicly and fully with “The Problem of Transcendental Intersubjectivity in Husserl.” He chose the *Formal and Transcendental Logic* and the *Cartesian Meditations* as major sources for the first three and *Ideas II* and *Krisis* for the last two parts of his central argumentation. The essay begins with the formulation of the central problem: “It must... be made intelligible how my transcendental ego can constitute in itself another transcendental ego and, thereafter, how it also can constitute an open plurality of such egos.” After an exposition of Husserl’s egology, as contained in the *Cartesian Meditations*, culminating in the “transcendental ego at large,” the problem is restated as to “How is it possible to derive the intersubjectivity of the world from the intentionality of my own conscious life?” The body of the essay consists of five sections. The first three deal with the three steps in which Husserl answered this question. They are followed by a discussion of his distinction between “naturalistic” and “personalistic” attitudes and his conception of intersubjective communities, that is, the step from the I-Thou relation to human collectivities. In every case, the exposition is addended by the discussion of a set of difficulties which Schutz encountered when dealing with each of the central topics.²¹

I cannot possibly offer here a detailed account of the nineteen critical points made by Schutz in this essay. Instead, I will give a summary of the five major themes of his argument.

(1) Husserl’s first step was the introduction of a “second epoché”; it separates the sphere of “what is ‘properly’ of the ego” from that which is not proper to it. Within ego’s “world-experience” is “screened off” by “abstracting” from the sense of others as “ego-like living beings” and their “cultural predicates” concerning their “sense as ego-subjects,” etc. Schutz found that this division of the “ego’s entire transcendental field of experience” lacks explanation of the constitution of the “pre-constituted substratum” of spheres “*not* properly of the ego”: they must be identified – that is, be constituted in consciousness – before I can abstract from them. In other words, the differentiation remains obscure.

(2) After the second reduction, another step was to bring “the constitution of the Other’s I within the primordial sphere.” By way of “analogical apperception,” it was to lead from the “experienced sense” of an apperceived “living body other than mine” to the recognition of “psychic events pertaining to the Other” which are “consistently congruent” with ego’s own psychic experiences. The other becomes “a co-existing ego in the mode of ‘there.’” Schutz found that this recognition is excluded by the second epoché; specifically, it presupposes “normality” of the conduct of any ‘ego there’ and therefore refers to those preconstituted substrata which were supposedly bracketed.

(3) Husserl’s third step was to achieve the appresentative constitution of another monad in mine, “the Other as an ego co-existing with me ‘there.’” Thus, to my primordially constituted nature accrues a second appresented stratum. This second stratum is identical with my primordial constituted nature “as it could appear in the Other.” In this synthesis, the “same nature” is given simultaneously as primordial and appresentational, and the “co-existence of my I and of the Other’s I” is instituted in a common time-form. Again, Schutz was unable to see how the appresentation of the Other’s ego can be obtained from the appresentation of his body. But even if it could, it would not bring “the concretization of a full other monad.”

(4) In *Ideas II*, Husserl had occupied himself with founding intersubjectivity on the possibility of communication. He started by juxtaposing the “naturalistic” to the “personalistic” attitude. Assuming the first, “other animate beings... appear to me as primally present living bodies with appresented internality.” Thus, “a mental life ‘belongs’ to the seen body by virtue of transferred compresence... just as a mental life belongs to my body.” In the “personalistic attitude,” empathy “leads to the constitution of the intersubjective objectivity of the world,” of a “permanently recreated communicative surrounding world in which to live goes hand in hand with “to be in a personal association” with others. Schutz found this whole theory suffering from “serious and basic deficiencies.” The empathic transfer of localizations on my body to the seen body of the Other is difficult to imagine. It is “impossible that, in comprehensive experience, the Other is grasped ‘directly’ as a personal subject dealing with objects of a common surrounding world.” Reciprocal understanding and communication “already presuppose a community of knowledge, even a common surrounding world, and not the reverse”: “social relationship cannot be constituted by communication.”

Further, Husserl proceeded “from subjects communicating with one another to the constitution of personal unities of a higher order” and even to “an all-encompassing community” not of subjects of minds, “encountering a world of objects significant as world *for* the mind.” Here, Schutz commented, the meanings of the concepts used “shift so radically” that one must speak of “an excessively metaphorical usage of inadequate terms.” Schutz stressed that the problem of the social person within a human communicative community is germane to “the social world of everyday life”: “this is not a problem for phenomenological constitutional analysis, and only regrettable ignorance of the concrete sciences of society led Husserl, whose conscientiousness was otherwise exemplary, to introduce unexamined constructs of everyday thinking and of the social sciences into phenomenological analyses of constitution.”²²

(5) In the *Cartesian Meditations* and the *Krisis* volume, Husserl had elaborated the idea that the mundane community of co-existent individuals allows to derive all other forms of intersubjective community, including one formed by transcendental egos. Yet, he himself had pointed out that “transcendental subjects,” thanks to the epoché, are phenomena showing “*eo ipso* nothing human” (para. 53 of *Krisis*). Here, Schutz spoke of “almost insurmountable difficulties” and called it “Methodologically naive to allow humanity, which includes the ego that philosophized and functions as I-pole of transcendental acts, the same conversion into transcendental subjectivity”²³ as the philosophizing ego in its transcendental solitude.

Schutz’s “partial catalogue” of the ensuing difficulties comprised the following points: (a) Husserl’s theory allows only the constitution of each transcendental ego *for himself*; there can be no transcendental community or We. (b) How can one speak of “a plurality of transcendental egos” if the transcendental alter ego is merely a possibility of the eidōs: “If there is no paradox here, there surely is an open problem.” (c) Husserl wrote that several persons can perform the epoché “in actual community with me.” But how can the isolate philosopher in the transcendental stance “mediate with someone else?” (d) Schutz mentioned once more “the completely untenable theory that social communities correspond to personalities of a higher order” and found it “scarcely necessary to refute.”

Where Schutz found points of agreement with Husserl’s treatment of intersubjectivity, they pertained to mundane intersubjectivity. An ex-

ample is Husserl's description of a social situation in terms of the "bodily presence of the participants in a community of time and space" and its expanding zones from near to far, from consociates to contemporaries, and to the "intercourse with the chain of others who are Others for Others as well as for me" in a corresponding interlinkage of "empathy and the horizon of empathy." This, Schutz wrote, "may serve as a highly useful first description of the life-world."

Schutz's general conclusions were: The attempt to demonstrate the constitution of transcendental intersubjectivity as achievement of the transcendental ego did not succeed; the problem of intersubjectivity cannot be solved within the transcendental sphere: it is given in life-worldly experiences.

These conclusions are remarkable, not simply as declaration of Husserl's failure to solve the problem of transcendental intersubjectivity but mostly for the assumption that the whole problem is unsolvable: it is led *ad absurdum* by the paradox of the attempt at 'socializing' the solitary transcendental ego.

With the essay of 1957, Schutz cut the "problem of intersubjectivity" from transcendental phenomenology. Thereby, he crowned his long efforts to demonstrate that intersubjectivity is neither more nor less than a spontaneous phenomenon of spontaneous human experience, the originary ground of man's sociality, a feature of the natural stance, and the naively taken-for-granted experiential sub-stratum of life-worldly interaction, as mundane as the ordinary workaday pragmatism of the life-world.

Consequently, Schutz claimed that the study of intersubjectivity is the exclusive concern of phenomenological psychology. His own work contains substantial contributions to it. His "general thesis of the alter ego" of 1942 dealt with the interflow of the streams of consciousness of persons in vivid face-to-face interaction, resulting in a we-experience springing from sharing a common present in inner time and from "growing older together." In 1953 followed the masterly reformulation of Husserl's concept of the "communicative common environment": in it, individuals become persons for themselves and for others; they motivate each other reciprocally in mutual understanding and consent and constitute their sociality in communicative acts of interchange, becoming consociates in a community of persons. In this form, the communicative common environment became one basic concept of Schutz's social psychology of the life-world. But his most original con-

tribution came with his exposition of “making music together”: the tuning-in-relation secures the success of the collective performance by a small group of musicians, not by mere technical interaction but essentially by a subtle yet vivid non-verbal intercommunication among the musicians-in-performance.²⁴

V

In 1957, Schutz’s critical dialogue with Husserl had reached the point at which he could discard transcendental phenomenology without risking to lose anything in his ongoing explorations of the life-world. As sociologist, Schutz could have let matters rest here. But as philosopher, he felt compelled to carry his critique of Husserl further.

Schutz had gone to the Colloquium at Royaumont with trepidations. He was sure of his critique of transcendental intersubjectivity, but he was not sure whether he could convince the European Husserl experts of his position. His fears were unfounded; Fink and Ingarden, the most prominent students of Husserl present, agreed with him.

Fink himself had presented a paper at Royaumont, dealing with operational concepts in Husserl’s philosophy. Schutz took up this topic in his paper on “Type and Eidos.”²⁵ Fink had distinguished between “thematic” and “operational” concepts: A philosopher’s efforts were called thematic when aiming at “the fixation and preservation of fundamental concepts,” that is, when critically examined and systematically developed. By contrast, operational concepts were used “in a vague manner as tools in forming thematic notions; they are models of thought which are not brought to objectifying fixation, but remain opaque and thematically unqualified.” It may be surprising to learn that Husserl used operationally such key notions as phenomenon, constitution, performance, epoché, and transcendental logic. They are mere “headings for groups of problems open to and requiring further analysis.”

What Fink described, I may add, is a technical necessity of intellectual work, being legitimate as long as the user of operational concepts does not treat them as if they were thematic concepts. But Fink implied, and Schutz concluded, that Husserl had committed this fallacy. The concern with it made Schutz focus critically on the eidetic sphere of Husserl’s thinking. Of course, he had scrutinized individual eidetic topics before.

The posthumously published “Fragments on the Phenomenology of Music,” written in 1944, contain sections on two such topics. The first ends as follows: “... the dichotomy between polythetic and monothetic constitution refers to an underlying conceptual scheme of reference, and the statement that music cannot be caught monothetically is merely a corollary of the thesis that the meaning-context of music is not related to a conceptual scheme.” In his preface to the essay, Fred Kersten pointed out that this statement indicates that the dichotomy of monothetic and polythetic constitution is not of that universality which Husserl had ascribed to it.

The second section concerns Husserl’s thesis of passive synthesis as seen from the angle of musical experiences. Here, Schutz provided a genuine piece of phenomenological analysis which I will not discuss. According to Husserl, the succession of tones of a melody is perceived one-by-one, but built up and synthesized “passively” without the listener being aware of the process. But, as Schutz showed, there is no monothetic build-up of a melody which, via passive synthesis, becomes a whole: we do not hear tones but a melody. Kersten concluded: “By challenging the universality of the synthesis of identification in pure passivity, Schutz has challenged Husserl’s conception of the nature of the ‘passive Doxa’ by virtue of which there is a world for us in the first place.”²⁶

Schutz kept his critical concern with eidetics alive in scattered remarks both in print and in letters. He made it fully thematic one year after the Royaumont symposium, venting his “suspicions” privately²⁷ to Gurwitsch:

(1) Husserl’s theory of intentionality may never lead to the constitution of the objective world; it merely presupposes this world as the unquestionably given basis of the life-world.

(2) Husserl’s idea of noema as identical objects of sedimented past experiences leads to the question: Can I really assert that I am aware of the particular noema representing the “rigorous identity” of the many acts of consciousness from which it issues as an eventual unity?

(3) Husserl offered no guarantee of such identity, not even in “transcendental apperception”; he relied on an ego that is split both in the mundane and transcendental sphere. Having not demonstrated the identity of the manifold perceptions of any object, he could neither arrive at a theory of the objective world – even as “world for me” – nor at a theory of causality.

(4) Husserl's assertion, that the identity of the noema is achieved in passive synthesis, is a "wooden iron." How could one assume an accomplishment of consciousness in the passive mode? The whole idea of passive synthesis is a "derailment" caused by inadmissible generalizations. Husserl had discovered the identity of ideal objects and, without ado, applied it to all noemata, notably such of material objects. The possibility of eidetic reduction is in doubt if it merely leads to the identity of the noema but not of the actual objects.

Schutz concluded that this constitutes a dilemma between *Sein oder Sinn*, Being or Sense. He pursued this line of criticism, in more definite form, in his paper on "Type and Eidos." Following Fink, he called Husserl's notions of typicality and idealization "mere operative schemata of a highly equivocal character." After a discussion of various details, he set down six "critical remarks":

(1) The equivocations of the notion of typicality, resulting from the operational use of the term, repeat themselves in related notions, such as similarity, synthesis by congruence, association, interest, and others.

(2) These equivocations "originate in the fact that he takes as his model of all his pertinent investigations the perception of an object in the outer world and, even more precisely, the visual perception of such an object."

(3) In *Experience and Judgment*, Husserl distinguished between essential and non-essential types. On what level of phenomenological investigation become these distinctions visible? On the level of experiences in the life-world and in the natural stance, all types are equally essential.

(4) Husserl stated correctly that typicality is not a private affair; it is "socialized" as "concrete typicality of the world valid for all of us." But any effort to establish origin or foundation of this intersubjective validity, maybe in "transsubjective passive synthesis," leads to "insoluble difficulties."

(5) Husserl's distinction between "activity and passivity of the conscious life" remained unclarified and created difficulties for phenomenologists like Ingarden, Wahl, and Landgrebe. Pointing to incompatible statements of Husserl on typification functioning within the activity-passivity scheme, Schutz asked whether the distinction was valid, and if so, could it determine the "degree of generality" of given types?

(6) Husserl demonstrated "a decisive difference between the forma-

tion of generic judgments... and the intuitions of the eidos.” Empirical universals are contingent; ideation takes the concrete case merely as “point of departure for free variations” performed arbitrarily in fantasy. The replacement of empirical factualities by pure possibilities is rooted in Husserl’s principle of the primacy of the eidos. Schutz suspected that “free variation in fantasy” has well-defined limits “by the frame of the type in terms of which we have experiences, in the natural attitude, the object from which the process of ideation starts”: a familiar object of the life-world. “Ideation can reveal nothing that was not preconstituted by the type.”²⁸

VI

The last document of Schutz’s critical dialogue with Husserl was written five months before his death; he called it *Hic egregie progressus sum*. On its eight highly condensed pages, he touched upon six major topics, all related to the ‘spatial’ and the time-dimension of consciousness: the expansion of the quasi-spatial dimension of inner-horizonal structures into the Social; the establishment of the inner-horizonal time dimension in a person’s life story; the outer-horizonal dimension of social life; the revision of the theory of relevance by the integration of all the considerations into Schutz’s earlier version; and the criticism of a heretofore accepted aspect of Husserl’s phenomenological psychology: the limitation of the application of the two “idealizations” which were to guarantee the reliability and constancy of the world of human experience.

This is the program for an extensive study. I will discuss here only the last point: Schutz’s critical revision of Husserl’s idealizations of “I can ever again” and of “and so forth, and so on.” As soon as the idealization, “I can ever again,” is placed into an autobiographical perspective, its generality becomes untenable: I could not always do “it,” whatever it may be; at some time in the future, I may no longer be able to do it. There is a “time structure of capability” tied to the life cycle of the individual: growing-up, maturing, getting old.

On the social level, we encounter what I will call the differentiation of intersubjective capabilities. As Schutz emphasized, nobody can assert as a matter of course that, what I can do, you can do, or he and she and everybody can do, or *vice versa*. The interpersonal relativity of the “it”

which can or cannot be done, is further complicated by its combination with autobiographical and time-dimensional relativity: How could I compare my past to someone else's present capabilities, or his present to my future ones?

This question gains its full significance not from mere variations of external patterns and, as Schutz said, of "grammatical" variations through all forms of the pronoun and the tenses and declensions of the verb. It gains it from the objective and subjective meanings attached to the "it" in any particular case. Can the "sameness" of what is done at different times by the same person or in the case of different persons at the same or different times simply be asserted by fiat of the typifying observer without taking into account the actual meanings "it" has in any specific case for the individual doing it or thinking about it?

Thus, in the first case, both "identity" and "reciprocity" are questionable: the "transitivity" of capabilities is basic. Thereby, the idealization is stripped of the universality Husserl had attached to it; it has been relativized. For this reason, Schutz considered a revision of his theory of relevance necessary. The linkage of capabilities to their subjective meanings places them into the personal relevance systems of individuals and subjects them to autobiographical shifts of emphasis and priority which are part of the ongoing process of the pursuit of significant projects within an individual's "life plan."

"I can ever do it again" expresses confidence into the constancy of subjective capabilities; "and so forth, and so on" is a declaration of confidence into the durability and reliability of things and circumstances. Schutz made only one parenthetical remark about the second idealization: he doubted that the first idealization is a subjective correlate of the second. A sharp distinction must be made between the relativity and transitivity of subjective capabilities and constancy of objects. But it seems clear that Schutz would also have relativized the second idealization. If we consider the 'same' intentional object in the apperception of different persons, we discover that the intentionality of each is inseparable from his differing attentional interests. Likewise, concrete objects are not of unlimited duration: they 'age,' wear out, or break down. At one 'moment' or other, they will disappoint us by not serving us "in the same way as before." They remain 'the same' only "until further notice." Some phenomenologists may consider the comparison of concrete objects with their intentional eidōs unwarranted. But Schutz, as shown, had insisted that eidetic idealizations

have to correspond to given empirical experiences. And these include the failure of objects and the disappointment of expectations of their reliability.

VII

While Schutz concentrated on the phenomenological-psychological sphere and saw phenomenology essentially as a method, he did not exclude the need for a proper philosophical underpinning of his work. In a letter of 1943, he spoke of the "courage to enter metaphysics,"²⁹ alluding to the exploration of basic meanings underlying substantive inquiries. He himself did not systematically tackle the metaphysical objectives he had in mind, but talked about them as necessary tasks which could not be pursued on the basis of phenomenology and with the help of its method.

The first of these tasks was the creation of an "ontology of Man in the life-world," part of a philosophical anthropology, elements for which could be abstracted from his work. Schutz remained convinced that, for pre-preparatory purposes, he could rely on Husserl's "analyses pertinent to problems of the *Lebenswelt*." But he was seeking directives for the writing of such an anthropology mostly from Max Scheler, and further from philosophers like Alois Dempf and even from Santayana.³⁰

Schutz remarked that Husserl's life-worldly analyses were "designed to be developed into a philosophical anthropology." But he must have aimed here at implications, since he had accepted Fink's opinion that "the ontological problem has been dodged by Husserl's phenomenology in all phases of its development." Husserl's regional and formal ontologies were no substitute for a "fully developed ontology." Yet, the problem of ontology "is of course the crux of the whole phen(omenological) philosophy"; on it depends the investigation of the "performability of our actions within the ontological structure of the world."³¹

This was a program awaiting execution.³² In the *Krisis*, Husserl had sought a new path into transcendental phenomenology by way of the life-world. Schutz, in scattered remarks, proclaimed the need for finding a path from the life-world into an ontology compatible with phenomenological thinking.

VIII

It is of interest to note that neither Gurwitsch nor Schutz were much concerned with Descartes; they were intrigued by one of his first great critics: Leibniz. Schutz read Leibniz in 1934. Two years later, he planned to deal with him extensively in a chapter of a new project, *The Problem of Personality in the Social World*. He intended to discuss: Leibniz's "principle of continuity," pertaining to all spiritual phenomena and to the monads themselves; the "small perceptions," being innumerable effective impressions that cannot be remembered; "the unity of the monad and the entelechy of the acting and thinking ego." He also wanted to write an *excursus* on "Leibniz's monad interpreted as ideal type posited by God" – an endearing idea. Finally, he explained that, for him, the term "monad" stood for "the person in its fullness" and that he treated the I "as monad and entelechy."³³

In 1940, Schutz planned an essay on Leibniz³⁴ but never wrote it. Yet, Leibniz lived on in his correspondence with Gurwitsch in hints and allusions to extensive personal discussions. Likewise, he alluded to Leibniz in a number of his publications. They, in no way, betray that, in Schutz's thinking, Leibniz loomed as the foremost ancestor of phenomenological psychology.

IX

In his Husserl critique, Schutz not only proceeded toward the far-reaching if not complete rejection of transcendental phenomenology and the demolition of the theory of transcendental intersubjectivity, he also made deep inroads into the sphere of eidetic phenomenology and Husserl's theory of consciousness. In view of this, the question may be posed: can he still be called a phenomenologist? He did not qualify by the standards of what he called orthodox phenomenologists. But he remained a phenomenologist in his own eyes by the following criteria: (1) the acceptance of the phenomenological method in the sense of *Ideas I*, and (2) the substantive use and development of Husserl's conceptions of the natural stance and of the life-world. He considered them the foremost contributions of Husserl. While variously contradicting the letter of Husserl's writings, he claimed that he carried out his own work in Husserl's spirit. In my considered opinion, he developed his

phenomenological-psychological thinking far beyond Husserl's suggestions; this does not make him less a phenomenologist. The student who does not surpass his teacher is a poor student indeed. And Schutz was a good student: a peer of the best who had learned from and worked closely with Husserl.

NOTES

1. The unfinished manuscripts of this study were edited by Ilja Srubar in their German original texts as *Theorie der Lebensformen* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1981) and in English translation by Helmut R. Wagner as *Life Forms and Meaning Structure* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982).
2. Response of Husserl in letter to Schutz of May 3, 1932; I am obliged to Mrs. Ilse Schutz for the information on Husserl's invitation to her husband, to join him as assistant in Freiburg.
3. Schutz, "Husserl and his Influence on Me," *The Annals of Phenomenology* 2 (1977), pp. 41-44.
4. Husserl's term, *Natürliche Einstellung*, is commonly rendered by "natural attitude." However, the nearest English word for *Einstellung* is stance. I am using the latter as the more adequate term, thereby avoiding the unwarranted connotation the term, attitude, evokes especially among sociologists.
5. Alfred Schutz, *Der sinnhafte Aufbau der sozialen Welt* (Wien: Springer, 1932), pp. 41-42. The quoted passages have been translated by me.
6. Edmund Husserl, "Phenomenology," in *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 14th ed., Vol. 17 (1929), pp. 700-701. Salmon's translation of this article into English, greatly shortened, is considered unreliable. However, an inspection of the final version of the German original (in Hua IX) does not necessitate a revision of the "structural" aspects derived from the published translation.
7. The conception of this parallelism seemed to have dominated Husserl's work before the *Krisis* period. Whether the *Krisis* essays bring a reversal of this conception or a temporary retreat from it, has to be left open.
8. Alfred Schutz, "William James' Concept of the Stream of Thought Phenomenologically Interpreted," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 1 (1941), pp. 442-444.
9. Alfred Schutz, "Some Leading Concepts of Phenomenology," *Social Research* (1945), pp. 93-94.
10. *Der sinnhafte Aufbau*, pp. 106 and 106 n. 2.
11. "Some Leading Concepts...". Only in the last period of his life did Schutz develop extensive criticisms of aspects of eidetic phenomenology. This will be shown later.
12. Alfred Schutz, "Husserl's Importance for the Social Sciences," in H.L. Van Breda et al., eds., *Edmund Husserl 1859-1959* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1959), p. 88.
13. Schutz, letter to Gurwitsch, May 10, 1957.
14. Gurwitsch, letter to Schutz, October 3, 1952; Schutz, letter to Gurwitsch, October 12, 1952.
15. Alfred Schutz, "Edmund Husserl's *Ideas*, Volume II," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 13 (1953), p. 411.
16. Schutz, "Answer to Comments made in the Discussion of 'The Problem of Transcendental Intersubjectivity in Husserl,'" in Schutz, *Collected Papers III*, (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1966), p. 90.

17. Letter to Farber, June 12, 1940.
18. Schutz, "On Multiple Realities," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 5 (1945), pp. 573-575.
19. This fragment was written no later than 1945. I have given it the title, "The Paradox of the Transcendental Ego."
20. "Edmund Husserl's *Ideas*, Volume II," p. 410.
21. Schutz, "The Problem of Transcendental Intersubjectivity in Husserl," in Schutz, *Collected Papers* III, pp. 51-84. The introductory paragraph of my exposition is based on pp. 54-57; the five substantive points are developed, in sequence, from Schutz's sections iii to vii, pp. 57-82.
22. Since Husserl withheld the manuscript for *Ideas II* from publication, this may appear to be too harsh a judgment. However, he transferred the "personalities of a higher order" into the *Cartesian Meditations*, which were published. Schutz's critical remarks, thus, were warranted.
23. This is Schutz's condensation of § 54b of the *Krisis* volume.
24. Schutz, "Scheler's Theory of Intersubjectivity and the General Thesis of the Alter Ego," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 2 (1942), pp. 351-354; "Edmund Husserl's *Ideas*, Volume II," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 13 (1953), pp. 403-405; "Making Music Together: A Study in Social Relationships," *Social Research* 18 (1951), pp. 94-95, 96-97.
25. Schutz, "Type and Eidos in Husserl's Late Philosophy," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 20 (1959), p. 147.
26. Schutz, "Fragments on the Phenomenology of Music," *Music and Man* 2 (1976), pp. 29-30, 54-58; Fred Kersten's editorial preface to this essay, *ibid.*, pp. 9, 15.
27. Schutz, letter to Gurwitsch, July 21, 1958.
28. This summary of Schutz's challenges of Husserl's eidetic theories was drawn from his paper on "Type and Eidos," pp. 161-164.
29. Schutz, letter to Voegelin, November 11, 1943.
30. *Der sinnhafte Aufbau*, p. 285; "Husserl's Importance for the Social Sciences," p. 97.
31. Alfred Schutz, "Die Phänomenologie und die Fundamente der Wissenschaften (*Ideas* III...)," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 13 (1953), p. 511 n. 2. Letter to Gurwitsch, July 21, 1958. Letter to Natanson, July 25, 1954. *Reflections on the Problem of Relevance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), p. 73.
32. In his paper on the "Problems of the Life-World" (in Natanson, ed., *Phenomenology and Social Reality* [The Hague: Nijhoff, 1970] p. 47), Gurwitsch mentioned that Schutz had planned to write a philosophical anthropology but "it was not given to him" to do so. This is the only, although authoritative, evidence for Schutz's actual intention to take up his own suggestions about the need for supplementing phenomenology by an ontology of the life-world.
33. The unfinished manuscript for this book runs to 144 pages; only the first of six parts had been developed.
34. Letter to Farber, November 14, 1940.