Alfred Schutz's main contributions to the field of economic reflection

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For several decades, contemporary social theory has held a considerable misunderstanding around phenomenologically oriented sociology, which has undermined its heuristic potential and, as a consequence, has pushed its conclusions to a marginal place in current discussions. In contrast, our article aims to recover that hermeneutical framework in order to think economic phenomena such as the economic action and the order of the market processes. It is undeniable that Alfred Schutz's work provides theoretical and methodological elements for the sociological analysis of the economic world. The linkages between Schutzian sociology and economic reflection vary widely, ranging from his formative stage within the context of the Mises Circle to the current recovery of his work by Economic Sociology. Within this framework, the aim of this work is to summarize Schutz's main contributions to the field of economic reflection. The recovery and systematization of the Schutzian vocabulary -in the interface between sociology and economics- can contribute with new elements not only to think from a theoretical point of view but also to address economic phenomena empirically.

Introduction

For many decades, contemporary sociological theory has held a considerable misunderstanding around phenomenologically oriented sociology, which has undermined its heuristic potential and, as a consequence, has pushed its conclusions to a marginal place in current discussions. Thus, Alfred Schutz's sociology has frequently been interpreted as a paradigmatic example of «subjectivism» given that it supposedly places exclusive emphasis on the actors' «subjective» interpretations, occluding –not to say denying– the possibility of thinking «objective» social structures such as power relations or social order. However, the indication that there exists a misunderstanding around labeling Schutz as subjectivist is not new. Some years ago, an expert on his work (Endress 2005) defended phenomenology against the accusation of subjectivism when he critically examined the way in which Pierre Bourdieu shapes his slogan-like label «subjectivism». Along these lines, in previous research, we demonstrated the groundless character of the dominant criticism against Schutz's work shedding a new light on his reflection around themes such as social order (López 2012, 2014a, 2014b) and power (Dreher & López 2015). In the framework of that research, the recovery of the connections between the author and the Austrian School of Economics became a central theme, because it is in that intellectual context that his sociology develops and where his notion of the life-world is based, a notion which makes clear the author's interest not only in the subjective aspects but also in the objective dimension of social reality (López 2014c). The ideas we present herein stems from those previous investigations and from an interest in recovering Schutz's contributions both to the theoretical and to the empirical sociological research on economic phenomena. The reflection will be conducted in the interface of phenomenologically oriented sociology and economics, specifically highlighting the theoretical potential of the Schutzian paradigm for the study of the economic world.

In order to accomplish this goal, the first section presents a detailed overview of the links between Schutzian sociology and economic reflection. Our attention is primarily focused: a) on the Austrian roots of Schutzian epistemological concern which - as we will show later in this work - was directed not only at social sciences in general but also at economics in particular; b) on the Schutzian roots in the contemporary discussions of Austrian Economics, i.e., in the debate opened some decades ago about the links between hermeneutics and economics; and, c) on the appropriation of Schutz's work by European economic sociology, i.e., the studies which make fruitful use of Schutzian phenomenological program for the empirical research of market processes. In the second section we propose that it is the problem of economic coordination that at first glance seems to have profited most from the Schutzian perspective and we present a review of the main contributions of Schutzian sociology to that paradigmatic problem of economics. Finally, in the third section and closely related to the previous one a critical analysis of Schutzian alleged political liberalism is sketched out.

Schutzian sociology and economic reflection

The Austrian roots of Schutzian reflection

The analysis of the links of Schutz's sociology with the economic reflection constitutes a rich and prolific field of study not only for the specialists in his work, but also for interpretive economics and for economic sociology itself. The first of the multiple cross-links which can be highlighted organizes around the Austrian School of Economics. As mentioned before, what motivated our previous work was the inquiry on the «Austrian roots of Schutzian reflection», which go through his project of a sociology of the life-world (López 2014c). There is ample evidence¹ to assert that the discussions within the Mises Circle constitute the immediate antecedent of Schutzian sociology: «economic issues (...) are important to Schutz's early intellectual development and provide much of the context of Schutz's great work, The Phenomenology of the Social World» (Koppl & Augier 2011: 15). Motivated by the purpose of finding a response to the problem posed by Misean apriorism Schutz largely concentrates on the phenomenological foundations of the concepts of social sciences. Misean theory of catallactics was part of a pure a priori theory of action considered as abstracted from its historical circumstances: «though the men of the Middle Ages would not have understood the law of marginal utility, they nevertheless did not and could not act otherwise than as the law of marginal utility describes. Even the man of the Middle Ages sought to apportion the means at his disposal in such a way that he attained the same level of satisfaction in every single kind of want» (Mises 1933 [2003]: 103). The implications of such a theory included a disconnection of economic concepts from worldly life and a rigid dichotomy between theoretical and historical sciences. While the object of inquiry of catallactics was subjective actions, the methodology of formation of objective categories consisted in an intellectual intuition which involved «oblivion» or a disconnection of the subject understood as a real person. The problem of formalism that the Austrian tradition represented by Mises' work entailed, involved a separation of theory from the contact with the life-world. Against this background, Schutz's epistemological concern was directed not only at social sciences in general but also at economics in particular. As Lester Embree clearly explains, Schutz's reflection on economics as a theoretical social science «is expounded in relation to his theory of science especially what he calls 'postulates'» (Embree 2009: 165). These postulates of wide application -called «procedural rules» or «rules for scientific procedure»- are the postulates of subjective meaning and of adequacy. As viewed by Schutz, and in stark contrast to the Austrian tradition of Carl Menger and Mises, the concept of action *must* refer to the subjects *within* the social world and to the interpretation of the actors in terms of systems of projects, available means, motives, relevances, plans, and so on. With regard to this postulate of subjective meaning it is worth remembering the repeatedly cited quotation by Schutz that applies to our discussion:

¹ See also Prendergast (1986), Foss (1996), Koppl (1997), Boettke (1998), Kurrild-Klitgaard (2001, 2003), Knudsen (2004), Barber (2004), Wilson (2005), Srubar (2007).

Is it not the "behavior of prices" rather than the behavior of men in the market situation which is studied by the economist, the "shape of demand curves" rather than the anticipations of economic subjects symbolized by such curves? Does not the economist investigate successfully subject matters such as "savings," "capital," "business cycle," "wages" and "unemployment," "multipliers" and "monopoly" as if these phenomena were entirely detached from any activity of the economic subjects, even less without entering into the subjective meaning structure such activities may have for them? (...) Closer investigation, however; reveals that this abstract conceptual scheme is nothing else than a kind of intellectual shorthand and that the underlying subjective elements of human actions involved are either taken for granted or deemed to be irrelevant with respect to the scientific purpose at hand - the problem under scrutiny and are, therefore, disregarded. Correctly understood, the postulate of subjective interpretation as applied to economics as well as to all the other social sciences means merely that we always can - and for certain purposes must - refer to the activities of the subjects within the social world and their interpretation by the actors in terms of systems of projects, available means, motives, relevances, and so on (Schutz 1962: 34-35).

On the other hand, the postulate of adequacy «deals with the *formation* of ideal-typical constructs» and «states that the type must *be sufficient to explain the action without contradicting previous experience*» (Schutz 1932 [1967]: 236. Italics in original). As stated by Schutz, each term in a scientific model of human action must be constructed in such a way that a human act performed within the lifeworld by an individual actor in the way indicated by the typical construct would be understandable for the actor him or herself as well as for his or her fellows in terms of common-sense interpretation of everyday 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 1962: 44).

Both postulates «serve to anchor the second-order constructs of the cultural scientists in the first-order constructs through which the actors themselves understand the social world» (Embree 2009: 171). The cultural sciences «develop a model of the social world in terms of a system of mutually coordinated ideal types of actions as well as relationships, situations, and products». The ideal types «also called "constructs" (...) are actually concepts of a higher level, i.e., constructs about constructs» (Embree 2009: 169).

All in all, as a social scientist both economist and sociologist try to explain the economic phenomena using the postulate of subjective interpretation and the postulate of adequacy. Both should refer to the actor within the social world. The notion of life-world becomes the touchstone of Schutzian theory of social sciences. The life-world is conceived as a subjective formation resulting from the activities of the subjective pre-scientific experience: «Schutz's big achievement in the present context is the "*descriptive analysis of economics*" (...), which elucidates what economists do. Most of them, including Mises, overlooked the lifeworldly ground of economic theory» (Eberle 2009: 505. Italics in original).

Closely related, Schutz is very critical of the principle of marginal utility «the fundamental hypothesis of modern theoretical economics» (Embree 2009: 175). He offers a critique to that principle which, he believed, functions as a regulator of the creation of concepts in economics. Schutz agrees with Mises that social theory should seek a prioris. But, in agreement with Husserl, he proposes a different notion. The a priori cannot be stated as propositions, such as laws and principles, but rather should be sought after at a more fundamental level, mainly in the constitutive features of the life-world. As I have shown elsewhere (López 2014c), the concepts of the social sciences are grounded in the structure of the life-world. The postulate of subjective meaning leads quite quickly to the sphere of intersubjectivity. As a consequence, the structure of the life-world not only has its roots in the experience of the solitary ego but also in the sphere of intersubjectivity: in the realm of the directly experienced social reality, the face-to-face relationship; and in the realm of the indirectly experienced social reality, the realm of contemporaries, predecessors and successors. In both areas Schutz develops two a priori structures of consciousness related to intersubjectivity: the pure We-relationship and the pure They-relationship. The pure We-relationship constitutes an *a priori* structure of consciousness linked to the realm of the directly experienced social reality and is characteristic of the domain of face-to-face relationships. Schutz calls «pure We-relationship» the face-to-face relationship in which the partners are aware of each other and sympathetically participate in each other's lives for however short a time. But likewise, the «pure We-relationship» is only a limiting concept. The directly experienced social relationship of real life is the pure We-relationship concretized and actualized to a greater or lesser degree and filled with content. On the other hand, the pure They-relationship constitutes an a priori structure of consciousness linked to the realm of the indirectly experienced social reality. My face-to-face encounters with others have given me a deep prepredicative knowledge of the Thou as a self. But the Thou who is merely my contemporary is never experienced personally as a self and never prepredicatively. On the contrary, all experience of contemporaries is predicative in nature. It is formed by means of interpretive judgments involving all my knowledge of the social world, although with varying degrees of explicitness. The term «They-orientation» is defined by the peculiar way in which I apprehend the conscious experiences of my contemporaries. For I apprehend them as anonymous processes. The «They-orientation» is the pure form of understanding the contemporary in a predicative fashion, that is, in

terms of his or her typical characteristics or ideal types. These make up first order constructs, the foundation and reference point for any second order construct in social sciences. That's the reason why the concepts of social sciences are grounded in the constitutive features of the life-world. However, there are no propositions related to the contents of those formal features; these contents may vary in different social, cultural and historical contexts and should be empirically explored (López 2014c: 22).

Schutzian criticism toward Misean formalism and his reflections on the need to find the foundation of the concepts of social sciences in the constitutive features of the life-world brings to mind Karl Polanyi's criticism of economic theory for being essentially «formal» (Polanyi 1957 [1992]), i.e., a kind of logic focused on choice, the means-end relationship, and the alleged scarcity of things that people want. To the formal concept of economics Polanyi counterposes a «substantive» concept, grounded in reality and not in logic (Swedberg & Smelser 2005: 13): «the substantive meaning of economic derives from man's dependence for his living upon nature and his fellows» (Polanyi 1957 [1992]: 29).

By distancing himself from those formal principles of catallactics Schutz distinguishes theoretical economics with economic history or economic sociology²:

The so-called 'principles of catallactics' certainly have as their subject matter human acts considered as finished products, not actions in progress. The meaning-content of these principles is exhausted in the subsumption of such acts under the interpretive schemes of economic theory. To be sure, no economic act is conceivable without some reference to an economic actor, but the latter is absolutely anonymous; it is no you, nor I, nor an entrepreneur, nor even an "economic man" as such, but a pure universal "one." (...) However, one can study the economic actor as such and try to find out what is going on in his mind; of course, one is not then engaged in theoretical economics but in economic history or economic sociology (Schutz 1932 [1967]: 137).

According to Schutz, economic sociology is not engaged in theoretical economics; instead it aims at studying economic action with reference to an economic actor, not a universal «one», but a concrete actor living among other fellows in social, cultural and historical contexts.

² In *Collected Papers II* (1964a), Schutz reworks this contrast between theoretical economics and economic sociology in the distinction between *pure theory* and *applied theory* (Embree 2009: 167).

The Schutzian roots in the contemporary discussions of Austrian Economics

Within the framework of the analysis of the links of Schutz's sociology with the economic reflection it is also possible to trace the «Schutzian roots in the contemporary discussions of Austrian Economics» in the debate opened some decades ago about the links between hermeneutics and economics. The discussions within Austrian tradition around the importance of sociological analysis constitute a development independent from and parallel to contemporary economic sociology which has a common ground in the strong criticism against essential principles of neoclassical economics regarding the economic behavior of the individual³. During the late 80's and early 90's an «interpretive turn» was introduced in the economic sciences. These economists, interested in recovering the relevance of interpretive theory for Austrian Economics, formulated what was called «economics of meaning» (Boettke, Lavoie, & Storr 2001) or «interpretive economics» (Boettke 1990; Prychitko 1990)⁴. This movement gave place to a paradigmatic book on the epistemological turn edited by Donald Lavoie, Economics and Hermeneutics (1991), which mainly deals with the link between those two intellectual traditions that until then had been total strangers. The two economists who provoked the debate on the use of hermeneutics to revise Austrian Economics were Richard Ebeling (1985, 1986), who had drawn principally from the works of Schutz and Paul Ricoeur, and Lavoie (1986), who made use of Hans-Georg Gadamer's ideas. Both authors found inspiration in the work of Ludwig Lachmann and his book The Legacy of Max Weber (1970), immediate precedent for the attempt at establishing bridges between sociology and Austrian economics. In fact it is maintained that Lachmann's book on Weber can be called «the first explicitly hermeneutical contribution to Austrian Economics» (Lavoie 1991: 13). Schutzian sociology allowed overcoming the limitations of neoclassical thought. In opposition to the rational maximization of the individuals, these authors pick up Schutz's claims regarding the existence of intersubjective structures of meaning which enable the individual to act in the social world. In his book, Lachmann sought to articulate how the troublesome aspects of the Weberian concept of ideal type could be replaced with the notion of *plan*. According to the author, human action exists as a scheme of plans designed to reach imagined futures:

³ For a comparison of mainstream economics and contemporary economic sociology see Swedberg and Smelser (2005: 3-6).

⁴ It is important to mention that Werner Sombart was the first sociologist who pointed out the need for a *«verstehende* economics» (Sombart 1930 [2003]).

One trait distinguishes all cultural phenomena from natural ones. When men act they carry in their minds an image of what they want to achieve. All human action can be regarded as the carrying out of projects that are designed to give effect to imagined ends. But every man pursues a multiplicity of ends, the achievement of at least some of which precludes that of other ends. Moreover, the scarcity of the means at the disposal of each actor imposes further restraints upon his choice. In other words, men have to choose the purposes they wish to achieve, and they have to make such choice within the constraints of a given 'situation'. To act at all, men have to make plans, comprehensive surveys of the means at their disposal and the ways in which they might be used, and let their actions be guided by them (Lachmann 1970: 30).

This background was the kickstart for further developments. In Austrian Economics: a hermeneutic approach (1991), Lachmann was critical of the success that after 1930 had obtained the method of classical mechanics among economists. Economists all over the world followed Pareto in embracing that method as the only truly «scientific» method. In the decades that followed «this became the dominant style of thought in all countries» (Lachmann 1991: 132). In this environment, rational action became the methodological tool par excellence. The mainstream advocated the powerful tool of positive analysis, the objective model of rational action. The interpretive turn in social thought demanded a fundamental rethinking of basic questions given that modern discourse concerning economics and sociology was stalled at this point «concentrating on the merits and demerits of the rational choice framework for social analysis» (Boettke 1998: 57). Then the hermeneutical Austrians' challenge was primarily aimed at mainstream neoclassical economics, which they charge with the vice of formalism: «formalism is the artificial severing of economic theory construction from application, in effect the separation of theory from contact with the lifeworld, with everyday reality as we know it» (Lavoie 1994: 55). However, the challenge had implications for the mainstream of the Austrian tradition as well:

the overall hermeneutical challenge to tradicional Austrian economics can be summarized by referring to (...) three 'core methodological tenets' of the school, subjectivism, methodological individualism and market process (...) For the school to take its own interpretive turn it will need to overcome its tendency towards atomism, which mistakenly locates the domain of meaning in isolated individual minds, and objectivism, which over-dichotomizes theory from history, and scientific from everyday understanding (Lavoie 1994: 55-57). Given that Schutz had already drawn attention to the problem of formalism characteristic of his intellectual context, the recovery of his work by contemporary Austrian tradition was not a random decision.

Economic sociology

The third cross-link can be found in the appropriation of Schutz's work by economic sociology in the studies which make fruitful use of the phenomenological program for the empirical research on market processes. In the «Introduction» of the *Handbook of Economic Sociology* (2005), Swedberg and Smelser acknowledges that new economic sociology is primarily a U.S. phenomenon. However, many European contributions to economic sociology are mentioned, among which Schutzian phenomenology occupies a special place: «Knorr Cetina in Germany and Aspers in Sweden have independently of one another embarked on the project of applying phenomenology to economic sociology» (Swedberg & Smelser 2005: 19).

In an article published in 2002 Karin Knorr Cetina and Urs Bruegger (Knorr Cetina & Bruegger 2002), examines the patterns of integration which distinguish the global social system embedded in economic transactions. Called «global microstructures» these patterns, which are global in scope but microsocial in character, constitute the basic features of the interaction order. The authors draw on Schutz's reflection on the temporal coordination as the basis for the level of intersubjectivity for their analysis of global markets, which posit «a form of market coordination that supplements relational or network forms of coordination» (Knorr Cetina & Bruegger 2002: 905). In an article of 2004, they clarify this point: «one important purpose of this chapter is to bring together elements of several microsociological literatures –interaction-ism, ethnomethodology, phenomenology– with elements from new economic sociology, specifically, its interest in institutions (...) in embeddedness, and in symbolic and expressive dimension of economic objects and activities» (Knorr Cetina & Bruegger 2004: 159).

The authors highlight the relevance of Schutzian approach or «microsociology» to issues of globalization and to the understanding of markets «when they are sketched out in geographical space» (Knorr Cetina & Bruegger 2002: 907). In those fields participants bridge the geographical distances and orient toward one another using patterns of relatedness and coordination called microstructures that are global in scope but microsocial in character and that assemble and link global domains. The authors also draw on Schutz and Luckmann's notion of *appresentation* to advocate that participants' reciprocal observation of markets in screens, combined with temporal coordination mechanisms, may constitute a basis for both a form of intersubjectivity and the integration of some global spheres. Making use of this core notion of Schutz's theory of symbols they describe the transportation of local details from particular time zones and geographical regions where they are observed to the global arena on screen. The «screen world» is the global market into which local details are transposed (Knorr Cetina & Bruegger 2004). This clearly shows the central role of the Schutzian approach to intersubjective structures and the importance of his theory of symbols in the analysis of economic phenomena. The strategy for organizing their argument consists on recovering Schutzian analysis of temporal coordination at the level of intersubjectivity in order to «supplement» relational or network forms of coordination. The goal here is to complement or «bring together» Schutzian «microsociology» with the interest of economic sociology in relational or network analysis.

The major difference between Knorr Cetina's approach and Aspers' (Aspers 2009) is that the latter does not aim at making use of Schutzian phenomenology in order to «supplement» other perspectives. Instead, his main objective is to introduce empirical phenomenology as an approach in its own right:

phenomenology has taken three routes that are relevant to social sciences. The first is the one taken by Schütz and his followers, which is essentially non-empirical. The second is ethnomethodology, which is only remotely related to phenomenology, and the third and perhaps most well known is the integration of phenomenology into the mainstream of social science. (...) I present what can be seen as a fourth route, empirical phenomenology, which is a development based on interpretations of the phenomenological literature (Aspers 2009: 4).

The author intends to make Schutzian approach «more empirical applicable» highlighting that the basic premise of empirical phenomenology is that an explanation in the social sciences should be connected with the meaning structure of real people. From this perspective, both the postulate of subjective interpretation and the postulate of adequacy proposed by Schutz are recovered. The author's assessment of the practical implications of empirical phenomenology leads him to conclude that a fruitful strategy for accessing the perspective of actors could be participant observation and interviews. In order to «ensure that the actors' perspective comes through, and thus that no scientific explanation exists unless what is studied is related to the first-order constructs of those studied» (Aspers 2009: 10). As claimed by Knorr Cetina: (w]hat the phenomenological approach means in regard to data collection and data treatment is first of all a focus on actor's meaning» (Knorr Cetina 2006: x).

In the same line, Aspers (2006), recovers the phenomenological perspec-

tive for empirical qualitative investigation in the fashion markets. The author conducted an empirical study of fashion photography in Sweden, an investigation of an understudied market. He maintains that a variety of actors are relevant to understanding these markets (fashion photographers, agents, editors of fashion magazines and art directors). As stated by Aspers, the three main goals that have been addressed in the book are: «to understand, and thereby explain, the market fashion of photography in Sweden, to present and ethnography of this market, and to incorporate the phenomenological approach to the social sciences» (Aspers 2006: 155). The author examines the relation between the different positions in those markets from Schutz's notion of reciprocal expectations. This recovery of Schutzian work opens the discussion on its general relevance to economic sociology and allows analyzing how far it is possible to go with this approach.

The problem of economic coordination

Fundamentally, it is the problem of economic coordination that at first glance seems to have profited most from the Schutzian perspective. According to Knorr Cetina and Bruegger (2002), the starting point for an understanding of global microstructured domains is the distinction between «embodied presence» and «response presence», a differentiation which has a family resemblance to Schutzian distinction between We-relationship and They relationship. The first one corresponds to the face-to-face situations, while the second corresponds to situations in which participants are capable of responding to one another and common objects in real time without being physically present in the same place. The question that lies at the core of the notion of a response-presence-based social form that extends across global distances is: «what are the possibilities of its inherent connectivity and integration as the key to overcoming the geographical separation of participants?» (Knorr Cetina & Bruegger 2002: 911). The response to this problem of coordination is the notion of global we-relationship which is based on temporal coordination. The notion suggests that a level of microintegration, or intersubjectivity, is possible in global fields.

In global markets, adjustments must be made to compensate for the geographic distance between participants. Schutzian concept of intersubjectivity allows the authors to characterize the social binding in this kind of markets, bringing into focus the idea of temporal coordination which is central to the phenomenon of intersubjectivity. Rather than two individual facing each other, they are interested in the example of two subjects watching a third object, for instance a bird flying, for the conceptualization of sociality of global fields: «to illustrate global orientation in financial markets, we address the three elements that are central to intersubjectivity: (1) participants' orientation toward and observation of a common object, (2) the reciprocity of these orientations, and (3) interlocking time dimensions» (Knorr Cetina & Bruegger 2002: 923). As opposed to face-to-face situation, the authors coin the concept of faceto-screen situation. The face-to-screen concept replaces the face-to-face one in response-presence-based situations, i.e., the orientation of participants toward the global sphere that is present on screen. Secondly, the reciprocity of orientations takes place when the screen itself, like a mirror, reflects market participants' activities to one another in real time: «the reciprocity of observation is an essential and invariable aspect of these temporally focused global interaction systems, in addition to being an underlying source of intersubjectivity» (Knorr Cetina & Bruegger 2002: 925). Finally, temporal coordination within the authors scheme means that these markets are communities of time, a condition that is central to their historical particularity conceived as a social system that overcome the geographic separation between participants. The aspects of temporal coordination between participants are: synchronicity, continuity and temporal immediacy. Moreover, «temporal coordination involves a temporal division of labor across time zones, such that the community of time extends around the clock». All this complex structuration and reciprocity allow the authors to maintain the argument of a level of global intersubjectivity that extends beyond the face-to-face situation. It is important to indicate here that, according to the aforementioned point of view as regard the use of Schutzian phenomenology in order to «supplement» other perspectives, the authors point out the need to distinguish between different forms of market coordination reciprocally related: the network form of coordination and the reflexive, temporal form of coordination.

The problem of coordination has also occupied contemporary Austrian tradition. In a similar manner, they highlight the problems that involve the temporal and geographic distance between participants:

how men, mutually dependent upon each other in that system of division of labor, can successfully coordinate their activities for assurance of a balance between the multitudes of demands and supplies for various goods and services in a complex and developed market order (...). Clearly, such coordination of a vast number of interpersonal plans, in which the market actors are separated from each other in terms both time and space, requires some mechanism through which expectations can be formed (Ebeling 1999: 120-121).

In this regards, contemporary Austrian economics have benefited from Schutzian insights. The centrality of Schutz's theory of ideal types and of the notion of stock of knowledge is recovered by authors such as Storr (2010), Knudsen (2004), Kurrild-Klitgaard (2001), Mote (2001), Ebeling (1999), Koppl (1997), Foss (1996) and Pietrykowski (1996), who claim that one of Schutz's biggest contributions to the methodology of the social sciences is the introduction of a scale of ideal types based on growing degrees of anonymity. In this sense, several authors consider that Schutz's studies foster understanding of the properties of the order creation of the market processes (Ebeling 1999; Foss 1996). And this coordination demands a mechanism through which mutual expectations are formed. The Schutzian system of ideal types can help build that theory of expectations. Thus, Koppl, Foss and Pietrykowski «have looked to the ideal-type method as a way to better understand and model two primary economic phenomena: economic expectations and social order/ market coordination» (Mote 2001: 223). Foss, for instance, claims that in their daily-life situations, actors are skilled at coordinating their actions, because there are things that are more «prominent» than others. In their everyday lives, actors draw on the stock of knowledge they have in common, which consists of shared typifications of the social world. They are able to coordinate their actions because they are equipped with that everyday life knowledge, which includes an ample repertoire of courses-of-action and personal ideal types and because that common-sense knowledge is presupposed and has an origin and social acceptance. Foss makes use of the concept of «prominence» of Thomas Schelling, which functions as a principle for organizing common sense knowledge and typifications. However, he (as well as Koppl) disregards these typifications as being organized in domains of relevances, as Schutz states. It is Pietrykowski who moved forward in the direction of recovering Schutz's theory of relevances, a key theme which has not yet been paid the attention it deserves. The author makes use of the notions of «intrinsic» and «imposed» relevances. Intrinsic relevances are related to the freedom of the individual to choose what he/she is interested in, whereas imposed relevances have to do with the fact that situations are also imposed on us as significant although they are not related to our own interests. Pietrykowski contends that «negotiation» of these (in some cases) conflicting relevances is a matter of «the readiness with which individuals accept or resist the imposition of the other's relevances systems» which «differs from situation to situation»⁵.

Together with the aforementioned importance of the theory of the ideal types to give an answer to the «paradigmatic problem» of the economic theory, the limitations of Schutz's theory regarding the concept of «unintended conse-

⁵ As I have shown elsewhere, through his valuable observations Pietrykowski opened the analysis to the Schutzian problem of relevance in the field of economic reflection (López 2014c).

quences» are also highlighted. The focus on the «unintended consequences» is based on the concept of the spontaneous social orders proposed by Friederich von Hayek, who emphasizes, among other things, that those orders are not the result of human intention. As Storr (2010) points out, for Hayek «spontaneous orders are the unintended consequence of the nonetheless purposeful action of multiple individuals». As mentioned by Lavoie, «in economics market processes stands for what is really a more fundamental category which applies not only to markets, but to all sorts of institutions: spontaneous order. It is the principle that the social manifestation of meaningful action is that of an evolving system which exhibits systematic, but generally unintended, consequences» (Lavoie 1994: 56). The critics claim that in the Schutzian scheme there is no reflection around this notion and, in this sense, the Schutzian categories are insufficient. Even Koppl, who has made one of the biggest contributions to enlighten on the strengths of Schutz's theory for the Austrian audience, asserts that Schutz does not recognize clearly that human action can produce unintended systemic consequences (Koppl 2002: 54). However, Storr (2010) proposes that this criticism of Schutz is unfair: «first, the second order constructs that social scientists employ are based on first order common-sense constructs that individuals use to negotiate the social world which necessarily make reference to unintended consequences and spontaneous orders. Secondly, Schütz himself often engaged in causal spontaneous order analysis» (Storr 2010: 176). Storr argues that «social stock of knowledge emerges spontaneously» and that as a consequence of the pragmatic motive governing the actors in the social world understood as a spontaneous social order that contains multiple and emerging «made orders», the actors should resort to their stock of knowledge to explain the unintended consequences of their actions and other people's actions. He adds that «individuals are necessarily spontaneous order theorists». Here, Schutzian theory, as though it had fallen into the bed of Procrustes, is forced to fit the size of the Hayekian liberal theory of order as regards the notion of unintended consequences. However, Schutz resorts to categories of his own to understand the social order resulting from his particular notion of the life-world and the analysis of the unintended consequences in Schutz's work not only implies the reification of the author's heuristic framework but also entails defining him as a theorist of liberal order.

Economic theory and liberal politics

A systematic and explicit reflection on the connection between Schutz's thought on social order and liberal politics can be found in a recent article by Koppl and Augier (2011) on the occasion of the publication of an inter-

view with Schutz dating from 1958 (Greaves 1958). In the introduction to the interview, the authors contend that: «it may still be true that many of Alfred Schutz's admirers have a limited appreciation for the importance of the *economic theory* and *liberal politics* in Schutz's formative years as a young scholar» (Koppl & Augier 2011: 15. Italics in original). Mises was a powerful advocate of the political philosophy of classical liberalism and, given the strong connection between Schutz and the Austrian School of Mises, which was strongly liberal in the old-fashioned European sense of peace, free trade, and limited government: «liberalism and the Austrian School of Economics were twin influences on the young Schutz» (Koppl & Augier 2011: 16).

The authors also make reference to Schutzian review of Mises' 1933 book Grundprobleme der Nationalökonomie⁶. They critically analyzes the editor's preface to Schutz's review where Wagner, Psathas, and Kersten speak of an «adherence to an utterly unrestrained principle of free competition» shared by Mises and the rest of the «Viennese School of the theory of marginal utility». There, the editors contend that «Schutz himself would not seem to have been enthusiastic about a theory of unrestrained (better, cut-throat) competition» (Wagner, Psathas, & Kersten 1996: 88). It is reproached that the editors «supply, however, no evidence» for their claim (Koppl & Augier 2011). As stated by Koppl and Augier, the evidence points the other way. Their manuscript sets out the theoretical elements of Mises' and Hayek's liberalism, quotes excerpts of their works which highlight the non-conservative nature of their claims, and takes for granted the fact that Schutz inherits that liberal thought without presenting the theoretical traits of his hermeneutical framework in order to support the assertion. There is not even a single quotation of passages of his work where his liberalism becomes evident. The evidence provided by the authors refers to the intellectual context of Schutzian reflection: «the evidence suggests that Schutz upheld the liberal views championed by Mises» (Koppl & Augier 2011: 23). First, Schutz was a member of the Mont Pelerin Society, an association of liberal thinkers; second, Schutz's review of the aforementioned article of Mises, an outline which is not critical in nature; finally, the last evidence comes from Schutz's work for the Austrian Banking Association. What calls special attention is the fact that the introduction that precedes the interview does not provide theoretical evidence to support Schutzian alleged liberalism. Moreover, the interview only captures the differences between Mises and his students:

⁶ This work by Mises has been translated as *Epistemological Problems of Economics* (Mises 1933 [2003]). Helmut Wagner's English translation of Schutz's review appears in volume 4 of Schutz's *Collected Papers* (1996) as chapter 9, «Basic Problems of Political Economy».

with respect to the differences between Mises and his students, Mises was the only consistent thinker in terms of liberalism who made no concession. He has fought all kinds of interference by government. He has always been so radical that everyone has had as an argument against Mises that his proposals *are not possible politically in our times*. You have to make concessions (...) If somebody didn't accept liberalism in its purity, Mises suspected that he was a socialist, Marxist, etc. (Greaves 1958: 30. Italics in original).

Despite the value of Koppl's and Augier's insights, a brief remark with regard to methodology cannot be avoided. In order to attain a deeper understanding of a particular sociological theory, the researcher needs to analyze several dimensions. According to metatheorizing perspective (Ritzer 1991), the first dimension entails turning to the sociological theorist him/her-self and examining, among other things, networks and backgrounds, such as his/her biographical context, his/her life-worldly experience, his/her correspondence with colleagues, his/her institutional affiliations and professional involvement. In the case of Schutz's theory, this is the dimension developed by Koppl and Augier. However, this analysis should be supplemented by a second dimension: a detailed examination of the sociological theory itself, in our case, Schutzian texts. The third dimension concerns turning to other academic disciplines for ideas, tools, concepts, theories and the like that can be used in the analysis of Schutzian theory, for instance, the influences of the economic discussion in the context of the Austrian School of Economics and the Mises Circle and the subsequent impact of his work on the intellectual circles of interpretive economics and economic sociology. Finally, the fourth dimension calls for shifting to the more macro level to look at the larger society and the nature of its impact on sociological theorizing. For instance, by examining the sociohistorical context in which Schutz lived and worked and the national and international settings. In this regard, should also be recovered the impact of Schutzian historical context on his production, as well as the social, political and economic problems of his time. Taken together these dimensions would lead to a detailed understanding of Schutzian sociological theory. And, for this reason, we believe that the analysis of the intellectual context is insufficient to conclude that Schutz upheld liberal views. Due to space constraints, in the following lines we would like to introduce some theoretical elements that appear in Schutz's work which serve as a base to complement the first dimension analyzed by the authors. The elements presented do not allow us to make any conclusive statement about Schutzian alleged liberalism. On the contrary, they unveil the internal tensions present in Schutz's work.

To begin with, we must turn our attention to Austrian liberalism in order to analyze to what extent Schutzian reflections on social order, politics, society and government reproduce the liberal views championed by Mises and, specially, by Hayek. As Koppl and Augier claim «Mises and his followers had set about to defend Austrian liberalism, which they interpreted as an offshoot of the British liberal tradition of David Hume and Adam Smith. The Austrian liberals of Mises and his circle defended property rights as essential to liberty. Far from being a threat, private property is necessary to ensure that power is dispersed and the dangers of state power are kept in check» (Koppl & Augier 2011: 17). In «The principles of Liberal social order» (1967), Hayek mentions this fact. At the beginning of the manuscript he also contends that liberalism «derives from the discovery of a self-generating or spontaneous order in social affairs (...), an order which made it possible to utilize the knowledge and skill of all members of society to a much greater extent than would be possible in any order created by central direction» (Hayek 1967: 162). Moreover, a distinction between spontaneous order and organization or arrangement is presented in the text as a differentiation between individual and common purposes: while organization or arrangement is based on commands, the spontaneous order is based on abstract rules which leave individuals free to use their own knowledge for their own purposes. The spontaneous order of a free society will contain many organizations (including government). However, the two principles of order cannot be mixed in any manner. The characteristic of a spontaneous order is that by using its ordering forces, i.e., the regularity of the conduct of its members, it is possible to achieve an order of a much more complex set of facts that it could ever be achieved by deliberate arrangement. Particularly, the order of the market rests not on common purposes but on reciprocity, that is «on the reconciliation of different purposes for the mutual benefit of the participants» (Hayek 1967: 163). It is in this regard that Hayek «criticizes the idea that orderly arrangements must be either born of nature or arranged through artifice. His alternative, spontaneous order, relies on the unintentional coordination of intentional actions» (Heath 2005: 69). As a consequence, the very idea of spontaneous order is linked to a political theory of liberalism (Heath 2005). As stated by Hayek: «free men who are to be allowed to use their own knowledge for their own purposes must therefore not be subject to rules which tell them what they must positively do, but only to rules which tell them what they must not do (...) the rules of just conduct thus merely delimit the range of permissible actions but do not determine the particular actions a man must take at a particular moment» (Hayek 1967: 167).

Schutzian review of Santayana's text on «Dominations and Powers» (Schutz 1964b) provides a first access to recover his position on social order, politics, society and government. In the same manner as the review of Mises' manuscript, «the presentation of Santayana's thought follows as closely as possible his own wording» (Brodersen 1964: xiv), i.e., without a clear critical intention.

Santayana's study of society and government is structured in three different levels: the generative, the militant and the rational orders. The three orders are, as Schutz claims, ideal-typical constructs in the established terminology of the social sciences. The first «Powers and Dominations» occurs in the generative order which is the order of growth, custom, and tradition. But as soon as the natural growth of the human family is disturbed or disrupted, and the dominance of a different social unit is substituted for it, complications may arise within traditional society. The new social order is no longer biological but is voluntarily imposed, because potentialities in the psyche now come to consciousness before they are habitually realized in action. There is therefore a contrast, and often a conflict, between the new prompting at work and the traditional convention. This conflict constitutes the militant order of society, which includes all voluntary associations that cross the generative order of society (not only military bands, but also political parties and religious sects). The generative order corresponds as a whole to Power because it gathers the emergence of those elements society needs; the militant order corresponds to Domination or to the emergence of control and the imposition of some powers upon others; the third one, corresponds to virtue, because democracy or representative government are displayed as the rational way to harmonize former elements (Moreno Moreno 2007: 134). As stated, these ideal-typical constructs are interwoven in reality. The construction of the three orders is only a methodical device adopted in order to study «Powers and Dominations» within each of them, as well as to mark the Domination which each order exercises over the rest. According to Schutz, it is in the militant order that the interplay of Dominations and Powers appears most clearly (Schutz 1964b: 210).

Schutz makes clear two attitudes toward Santayana's ideas. Santayana leaves the reader «in a state of bewilderment as well as of admiration» (Schutz 1964b: 224). Firstly, with bewilderment Schutz confronts Santayana's materialistic-naturalistic position, the key concept at the foundation of his conception of society and government. Schutz criticizes Santayana's metaphysical assumption that the generative order of society is the paramount social reality upon which all the other orders are founded. This is due to the attempt to deal with individuals from the point of view of a naturalist and materialist «who is not satisfied with an analysis of the world as taken for granted but aims at founding life, psyche, and spirit, in brief, human nature, upon the physical order of nature» (Schutz 1964b: 224-225). Secondly, admiration is due to his truly philosophical craftsmanship in organizing the problems of a philosophical anthropology around the existential experience of the human situation within the world; admiration is due also to the consistency with which social and political life is described in terms of a *drama* of will, psyche,

and spirit oscillating between the vacant, the indifferent, and the vital forms of liberty, and the forms of necessary and voluntary servitude (Schutz 1964b: 224). The realm of vital liberty – the inner liberty of the spirit, understood as the «awakened inner attention» – opens a chasm between the demands of the natural powers of primal will and the path open to action. This conflict is manifested in various forms of servitude. Government has traits of the militant order of society in which the drama of will manifests. This drama «of primal will, psyche, and spirit in the various realms of vacant, contingent, and vital liberty, undergoing the various forms of necessary and voluntary servitude, is one of the constituent factors of the genetic order of society» (Schutz 1964b: 213).

This is not the first time that Schutz recovers Santayana's thought. According to Schutz the mainstream of Husserl's argument in *Ideas II*, has similarities with certain themes presented by «William James, Santayana, Dewey, George H. Mead, Cooley, and others» (Schutz 1966: 36). Moreover, Schutz takes up the notion of animal faith proposed by Santayana in order to support his definition of intersubjectivity:

Intersubjective experience, communication, sharing of something in common presupposes, thus, in the last analysis faith in the Others truthfulness, animal faith in the sense of Santayana; it presupposes that I take for granted the Other's possibility of bestow upon one of the innumerable sub-universes the accent of reality, and on the other hand that he, the Other, takes for granted that I, too, have open possibilities for defining what is my dream, my phantasy, my real life. This is the last insight into the intersubjective dialectic of reality (Schutz 1964a: 155).

This theoretical evidence suggests that Schutz has strong connection with Santayana's ideas of animal faith. And animal faith, in turn, has a connection with Keynesian notion «animal spirit» (Padua 2014: 37). However, we cannot be conclusive on this point and these guidelines need to be further developed. What is important to mention here is that an argument focused on the intellectual context of Schutzian thought should be further enriched with an analysis of the conceptual and philosophical work of the author. Taking this dimension into account, it should be nuanced, as Wagner does, the statement that the mere membership of Schutz to *Mises Circle* constitutes evidence that Schutz was a liberal thinker. According to Wagner, what kept Schutz within the *Mises Circle* were «its underlying interpretive assumptions» in terms of which economic processes were explained. It is with this backdrop in mind, that we can support Wagner's idea that: «Schutz accepted marginal utility theory in principle. However, in contrast to von Hayek and in agreement with many other students of von Mises, he did not subscribe to the extreme economic liberalism of his teacher» (Wagner 1983: 12).

As seen previously, Schutz appreciates Santayana's reflections on conflict and drama of will that the author highlights as characteristic of social and political life and which is described in terms of a *drama* of will, psyche, and spirit that oscillates between the vital forms of liberty and the forms of necessary and voluntary servitude. As I have shown elsewhere (López 2014a), another kind of tension or conflict appears in Schutz's early work as one of the preliminary conditions of social order. And this tension has certain similarities with the one proposed by Santayana. In Schutz's words, the multiplicity of social persons that «revolve» around the nucleus of the self range from the intimate person to the full development of the process of anonymization in the social world. The incorporation of the external world means that the person finds:

givennesses and structures that do not stem from me, myself, but instead are pregiven from without forcing on me an attitude along with an *attention à la vie* coming from the things themselves but not from the sources of my *durée*, from my intimate person, and that are, so to speak, imposed upon me (Schutz 2013a: 235-236).

At all levels, we find «a continuous transition from the absolute intimate person to the highest anonymous behavior» and «the tension continues» to the highest anonymous contemporary world. There is a development of the process of anonymization in the social world. Supplementary typifications appear because it is not I alone who carry out my own self-chosen plans, but I work together «with others and against others, also caring and setting goals not just for my self but also for others» (Schutz 2013a: 237). This issue «concerns the problem of intrinsic relevance (...) in contradistinction to the type of relevance imposed» (Barber 2013: footnote 139). The process of anonymization in the social world involves imposed relevances which prescribe our personal choice:

custom and culture, customary and self-imposed duties and rights, inclination and upbringing, prescribe certain of our attitudes toward our fellow human beings, our personal choice and the external need assign us our place in the social cosmos with which we are *satisfied* or which we may strive to *change* (Schutz 2013a: 243-244).

As a citizen of my community, for instance, «as someone who belongs to my political party, as a member of my church, over against these contemporary, more or less anonymous institutions, *I take up attitudes that have their origins in quite distinctly anchored levels of my self»* (Schutz 2013b: 247. Emphasis added). Occasionally, it would seem that all of the sides of my self are independent persons with their own wishes and wills. However, «it is consistent with the unity and unification of self-consciousness that always other sides of ourselves; other moments of our personality, are put into play in our daily social life while other and perhaps more essential sides, where not entirely excluded, are thus still in such measure crowded in the background» (Schutz 2013b: 249-250). There is the diversity of standardized or normative attitudes demanded of me at every step by living in the cultural world of daily life (for instance, If I am to travel by train, then I must conduct myself according to the prescriptions required when traveling by train). In everyday life, specific attitudes in their standardization and normativeness are imposed on us. They touch upon a peripheral sphere of ourselves, we incorporate them on the basis of our education, inclinations, our settling of goals, without thinking too much about them. The ultimate goals of our bearing on the great systems of the state, of the law and of the economy are of an entirely similar nature.

In short, a tension or interplay between intrinsic and imposed relevances constitutes one of the preliminary conditions of social order in Schutzian scheme. The freedom of the individual to choose what he/she is interested in, is confronted with the fact that we work «with others and against others», and this incorporation of the external social world involves that imposed relevances prescribe our personal choice. Among the diversity of standarized or normative attitudes which are imposed upon us, the state, the law and the economy establish the ultimate goals of our bearing. However, the tension is reflected in the fact that we could be satisfied or we could strive to change the imposed duties and rights. It is important to mention that this tension, which may vary in different social, cultural and historical contexts, should be empirically explored.

The connection between Schutzian theory of relevances and Hayekian theory of spontaneous order has also been explored by Mori (2009). The author suggests that «Schutz should have already understood Hayek's view on so-called given data as the problem of relevance» (Mori 2009: 529). Additionally, he points out that the relevance theory itself «leads to a *spontaneous* order». In our view, there is not in Hayek's theory such a tension between intrinsic and imposed relevances. Free men who are to be allowed to use their own knowledge for their own purposes must not be subject to duties, that is, to rules which tell them what they must positively do. In this respect, the main dangers of state power are pointed out. On the contrary, Schutzian theory of relevances points out to the very existence of a conflict and a tension within social order between intrinsic relevances, which are related to the freedom of the individual to choose what he/she is interested in, and imposed on us as signifi-

cant although they are not related to our own interests. For these reasons, we argue that it is no possible to explain the theory of the intrinsic and imposed relevances as an extension of Hayekian theory of unintended consequences. There is not a self-regulation or reconciliation of the different interests and purposes nor an unintentional coordination of intentional actions within social order but interplay of intrinsic and imposed relevances. Pointing out this deficiency in the economic theory of the self-regulated or spontaneous markets from Schutzian sociology not only allows placing Schutz on the same critical line as the new economic sociology regarding the marginalist economic school, as it supposes the existence of self-regulated markets and of a *homo economicus* who organizes his/her actions according to perfect rational criteria, but mainly, it may be asserted that, in contrast with Hayek and Mises, Schutz did not subscribe to extreme liberalism in his intellectual context.

Final comments

In this work, we aimed to synthesize a phenomenological program for sociological analysis of economic action and of the order of the market processes which serves as a foundation for the development of a phenomenologically oriented economic sociology. In this regard, we showed that there is in Schutzian phenomenologically oriented sociology an economic sociology in embryonic form which has not been deeply explored and which can build bridges between sociology and economics.

Firstly, we showed, against the background of the Mises Circle, that Schutz's epistemological concern was directed not only at social sciences in general but also at economics in particular. Social scientist both economist and sociologist need to explain the economic phenomena using the postulate of subjective interpretation and the postulate of adequacy. Both should refer to the actor within the social world. The notion of life-world becomes the touchstone of Schutzian theory of social sciencies, of sociology and of economics. Secondly, Schutz's contribution to reflections on economic sociology is also based on the subsequent reappropriation of his work. The subsequent recovery of Schutz's work shows its relevance both for theoretical and empirical research in economic sociology. For this reason, a phenomenological program for theoretical and empirical research of the market phenomena from Schutzian sociology must incorporate his reflections on intersubjectivity and notions such as common-sense of knowledge, the theory of the ideal types, the theory of expectations, the theory of relevances and the theory of symbols. Finally, as regards the problem of coordination as a way to approach the order of the market processes, we demonstrated that Schutzian sociology makes it possible to point

out the limitations of the economic theory of the spontaneous or self-regulated market orders to such an extent that it can be asserted that Schutz did not subscribe to extreme economic liberalism in his intellectual context. This recovery and systematization of Schutzian vocabulary -in the interface between sociology and economics- many times ignored in sociological reflections on economics, can contribute with new elements not only to think from a theoretical point of view but also to address the economic phenomena empirically.

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Alfred Schütz con la moglie Ilse Heime, sposata nel 1926