

From the Pure “We-Relationship” in Schütz to “What Happens Between Us” in Waldenfels: Open Possibilities for an Inclusive Attitude in Relation to the Other

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Abstract

This article intends to compare the pure *We-relationship* in Schütz to *what happens between us* in Waldenfels. Schütz criticizes Weber’s basic methodological concepts: behavior and rationalism. For Schütz it is impossible through rational observance on relational behavior to guarantee the objectivism of sociology as a science. Schütz tries to prove that only a sociological theory that shows the different *realms/worlds* from which the interpretation of a product is built, with its obvious limitation of grasping the real meaning, while also clarifying the deep relationship with others, can in fact illustrate its relative *anonymity* or *concreteness*. This task involves a sense of searching for concreteness instead of taking for granted its objectiveness. For Waldenfels, the pure *We-relationship* is too fixed in the subjectivity that is based on one-sided understanding, and decreases possibilities of the event occurring between us. For Schütz, one deals with an eternal paradox of interpretation that will not make us acquainted completely with the other’s mind. The lack of fissure in the *We-relationship* does not leave space for the possibilities of *what happens between us*, in other words, the meaning is arrested in subjectivity in an attempt to make meaning as concrete as possible. Waldenfels will not say that the meaning in its integrality can be found, but he will open ways, which lead to a threshold *where/elsewhere* one will find fissures, new possibilities that first penetrate the body and after can take place in attitudes towards the other.

Keywords: Weber, ideal types, Schütz, we-relationship, Waldenfels, what happens between us, otherness

1. The phenomenology of the stream of consciousness

In the nineties, Alfred Schütz brought a new vision based on the tradition, mainly in Max Weber and in Edmund Husserl. In the beginning, Schütz opened a discussion on the theory of Weber's basic methodological concepts. Common questions arose at the time about the nature of sociology and its method. For Schütz, normally, the sociologists bring them through narrow senses like economy, mind, reciprocal effect, progress and so on (Schütz 1967, 11).

Schütz notes that Weber reduces all kinds of social relationships and structures, all cultural objectifications, all realms of objective mind, to the most elementary forms of individual behavior (Schütz 1967, 6) or, better said, the social world finds its meaning tied to our own acts. In this understanding, social science can have access to each social relationship involving the act of the individual in the social world. To find the structure of intentional meanings, Weber proposed his theory of *ideal types*. That means a certain theoretical construct, like a statistical average, selecting questions that have been raised at the time, not the kinds of questions merely produced by fantasy, but historical ones that will construct the data of the social scientist. Nevertheless, Schütz says that Weber, despite his great contribution in placing the meaningful act of the individual as the key idea of interpretative sociology, still remains with a narrow vision before the complexity of the social world in fully differentiated perspectives.

Weber takes for granted the intersubjective agreement of the social world and for that reason believes that our living experience, through our acts, can be interpreted correctly. On the contrary, Schütz believes that "the structure of the social world is meaningful, not only for those living in that world, but for its scientific interpreters as well" (Schütz 1967, 9), and that leads to better research to achieve the realms of possibilities that arise from these intersubjective relations.

Weber defines acts, first of all, based on the behavior of another human being, and through social relationships, leading us to a second meaning: "They are now focused on another – a

Thou" (Schütz 1967, 16). In this sense, the action is understood as presupposing the existence of this *Thou*, however, Weber says that we need to be aware in social action more than merely viewing the existence of the other. So now, at the third level, Weber differentiates between the mere existence of other taken for granted, and the behavior of other that is developed thematically. At a fourth level, he assumes the postulate that social action must be oriented to the behavior of others (Schütz 1967, 17). To interpret this behavior into social relations he leads us to the last level, which is the task of sociology.

For Weber, there is a distinction between meaningful behavior and meaningless behavior. This last one is considered as *affectual behavior* (Schütz 1967, 18) in the sense of uncontrolled reaction through stimulus. The first is *affectual action* that shows an action that is rationally based on a chosen value for its own sake, like "devote oneself to a person or ideal, to contemplative bliss, or finally the working off of emotional tensions" (Weber 1992, 12).

Schütz analyzes the concept of Weber's meaningful behavior as having a teleological orientation due to the behavior considered in a rational way. In doing so, Weber intends to show that the meaning of an action is identical with the motive of the action. Schütz says: "none of my experiences is entirely devoid of meaning" (Schütz 1967, 19). So some unsolved problems remain in Weber's theory as Schütz points out (Schütz 1967, 17): What does it mean to say that the actor attaches a meaning to his action? In what manner is the other self given to the Ego as something meaningful? In what manner does the Ego understand the behavior of others, in general, in terms of the others' own subjective meaning?

If one takes the example of a mother carrying her baby, begging money in a big city like São Paulo, and saying that she and her son have HIV, one will never know if the action is true or not. Maybe she is a nanny, and just took advantage of the child to earn extra money. This is big social problem that one cannot solve just saying that she is really telling the truth because the action appears to indicate it. This example leads to the differences between observational understanding and motivational understanding. For Weber and as for Scheler, the

observer somehow can, through perceiving the behavior, understand another's motivation and really be sure about the true act he is performing. On the contrary, Schütz says that is not possible at all, because it will require understanding the motivation, a certain amount of knowledge of the actor's past and future (Schütz 1967, 27). Therefore, one will not know the real motivation of the nanny, unless we knew the history and intentions that she might have.

Schütz brings Bergson's distinction between living within the stream of experience and living within the world of space and time. The first one is the inner stream of duration in a sense of continuous coming-to-be and passing-away of heterogeneous qualities (Schütz 1967, 45). The second is the quantified world, specialized, based on the idea of a homogeneous time. The inner stream of duration is not made of layers that appear to our consciousness as something organized, but a continuous flux, a constant transition from a *now-thus* to a new *now-thus*. The stream of consciousness cannot be grasped by the reflection because it belongs to the spatiotemporal world of everyday life. Nevertheless, one can allow this flow being experienced, or being stopped, trying to classify it into spatiotemporal concepts. As Schütz points out, one can see human acts under the same double aspect, in others words, seeing them as enduring conscious processes or already completed acts. In Husserl's study of the internal-consciousness, Schütz reports that Husserl established a deeper base upon the stream of consciousness, appointing the double intentionality (Husserl 1928b, 436) of it. Husserl calls these two types of intentionality as the longitudinal intentionality (*längs-intencionalität*) and transverse intentionality (*Quer-intencionalität*). So, the transverse intentionality is constituted, is the objective time. The longitudinal intentionality shows an ever flowing now-point that is never actual. Now, a question arises: How are the individual experiences within the stream of consciousness constituted into intentional units (Schütz 1967, 46)?

Husserl gives a precise description of this process distinguishing between primary remembrance – *retention* and secondary remembrance – *recollection or reproduction* (Husserl 1928b, 391). The *retentional* modification is attained “directly to

a primal impression in the sense that it is a continuum retaining throughout the same basic outline" (Schütz 1967, 48). In this way, the *retention*, upon the primal impression, makes possible a regard on the flowing, enduring of experience in its constant processes, but one cannot characterize as an act of looking back that guaranties an object, but "as the being-still-conscious of the just-having-been" (Schütz 1967, 49). The identity of the object and objective time itself is constituted in *recollection*. Those concepts are very important to another one – the concept of "lived experience" (*Erlebnis*) (Husserl 1928a, 82). Therefore, the experience cannot be grasped adequately in its full unity because it flows constantly. Only through *retention* and *recollection* can one have any consciousness of something in the flowing of time. Now, it is necessary to distinguish between the pre-empirical being of the lived experiences – "prior to the reflective glance of attention directed toward them, and their being as phenomena" (Schütz 1967, 50). When one turns his attention to the living experience, one no longer lives in the pure duration anymore, because the experience is apprehended by this glance. So, there are two types of experience: one that is taken into my glance of experience and that which is a continuum, and cannot be grasped. The meaning belongs to the first one for "meaning is merely an operation of intentionality, which, however, only becomes visible to the reflective glance" (Schütz 1967, 52), directed not at passing, but at already past experience.

At this point, Schütz calls attention to some experience that cannot be thought and that takes part in the *recollection*, but one is not capable of grasping it, in other words, he can know but not describe it. Those kinds of experience are of the vital Ego (the relation with some internal/external movements) and physical like moods, feelings and affects. Based on this, Schütz attests that meaning cannot be identified just with rationality that can be recovered but also which is irrecoverable. Therefore, Weber is wrong when he puts rationality in the broadest sense – capable of giving a meaning (Schütz 1967, 53). For Husserl, there are experiences that are incapable of endowing meaning, such as experience of primordial passivity, because giving meaning depends on an activity process that belongs to an Ego-Act. When one talks

about the act and the action one needs to understand the differentiation between them. Thus, when an action is done, it is because several acts have been completed. Accordingly, in the processes of endowing meaning in *recollection* state of memory one has *protentions* that are characterized by the possibility of bringing the expectation of the fulfillment of an act. What is visible to the mind is the completed act, not the continuum process. Thereby, in thought, one projects the act, and the corresponding projected act from the action is the meaning of it. The rational action can be defined as an action that knows intermediate goals, but the problem is that one cannot follow the continuum flux of experience, because, normally, one has the tendency to select one's goal. This follows that rationality is arbitrary and that the meaning is not really attached to an action as Weber supposed but to its corresponding projected act. The meaningful ground of an action that is grasped as a unity is always merely relative to a particular Here and Now of the actor (Schütz 1967, 97).

1.2 Lived experience and the experience of other

The problem of other (*Thou*) (Schütz 1967, 98) must be recognized that the *Thou* is conscious and exhibits the same basic form as mine. But we cannot say that we observe the subjective experience of another person in the same way as he does, because the experience as an observer is external rather than internal. One thing is the mode in which the object directly appears, and the other thing is the apprehension of the *Thou*, for one can just comprehend his experience through his field of expression, in other words, through his *signitive-symbolic representation* (Schütz 1967, 100).

In terms of coexistence, one can perceive a simultaneousness between the lived experience and the experience from other. Simultaneously is not that of the physical time, which is quantifiable, divisible or spatial. It embraces more the idea; the assumptions made that the other stream of consciousness has a structure similar to mine (Schütz 1967, 103). In order to avoid confusion, one cannot entirely grasp, objectively, the others experiences, but one can follow his lived experience in term of continuity. At this point, Schütz

searches resource in Husserl's *Ideen*: "our Knowledge of the consciousness of other people is always in principle open to doubt, whereas our Knowledge of our own consciousness, based as it is on immanent acts, and is always in principle indubitable" (Husserl 1928a, 85). So, one can say that the own stream of consciousness is given continuously in all its fullness, but the other consciousness is just given through discontinuous segments, only in interpretative perspectives never in its fullness. According to Schultz, one needs to differentiate between *expressive movements* and *expressive acts* (Schütz 1967, 117). The first has meaning only for whom is being observed. The second always has meaning for the actor. Thus, the observer never will know the expressive acts in its fullness for that belongs to the one who is acting.

If one takes the example of the nanny, we clearly see the impossibility of the participants to grasp one another's intended meaning. Even the nanny, will never absolutely know if she is achieving her goals in persuading the listener. She will use the signs of language to try to capture a sign context that is objective, but the projected meaning intrinsically will never correspond to her *expressive movements* and it is the only thing that the listener will have for his interpretation. The subjective meaning that the interpreter grasps is at best an approximation to the sign-user's intended meaning deals to its limitation. The same way, the person who expresses himself in signs is never quite sure of how he is being understood. In this complex understanding of the meaning context, the speaker is picturing his project on the basis of something present, imagining it in the future perfect tense while the listener is picturing something pluperfect on the basis on something past (Schütz 1967, 127).

The interpreter starts with his own experience of the body and artifacts and even judgments, and thoughts from others. The body, artifact and judgments are products of actions that give evidence of what went on in the minds of the actors who made them. These products can be interpreted in two different ways. First, through the *subjective meaning* of the product, viewing how the product stands or stood in the mind of the producer, and to know it means that one is able to run over

in his own mind in simultaneity or quasi-simultaneity the acts that are constituted by the producer. On the contrary, the *objective meaning* can be predicated only from the product already done, the already constituted meaning-context. Therefore, says Schütz: “the objective meaning is grasped as an objectification endowed with universal meaning” (Schütz 1967, 135). That means that one can leave out of account the personal actor and refer to him in a general mode, he becomes himself the *anonymous one*. It is due because one has already the product on hands.

This simultaneousness means, for Schütz, that one lives in the acts of understanding the other. The others subjective experiences are accessible to one’s interpretation and even taken for granted, as well as his existence and personal characteristics. Schütz says: “My Here and Now includes you, together with your awareness of my World, just as I and my conscious content belong to your world in your Here and Now” (Schütz 1967, 147). As one lives from moment to moment, the social world is only directly experienced for us in fragments and this experience is also fragmented by its conceptual perspectives. Nevertheless, the world that one shares with his neighbors does not mean that he directly and immediately grasps their subjective experiences, notwithstanding he can infer through indirect evidence that he can find in the world he is anchored by spatiotemporal community. Schütz calls this world the *world of our contemporaries* (Schütz 1967, 143), in others words, the world where one can infer by its evidence, but also one can interact as observer and actor of it. This world of our contemporaries could be divided, depending on directly experienced social reality in it. In so doing, one will find his *fellow men* with whom he has direct experience of their subjective experiences.

In addition to these two worlds, one also can find more, like the *world of my predecessors* that existed before and that he just can be an observer and not an actor of it. The other world of which one has evidence is the social *world of successors* that will exist, whose men he knows nothing of and can have no personal acquaintance of their subjective experience. Schütz brings these differences to mean that the experience is

surrounded into a temporality which embraces many different ways in question concerning one's relation to the others.

There is no guarantee that the participants of a relationship will be aware of everything the observer can see. There will always be a doubt between what is going on in the mind of the participants and of the observer's mind in a relationship. The logic doesn't go like that: When A acts in a certain way, B follows in a certain other way.

One can say that he has direct experience of the other when he shares with him a community of space and a community of time. One shares community of space when he is present to one another and can see their bodies as a field of expression. One shares community of time when his experience is flowing side by side with the other as Schütz would say: "when we are growing older together" (Schütz 1967, 163). This spatial and temporal immediacy is essential to *the face-to-face* situation that presupposes an actual simultaneity between one another of two separate streams of consciousness. For that, the participants must become intentionally conscious of others (*fellow man*) confronting them, and that awareness of the other Schütz will call the *Thou-orientation*.

The *Thou-orientation* can be one-sided or reciprocal. When it is reciprocal, one is mutually aware of each other so he will have a pure *We-relationship* (Schütz 1967, 164). It is important to note that the *Thou-orientation* and the *We-relationship* are limit concepts because the stream of conscience will always be different for each one. One cannot precisely know what is going on in the mind of the other even, for example, in synchronized swimming. The swimmers perform the same body movements but one is paying attention to his movements and the other is thinking about what he is going to do tomorrow; his movements are automatic and he does not need to pay attention all the time to them. One can say that while he is living in the *We-relationship*, he is living in his common stream of consciousness. Thus, when one reflects on it, and the more he does it, he transforms his partner into a "mere object of thought" (Schütz 1967, 167).

This reflection will transform his *fellow man* from a pure *We-relationship* into a *They-relationship* (Schütz 1967, 183), in

other words, from a direct relationship into an indirect relationship. At the *They-relationship*, one is not face-to-face in a direct interaction, because he is the observer and not interacting face-to-face anymore.

1.3. Indirect and direct experience in the four worlds

Schütz shows that the paths (direct and indirect experience) intersect moving opposite to one another. The indirect experience is open to many ideal types built from the world of contemporaries and predecessors that support one's observation. The product already made by the accomplished act will be processed by the interest of the observed. So, the observer is having an experience at the moment he is interpreting the action. He will compare it with his previous experiences and make his own project according to his interest mediated by his gaze of attention. On the contrary, the direct experience will give a possibility of the newness of a product coming through our expectation from the future perfect tense, while the indirect experience will stay its analysis of the pluperfect, in other words, it always will be an ideal type of an ideal type. Says Schütz: "The illusion, consists in consider a personal ideal type (abstraction of someone) as a real person, whereas actually it is a shadow person" (Schütz 1967, 190).

Schütz reviews that only a sociological theory which shows the different realms/worlds from which the interpretation of a product is built, with its obvious limitation of grasping the real meaning, and also that clarifies the deep relationship with others, can in fact illustrate their relative *anonymity* or *concreteness* (Schütz 1967, 200). That task will be possible when one begins to take the other person's point of view as such, in other words, when "we make a leap from the objective to the subjective context of meaning" (Schütz 1967, 217). This task involves a sense of searching for concreteness instead of taking for granted its objectiveness. Instead of attaching an objective meaning to an action as Weber proposed, consider that one can take the real meaning of the external behavior presented by its participants. One can, for Schütz, consider the history of the action in its various acts so that he can make his interpretation more concrete but never consider it

as the ultimate truth of what happened (pluperfect), because he will never know what really went on in the mind of the participants. To consider the history of an action does not mean to be arrested in the interpretation of our predecessors, but to consider all possible realms as such, like the contemporaries and successors as well as my fellow men that live in a direct relationship with me. One needs to do it for Schütz, because the meaning of the social world is itself conditioned by time (Schütz 1967, 220).

One needs to consider, that for Schütz the stream of history, more than being involved in anonymous events, is also made by genuine experience of other men, experience that occurs within the immediacy of individual streams of consciousness, and, still, one is immersed in this duality. The real meaning is an impossible task for social sciences, nevertheless, the social sciences do believe it is possible and fall into the illusion of considering the ideal person as a real, concrete person. As Schütz says:

“The tendency to look for a subjective meaning for everything in existence is so deeply rooted in the human mind, the search for the meaning of every object is so tied up with the idea that that object was once given meaning by some mind, that everything in the world can be interpreted as a product and therefore as evidence for what went on in the mind of God. Indeed, the whole universe can be regarded as the product of God, to whose creative act it bears witness” (Schütz 1967, 138).

Schütz presents, in his work, the way that the social sciences must consider its interpretative approaches concerning the social world. The social world cannot be egological, but involves others that grow older with me, beside me, before someone or even after someone will somehow delineate the world that he can know. Schütz left the problem open, because it is an open problem (Schütz 1967, 250) that social science must deal with – the objective-subjective problem. Schütz believes that Husserl will somehow solve this problem, and affirms that in part he had solved it in his *Cartesian Meditation*.

2. Waldenfels's contribution to the phenomenology of other

For Waldenfels, the pure *We-relationship* is too fixed in the subjectivity that is based on one-sided understanding (Waldenfels 1980, 215), and decreases the possibilities of the event occurring to one another. What *happens between us* happens first to the body that, simultaneously, responds to the demands without discriminating inside and outside. One cannot say that this movement is just passive, because responsiveness is acting, although primary without consciousness. One can say that this *passive/active* event that corresponds to *responsiveness* is due to the *otherness/aliennes* that comes from *elsewhere*. This event can break the traditional line of the determinism and the strict pretensions of the scientific objectivism. Waldenfels is not pretending to preach the indeterminism, or defending an irrational way of thinking, but to contemplate the possibilities that can emerge from the event that comes across. The way he proposes is crucial for the understanding of the ethical consequences for the phenomenon of inclusiveness. The event itself is inclusive, because of bringing all the possibilities together. That it remains inclusive, depends on the attitude towards it. In the *pure We-relationship* the *face-to-face relationships* do not remain open to the possibilities, but are arrested to the subjectivities. What *happens between us* can modify attitude. That explains why some experiences (religious, emotional and even behavioral) change attitude. One can really explain the why of attitudes, and, maybe, he is not interested in any explanations at all, because the *mystery* for some people does not need to be fulfilled with objective contents.

2.1. Otherness and its fissures

The *aliennes* / *otherness* must be understood to conform its different ways of using this word. Waldenfels illustrates that the equivalent in German would be *Fremd-heit* (Waldenfels 2007, 5). Primarily, *Fremd* means something which lies outside of one's own domain, in others words, what is placed outside or

inside, in-group or out-group. That would be the stranger, the foreigner who is placed there by relationships. The other way of considering *Fremd* is what belongs to others. It means the property that one possesses or does not. *Fremd* can also mean what strikes us as heterogeneous, which evokes another genus, generating feelings of astonishment or wonder. These three aspects of *alienness* can be addressed as aspects of *place*, *property*, and *manner* (Waldenfels 2007, 6). For Waldenfels, the alien is not just opposed to the same as a process of delimitation, but is a process that goes simultaneously as an inclusion (*Eingrenzung*) and an exclusion (*Ausgrenzung*) (Waldenfels 2007, 7) emerging from elsewhere. In the *Cartesian Meditations*, Husserl characterizes the experience of other as the “verifiable accessibility of what is originally inaccessible” (Husserl 1997, 144). The experience of other is accessible for someone because he is involved in such experiences, but, at the same time, it is not something determinable that can be deciphered in the first gaze, although it can bring new possibilities for the experience as a whole.

When Waldenfels says that the alien rises *elsewhere* he means that the alien does not simply emerge outside, yet can emerge in the selves through their experiences. One can say that the dwelling place of the *otherness* is in the self, living *elsewhere* through an *incarnate absence* (Waldenfels 2007, 8). The incarnation is celebrated by its accessibility and the absence for its original inaccessibility. So, one’s own and the other’s *otherness* represent dimensions that can be interwoven into experience. The first dimension is called by Waldenfels the *ecstatic alienness* (Waldenfels 2007, 10) to mean the *otherness* that can emerge in one’s own selves through a step outside ordinary life to get amusement, astonishment that drives someone to others possibilities of experiences. Secondly, Waldenfels appoints the *duplicative alienness* (Waldenfels 2007, 11) as well to show the *alter ego* that is not the object of gaze, but seizes and can transform someone into an object so that he can have the experience of being seen, an experience that cannot be avoided or grasped, because of the incarnate absence. A third dimension represents what is beyond the ordinary, or surpasses the established order. This dimension is

called *extraordinary alienness* (Waldenfels 2007, 13), for it steps outside the giving order. When this *otherness* is encountered in the threshold between this side and the other side of order, like mythical images, and the unformed that can drive us into an uncertainty about the own order, can bring also this order in its *status nascendi*, that may be called *liminal alienness*.

The barrier between *ownness* and *otherness* has been built in history over an attempt to appropriate and dominate the world. Together with a sense of individualism, mainly in western societies, one atomizes the world into individuals. Therefore, the society yields different forms of centrism (Waldenfels 2007, 14). The first is a kind of *egocentrism* that reduces the alien to the own, transforming the alien into an extension of oneself due to persuasions and oppressions. The second is a complementation, and it is called *logocentrism*, based on the logos as a set of common goals or rules that put the alien as nothing more than parts of a whole or cases of a rule (Waldenfels 2007, 15). *Egocentrism* and *logocentrism* bring with them other centrisms like *ethnocentrism* and *eurocentrism* that represent a kind of a collective centrism despising other groups or cultures.

This history of appropriation, for Waldenfels, is the cause of so many centrisms passing for a new process called *descentrism* of the individuals. The identity has been transferred to big programs like so many internet pages of relationships. The ego that appropriates is appropriated now, and he is dealing with a kind of displacement. Even the rationality, on this context, is dissipated into rationalities, into forms and into worlds of life. In this new process, the *otherness* doesn't disappear, yet becomes more evident because it is now artificialized in the new programs. The styles of relationships are changed from more *face-to-face relationships* into programs of relationships typified by computers. One can say that the *accessibility* is grasped more now in many ways, so that he can contact distant friends, be filled with so much information, open possibilities in term of jobs, business, but, at same time, the other is so inaccessible to one's affections and care. How can someone make it accessible without suppressing the *otherness* (Waldenfels 2007, 16)? Why do accessibilities sometimes bring

more inaccessibilities in so many ways? The answer is: keep the paradox as a possibility and not as a threat. Merleau-Ponty brings this idea in most of his works showing an open possibility embodied in relationships with others as a *compresence* (Merleau-Ponty 1964, 168-169). Merleau-Ponty gives a way to dissipate the barrier that one builds against the *otherness* in the history of appropriation and the history of having been appropriated. Attitude will consider the other as a possibility and not as a threat, in others words, the *otherness* is the key and not the locked door. For Merleau-Ponty, the paradox of xenology is not really a paradox, but the only possibility to experience the other.

2.2. Responding to other’s demand. Something happens between us

The *otherness*, for Waldenfels, conducts his thoughts not just by questioning or regulating the other, but, inspired by Merleau-Ponty, through the openness that the intersubjective relations can propitiate, to a new concept, different to the intentionality or regularity ones. The *otherness* will give to Waldenfels the possibility to consider the responsivities of relations – to ourselves, to the other, and to the world. As Waldenfels says: “Instead the alien as alien requires a responsive form of phenomenology that begins beyond challenges us and puts our own possibilities into question, even before we get involved in a questioning, in striving for knowledge, an in a will to know” (Waldenfels 2007, 25). Waldenfels will use, to develop a responsive phenomenology, two key concepts, called *demand* and *response*. Thus, he will analyze how someone responds to other’s demand. This response is not like an answer that fills a gap in questions that presuppose precise answers. This is more a source of response that represents necessity rather than moral judgments or objective prepositions. It is something that one cannot escape, because escape is already a way of responding existing in this world. The other’s *demand* comes from *elsewhere* so that when one responds to someone’s *demand*, it is an inevitable movement which throws to the *otherness*. Life considered as responsive is constituted diachronically, showing the

inescapable changes that the synchronic overview tries to capture.

Waldenfels calls attention for this time of response that arises *elsewhere*, in other words, the responsive time. It is not due to the anonymous one, but *to whom* something happens (Waldenfels 2007, 43-48). For example, one can consider in thoughts all the starving and abused children from the *favelas* in the big cities, even make donations to help somehow, but it is a completely different matter if these events of starving and abuse happen with someone (prayers are different when one sees faces). Even if the event appears to be inevitable at some case the experience of the event needs to be done anyway. It is not a matter of luck, but that something happens to someone. As Waldenfels says:

“Throughout this happening something becomes visible, audible, sensible, in such a way that it comes to our mind, strikes us, attracts or repels us and withdraws from our knowing and willing, without been ascribed to a subject who would function as the author or bearer of acts and actions” (Waldenfels 2007, 45).

At the moment of *what happens* (Waldenfels 2007, 48) (*Widerfahrnis*), Waldenfels explores an intermediary realm (*Zwischenreich*) in order to understand how something happens between one another. It can neither be reached by summarizing, nor unifying perspectives. The intermediary events (*Zwischenereignisse*) that always come from *elsewhere*, make it impossible to determine the position of a first or last event. One can call the – *what happens* the possible/impossible event, or simply the responsive event. Waldenfels puts it in these words: “[...] as a lived impossibility, im-possible measured on the possibilities which are available for me, for you and for us altogether” (Waldenfels 2007, 49). This deviation, caused by the event itself, raises a responsive movement, bringing all the possible/impossible experiences that happen between one another.

The responsive event makes a *split* (Waldenfels 2007, 75-81) in the self. One is affected (pathos), stimulated, surprised, violated in the static ego. The response appears

whether one wants or not, just because it depends neither on knowing, nor on willing, but depends on the body that comports the event of *what happens* as a whole. The event of *what happens between us* is marked in a responsive way due to its indetermination, incapability of imprisonment, that just happens to the body to whom consciousness belongs and to whom it find its concealment, its hideout. The event does not make only a split in the self; it makes a *double* (Waldenfels 2007, 81-85) in the self, characterized by the *alter ego* to whom one will be constituted. Therefore, in the event of *what happens between us*, one perceives oneself from *elsewhere*, so that the first and last word do not belong to someone, because even constitution is not one's possession. One sees oneself through the others eyes, and this means that he is interlaced with others. The event does not belong to consciousness, but to the body, for the body is always there before everything, and what affects, affects first of all the body – the *zero point*. The incorporeity implies that the own and the alien are entangled. Waldenfels says: "There are no ready-made individuals; rather there is only a process of individualization which presupposes certain anonymity and typically of a bodily self. What we feel, perceive, do or say is interwoven with what others feel, perceive, do or say" (Waldenfels 2007, 84). One is not the owner of his own house, the responsive movement bears to im-possible (possible/impossible) experience that makes profound scars in what someone truly is.

The understanding of what surrounds passes through the body. The space and time dimensions like above and below are connected with the upright position of humans that consider the earth as their ground. Before and behind is due to the position for what normally one thinks the front or the back of the body. Right and left emerge from one's hands – left hand, right hand. Nearness and distance is connected to the reach of the body, inside and outside to what we can or cannot see, like the interior and exterior parts of our bodies, the underneath and up part of the earth. Long and short periods of time are associated with the welfare of the body, especially when five minutes may cause a strong unpleasant feeling of malaise dealing with a boring conversation. These bodies' conceptions of

time and space easily apply to moral perspectives as well. For Waldenfels, the problem of *otherness* plays an important role in ethical conceptions, mainly in the way one excludes or includes the fellow man in the world in which someone lives. *What happens between us* can give the possibility to drive someone to a threshold that can break down the established order proposed for the history of human evolution, and, necessarily, this change will pass toward the body. *What happens* needs to reach the body to manifest its power. Here one can understand what Foucault means when he says that the power needs the body to manifest its power (Foucault 1979, 146). *What happens* happens to the body and comes from *elsewhere*. The responsive event is not something that starts in consciousness and is controlled by it, but comes as a possibility to the consciousness. That means that a gap emerges from the established order, changing it, due to its possibilities. *To whom* something happens is not a matter of choice, but the attitude toward what happens makes all the difference in the relation to the other. *What happens between us* in the responsive way is not considered in the Schütz's phenomenology of the *We-relationship*. For Schütz, we will deal with an eternal paradox of interpretation that will not make us acquainted completely of the other's mind. The lack of fissure in the *We-relationship* in Schütz does not leave space for the possibilities for *what happens between us*, in other words, the meaning is arrested into the subjectivity, lost somewhere. Waldenfels will not say that the meaning in its integrality can be found, but he will open ways which leads to a threshold *where/elsewhere* one will find fissures, new possibilities that first penetrate the body and after can take place in attitude towards the other.

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