



Alfred Schütz and George Shackle: Two Views of Choice*

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Abstract. Within the Austrian school of economics, Ludwig Lachmann identified Alfred Schütz and George Shackle as master “subjectivists.” Subjectivists trace aggregate economic phenomena back to the subjective thoughts and expectations of individuals. Schütz was a member of the “Mises Circle” of Austrian economists. Shackle was a student of the Austrian economist F.A. Hayek, but a follower of Hayek’s great rival, John Maynard Keynes. Austrians respect both figures as important subjectivists who offered valuable accounts of the role of uncertainty in human action. The paper serves two purposes. First, it is a useful primer on the distinct theories of Schütz and Shackle. Second, it draws attention to the problem of change and novelty in the work of Schütz and Shackle. Schütz underemphasized the role of novelty in society. Shackle, by contrast, exaggerated the role of novelty in choice. A middle ground position is defended.

JEL Classification: D8, B4, B5

The sun is new every day

Heraclitus

I. Introduction

Each day the sun rises in the east, crosses the sky, and sets in the west. This cycle is a paradigm of regularity. And it is a paradigm of acting man’s knowledge. The knowledge of the philosopher, the scientist, or the mystic may depend less on regularity than on other things, but the everyday knowledge of acting man depends first on regularity.

But time marches on and with time comes change. Every choice situation presents acting man with something new. His knowledge is incomplete. All things bear the aspect of novelty. How does this ignorance affect acting man?

Two answers suggest themselves, both denials. We may deny either the reality of change or the reliability of knowledge. G. L. S. Shackle gives the second answer. We “cannot claim knowledge so long as we acknowledge Novelty” (1972:26). In at least some of his

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writings, Alfred Schütz seems to offer the first answer, namely, to deny the reality of change. Schütz does acknowledge that all choices involve some element of novelty. “Yet exactly those features which make them unique and irretrievable in the strict sense are—to my common-sense thinking—eliminated as being irrelevant for my purpose at hand” (Schütz 1954:21).

In this paper I will defend a middle-ground position. Novelty matters, but only so much. In staking out this middle ground I will have occasion to find fault with the analyses of both Schütz and Shackle. Both thinkers recognize the reality of novelty and of typicality. Schütz emphasizes typicality and downplays novelty. Shackle emphasizes novelty and downplays typicality. But the differences between them are not only differences of emphasis. Schütz views novelty as inessential to choice; Shackle views all choice as “originative.” Schütz studied closely the way meanings actually unfold in our minds and based his analysis on that. Shackle considered certain philosophical antinomies of choice and based his analysis on that. While both thinkers are recognizably subjectivists, they offer distinct varieties of subjectivism.¹ Thus, the middle-ground position I favor is not quite that of either thinker.²

The differences between Schütz and Shackle may have something to do with their different positions respecting neoclassical economics.³ Schütz was a part of the Austrian school of the 1930s. (See Prendergast 1986.) At that time, the Austrians thought of themselves as part of the neoclassical school of economics. Shackle, by contrast, followed John Maynard Keynes quite closely and considered himself opposed to neoclassical economics. Neoclassical economics itself changed in this period. In 1932, Schütz wrote his most important book, *The Phenomenology of the Social World*. At that time neoclassical economics included process analysis. It was better able to account for change and novelty. By the time Shackle was writing, after World War Two, neoclassical economics had become rigidly mathematical and unable to account for change and novelty. In this paper, however, I will not pursue this point. I will only compare their positions.

A middle ground position is possible because all things appear to acting man in a dual aspect. They are familiar and new, typical and novel. It is precisely because the things relevant to acting man’s purpose at hand are known in their typicality that choice is possible. It is precisely because these things are known only in their typicality that choice is real. (“Real” means problematic.) Acting man knows that he does not know what the morrow will bring, but he also knows the sun will rise in the morning. He knows the sun is new every day.

II. Schütz

Schütz was concerned with the knowledge people employ in their everyday action. He found that this knowledge is ideal-typical. We exist in an “intersubjective world.” We can act in this world because we interpret it. Our interpretations arise from experiences, “our own or those handed down to us by parents or teachers” (1954:7). These direct and indirect experiences give us a “scheme of reference” in the form of our “knowledge at hand” (1954:7).

The “stock of knowledge at hand” with which we interpret the world tells us that the world is full of “more or less well circumscribed objects” having “more or less definite qualities” (1954:8). Objects resist us and may be acted upon. These objects, Schütz tells

us are not perfectly self-contained and “insulated.” They appear to us “from the outset,” as existing “within a horizon of familiarity and pre-acquaintanceship” given by the knowledge currently “taken for granted until further notice” (1954:8).

In everyday action, some knowledge is taken for granted at any time. This taken-for-granted knowledge is a collection of “pre-experiences” of the world. These “unquestioned pre-experiences” are not themselves real experiences. They are “from the outset, at hand as *typical*” (1954:8). They come “carrying open horizons of anticipated similar experiences” (1954:8). Our experience of “the outer world” is not that of a disjointed collection of unrelated “sense-contents.”⁴ Through the stock of knowledge at hand, we experience the world as a more or less structured whole containing “mountains,” “trees,” “animals,” “fellow-men,” and so on (1954:8).⁵

We know the world in its typicality. We know it as a system of types: typical objects, typical relationships among typical objects, typical problems and typical solutions to these typical problems (Schütz 1954:13–14). Even the most familiar objects are known only in their typicality. Schütz calls these types “typifications.”⁶

I might think about my “Barlow” pocketknife, currently out of view. In doing so I form a typification of its shape, of the rusted surface of its blades, and the feel of it in my hand. Withdrawing it from my pocket, I now confront it in a new setting, in this light, at this moment, feeling just the way I do right now. The shape, the rusted surface of the blades, and the feel of it in my hands are—right now in the midst of my direct experiencing of them—in some measure foreign to my typifications of them. This is because all lived experiences “are as such unique and irretrievable events” (Schütz 1954:20). My typification of my pocketknife is a constellation of anticipations, a pre-experiencing “carrying open horizons of anticipated similar experiences.” It is a picture, not the real thing.

A typification is more or less empty of particulars. Otherwise it would not be a typification, but a lived experience. The particulars of lived experience will be “filled in” when the anticipated and typified event is “actualized” in experience (Schütz 1959:286).

Typifications fall around us in concentric rings, those near us are highly specific, and those farther away are more general, more empty. Thus, I have the typifications “my Barlow knife,” “pocket knife,” “knife,” “cutting instrument,” “tool,” “human artifact,” and “object of the external world.” It is the same with the typifications we have of other people.

If I think of an absent friend, I form a typification “of his personality and behaviour based on my past experiences” of him (1954:17). If I mail a letter, I form a typification of “unknown people called postmen” whose actions are “not quite intelligible to me” (1954:17). But I think they will act in typical patterns that typically result in the letter arriving more or less promptly. “I understand ‘Why France fears the rearmament of Germany’” even if I never met a Frenchman or German (1954:17). I follow the rules of English grammar “in order to make myself understandable” (1954:17). At the highest levels of abstraction, I see in any “artifact or utensil” a reference to its producer even if he is, for me, only a perfectly anonymous “fellow-man” who produced the thing for other perfectly anonymous “fellow-men” to use in ways and for ends unknown to me (1954:17).

Before moving from Schütz’s analysis of common-sense knowledge to his analysis of the everyday choosing based on this knowledge, three clarifying remarks may be in order.

First, common-sense knowledge is not ‘objective,’ but subjective. There is no presumption that this knowledge is ‘true,’ ‘scientific,’ or even internally consistent. It may not even be particularly well suited to the actor’s purpose. (Bleeding with leeches is not a very good cure for most diseases.) Subjective knowledge is not fully clear and distinct. Everyday knowledge is a mixed bag of typifications often jumbled together “in a very incoherent and confused state” (Schütz 1943:72). Some pieces are clear and distinct bits of knowledge. Others are vague. The linkages between the several parts of everyday knowledge are not well ordered or understood. “There are everywhere gaps, intermissions, discontinuities” (1943:73).

Second, our knowledge is always in flux (1959:284). The sheer rolling-on of lived experience modifies, enlarges and enriches our knowledge.

Finally, and this will be important later, our knowledge is largely pre-given. Each of us “was already born into a social cosmos” (1943:70). The typification “my pocket knife” is not mine and mine alone. It is uniquely my own only insofar as it differs from the typification “anyone’s pocket knife.” If we are in the same “in-group,” then we share the typification “anyone’s pocket knife” even if we have never met. The knowledge that is mine alone has its place within the (generally more general) knowledge shared by the members of my “in-group.” Similarly, my knowledge, even those parts that are mine alone, is pre-given at the “moment” of choice.⁷ As we will see, in emphasizing the pre-giveness of everyday knowledge, Schütz ends up neglecting the role of novelty and creativity in everyday action.

Having looked at common-sense knowledge, we may now study Schütz’s analysis of the everyday action based on it. Acting man chooses. The word “choose” differentiates “conduct” from “action.” It distinguishes the mere doing of something, such as a habit or routine, from the realization of a plan, a “project.”

Choosing for Schütz is a process of deliberation. Schütz often quoted Dewey’s remark that deliberation is “a dramatic rehearsal in imagination of various competing possible lines of action. . . . It is an experiment in making various combinations of selected elements of habits and impulses to see what the resultant action would be like if it were entered upon” (quoted in Schütz 1951:68). Schütz calls this rehearsing “projecting.” A project is a plan, a potential course of action, which is imagined as bringing about a certain state of affairs.

A crucial feature of Schütz treatment of “projecting” is its temporal structure. According to Schütz, “it is not the ongoing process of action, but the phantasied act as having been accomplished which is the starting point of all projecting” (1954:20). Imagining the end of action to have been already achieved is “thinking in the future perfect tense” (1954:20). According to Schütz, in all cases of deliberative choice, the chooser imagines ends before he considers means.

According to Schütz, we have available to us at any time an array of typifications that might be applied to the situation in which we find ourselves. When we adopt an end for action, we pick up one of these typifications (Schütz and Luckmann 1973:215–223). We employ, Schütz argues, the “knowledge at hand at the time of projecting” (1954:20). This knowledge, in turn, emerges from the experience of past actions. “Consequently, all projecting involves the idealization of ‘I-can-do-it-again,’ i.e., the assumption that I may under typically similar circumstances act in a way typically similar to that in which I acted before in order to bring about a typically similar state of affairs” (1954:20).

Schütz's analysis seems to give inadequate attention to an aspect of action much celebrated in Shackle's writings. Choice is always more or less creative. In Schütz's analysis, both the end of action adopted and the means chosen are already "typically familiar" to the chooser. Yes, deliberation is necessary, acting man must conceive of the various possible states of affairs (thought of in the future perfect tense) which he might seek to bring about, he must more or less clearly apprehend his current circumstances, and he must somehow find actions (which he imagines to be) suited to bring about the various states of affairs he has in mind. But the states of affairs he has in mind will be nothing new to him, they will be "typically similar" to ones he has brought about in the past, and his possible actions are all "typically similar" to ones he has performed in the past under "typically similar" circumstances. In this sense, for the acting man of Schütz's analysis, there is nothing new under the sun.

There is something unsatisfactory about Schütz's treatment of the typical elements of choice. Choice is problematic. If the world is familiar, how can choice be difficult, anxiety ridden, and painful? Can I never do something new and different? My current circumstances are always unique, in some degree novel. Is this newness never important? On these points, Schütz is unclear. He seems to claim that insofar as things are novel, acting man is not interested in them; he cares only for their typical features. The following passage from Schütz work is an example.

My knowledge at hand at the time of projecting must, strictly speaking, be different from my knowledge at hand after having performed the projected act. . . . Thus, the 'repeated' action will be something else than a mere re-performance. The first action A' started within a set of circumstances C' and indeed brought about the state of affairs S'; the repeated action A'' starts in a set of circumstances C'' and is expected to bring about the state of affairs S''. By necessity C'' will differ from C' because the experience that A' succeeded in bringing about S' belongs to my stock of knowledge, which is an element of C'', whereas to my stock of knowledge, which was an element of C', belonged merely the empty anticipation that this would be the case. Similarly, S'' will differ from S' as A'' will from A'. This is so because all the terms—C', C'', A', A'', S', S''—are as such unique and irretrievable events. Yet *exactly those features which make them unique and irretrievable in the strict sense are—to my common-sense thinking—eliminated as being irrelevant* for my purpose at hand. When making the idealization of "I-can-do-it-again" I am merely interested in the typicality of A, C and S, all of them without primes. The construction consists, figuratively speaking, in the suppression of the primes as being irrelevant, and this, incidentally, is characteristic of typifications of all kinds. (1954:20–21, emphasis added)

Note how knowledge changes. After having performed the act my knowledge will be different. As time marches on, my knowledge grows and changes, but in the midst of choosing I am indifferent to the ways in which the future will differ from the past.

Schütz recognized that unique events occur. He recognized that our expectations of the future do not refer to "future occurrences in their uniqueness," but only in their typicality. For Schütz, "because of their very typicality our anticipations are necessarily more or less

empty.” Thus, strictly speaking, “whatever occurs could not have been expected.” But in everyday life, he imagined, we are generally “interested merely in the typicality of the future events” (1959:286–287). Thus, while Schütz recognized that all anticipations “carry with them open horizons that may or may not be fulfilled when the anticipated event occurs in its uniqueness” (1959:287), he explicitly claimed that “exactly those features which make them unique and irretrievable in the strict sense are—to my common-sense thinking—eliminated as being irrelevant for my purpose at hand” (1954:21). Thus, Schütz greatly limits the role of novelty in everyday choice. He concedes that unique events occur, but it is a grudging concession from which, he imagines, nothing really follows.

Schütz’s picture of the common-sense actor “suppressing the primes” may remind the economist of the dullards of Schumpeter’s circular flow. They carry on in the old familiar grooves. But sometimes entrepreneurs innovate. Sometimes the action, as it were, is in the primes. I will return to this point in the section four.

III. Shackle

Shackle’s writings on choice are a kind of philosophical analysis of choice as such. Shackle is trying to understand what might be called the real meaning of choice. And this real meaning has much to do with novelty and creativity.⁸

In Shackle’s theory of choice, the options between which the chooser chooses are created by him. He invents them. In this sense choice is “originative.” These “choosables” have a kind of two-fold essence. First, they are “compatible so far as the chooser can judge it with the posture and nature of the field” of choice. Second, because they spring from the creative brow of the chooser, their numbers may be indefinitely increased. The list of “choosables” is “incomplete and uncompleteable.”

Choice is motivated, in Shackle’s theory, by the desire to get a “good state of mind.” Since choice is forward-looking, this desire may equally be called a desire to get a “good state of imagination.” The chooser imagines the different possible consequence of his choice. Decision makers know that they do not know for sure what will follow from their choices. They consider various “imagined sequels to choice” as more or less possible. The list of possible sequels is as long as the imagination of the chooser, but he manages to reduce this plurality to two “focus outcomes” which summarize the pros and cons of each option standing to choice.⁹

When we choose, we imagine the different consequences of the different actions we might take. For each action, we focus on a good and bad pair that summarizes the overall pluses and minuses associated with it. Running over as many such pairs as we can imagine, we elect the one that gives us the best “state of imagination,” the one we are most content to look forward to. This view of choice implies that history is created by and originates in human imagination.

Shackle’s view of choice is based, in part at least, on his insight into a paradox concerning the very meaning of the word. If choice is “real,” it must be possible to change the world by freely chosen actions. The future must be open. On the other hand, if the future is completely open and anything can happen, no chosen action could be effective. In this case, too, choice would not be “real.” For choice to be real, the future must be changeable within limits.

Shackle sees (real) choice as bringing something new into the world. “In the extreme of its possible meanings,” Shackle argues, “the word *origin* brings thought to a stop” (1979:19). Choice is a “beginning.” It is creation *ex nihilo*, an “origin.” Otherwise it is an illusion.

If we elect to suppose that each present is rigidly necessitated in every detail by its antecedent present; if, that is, we suppose the course of history from eternity to eternity to be a picture completely painted at some unique and once-and-for-all creation of the world; then choice is the empty name of a delusion of human consciousness. (1979:20).

The future is not contained in the past. But the past puts some limits to what the future may bring. Otherwise, choice would be just as illusory as it seems under the hypothesis of determinism. “If each present leaves its successor wholly unconstrained, so that any state of the world can be followed by any other state; then ‘choice’ is evidently powerless” (1979:20). History is woven out of human choices and “The anarchy of Nature is as fatal as the determinacy of Nature to the notion of choice as the source of history” (1979:20). Choice shifts the bounds of the possible. It removes certain “histories-to-come” from the realm of the possible and replaces them with other “histories-to-come.”

I believe we should take Shackle’s analysis seriously. Choice, Shackle has taught us, is originative. It is the infusion of something new, something created by the chooser, into the world. It makes some things possible and others impossible. At least some choices must be creative acts whose effect is to shift the bounds of the possible.

I believe Shackle’s view of choice is an important one; it should influence our thinking. But it is imperfect. At least two imperfections matter. First, Shackle seems to invert the temporal order of events. He seems to have individuals *first* thinking up actions and *then* imagining their consequences. But Schütz was right to argue that the purpose of an action is imagined before the action taken to realize this purpose. Second, Shackle talks about creative acts without realizing that all creative acts occur within the context of some “typifications” emerging from the life-world. He therefore pays inadequate attention to the fact that all “originative” choices occur within the horizons of the typically familiar. I will discuss each of these imperfections in order.

In using the term “history-to-come” Shackle seems to have the chooser thinking in the future perfect tense. But in the end, it seems not. For Shackle, there is no limit to the number of “distinct histories-to-come” that the “chooser can imagine as possible sequels of an elected scheme of commitment to personal action” (Shackle 1979:23–24). The imagined consequence of any “scheme . . . of personal action” is an “incomplete and uncompletable” skein of possibilities. To think in the future perfect tense is to first conceive the results and then look to the doing. Shackle seems to have the chooser first conceive of the doing and then look to the results. Not only do I find this to be an error, but also I am unable to imagine any scheme of personal action without first imagining its intended consequences.

I have said that Shackle “seems” to reverse the order of things by having the action conceived before its consequences. I use the word “seems” for a reason. I am unaware of any evidence that Shackle ever considered the temporal sequence involved in imagining the doing and imagining the consequences. I suspect that he never seriously considered the issue. One could not, therefore, say that Shackle “claims” or “avers” that we think of actions

first and consequences second. But he gives no sign of recognizing the sense in which we must think first of consequences and only secondly of the actions needed to get us there.

One might object that we do not think exclusively in the future perfect tense; we tack back and forth between imagining an action and imagining its possible sequels. In fact, we do not always tack between these poles. Sometimes we just go. But in our more deliberative choices we do indeed iterate between imagined action and imagined sequels. But this iteration must always begin with an imagined end of action. The end defines the act; it thus precedes the act in our imagination. When we iterate between imagined action and the imagined possible sequels to that action, the imagined action is always defined by its intended end. To imagine the action I must imagine the intended consequence first. If I try to imagine an action without first imagining its intended end, I founder. At best I can imagine arbitrary bodily movements. Schütz was right, “it is not the ongoing process of action, but the phantasied act as having been accomplished which is the starting point of all projecting” (1954:20). Shackle nowhere recognizes this temporal structure of “projecting.”

The second imperfection in Shackle’s thought with which I will occupy myself in this essay concerns the nature of our knowledge of the world. According to Shackle, we may think of “each moment as the child of its predecessor in the decision-maker’s mind” (Shackle 1961:38). This way of thinking of things may suggest the sort of continuity of typifications that Schütz had in mind. But Shackle claims that the connecting link between the child and the parent is “the *formal* aspect of knowledge of the past.” And he means by this something touching, in his own words, “the mere surface of things” (1961:39). The “formal aspect” of our knowledge of things past consists in the “dates of the deaths of kings, the wording of parliamentary enactments, the figures of elections, the details of balance sheets,” and such like (1961:39). None of this gets at the heart of past events. “The meaning which is found in them, the emotional colour that they wear, what they stand for in imagined history are private to the individual mind” (1961:39).

The picture of our common-sense knowledge that we get from George Shackle is very different indeed from the one we get from Alfred Schütz. In Shackle’s picture there are no typifications “carrying open horizons of anticipated similar experiences.” There is a fundamental breach between past and future. Time is “a forceps which grips us between the past which is unchoosable and the future which is unknowable” (1972:xvi).

In Shackle’s theory, the ordering of events into schemes of more and less possible outcomes of different actions occurs without the aid of intersubjectively valid typifications handed down through social practice. But then he must impute these ordering schemes to the individual genius of each choosing person. The ordering scheme used to guide choice “has the quality of a *beginning* in our extreme sense, the new existence of something not ascribable to antecedents” (1979:23). This false imputation of each of the ordering schemes guiding choice to the individual genius of the chooser creates an exaggerated picture of the novelty attendant upon any choice.

IV. The Middle Ground

In reviewing the theories of Schütz and Shackle, I have criticized them both. Schütz has downplayed the role of novelty in everyday choosing, Shackle has exaggerated it. Shackle

also seems to have reversed the order of events by imagining that we think up actions before considering what the consequences might be. This error tends to further exaggerate the “originative” nature of choice. I prefer the middle ground.

Even in everyday actions we are fully aware of the novelty brought by time’s passing and in some degree we orient our actions to this very novelty. We interpret this novelty, however, as occurring within the relatively fixed framework of the typifications of everyday knowledge. As Schütz has taught us, we have pre-experienced the world, but only in its typical aspects. Everyday action is often concerned with the ways in which the future will differ from the past. Far from suppressing the primes, in Schütz’s metaphor, we are often interested precisely in the particulars that distinguish now from then. We are often vitally concerned with the ways in which this day’s sun is new.

In the market economy there is a group of people whose daily routine involves trying to determine in just what way tomorrow’s sun will be new. These people are speculators. Speculators judge the economic value of capital combinations, both existing and hypothetical. On the basis of these judgments they buy and sell stocks, re-group capitals, borrow and lend. The speculator’s knowledge is an intricate complex of many specific facts. But it is precisely to see beyond these and determine how the future will differ from the past that is the speculator’s job. The speculator uses his knowledge of the typical in order to anticipate the atypical.

Consider a banker who must decide whether or not to grant a business loan to an applicant. The banker engages in many typical activities. He interviews the applicant to judge, perhaps, his character. (Does he have a firm handshake? Can he look you in the eye?) He studies the applicant’s credit history to see if he is a good risk. He visits the applicant’s shop to see if he “runs a tight ship.” These are typically familiar actions taken in order to reach typically familiar results. From his position within these “horizons of familiarity,” the banker must imagine two different “skeins” of “histories-to-come,” one made “epistemically possible” by saying “yes” and the other made “epistemically possible” by saying “no.” His judgment of the plausibility of each potential “history-to-come” will be based only in part on his experiences with borrowers “typically similar” to the current applicant. Each of these potential histories, while typically similar to the histories of other business ventures with which the banker is familiar, will be filled with novel elements suggested by the idiosyncrasies of the applicant’s product, the unique aspects of his personality, and the peculiarities of current affairs.

This view of the speculator is not perfectly consistent with either Shackle’s or Schütz’s view of choice. Shackle’s view does not recognize that the typifications of everyday knowledge provide “horizons of familiarity” that enable the chooser to formulate intelligent guesses about how the future will differ from the past. Schütz’s view denies that the everyday actor ever wishes to formulate such guesses.

Economists should be interested in the middle ground position I have outlined. This middle ground view suggests that our ability to respond appropriately to changes and novel events may depend in some way on our ability to rely on the typifications of everyday knowledge. There may be something like an optimal rate of obsolescence for everyday knowledge. If different institutional frameworks, different “choices of constitutional constraint” if you will, have different effects on the rate of obsolescence of everyday knowledge, then we

want to consider those effects when prescribing policy. There are epistemic effects of the choice of policy regime.¹⁰

Notes

1. Butos and I (1997) compare Keynes and Hayek as another two “varieties of subjectivism.” In another paper, I give a very brief overview of the “seven hills of subjectivism,” in which I divide subjectivist economists into seven basic varieties (Koppl 1994:291). I have also compared Mises and Hayek (Koppl 1998) and Mises and Schütz (Koppl 1997). I believe further work distinguishing the varieties of subjectivism would benefit Austrian economics.
2. My middle-ground position fits Schütz better than Shackle. It is probably best viewed as a modification of Schütz’s view. The modification consists in importing some of Shackle’s concern with novelty. I borrow the term “middle ground” from Garrison (1982).
3. I thank an anonymous referee for making this point.
4. The term “sense-contents” comes from Ayers (1952).
5. In this paper I will stick to acting man and his “stock of knowledge at hand.” I will not discuss the “constitution” of “typifications” from the flow of “pre-predicative” experience. On the role of reflection and remembrance in constituting meanings (see Schütz 1932:45–53).
6. Typifications are the ideal types of everyday action. Ideal types are the typifications of scientific reason. A typification differs from an ideal type only because it need not meet the scientific standards of coherence and adequacy-to-purpose required of ideal types.
7. In Schütz’s view of choice, there is no “moment” of choice. Choosing is a process that unrolls through inner-time. See Schütz (1951).
8. In a paper Shackle has called “definitive in regard to my work,” Stephen Littlechild (1979) has summarized Shackle’s theory of choice. The following three paragraphs draw very heavily on Littlechild’s exposition.
9. In the simplest case, you get focus outcomes by taking the product of a measure of “possibility” on the one hand and a value function on the other. The focus outcomes are the highest and lowest of these products. Shackle argues that we focus our attention as choosers on these two outcomes. In the more general case, Shackle uses a function whose two arguments are potential surprise (possibility) on the one hand and gain or loss on the other hand. See Shackle (1949).
10. For a discussion, see Butos and Koppl (1993, 1999).

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