

**Znaniecki and Husserl on Cultural Reality and Studies of This Reality:  
An Onto-Epistemological Interpretation of the Humanistic Coefficient**

ABSTRACT. The aim of this paper is dual: first it is to show the complementarity of Znaniecki's and Husserl's approaches to the social sciences as well as the similarity between their interpretations of the situation of the modern social sciences, and, secondly, (which is a critical step) it is to mark the limitations of such approaches to the social sciences. Both Znaniecki and Husserl investigate the crisis of culture as a crucial feature of contemporary civilization and they both see the origin of this crisis in intellectual complications of the Western human being's modern self-knowledge. Consequently, the two ideas of the crisis of culture lead to similar views on science in general. Moreover, one can find similarly "negative traits", i.e. anxiety about an ontological conceptualization, in Znaniecki's and Husserl's studies. And this anxiety constitutes a limitation of the research they pursue. Far from sharing this anxiety, we opt for recognizing the need for ontology in the area of social studies. This need stems from human beings' dual approach to themselves, i.e. as the subject and, at the same

time, object of an action, interpretation and self-investigation. Therefore, by elaborating such concepts as the “humanistic coefficient” (Znanięcki) and *Lebenswelt* (Husserl), we find onto-epistemology to be the basis of social science. Such an “epistemocentric” perspective represents a challenge. In order to meet this challenge we propose a non-Cartesian onto-epistemology as an area of the contemporary conceptualization of the background to the social sciences.

KEY WORDS: Znanięcki, Husserl, humanistic coefficient, cultural reality, social onto-epistemology, human sciences

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