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Science as Cultural Activity

For me as physician-researcher and philosopher of science, Flusser's work is important because he is one of the few proponents, and among these arguably the most radical one, of the view that science is a creative field of human endeavor. He writes about science not just as a cultural *phenomenon*, but as a cultural *activity*.

Flusser sees modern science as a dynamic and dialectical process that "observes through theory and theorizes through observation" (Flusser 1982:2). For him, science is, together with philosophy, religion, and art, one of "the methods by which the spirit tries to penetrate into reality through appearances and discover the truth" (Flusser 2018: 2). This penetrating uncovering is not the same as what modern scientists consider their activity to be, namely first and foremost the generation of objective new knowledge.

Instead, Flusser thinks that the *spirit* does the penetrating work, not the intellect. This view broadens the possibilities of what is to be discovered and widens the horizon for what may be novel definitions of truth. Flusser's holistic approach to science, and to philosophy, religion and art, requires our tolerance and patience, as well as a general openness for the interdisciplinary conversation that slowly begins to flourish in some corners of academia.

"Overcoming the divorce between science and modern art is not just an epistemological and aesthetic engagement, but an engagement for a new society." (Flusser 1982: 4). Indeed, Flusser's work deserves a spot front and center in this developing discourse.

References

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<http://www.flusserstudies.net/sites/www.flusserstudies.net/files/media/attachments/dammann-flusser-on-science.pdf>