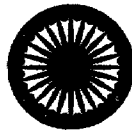


# Consciousness, Society and Values

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## CHAPTER 8

# Consciousness and Society: In Defence of a Phenomenological Approach to Social Reality

KOSHY THARAKAN

With the advent of Postmodernism, the recent discussions in Continental thought has called into question the philosophy of the Subject, particularly the Cartesian “cogito” and the related method of reflection. As a matter of fact, the questioning of the reflective subject began with the Existentialists. One need only to recall how Kierkegaard inverts the Cartesian dictum “cogito ergo sum” to demonstrate the primacy of existence over consciousness. One of the important ramifications of these questioning of the reflective subject is to do with the phenomenological doctrine of intentionality of consciousness. Recently, David Carr, himself a phenomenologist, has advanced a serious objection to the phenomenological approach to social reality. In what follows, I will be attempting a defence of phenomenology against criticisms like Carr’s.

According to Carr, phenomenology is incapable of forging an adequate understanding of the social as the cornerstone of phenomenological philosophy, namely the doctrine of intentionality of consciousness, is a response to the problematic relation between human experience and nature. Hence, employing it in the sphere of social relations is a case of misapplication of the principle.<sup>1</sup> According to Carr the notion of intentionality is purported to substitute for the notion of causality. The causal investigation resulted

in naturalizing the human subject, reducing 'Man' to the status of an effect of the vast causal order. He points out that such causal understanding of the intentional object of a thought resulted in the Cartesian problem of proving the existence and nature of the external world. Further, it is susceptible to the Humean scepticism as the causal relation is an external relation and thus is contingent. Thus, any attempt to draw inferences from our ideas to their origin in causal terms, to a world that causes the ideas is open to all sceptical doubts. However, Hume's sceptical solution to the sceptical problem exhorts us to proceed with the causal investigations of the world irrespective of the fact that we are not sure of the universality and necessity of the causal orders. Now, Carr points out that this further complicates the problem: "... given the assumption of the universality of the causal order, all being must belong to that order, including mental being. The contents of the mind must be considered entities or events which are related to the rest of nature according to causal principles."<sup>2</sup> It is a short step from here to reduce the mental into the physical. Thus, the principle of causality converts the human sciences into a naturalistic inquiry.

\* Carr rightly characterizes Husserl's intentionality thesis as a response to this situation. It removes the sceptical, as well as the solipsistic problem, by showing that human experience refers to something beyond itself as consciousness is always consciousness of something. That is to say that intentional relation being a direct relation, we can assure ourselves that our knowledge is really about the object and not merely about the contents of our mind. As Carr shows, more importantly, the doctrine of intentionality liberates us at once from the very natural order with which it puts us in direct contact because of its peculiar relation of "consciousness of"—an important feature of consciousness which has no place in the natural physical world.

Thus Carr maintains that intentionality is professed as a solution to the problem we have with the natural world. He

says that "...intentional approach is essentially designed to deal with our relation to nature"<sup>3</sup> and as such it cannot be gainfully used when we have to describe the problem of intersubjectivity, the kernel of social reality. This is so because the approach of intentionality is a reflective procedure in which one examines one's own experience. Thus, by reflecting on my experience and my world, I constitute the meaning of an alter ego. This way, "the other" is treated as a phenomenon, a *cogitatum*. Carr's contention is that this approach cannot do justice to "...the pervasiveness and priority of our social being and the *apriori* character of our relation to others."<sup>4</sup> An important consequence of reflective analysis is that the other person is treated as a phenomenon from the point of view of the phenomenologist and not in the image "the other" has of himself/herself. It is from the perspective of the reflecting ego that one grasps "the other", the other as an object of knowledge.

Here we may recall that Husserl's objective was to examine the origin of the "concept" of alter ego, and not to prove the existence of others. As Carr himself points out, Schutz has understood Husserl in this way and proceeded to reject the move to prove the existence of others, as it is impossible to phenomenologically constitute the other. Accordingly, Schutz proceeds from the "social world", which is primordial, in order to explicate the phenomenological structures of the social world. Now, Carr's main criticism of Schutz is that the latter always emphasizes the "understanding" relation, a relation in which there is no opacity or conflict, but only "co-operation". This is certainly a valid criticism of Schutz's phenomenology of the social world. Nevertheless, one wonders whether it should be taken as a limitation of the phenomenological approach as such. One need not begin with such "understanding" as the basis of society and consequently the problem of "conflicts" can be taken up phenomenologically. If one keeps in mind the distinction between "society" and the "science of society", the "understanding relation" may be viewed as a prelude to the

science of society. It is of course true that Schutz has emphasized "*verstehen*" as an experiential form of reality rather than an epistemological or a methodological problem peculiar to the Social Sciences. Nevertheless, as Schutz points out, the experiential form of reality as "...the common-sense knowledge of everyday life is the unquestioned but *always questionable* background within which inquiry starts and within which alone it can be carried out." (emphasis added)<sup>5</sup> Thus a phenomenologist need not restrict himself to the "understanding" that facilitates only co-operation and no conflicts. He can always question that understanding if need be. In other words, if Husserlian phenomenology is a "phenomenology of respect", as Mohanty calls it, it need not be taken as rejecting conflicts. The phenomenology of respect "... is methodologically committed to a respect for the given and to undertaking only such reflective analysis as is not repugnant to and is implied in the sense of the given, or rather, in the given as a unity of meaning. It does not judge but seeks to understand."<sup>6</sup> Thus, if conflicts are the real characterization of our relation with others, the phenomenology of respect would be able to bring to the fore the sense of such conflicts.

Carr's main criticism of "the phenomenology of respect" seems to be that in such an approach, "... the emphasis is on the sameness rather than the otherness of the other."<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, according to Carr, only by recognizing "the other" as an "other", as an antagonist, can we form a community. He says, "...only with an other who is recognized as an antagonist can I form a genuine community by overcoming the antagonism in a common project. And this means surpassing the face-to-face relationship toward an action or experience whose proper subject is the *we*."<sup>8</sup> In such a "we relation" there is no subject—object dichotomy. My relation with the other is one of participation and not that of a subject to an object. But in Schutz, Carr points out that, the relation is very much a subject-object relationship in which "...the object happens to be another subject..."<sup>9</sup>

According to Carr, this is the outcome of the doctrine of intentionality, a concept that has influenced thinkers like Schutz and Merleau-Ponty who, even while abandoning transcendental phenomenology in favour of an existential phenomenology, still attempt to build the *science* of society, in which the other has to be an "object".

Now, we may point out that Carr's worry is misplaced in the context of phenomenological philosophy of social sciences. As a social scientific approach, it has to be definitely a science, and cannot remain contended with witnessing the ongoing flux of social relations. It has to objectify its data, its phenomena, like any other science. But the advantage of a phenomenological approach precisely lies in that it does not reduce the "object" as a fact (*Sachen*) having its own reality, unconnected to the subject. The phenomenological perspective is to be distinguished from the objectivist's attitude in the naturalistic stance—an attitude exemplified *par excellence* in Positivism. The objectivist seems to forget that transcendental subjectivity which reveals the meaning of the relationships in the life-world is not subjectivity within the world. Thus, a proper phenomenological perspective attests to the claim that "...the life-world does not comprehend what its achievement is and what this achievement makes possible.... [T]he comprehension of structures and the understanding of constitution is not just a simple knowing of intentional acts or experiences that runs along with such acts, but is something that can be disclosed only through a *post-eventum* regressive reflective analysis and with the aid of most diverse clues."<sup>10</sup> What is important in the phenomenological approach is the "reflections" on the natural attitude and not what goes on in the natural attitude. In other words, the relationships in the life-world can be thematized only at the level of reflection. Carr's own prescription to recognize the "other" as an "other" by "surpassing the face-to-face relationship toward an action or experience whose proper subject is we", seem to be deeply

phenomenological and is in agreement with the transcendental project of phenomenology.<sup>11</sup>

In maintaining that the doctrine of intentionality is designed to resolve the problems regarding the relation between human experience and nature, and therefore employing it to understand the social relations amounts to the misapplication of the same, Carr seems to be holding a naïve view of social reality. If social relations are relations between persons, a "person" himself or herself is to be understood against the background of the world and nature. Social scientific explanations cannot be reduced to the ones that pertain to individual's alone. As Husserl points out, "Nature" itself is, in phenomenology, brought under the intentional correlate of the transcendental subjectivity. We may note here that "...transcendental consciousness and empirical consciousness are not two different domains, the latter an instance of the former; but the two are the same. Transcendental consciousness *is* empirical consciousness, freed from its mundanity, i.e., aware of its own function as self-interpreting as well as meaning-giving, therefore as 'constituting both itself and its world.'<sup>12</sup> Thus, one fails to understand why Carr thinks that only Nature and not persons can be brought under the scope of intentional relations.

Carr, however, is not alone in failing to grasp the relation between Nature and Society. Rather a long tradition of sociology is guilty of not integrating Nature and Society. As Murphy notes "... the theme of the embeddedness of social action in the process of nature is still poorly integrated into mainstream sociology. The research on this theme has not yet influenced general sociological theory, which continues to proceed as if nature did not matter."<sup>13</sup> This has the negative consequence of manipulating Nature, which disturbs the delicate balance between man and Nature. Indra Munshi, an Indian sociologist, points out that one of the important tasks of sociologists is to take into account the dialectical relation between Nature and Society. This calls for a new understanding of social reality that does not treat



social reality as an independent variable.<sup>14</sup> Thus, we may argue that contrary to what Carr thinks of phenomenology, a proper phenomenological philosophy of social sciences can even address issues in the domain of environmental philosophy and thereby enrich the concept of "social reality" itself. There are phenomenologists who read the public relevance of philosophy itself in terms of the potential of phenomenology to understand the ecological crisis. Thus, drawing upon Arne Naess' "Deep Ecology", which claims that a new ecological understanding of the self naturally results in an ecological life-style, Melle notes that the crisis of our age consists in a crisis of purpose and values which can be overcome by phenomenological philosophy. He states that phenomenological approach being grounded in intuitive evidence and reasoning will not be calculative and constructive, nor quantifying and converting. It will rather be intuitive, meditative and hermeneutical. Moreover, phenomenology being subject-oriented and ceaselessly engaged in the process of self-examination, will not be objectivistic.<sup>15</sup>

Carr's contention in criticizing the doctrine of intentionality as ill-equipped to understand the social reality consists in his belief that it is only with a "we relation", that is, of the nature of "participation", that one can forge a genuine community with the other. In other words, for Carr, since the intentional relation is an objectification, "the other" as an "object" for the intending subject, it prevents genuine understanding of "the other" as a person. Consequently, he claims that only an understanding which is conceived as an ontological process can do justice to "the other". Such ontological understanding, one may argue, emanates from a primordial connection to the world and the other, and not the result of intellectual reflection. It is the process of dialogue that is carried out within a concrete engagement with "the other", a result of "a fusion of perspectives and horizons". What is significant to the ontological understanding is the claim that an intentional strategy cannot

yield an authentic understanding of the other. However, Mohanty points out that such "...suspicion of method, and the idea that for a proper understanding, one should avoid an intentionality which objectifies the other...are unnecessary. It is perhaps true that an ontological relation, in a sense that is difficult to formulate, connects one to the other and that such an ontological relation is a condition necessary for the possibility of understanding."<sup>16</sup> However, Mohanty argues that just as one need not take methodological interpretation or intentional stance as the entire truth of the "social relation", one should not also construe the "non-intentional" ontological openness as characterizing the entire truth of the matter. Mohanty elaborates this point by taking the example of understanding a text. To understand the text, "...one must install oneself in a non-intentional, ontological relation to it, which may be regarded a la Gadamer as a mutual dialogue. But this does not suffice for an understanding of the text, it only prepares a ground. For a correct understanding, one must learn the language, one must be able to interpret the text through philological-historical research..."<sup>17</sup> It is inevitable, then, that one has to "objectify" to some extent what one wishes to understand. Such objectifications do not reduce "the other" completely to an object. There will definitely be some traces of subjectivity that cannot be objectified. Also, objectification is a two-way process in the context of social reality. The other also objectifies me and about which I need not be worried so much. In fact, in a phenomenology of respect, a process of such reciprocal understanding is carried out without "dehumanizing" the other.

One may note here that Carr's suspicion of the phenomenological project to understand social reality originates from his belief in the criticism of the "philosophy of subject" and the related questioning of the reflexive philosophical method. Carr points out that some thinkers criticize the phenomenological approach as they believe that it construes the relation between "Man and World" in terms

of an instrumental reason. But Carr goes a step further in raising the problem whether phenomenology can talk about any social relation at all. One of the motives to suspect the credibility of transcendental philosophy comes from the fact that the "...presuppositions under which the legislative ego can appear ...[is] traversed by "the *a priori* of a counter law," by a condition of "impossibility...."<sup>18</sup> As Schurmann points out, the Heideggerian question of "being" is what leads to the suspicion of a "...formal transgression at the very heart of transcendental legislation...."<sup>19</sup> According to Schurmann the nomothetical difference between transgression and legislation can be understood in the following three nomotheses or positing of norms. The first nomothesis is that of the "subject subjected". By prescribing what to be, the legislation imposes an order. Such ordering is transcendental "...if the source of laws is sought in the subject as bestowing the traits of objectivity on nature and the traits of personality on itself."<sup>20</sup> Thus, Kant's transcendental legislation attempts to order the experiences by way of positing norms. Now, in order to validate this transcendental legislation of norms, Kant has to answer to the question of "What is being?" Kant gives us two answers with respect to this question. The first, says Schurmann, is the "doctrinal" answer, as for Kant anything that is proved without a recourse to appearances, that is demonstrated *a priori*, is part of a doctrine. Thus, Kant holds "being" as a category, one which synthesizes data into the unity of objective experience. "As every other category, *Dasein* has objective validity only when it is gathered with the pure forms of intuition, time and space, and thereby constitutes whatever can become a phenomenon for us."<sup>21</sup> Kant also gives us another answer elsewhere. Schurmann calls it the "subversive" concept of being, where being is taken as givenness itself. Kant says: "Being is not a predicate, nor a determination of anything." It is not a predicate, as it does not add any thought-content to our conceptions. Thus, being as the positing of anything follows from the givenness. So, for Kant, "...without givenness

as its starting point all knowledge would remain impossible."<sup>22</sup> Kant says: "That there is anything possible and yet nothing real is a contradiction since, if nothing existed, nothing thinkable would be given."<sup>23</sup> Thus, being as positedness follows from givenness of ideal entities. In the critical philosophy of Kant, this givenness is not to be taken as absolute givenness, but only as relative to our experience, as a relative positedness. Thus, the second notion of being for Kant is that of "givenness" itself. As a primordial "givenness", it cannot be analyzed any further, but only be characterized negatively as "pre-cognitive". Now, the question is, if "givenness" is the prerequisite for any knowledge, then how is the "I" given, the existing "I"? In his *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant says: "The 'I think' expresses the act of determining my existence."<sup>24</sup> But, Schurmann points out that "my existence" cannot be a givenness to intellectual intuition or to formal consciousness as it has to be determined by the "I think". At the same time the "existing I" cannot be a "transcendental I", nor can it be an "empirical I" as observed in our mental life, for such observations as self-experience require the inner observation to be conjoined to a pure concept of understanding. But existence is not yet a category here, as Kant himself proclaims. Thus, "...the 'I think' is turned into a proposition of existence independently of any recourse to categories....[Kant] justifies that step by describing the existing I as 'indeterminately given', impossible to reify into a thinking thing."<sup>25</sup> That is, the "I" as the source of all determinations, as the logical subject of all thinking cannot itself be determined categorically. This means that the "...subject thus shows itself to be broken. On the one hand, there is the determinative 'I think' that posits itself and unfolds into twelve categories, on the other, 'my existence' which stands in need of determination."<sup>26</sup> Thus, here we see the transgression of the legislation at its very core as "...the existing I shows that indeterminacy and self-determination are two equally indispensable moments of its being."<sup>27</sup> This shows the

displacement of the "philosophy of subject", as its main propeller—the "reflective ego", the "I think"—is incapable of positing the "existing I" as determinate. According to Schurmann, this announces the death of modernity, for the interest in legislation is only a consequence of modernity which places all that is within the power of the subject, the reflexive power of the "I think".

The second nomothesis of "(Anti-) subjectivism" can be seen in Nietzsche. In it the break between thinking and being is complete. "Following the strategy of legislation—transgression, its new locus is that of a break between thinking as *making...* and being as *becoming...*"<sup>28</sup> It is (anti-)subjectivism inasmuch as he hypothesizes with and against the subject. In Nietzsche, the subject is a non-systematic, irreducible multiplicity and as a "polymorphous" subject it turns against any one fictitious thinking I or one transcendental apperception. "No longer denoting any subject as numerically one, the I ceases to be capable of instructing us about the legitimacy or illegitimacy of norms."<sup>29</sup> However, the legislation occurs as an act of domination within a configuration of forces as a work of will. In it then legislation becomes an act of saying "I", it is a "will to power". In his criticism of moral values, Nietzsche shows the identity of legislation and transgression in two complimentary ways: as a "...willful imposition of laws by one *nomothetical type*, and... as the shaping of *power* into force in a formation of domination."<sup>30</sup> Of these, only the first, the willful imposition of laws is of the subject. In the second, there is the displacement of legislation from type to power and one may trace, says Schurmann, Ricoeur's "transcendentalism without a subject" to this displacement. "The subject's self-positing thus dissolves in the will to power which is no one's will, nor a type of will. The counter-strategy revealed by the boundless drive for mastery over the earth marks the loss of the subject as referent."<sup>31</sup> It is so because there is the struggle of power for determination as legislation can happen only if power follows the strategy adopted for the constellation of forces.

Again, legislation takes place only if power constitutes an indeterminate moment in every formation. Thus, for Nietzsche, it is this struggle of power which is the locus of any legislation and transgression. But with this shift from subject to power, transcendentalism has to abandon its field, namely consciousness.

The third nomothesis that Schurmann talks about is with reference to Heidegger, that of the "subject de-centered". From Kant, who was the spokesman of modernity, to Nietzsche, the harbinger of late modernity, legislation finds itself taken away from the subject. But it is Heidegger who "...completes the move away from the subject. Phenomena are no longer in any way objects for the subject. It has ceased uttering the nomothetical "I" and claiming to position itself, be it ambiguously, at the centre of the phenomenal field. It is de-centred."<sup>32</sup> Like Nietzsche, Heidegger emphasizes the indeterminate factor in determination as a process of gathering phenomena into certain constellations. In other words, what happens is not the unearthing of a "structure"; the constellation is precisely the handiwork of "structuring". In order to emphasize "structuring" over "structure", Heidegger talks about "presencing." In presencing, for Heidegger, there is concealment along with unconcealment. As Schurmann notes: "In Heidegger's use, *epechein* ("to halt" or "stop"... ) addresses both the self-reservation or concealment in presencing and its historical orderings or stampings..."<sup>33</sup> Thus, Heidegger shows that "legislation" is an attempt at displacing the "oneness" of thinking and being by representational thinking, thinking as "re-presenting". As against legislation, Heidegger attempts to retrieve that identity of thinking and being as one process, so that thinking merely manifests the modalities of presence. This, Heidegger achieves through the conception of being as time in such a way that the difference between a mode of beingness or presence and being or presencing constitutes the ontological difference or better, the temporal difference. Here what becomes originally legislative is the sudden epochs of truth—

“alethia”, the opening up of being as fundamental historical positions. It is these positions that justify any norm. Nevertheless, such an “...event of presencing, or ‘being’”, differs from every given order of presence; each fundamental position is therefore already transgressed, permeated with indeterminacy, as it establishes itself.”<sup>34</sup> Thus Schurmann argues that in spite of the material de-centring of the subject, there is a formal continuity from Kant to Heidegger, through Nietzsche which he characterizes as the “*nomothetical difference between legislation and transgression*”.<sup>35</sup> Now Schurmann claims that acknowledging this nomothetical difference has a significant methodological consequence for phenomenology, namely that it cannot remain content with descriptions. “Merely to describe the phenomenal network, the “life-world”, of an age is to miss the factor of transgression operative in it. In more sociological terms the rationality of description amounts to rationalizing existing social formations, leaving their norms and common sense justifications untouched.”<sup>36</sup> This would leave the phenomenological descriptions without any scope for a critique, even though such descriptions would enable one to concretize the abstract concepts by tracing them back to the life-world. But what is missing in such a descriptive endeavour is precisely those norms and justifications that condition the life-world. However, this lack of space for critique is rectified, Schurmann points out, in radical phenomenology that problematizes the legitimation and transgression of norms. As he says: “Situating what is said, both in scientific and in ordinary language, in relation to the nomothetical difference makes phenomenology into something it could never be as long as it remained a discourse about consciousness and its acts: a tool for discursive intervention.”<sup>37</sup> By “discursive intervention”, Schurmann means the critical act of freeing the potential transgressions inscribed in the legislation by pointing out the displacements in the “topos” of our strategies that have led us to the site where we are.

Is it possible to adopt such a critical posture within the framework of transcendental philosophy? Mohanty seems to affirm such a possibility. Transcendental philosophy for him, is something that lays bare the ways in which subjectivity constitutes objectivity. In order to be so, the subject has to reflect on its own operations. By "reflection" he means such "...methodical turning back of consciousness on itself... [and] has to be distinguished, on the one hand, from that pre-reflective translucency or reflexivity which characterises all our conscious life... and on the other hand, from what passes by the name of 'introspection' in older forms of empirical psychology."<sup>38</sup> Again, transcendental reflection, as against empirical reflection, is not an object-directed cognitive affair. Rather, it "...aims at explicating the conditions of the possibility of any and every object-directed cognitive achievement which happens to be at hand."<sup>39</sup> This transcendental reflection can be either noetic or noematic, depending on whether the reflection is on the noetic acts or on their noematic contents. In transcendental phenomenology, reflection begins with noematic reflection and proceeds to noetic reflection. The noematic reflection can be either phenomenological or critical. "Phenomenological noematic reflection is interested in the 'constitution' of noemata in their correlative acts; a critical noematic reflection is interested in laying bare the conditions under which a noema acquires 'validity', becomes 'true'—'truth' and 'falsity' being possible predicates of noemata..."<sup>40</sup> Thus, we reiterate that transcendental phenomenology can appropriate the critical stance within its fold and may lead to what Schurmann characterizes as discursive intervention.

With regard to the Heideggerian critique of the metaphysics of presence that projects a "metaphysics of absence", Mohanty rightly observes that such a contrast is misleading. "If what is decisive is temporality with its integral horizon as contrasted with an exclusive concentration on the present ... one has to recall that the foundation of such a conception of temporality was laid first by Husserl within



the framework of a philosophy of consciousness... and there was no reason why a philosophy of consciousness as such could not absorb them into itself."<sup>41</sup> Thus, the principle of "the interinvolvement of disclosure and concealment", that is the possibility of laying bare as also within itself a concealment, must be capable of resolving itself in the ambit of transcendental phenomenology. In such a transcendental philosophy, the concept of consciousness is construed as the most inclusive, wherein the distinction between the empirical and the transcendental itself tend to coalesce. According to Mohanty, this is precisely the destiny of transcendental philosophy.

Another possible way to look at critical praxis is through the prism of axiology. It is the axiological dimension of praxis that Mays stresses when he commends Paci's endeavour towards a phenomenological Marxism.<sup>42</sup> The phenomenologist's concern with values is not to be understood merely as a "reflection" upon values. Rather, "...the discipline of phenomenology, far from inhabiting solely the domain of strictly epistemological concerns, involves, no less, an axiological, and specifically an ethical vision... not merely a reflection upon 'values', construed as a narrowly circumscribed species of intentional object, but that *every* intentional object is, in its own way, a *value*..."<sup>43</sup> Laycock points out that some values are "ideals", such as transcendent intentional objects and the World as the ultimately transcendent object as revealed by the phenomenological reduction is the locus of absolute value. Thus, for him, the "...phenomenological reduction is...an ethically indispensable form of *praxis* in which the otherwise concealed prereflective activity of *valuing*, and in particular, *intersubjective* valuing, is revealed."<sup>44</sup> According to Laycock, a "value" is the object of "valuing." He points out that, for Husserl, the primordial instance of valuing is a prereflective and prethematic "interest." Interests are, so to say, a species of valuing. Thus, for Husserl, intentional objects are "...values toward the realization of which we may strive, and which, by degrees,

we may approximate, though never effecting their exhaustive realization. Nothing, of course, guarantees that our investigatory interest in a given transcendent object will be sustained. We can, at any moment, 'lose interest', thus turning away from this object toward another. Yet so long as the object remains of *interest* to us, we strive to make it present through a *potentially* though never *actually*, infinite manifold of profiles."<sup>45</sup> In other words, the transcendent object that is intentional, orients our efforts so as to realize these efforts in some degree of success. It is in this vein that Paul Ricoeur remarks that "every attention reveals an 'I can' at the heart of the 'I think'".<sup>46</sup> In other words, we may say that "practice" is embedded in "thought". Precisely through such intertwining of consciousness and existence, a transcendental phenomenology can capture the social reality in the endeavour of consciousness.

#### NOTES

1. Carr, David, "Alfred Schutz and the Project of Phenomenological Social Theory" in *Phenomenology of the Cultural Disciplines*, (Eds.), Daniel, Mano and Embree, Lester.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 324.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 327.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 328
5. Schutz, Alfred, "Concept and Theory Formation in the Social Sciences" in *Philosophy of Social Sciences: A Reader*, (Eds.), Natanson, Maurice, p. 241.
6. Mohanty, J.N, "Husserl's Transcendental Phenomenology and Essentialism" in *The Possibility of Transcendental Philosophy*, pp. 205-206.
7. Carr, David, *op.cit.*, p. 331.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 331-332.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 332.
10. Funke, Gerhard, "Phenomenology and History" in *Phenomenology and the Social Sciences*, Vol. II, (Ed.), Maurice Natanson, p.29.
11. As Mohanty says, the introduction of the concepts of "life-world" has modified in an important sense, Husserl's notion of transcendental subjectivity. The 'Life-world' stage of Husserlian

phenomenology has an enriched concept of the life of the subjectivity which is not negated even by the reductions and the consequent turn to the transcendental subjectivity. Here the important aspect to be noted is that the concept of life that Husserl talks about is still "...intentional, intersubjective and accomplishing of ideal objectivities. It consists not merely in the positioning, objectifying acts of consciousness, but also in the non-positional, anonymous, pre-objective, "operative" intentionalities constituting the sense of being "already given" that belongs to the perceptual world as perceived or what *Formale und transzendente Logik* calls the "aesthetic world". (Mohanty, J.N., "Life-World' and 'A Priori' in Husserl's Later Thought" in *The Possibility of Transcendental Philosophy*, p. 109.)

12. Mohanty, J.N., "Husserl's Transcendental Phenomenology and Essentialism" in *The Possibility of Transcendental Philosophy*, p. 208.
13. Murphy, Raymond (1997), *Sociology and Nature: Social Action in Context*, Oxford: Westview Press, p. 19. Quoted in Indra Munshi, "Environment' in Sociological Theory" in *Sociological Bulletin*, Vol. 49, No.2, September 2000, p.255. Nevertheless, in anthropological literature, one finds many arguments after Levi-Strauss that holds "Nature" itself as a cultural construct. But the point that Murphy advances is that the mainstream sociological theorists who assume a sort of dualism between the "social" and the "Natural" misses an important feature of our times, namely the environmental concerns.
14. Of course, the Positivists do not treat social reality as an independent variable, but they go to the other extreme of reducing social reality to that of Nature which again is unwarranted.
15. Melle, Ullrich, "Philosophy and Ecological Crisis" in *Phenomenology of the Cultural Disciplines*", (Eds.), Mano David and Lester Embree, p. 121.
16. Mohanty, J.N., "Understanding the Other" in *The Self and its Other: Philosophical Essays*, p. 123.
17. *Ibid*, p. 123.
18. Schurmann, Reiner, "Legislation-Transgression: Strategies and Counter-Strategies in the Transcendental Justification of Norms" in *Phenomenology and the Human Sciences*, (Eds.), J.N. Mohanty, p. 121.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 123.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 124.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 125.
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