MIND, SELF, and SOCIETY

FROM THE STANDPOINT OF A SOCIAL BEHAVIORIST

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INTRODUCTION

GEORGE H. MEAD AS SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGIST AND SOCIAL PHILOSOPHER

I

PHILOSOPHICALLY, Mead was a pragmatist; scientifically, he was a social psychologist. He belonged to an old tradition—the tradition of Aristotle, Descartes, Leibniz; of Russell, Whitehead, Dewey—which fails to see any sharp separation or any antagonism between the activities of science and philosophy, and whose members are themselves both scientists and philosophers. It would be difficult to overemphasize the contribution to philosophy made by those whose philosophy has been nourished in their own scientific activities. Mead stated in one of his lectures that "the philosophy of a period is always an attempt to interpret its most secure knowledge." While that remark may need qualification in terms of the place that value considerations play in philosophical generalization, it provides the clue to Mead's own development, and indeed to pragmatism in general.

By the end of the last century no item of knowledge seemed more secure than the doctrine of biological evolution. This doctrine had dramatically called attention to the factor of developmental change in the world, as physics and mathematics had previously exhibited the element of structural constancy. The implication seemed to be that not only the human organism but the entire life of mind as well had to be interpreted within the evolutionary development, sharing in its quality of change, and arising in the interactivity of organism and environment. Mind had to appear within, and presumably to stay within, conduct. Societies themselves had to be envisaged as complex biological entities and fitted into the evolutionary categories. It has been

the philosophical task of pragmatism to reinterpret the concepts of mind and intelligence in the biological, psychological, and sociological terms which post-Darwinian currents of thought have made prominent, and to reconsider the problems and task of philosophy from this new standpoint. The task is by no means completed, as is evidenced by the fact that the system-forming period is hardly yet in evidence. But the outlines of an empirical naturalism erected on biological, psychological, and sociological data and attitudes are clearly discerned, a naturalism which sees thinking man in nature, and which aims to avoid the inherited dualisms of mind and matter, experience and nature, philosophy and science, teleology and mechanism, theory and practice. It is a philosophy which, in terms used by Mead, opposes "the otherworldliness of the reason . . . . of ancient philosophy, the otherworldliness of soul . . . . of Christian doctrine, and the otherworldliness of the mind . . . . of the Renaissance dualisms." Much, too, has been done in the way of tracing the implications of the accompanying attitudes for education, aesthetics, logic, ethics, religion, scientific method, and epistemology. The pragmatic reliance upon the experimental method, coupled with the moral and valuational relation of the movement to the democratic tradition, has resulted in a conception of philosophy as having a double concern with fact and value; and a conception of the contemporary moral problem as the redirection and reformulation of human goods in terms of the attitudes and results of the experimental method. Darwinism, the experimental method, and democracy are the headwaters of the pragmatic stream.

In many ways the most secure and imposing result of pragmatic activity to date has been its theory of intelligence and mind. Such a theory is, of course, basic to the whole structure. The development and elaboration of this theory defines the lifelong activity of George H. Mead. The work of Mead and Dewey is in many respects complementary, and so far as I know, never in significant opposition. They were close friends from the years at the University of Michigan, and constantly discussed

their problems together during the years at the University of Chicago. A natural division of labor at a common task was the result. Neither stands to the other in the exclusive relation of teacher to student; both, in my opinion, were of equal though different intellectual stature; both shared in a mutual give-and-take according to their own particular genius.[1] If Dewey gives range and vision, Mead gave analytical depth and scientific precision. If Dewey is at once the rolling rim and many of the radiating spokes of the contemporary pragmatic wheel, Mead is the hub. And though in mileage the rim of the wheel travels farthest, it can go no farther as the crow flies than its hub can go. Mead's thought rests closely upon a few basic ideas which were refined and elaborated over many years. True to his own words, the philosophy upon which he was more and more engaged in his later years was an elaboration, a "descriptive generalization," of the basic ideas which, as scientist, represented the most secure relevant knowledge he could obtain. Our task, however, is not to consider that philosophy as a whole here,[2] but rather the scientific basis upon which it rests (a basis which Mead as scientist has done much to create), and something of its social and ethical dimensions.

II

Mead as scientist was a social psychologist. It is commonly recognized today that science walks on two legs—theory and observation; that the logical phase of science (the phase of the isolation and definition of basic categories, and of system building) is of equal importance with the activity of the fact-finder and verifier. Mead adds little or nothing to the corpus of the facts of the social sciences as determined by distinctive methods

[1] Dewey discusses Mead in the *Journal of Philosophy*, XXVIII (1931), 309–14; and in the *University of Chicago Record* (New Series), XVII (1931), 173–77. For Mead's discussion of Dewey see *International Journal of Ethics*, XL (1930), 211–31; and the article on "The Philosophy of John Dewey," to be published in the 1936 volume of this journal.

[2] See Mead's works, *The Philosophy of the Present* (ed. Arthur E. Murphy); *The Philosophy of the Act* (ed. John M. Brewster, Albert M. Dunham, Charles W. Morris); *Movements of Thought in the Nineteenth Century* (ed. Merritt H. Moore).

of investigation; to the ideational and conceptual structure he adds much. It is true that the two aspects of science are ultimately inseparable, and that scientific ideas cannot be developed or analyzed fruitfully without reference to fact; but the observations to which Mead appeals are for the most part open to anyone—they involve no special scientific technique. Not in figures and charts and instruments is his contribution to be found, but in insight as to the nature of minds and selves and society.

The terms "social" and "psychologist" have not long appeared together, nor in company with biological categories. Tradition has identified psychology with the study of the individual self or mind. Even the post-Darwinian influence of biological concepts did not for a long time break up the inherited individualistic presuppositions (as is evidenced by the difficulties of a Huxley to find a place for moral behavior in the evolutionary process), though it did formulate the problem as to how the human mind appeared in the history of animal conduct. Mead traces in the following pages the process by which biological considerations forced psychology through the stages of associationism, parallelism, functionalism, and behaviorism. While Mead's own position is behavioristic, it is a social behaviorism and not an individualistic and subcutaneous one; he did not find an answer in any of the stages or schools of psychology as to how mind—full-fledged, reflective, creative, responsible, self-conscious mind—appeared within the natural history of conduct. Another factor had to be brought into the account: society. It was nevertheless fortunate that Mead was at the University of Chicago when the heavily charged psychological air precipitated itself into functional and behavioristic forms.[3]

The entrance of the other factor, the social, into Mead's

thought is less easy to account for, since he himself has not traced this development. Mead again was fortunate in being in environments in which sociology and social psychology were beginning to take the form of sciences. Idealistic philosophies such as those of Hegel and Royce stressed the social nature of the self and morality—and Mead had studied under Royce. Tarde and Baldwin had made many contributions toward a social psychology by 1900. Giddings had done his major work, and Cooley had begun his sociological career at the University of Michigan; Mead was a friend of Cooley and taught for three years in that environment. Attention had gradually been paid, especially by the Germans, to the social aspects of language, to mythology, to religion—and Mead had studied in Germany. Although he was at Berlin, and not at Leipzig with Wundt, there can be no doubt but that the influence of Wundt must be given credit for helping to isolate the concept of the gesture by seeing the social context in which it functions; instead of being simply "expressions of emotions" in the Darwinian sense, gestures were well on the way to being regarded as early stages of the act of one organism responded to by another as indications of the later stages of the social act. Mead specifically thinks of the gesture in social terms, and from such gestures traces the development of genuine language communication. In one sense, then, Mead may be said to follow a path partially indicated by Wundt; and certainly Wundt helped him to correct the inadequacies of an individualistic psychology by the employment of social categories.[4]

Nevertheless, Mead was no bare follower of Royce or Tarde or Baldwin or Giddings or Cooley or Wundt. As the following pages make clear, he had one basic criticism which he applied to them all: they did not go the whole way in explaining how

minds and selves arose within conduct. This criticism breaks into two parts: (1) they all in some sense presupposed antecedently existent minds or selves to get the social process under way; (2) even in respect to the phases of mind or the self which they did attempt to account for socially, they failed to isolate the mechanism involved. The magic hat of the social, out of which mind and the self were to be drawn, was in part loaded in advance; and for the rest there was merely a pious announcement that the trick could be done, while the performance itself never took place. Mead's endeavor is to show that mind and the self are without residue social emergents; and that language, in the form of the vocal gesture, provides the mechanism for their emergence.

It is my belief that Mead has been successful in these tasks, especially in the isolation of the language mechanism by which mind is socially constituted and through which the self that is conscious of itself as an object appears. There is a question whether in identifying mind with the operation of symbols it must be held that such symbols are all language symbols of a social-vocal origin. If this is not so there may be individual aspects of mind in men and animals that do not come within the scope of Mead's terminology. In current terms, the question is as to the genetic priority of sign-situations (non-language symbols) and symbol-situations (language symbols). The issue here is largely as to the denotation of the words "mind" and "symbol," since Mead in some places admits the facts of redintegration which Hollingworth stresses, and the facts of delayed reaction which Hunter emphasizes, but unlike these men, feels that such processes do not come under the classification of "significant symbol" or "mind." Mead admits that the individual organism must have certain physiological prerequisites for developing language symbols; those who wish to use mind and symbol in a wider sense might add that the individual could not develop language symbols without being able to respond to non-linguistic, and so non-social, signs, in which one event leads at some organic center to the expectation of and redintegration

of some other event.[5] However this may be, with the acceptance of Mead's use of the terms "mind" and "self," it seems to me that he has shown that mind and the self are, without remainder, generated in a social process, and that he has for the first time isolated the mechanism of this genesis. It is hardly necessary to say that a much smaller achievement would be sufficient to serve as a milestone in science and philosophy. Mead's work marks an early stage in the actual birth of social psychology as a science, since his basic ideas go back to the early years of this century.[6]

So it is that the problem as to how the human mind and self arise in the process of conduct is answered by Mead in biosocial terms. He does not neglect with the traditional psychologist the social process in which human development takes place; he does not neglect with the traditional social scientist the biological level of the social process by falling back upon a mentalistic and subjective conception of society as being lived in antecedent minds.[7] Both extremes are avoided by an appeal to an ongoing social process of interacting biological organisms, within which process, through the internalization of the conversation of gestures (in the form of the vocal gesture), mind and selves arise. And a third extreme of biologic individualism is avoided through the recognition of the social nature of the underlying biological process in which minds arise.

The individual act is seen within the social act; psychology

and sociology are united upon a biological basis; social psychology is grounded upon a social behaviorism. It is in these terms that Mead endeavored to carry out a major problem posed by evolutionary conceptions: the problem of how to bridge the gap between impulse and rationality, of showing how certain biological organisms acquire the capacity of self-consciousness, of thinking, of abstract reasoning, of purposive behavior, of moral devotion; the problem in short of how man, the rational animal, arose.

III

Though not used by Mead, the term "social behaviorism" may serve to characterize the relation of Mead's position to that of John B. Watson. Mead considered Watson's views as oversimplified, as having abstracted the individual's segment of the act from the complete or social act. Though Watson talks much about language, the essence of language as found in a certain type of social interplay has escaped entirely, and hidden itself under the skin. And even there it hides in the movements of the vocal cords, or in the responses substituted for vocal responses, and is finally lost entirely among implicit responses. In contrast, for Mead language is an objective phenomenon of interaction within a social group, a complication of the gesture situation, and even when internalized to constitute the inner forum of the individual's mind, it remains social—a way of arousing in the individual by his own gestures the attitudes and rôles of others implicated in a common social activity.

A second difference lies in the treatment of the private. As Köhler has remarked in his *Gestalt Psychology*, Watson's position is essentially the preference for an epistemology; it says in effect that the private cannot fall within science even if it could be known to exist; hence we must write with the human animal in front of us. To describe what is so observable is perfectly proper, but as human animals we do in fact observe aspects of ourselves in our attitudes, our images, our thoughts, our emotions which we do not observe so completely in others; and

that fact is communicable. Watsonism gave the impression of ruling out of court the very contents that a mature psychology must explain. Mead was keenly conscious of this situation, but clearly believed that his own version of behaviorism was adequate to the task. Not merely was it to include the neglected social aspects of the act, but also the internal aspects of the act open mainly, but not exclusively, to the observation of the acting individual himself. Mind was not to be reduced to non-mental behavior, but to be seen as a type of behavior genetically emerging out of non-mental types. Behaviorism accordingly meant for Mead not the denial of the private nor the neglect of consciousness, but the approach to all experience in terms of conduct. Some may feel that this wider use of the term is inadvisable, that the term is Watson's. However, the present use includes all that may be observed and quantified by the radical behaviorist, and where any confusion may result, behaviorism in this wider sense may be distinguished from Watsonism. The judgment of time will perhaps regard Watsonism as behaviorism methodologically simplified for purposes of initial laboratory investigation. Mead's (and Dewey's) use of the term "behaviorism" to suggest the approach to experience—reflective and non-reflective—in terms of conduct simply signalizes with an appropriate name the direction implicit in the evolutional approach of pragmatism, a direction established long before Watson appeared on the scene and continuing after he has professionally left it.

A third difference arises from the fact that Mead, in harmony with Dewey's 1896 paper on "The Reflex-Arc Concept in Psychology," stresses the correlativity of stimulus and response. Aspects of the world become parts of the psychological environment, become stimuli, only in so far as they effect the further release of an ongoing impulse.[8] Thus, the sensitivity and activity of the organism determine its effective environment as

genuinely as the physical environment affects the sensitivity of the form. The resulting view does more justice to the dynamic and aggressive aspects of behavior than does Watsonism, which gives the impression of regarding the organism as a puppet, whose wires are pulled by the physical environment. Thus, in the case of reflective thinking, which Watson treats quite on a par with the conditioning of the rat, Mead is able to give a penetrating analysis of such reflection in terms of the self-conditioning of the organism to future stimuli in virtue of being able to indicate to itself through symbols the consequences of certain types of response to such stimuli. This account is able to explain the behavior of Watson in conditioning the rat, and not merely the resulting behavior of the conditioned rat.

Finally, a basic difference is reflected in the circumstance that Watsonism has seemed to many not only to deny private experience, but to empty "experience" itself of any meaning not possessed by "response." Certain of the radical behaviorists have frankly identified "I see *x*" with "my ocular muscles have contracted"; and have as frankly admitted that this identification leads into a behavioristic form of solipsism. Such a situation is simply the appearance in psychology of the logical and methodological scandal which has long harassed scientific thought: on the one hand science has prided itself upon being empirical, on bringing its most subtle theories to the test of observation; on the other hand science has tended to accept a metaphysics which regards the data of observation as subjective and mental and which denies that the objects studied have the characters which as experienced they appear to have. The pragmatist of Mead's type cannot agree with the attempt of critical realism to make this situation palatable. Such a pragmatist holds that the world, as conceived by science, is found within the wider and richer world that is experienced; instead of being the "real" world in terms of which to depreciate the world as experienced, the world of science is something whose origin is to be traced in experiential terms. Thus, Mead held that the physical thing, though prior for science, is experientially

a derivative from social objects, i.e., is in the order of experience socially derived. On Mead's view the world of science is composed of that which is common to and true for various observers—the world of common or social experience as symbolically formulated. Mead's suggestion for the solution of the riddle lies in an insistence that the basic datum for observation is a world in which other selves and objects have the same direct accessibility (though the completeness of the accessibility may vary) as the observer has of himself. The experienced world is conceived by Mead as a realm of natural events, emergent through the sensitivity of organisms, events no more a property of the organism than of the things observed. Philosophically the position is here an objective relativism: qualities of the object may yet be relative to a conditioning organism. A certain portion of the world, as experienced, is private; but a portion is social or common, and science formulates it. Private experience and common experience are polar concepts; the private can only be defined over against that which is common.

It is not possible here to go into the implications for epistemology and philosophy of science of this concept of social experience.[9] It is mentioned here to show that Mead's behaviorism does not reduce the experienced world to movements of nerves and muscles, even though it insists that the characters of this world are functions of impulses seeking expression. This view does not make experience mental nor individual. It is because experience has a social dimension, because the self or organism is given in a field with others, that Mead is empirically entitled to start with the social act and to ground his social psychology upon a social behaviorism. The resulting richer and more adequate conception of behaviorism makes his account of central importance in the development of psychology, while presenting for the first time a behaviorism that can claim to be adequate to the problems of philosophy.[10]

The transformation of the biologic individual to the minded organism or self takes place, on Mead's account, through the agency of language, while language in turn presupposes the existence of a certain kind of society and certain physiological capacities in the individual organisms.

The minimal society must be composed of biologic individuals participating in a social act and using the early stages of each other's actions as gestures, that is, as guides to the completion of the act. In the "conversation of gestures" of the dog fight each dog determines his behavior in terms of what the other dog is beginning to do; and the same holds for the boxer, the fencer, and the chick which runs to the hen at the hen's cluck. Such action is a type of communication; in one sense the gestures are symbols, since they indicate, stand for, and cause action appropriate to the later stages of the act of which they are early fragments, and secondarily to the objects implicated in such acts.[11] In the same sense, the gestures may be said to have meaning, namely, they mean the later stages of the oncoming act and, secondarily, the objects implicated: the clenched fist means the blow, the outstretched hand means the object being

reached for. Such meanings are not subjective, not private, not mental, but are objectively there in the social situation.

Nevertheless, this type of communication is not language proper; the meanings are not yet "in mind"; the biologic individuals are not yet consciously communicating selves. For these results to transpire the symbols or gestures must become significant symbols or gestures. The individual must know what he is about; he himself, and not merely those who respond to him, must be able to interpret the meaning of his own gesture. Behavioristically, this is to say that the biologic individual must be able to call out in himself the response his gesture calls out in the other, and then utilize this response of the other for the control of his own further conduct. Such gestures are significant symbols. Through their use the individual is "taking the rôle of the other" in the regulation of his own conduct. Man is essentially the rôle-taking animal. The calling out of the same response in both the self and the other gives the common content necessary for community of meaning.

As an example of the significant symbol Mead uses the tendency to call out "Fire!" when smoke is seen in a crowded theater. The immediate utterance of the sound would simply be part of the initiated act, and would be at the best a non-significant symbol. But when the tendency to call out "Fire!" affects the individual as it affects others, and is itself controlled in terms of these effects, the vocal gesture has become a significant symbol; the individual is conscious[12] of what he is about; he has reached the stage of genuine language instead of unconscious communication; he may now be said to use symbols and not merely respond to signs; he has now acquired a mind.

In looking for gestures capable of becoming significant symbols, and so of transforming the biologic individual into a minded

organism, Mead comes upon the vocal gesture. No other gesture affects the individual himself so similarly as it affects others. We hear ourselves talk as others do, but we do not see our facial expressions, nor normally watch our own actions. For Mead, the vocal gesture is the actual fountainhead of language proper and all derivative forms of symbolism; and so of mind.

Mind is the presence in behavior of significant symbols. It is the internalization within the individual of the social process of communication in which meaning emerges. It is the ability to indicate to one's self the response (and implicated objects) that one's gesture indicates to others, and to control the response itself in these terms. The significant gesture, itself a part of a social process, internalizes and makes available to the component biologic individuals the meanings which have themselves emerged in the earlier, non-significant, stages of gestural communication. Instead of beginning with individual minds and working out to society, Mead starts with an objective social process and works inward through the importation of the social process of communication into the individual by the medium of the vocal gesture. The individual has then taken the social act into himself. Mind remains social; even in the inner forum so developed thought goes on by one's assuming the rôles of others and controlling one's behavior in terms of such rôle-taking. Since the isolation of the physical thing is for Mead dependent upon the ability to take the rôle of the other, and since thought about such objects involves taking their rôles, even the scientist's reflection about physical nature is a social process, though the objects thought about are no longer social.[13]

Not all animals which communicate at the level of the conversation of gestures pass to the level of the significant symbol. Indeed, Mead quite clearly believes that no animal but man has made the transition from impulse to rationality, although he generally adds the qualification that no evidence is at hand to

suggest otherwise. His position seems to be that only the human organism has the neurological makeup necessary for the significant symbol. Mead's neurological remarks are frequently made in terms congenial to the older and more static forms of behaviorism—in terms of the number of nerve cells, the possible combinations of cells, the breaking-up and reassociating of the elements of older associations—rather than in terms of the more congenial dynamical conceptions found in Child, Lashley, Köhler, and Pavlov. His basic points, however, are independent of these changes in biological categories. In discussing the neurological conditions of the significant symbol he stresses on the one hand the importance of the cortex and on the other what he calls the temporal dimension of the human nervous system—the ability of a slowly developing act to be controlled in its development by acts which it itself initiates. I take it that all control "by the future" rests on the possibility of such behavior. It is presumably the human cortex (whose place in the higher reflexes the reflexologists have made abundantly clear) and the temporal dimension of the nervous system (which allows the control of the gesture in terms of the consequences of making it) which permit the human animal alone to pass from the level of the conversation of gestures to that of the significant language symbol, and the absence of which prevent the talking birds from really talking. These two characteristics, coupled with the place of the human hand in the isolation of the physical object, are supposedly the organic bases which determine the biological differentiations of man and the animals.

V

It is the same agency of language which on this theory makes possible the appearance of the self. Indeed, the self, mind, "consciousness of," and the significant symbol are in a sense precipitated together. Mead finds the distinguishing trait of selfhood to reside in the capacity of the minded organism to be an object to itself. The mechanism by which this is possible on a behavioristic approach is found in the rôle-taking which is in-

volved in the language symbol. In so far as one can take the rôle of the other, he can, as it were, look back at himself from (respond to himself from) that perspective, and so become an object to himself. Thus again, it is only in a social process that selves, as distinct from biological organisms, can arise—selves as beings that have become conscious of themselves.

Nor is it merely the process of being aware of one's self that is social: the self that one becomes conscious of in this manner is itself social in form, though not always in content. Mead stresses two stages in the development of the self: the stages of play and the game. In play the child simply assumes one rôle after another of persons and animals that have in some way or other entered into its life. One here sees, writ large as it were, the assumption of the attitudes of others through the self-stimulation of the vocal gesture, whereas later in life such attitudes are more abbreviated and harder to detect. In the game, however, one has become, as it were, all of the others implicated in the common activity—must have within one's self the whole organized activity in order to successfully play one's own part. The person here has not merely assumed the rôle of a specific other, but of any other participating in the common activity; he has generalized the attitude of rôle-taking. In one of Mead's happiest terms and most fertile concepts he has taken the attitude or rôle of the "generalized other."[14]

Now all of the attitudes of others organized and taken over into one's self—however specific or generalized they may be—constitute the "me." If this were all that there is to the self, the account would be an extreme and one-sided one, leaving no place for creative and reconstructive activity; the self would not merely reflect the social structure, but would be nothing beyond

that reflection. The complete self, however, is conceived by Mead as being both "I" and a "me." The "I" is the principle of action and of impulse; and in its action it changes the social structure. As Mead says of Dewey's views, "the individual is no thrall of society. He constitutes society as genuinely as society constitutes the individual." Indeed, every action of the individual at either the non-linguistic or linguistic levels of communication changes the social structure to some degree, slightly for the most part, greatly in the case of the genius and the leader.

Not merely is the self as a social being developed on the basis of the biological organism, but society itself, as an organic whole of a complex order, cannot be put into opposition with its distinguishable and recognizable components—biologic individuals at the simpler social levels, selves at the higher. This point is worth making since some readers have gained the impression that pragmatism has lost the individual in society. Certain phrases of Mead may suggest this at times, but the recognition of the biologic individual (the "I" over against the "me") and the fact that while selves presuppose a prior social process they in turn make possible the organization of a distinctively human society, should silence all doubt. Any other interpretation is incompatible with the stress which Mead's instrumentalism and ethical theory put upon thought as a reconstructive activity, and upon the individual thinker as—to use Dewey's phrase—"a reconstructive center of society."[15]

Through a social process, then, the biologic individual of proper organic stuff gets a mind and a self. Through society the impulsive animal becomes a rational animal, a man.[16] In vir-

tue of the internalization or importation of the social process of communication, the individual gains the mechanism of reflective thought (the ability to direct his action in terms of the foreseen consequences of alternative courses of action); acquires the ability to make himself an object to himself and to live in a common moral and scientific world; becomes a moral individual with impulsive ends transformed into the conscious pursuit of ends-in-view.

Because of the emergence of such an individual, society is in turn transformed. It receives through the reflective social self the organization distinctive of human society; instead of playing his social part through physiological differentiation (as in the case of the insect) or through the bare influence of gestures upon others, the human individual regulates his part in the social act through having within himself the rôles of the others implicated in the common activity. In attaining a new principle of social organization, society has gained a new technique of control, since it has now implanted itself within its component parts, and so regulates, to the degree that this is successfully done, the behavior of the individual in terms of the effect on others of his contemplated action. And finally, in the process, society has provided a technique for its own transformation. It can rationally wish to do no more than present to each of its members, through the "me," the social setting within which conduct is to take place, and to make each responsible for the social values affected through this action. Under the penalty of stagnation, society cannot but be grateful for the changes which the moral act of the creative "I" introduces upon the social stage.

VI

This is not the place to take up the multiplicity of insights which Mead weaves into his general framework; nor the impli-

cations for education, psychopathology, sociology, psychology, and linguistics; nor the way in which his philosophy dovetails with his social psychology. But as an illustration of the fertility of his basic ideas I cannot avoid mentioning two related points —the theory of universals and the concept of the generalized other. The issue here is not narrowly philosophical, but concerns the possibility of doing justice on a pragmatic, relativistic, and empirical point of view to the factors of structure, stability, and universality. It is such factors that the mathematical and physical sciences have brought into prominence, while the post-Darwinian biological and social sciences have made prominent the categories of change and process. It would be a sign of the inadequacy of modern empiricism if it should merely again set a philosophy of Becoming alongside of the philosophies of Being, duplicating the impasse which beset Greek thought.

It is frequently stated that the pragmatist must be a nominalist and cannot do justice to the fact of universality. In reality, pragmatism is nearest at this point to medieval conceptualism. It is only when the symbol is a bare particular, standing indifferently for a number of other particulars, that nominalism is the result. As a fact, however, the significant symbol, as a gesture, is not arbitrary, but always a phase of an act, and so shares in whatever universality the act possesses. As Charles Peirce saw—and Ockham long before—universality is closely connected with habit. An act is universal in that many objects or aspects of objects can serve as appropriate stimuli: any object that one can sit on is a seat; any object that drives the nail is a hammer. Now the words "seat" and "hammer," as universals, are themselves segments of the involved attitudes, and not isolated particulars; the individual repetitions of the words, like a specific act of sitting or hammering, are instances (replicas, in Peirce's terms) of the universality of the attitude. It is in the attitude that the idea or concept as a universal lies. The concepts denote whatever objects fulfil the requirements of the act, that is, any objects that have the characteristics suitable to serve as stimuli for the ongoing act. Universality is thus not an

sional references to logic, his account contains in implicit form the germs of a theory of logic and a philosophy of mathematics.

When it is realized that social universality is potentially extensible to the past and future, it can be realized that Mead's approach is compatible with the recognition that relatively to the most general co-operative acts there are highly invariant features of the world. The emergent and temporalistic aspects of the pragmatic position are not at odds with whatever constancy the world as experienced does in fact reveal, nor with whatever formalism logic and mathematics are able to attain. Pragmatism merely wishes to avoid fanaticism in these matters. It counsels sanity toward the mutual principles of being and becoming, by pointing out that empirically universality is a character of things over against the act, whether individual or social. And as such it is a matter of more or less, not of all or none.[17]

Did space permit it would be interesting to discuss other queries raised by the conception of the generalized other. How far, for instance, is the difference between Platonist and relativist dependent upon the degree to which one takes the rôle of the generalized other? Can the extension of the process of rôle-taking toward physical things permit one to transcend human observers altogether, so that one can meaningly pass from the social positivism, which at times Mead seems to regard as the limit of meaningful metaphysics,[18] to a philosophical realism?[19] What is the bearing of Mead's doctrine, when coupled with the concept of social experience, upon the nature of truth and knowledge? How far does the generalized other provide the psychological equivalent of the historical concept of God, and of the Absolute of the idealists, and so for the contrast of Reality and Appearance? It is only possible to raise such questions

here, and perhaps this digression and expansion of Mead's thought has been unfair to certain readers. It has been entered into in order to show the power of Mead's social psychology for the approach to problems which pragmatism has not sufficiently discussed, and where its critics have been most just in detecting lacunae.

VII

Mead, in common with all pragmatists since James, held an interest theory of value: that is good which satisfies an interest or impulse.[20] But once again Mead's statement of this is in objective relativistic terms: value is the character of an object in its capacity of satisfying an interest—it resides neither in the object alone nor in an emotional state of the subject. Interests or impulses clash, however, and so arises the problem of the standard of value and the need for evaluation.

The aesthetic object brings the emotionally toned impulses into a harmonious whole; the object capable of so stimulating and integrating the impulses has aesthetic character or value. Through an object of such a character one enjoys "the recovery of the sense of the final outcome in partial achievement," "savoring the end that he is fashioning."[21] The artist plays upon attitudes, arousing in himself, by the use of his medium, the emotional aspects of an attitude which his work in varying degrees communicates to others by calling out in them this attitude. In so far as this is done, the aesthetic exaltation is the fusion of the "I" and the "me" made possible by the object. Mead believed, without elaborating his views in detail, that his version of behavioristic psychology gives a fruitful basis for aesthetic theory.

Aesthetic value is, as it were, a consummatory gift offered to the self by nature or by the artist; the task of the moral life is

to create through reflective effort a similar integration of impulse at the level of interacting selves.[22]

In its essentials, Mead's ethical theory is the same as Dewey's, but the approach through the social psychology of the self throws the conception into new relief. Being social, there is no psychological problem as to how the self can take others into account in its reflective activity, just as there is no problem of surmounting hedonism on a view which takes an act directed upon objects as its basic unit. The self, as constituted by its impulses, is seeking the objects which allow the consummation of the impulses. As social, to the degree that the self has taken the attitudes of others into itself through the language process, it has become the others, and the values of others are its own; to the degree that the self assumes the rôle of the generalized other, its values are the values of the social process itself. The epistemological escape from the egocentric predicament by getting an ego which includes the standpoints of others is analogous in value theory to the getting of a self which includes within itself the values of others. This free construction of the implications of Mead's actual statements shows the fertility of the approach to the field of value. Certain it is that it gives a more precise way of formulating the breakdown of the alternatives of egoism and altruism, of self-assertion and self-sacrifice, than the psychological equipment of ethicists usually makes possible.

Stated in ethical terms, Mead is insisting that in the moral act the motive for action is the impulse itself as directed to a social end. A social self has social impulses that demand expression as imperatively as any other impulses. For Mead, moral ends are social ends because in the first place the only standard for impulse that impulse makes possible resides in the answer as to whether the impulse in question feeds or dies on its own satisfaction, and whether it expands and harmonizes, or narrows and defeats, other impulses; and second, because the self,

as a social being, must be concerned within and without with a social harmony of impulses.

The moral task, it follows, is to be observant of all the values resident in the particular situations of life,[23] and to deal with these values reflectively in the endeavor to allow the maximum satisfaction and expansion—the maximum dynamic harmony—of the impulses concerned. Moral action is intelligent, socially directed action in which one acts with the interest of others as well as one's self in mind. The appeal is not from interest to reason, but from isolated interests to the interest in the social system of interests in which one's behavior is implicated. Such, as I read it, is the kernel of Mead's, and so pragmatism's, ethical theory. The right act, as relative to the situation, is nevertheless objective and universal in that it demands the assent of all rational beings. The right is neither subjective caprice nor a timeless essence; its universality is a social universality.

Such a view makes the moral life a strenuous and active life. Sustained by social ends and fed by all the knowledge that science can give, morality yet demands the creativity of the "I," of the self that is more than a "me." It is in a society of such selves that Mead sees the social ideal. This society would not have as its goal the bare sustenance and attainment of any set of existent or authoritatively defined values—this Mead calls the Augustinian philosophy of history. On the contrary its philosophy of history would be as experimental as the experimental method itself. It would be concerned with the technique for remaking values through the reinterpretation of the situation in terms of the best knowledge available, and that technique, it would appear, could be nothing but morality itself.

Such a society of moral beings would seem to be Mead's version of the democratic ideal. While an emergent universe can guarantee no future, Mead does believe that the agencies and institutions of human life—language, religion, the economic