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*International Journal of Ethics*, Volume 35, Issue 3 (Apr., 1925), 251-277.

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*International Journal of Ethics*  
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## THE GENESIS OF THE SELF AND SOCIAL CONTROL

GEORGE HERBERT MEAD

It is my desire to present an account of the appearance of the self in social behavior, and then to advert to some implications of such an account in their bearings upon social control.

The term "behavior" indicates the standpoint of what follows, that of a behavioristic psychology. There is an aspect of this psychology that calls for an emphasis which I think has not been sufficiently given it. It is not simply the objectivity of this psychology which has commended it. All recent psychology, in so far as it lays claim to a scientific approach, considers itself objective. But behavioristic psychology, coming in by the door of the study of animals lower than man, has perforce shifted its interest from psychical states to external conduct. Even when this conduct is followed into the central nervous system, it is not to find the correlate of the neurosis in a psychosis, but to complete the act, however distant this may be in space and time. This doctrine finds itself in sympathetic accord with recent realism and pragmatism, which places the so-called *sensa* and the significances of things in the object. While psychology has been turning to the act as a process, philosophic thought has been transferring contents that had been the subject-matter of earlier psychology from the field of states of consciousness to the objective world. Prebehavioristic psychology had a foot in two worlds. Its material was found in consciousness and in the world of physiology and physics. As long, however, as psychology was occupied with states of consciousness which constituted objects, there was an inevitable duplication. The whole physiological and physical apparatus could be stated in terms of states of consciousness, and solipsism hovered in the background. A psychology that is called upon to analyze the object into the

states of consciousness which it is studying may conceivably be an empirical science, but in so far its world is not the world of the other sciences. A behavioristic psychology, on the other hand, that is not responsible for the content of the object, becomes a science that is cognate with physiology and dynamics, and escapes the trail of the epistemological serpent.

I am not concerned with the philosophical justification of this attitude of behavioristic psychology; I merely wish to emphasize its inevitable tendency to deal with processes, that is, with acts, and to find its objects given in the world with which all science deals. From Descartes' time on, it has been a border state, lying between philosophy and the natural sciences, and has suffered the inconveniences which attend buffer states. Descartes' unambiguous and uncompromising division between an extended physical world, and an unextended world of thought, when it reached the pineal gland found itself in ambiguous territory, and only avoided compromise by leaving the relations of mind and body to the infinite power of his *deus ex machina*. The difficulties which have attended psychology's regulation of these relations have been only in part metaphysical. More fundamentally they have been logical. The natural sciences start pragmatically with a world that is there, within which a problem has arisen, and introduce hypothetical reconstructions only in so far as its solution demands them. They always have their feet upon the solid ground of unquestioned objects of observation and experiment, where Samuel Johnson placed his in his summary refutation of Berkeley's idealism. Speculative philosophy, beset with the problem of epistemology, found its problem in the nature and very existence of the world inside which the problems of the natural sciences appeared, and which furnished the test of its hypotheses. Thus psychology as a philosophic discipline carried the epistemological problem into the experience of the individual, but as a science located the problem in a given world which its epistemological problem could not accept as given. Between the two,

its sympathies have always been with the presuppositions and method of the natural sciences. On the one hand, as empirical science it has sought to regard the so-called consciousness of the individual as merely given in the sense of the objects of the natural sciences, but as states of consciousness were still regarded as cognitive, they had inevitably inherited the epistemological diathesis. On the other hand, as experimental science it was forced to place states of consciousness within or without the processes it was studying. Placing them in interactionism within the natural processes ran counter to the presuppositions of its scientific procedure, so that the prevailing attitude has been that of epiphenomenalism, an adaptation of Leibnitz' pre-established harmony and Spinoza's parallel attributes. They ran as harmless conscious shadows beside the physical and physiological processes with which science could come to immediate terms. But this proved but an unstable compromise. The conscious streak that accompanied the neuroses could answer only to sensing and thinking as processes; as qualities and significance of things, states of consciousness became hardly tolerable reduplications of things, except in the case of the secondary qualities. The molecular structure of things seemed to remove these from the hypothetical objects of physical science, and consciousness proved a welcome dumping-ground for them. This bifurcation of nature proves equally unsatisfactory. The horns and the hoofs go with the hide. States of contact experience have no better right to objective existence than those of distance experience. Psychology, however, has not been interested in these epistemological and metaphysical riddles, it has been simply irritated by them. It has shifted its interest to the processes, where phenomenalism is most harmless, appearing as physiological psychology, as functional psychology, as dynamic psychology, and has ignored the problems for which it had no care. The effect of this has been to give to the central nervous system a logical pre-eminence in the procedure and textbooks of psychology which is utterly unwarranted in the analysis of

the experience of the individual. The central nervous system has been unwittingly assimilated to the logical position of consciousness. It occupies only an important stage in the act, but we find ourselves locating the whole environment of the individual in its convolutions. It is small wonder, then, that behaviorism has been welcomed with unmistakable relief, for it has studied the conduct of animals in necessary ignorance of consciousness, and it has been occupied with the act as a whole, not as a nervous arc.

But the relief with which one turns to conduct and away from states of consciousness has not disposed of the problems involved in the ambiguous term "consciousness," even for the psychologist. Bergson's theory of perception was at least a step toward the clarification of this ambiguity. It recognizes that in so far as the content of the percept can be termed consciousness, it indicates a diminution of the reality of the object rather than an addition, and this diminution answers to the active interests of the organism, which are represented in the central nervous system by paths of possible response. These co-ordinated paths in some sense cut out the object of perception. The percept is relative to the perceiving individual, but relative to his active interest, not relative in the sense that its content is a state of his consciousness. It is at least meaningless to lodge the so-called sensuous characters of things in the cortex. When, however, Bergson suggests that certain of these qualities may be the condensation of vibrations, we seem again to be in the presence of qualities that are states of consciousness. Presumably the condensations, e.g., the actual quality of color, do not exist in the object, but in the condensing mind. However, Bergson's statement at least placed the central nervous system in the world of things, of percepts, on the one hand, and on the other placed the characters of things in pure perception in the things themselves; but the divorce of duration, as psychical, from a static intellectualized spatial world left a dichotomy which was functional only from the standpoint of a Bergsonian

metaphysics. Neo-realism undertook to return all the qualities of things to the things, over against a mind which was simply aware of the sensa. This simple, radical procedure left problems of a perception which was still cognitive in its nature, which a Critical Realism sought to solve by retreating to representative perception again. It remained for pragmatism to take the still more radical position that in immediate experience the percept stands over against the individual, not in a relation of awareness, but simply in that of conduct. Cognition is a process of finding out something that is problematical, not of entering into relation with a world that is there.

There is an ambiguity in the word "consciousness." We use it in the sense of "awareness," "consciousness of," and are apt to assume that in this sense it is coextensive with experience, that it covers the relation of the sentient organism to its environment in so far as the environment exists for the organism. We thus predicate of this existence of the environment for the organism the attitude of cognition on the part of the organism. The other use of consciousness to which I refer is in the sense of certain contents, to wit, the sense qualities of things, more especially the so-called secondary qualities, the affections of the body of the sentient organism, especially those that are pleasurable and painful, the contents of the images of memory and imagination, and of the activities of the organism, so far as they appear in its experience. There is another field, that of self-consciousness, to which I am not as yet referring. There is a common character which in varying degree belongs to all of these contents, that is, that these contents could not appear at all, or exactly as they do appear, in the experience of any other organism. They are in this sense private, though this privacy does not imply necessarily anything more than difference of access or of perspective on the part of the different organisms. If we take the pragmatic attitude, referred to above, consciousness in the first sense, that of awareness, would disappear from immediate experience, while the world that is there for the organism would

still be there. A particular organism would become conscious from this standpoint, that is, there would be a world that would exist for the organism, when the organism marked or plotted or, to use Bergson's term, canalized its environment in terms of its future conduct. For Bergson, a percept is an object of possible action for an organism, and it is the active relationship of the organism to the distant object that constitutes it an object. Bergson meets the difficulty that the organism can exercise no physical influence upon the distant object by his assumption that consciousness in this sense is in reality not an addition to the object, but an abstraction from all in the relation of the organism to the object which does not bear upon this action. There arises, then, a selected series of objects, determined by the active interests of the organism.

An environment thus arises for an organism through the selective power of an attention that is determined by its impulses that are seeking expression. This peculiar environment does not exist in the consciousness of the form as a separate milieu, but the consciousness of the organism consists in the fact that its future conduct outlines and defines its objects. In so far as the organization of one individual differs from that of others, it will have a private environment, though these differences may be called those of standpoint. They are objective differences. They exist in nature. The most fundamental phase of these differences is found in the determination of what the relativist calls a "consentient set," i.e., the selection of those objects which may all be considered as "here" with reference to the individual. It is this set, which is co-gredient with the individual, that constitutes an environment within which motion may take place. These perspectives of nature exist in nature, not in the consciousness of the organism as a stuff. In this relation of a peculiar environment for an individual, there is no implication of an awareness. All that is implied is that the ongoing activity of the individual form marks and defines its world for the form, which thus exists for it as it does not for

any other form. If this is called consciousness, a behavioristic psychology can state it in terms of conduct.

Consciousness in the second sense, that of a peculiar content or contents, implies relativity in another sense, in the sense of emergence, as this has been defined by Alexander, in *Space Time and the Deity*, and accepted by Lloyd Morgan, in *Emergent Evolution*. In evolution not only have new forms appeared, but new qualities or contents in experience. It is the sensitivities of forms that are the occasions for the appearance, in the worlds of these forms, of new characters of things, answering to all the senses, and new meanings answering to their new capacities for conduct. And these new characters and new meanings exist in nature as do the forms of physical objects, though they are relative to the sensitivities and capacities of the individual forms. If we drop awareness from immediate experience, Alexander's distinction between perception and enjoyment may be also dropped. This distinction lies between the awareness of perception of external objects and that of the experience of the individual in perception and his other processes. Pleased palates and irritated or suffering members are there in the same sense as other percepts or objects. And this is true also of straining muscles, of fearful objects, or a turned stomach, or an attractive thing, nor can we deny this sort of objectivity to imagery, because access to it is confined to the individual in whose world it appears. Part of this imagery fits into the world that is there, and is with great difficulty analyzed out. That which will not fit in becomes located in our pasts or in futures of varying degrees of definiteness.

If my friend enters the room, and I catch a glimpse of his face, the imagery of his face fills out the countenance, and I see him with his whole complement of features. The same imagery might have figured in my memory of last meeting him. Or it might have figured in the plan I entertained of calling, on the following evening. It belongs either to the passing present, or to the irrevocable past, or to the contingent future. This



imagery is for the percipient as objective as the so-called sense object. It may enter that object and be indistinguishable from it. Where it can be distinguished, however, it is recognized as having this private character; that is, while we assume that the color of the object perceived, even if it vary from eye to eye, is in some respects identical for all eyes in so far as the organs are alike, it is not assumed that the image which one has is there for other eyes, or imaginations. While this sole accessibility of imagery to the individual does not in itself render it less objective, it places it at the disposal of the individual, when he attains to a mind which it can furnish. The same is true of the other class of objects which in his experience is accessible only to him. I refer to the objects which the individual possesses from the inside, so to speak, the parts of his organism, especially as they are painful or pleasurable. In the so-called lower animals, there is no evidence that this private field is organized and used as the possession of a self. The passing present is neither extended into a memory series, nor into an anticipated future.

Imagery is but one phase of the presence of the past in the passing present. In the living form it appears as facility in the response, and in the selection of the stimulus, in selective discrimination, in the stimulus. Imagery emerges, in the sense of Alexander, as the content of the past in the stimulus, and as meaning in the response. Imagery and meaning are there in the objects as contents, before they become material for the mind, before the mind appears in conduct.

I have referred to the doctrine of relativity. More specifically, my reference was to formulation of the doctrine given in Professor Whitehead's three books, *The Principles of Natural Knowledge*, *The Concept of Nature*, and *The Principle of Relativity*. What I have had particularly in mind is Whitehead's recognition, as over against current Einsteinian doctrine, that if motion is to be accepted as an objective fact, we must also accept the existence in nature of so-called consentient sets at rest, determined by their relation to so-called percipient events.

The same events in nature appear in different consentient sets, as these events are ordered in different time systems, and this ordering in different time systems is dependent upon their relations to different percipient events. Motion in nature implies rest in nature. Rest in nature implies co-gredience, i.e., a persistent relation of here and there with reference to some individual, and it is this that determines the time system in accordance with which events are ordered. If rest is a fact in nature, we must conceive of it as stratified, to use Whitehead's term, by the different temporal perspectives of different individuals, though a group of individuals may have the same perspective; we must, however, remember that this is a stratification of nature not in a static space, but a nature whose extension is affected with a time dimension.

It is this conception of the existence in nature of consentient sets determined by their relations to percipient events that I wish to generalize so that it will cover the environment in relation to the living form, and the experienced world with reference to the experiencing individual. This is evidently only possible if we conceive life as a process and not a series of static physico-chemical situations, and if we regard experience as conduct or behavior, not as a series of conscious states. This I take to be the essence of Bergson's philosophy of change, in accordance with which our perceptual world is determined by the actions that are taking place. Conduct does cut out and fashion the objects upon which action is directed. It is only with reference to life as an ongoing process that the animal determines his habitat. The most convincing illustration can be found in the different presentation of the life of a community, in terms of a social statics, the statistical data of population and occupations and the like, or in terms of the actual lives of the different individuals who make up the community. In the latter case we realize that each individual has a world that differs in some degree from that of any other member of the same community, that he slices the events of the community life that are common

to all from a different angle from that of any other individual. In Whitehead's phrase, each individual stratifies the common life in a different manner, and the life of the community is the sum of all these stratifications, and all of these stratifications exist in nature. It is this recognition that takes psychology out of its isolation, as a science that deals with what is found in the mind of an individual, and makes of it the standpoint from which to approach reality as it is going on.

It is evident that a statement of the life of each individual in terms of the results of an analysis of that which is immediately experienced would offer a common plane of events, in which the experience of each would differ from the experiences of others only in their extent, and the completeness or incompleteness of their connections. These differences disappear in the generalized formulations of the social sciences. The experiences of the same individuals, in so far as each faces a world in which objects are plans of action, would implicate in each a different succession of events. In the simplest illustration, two persons approach a passing automobile. To one it is a moving object that he will pass before it reaches the portion of the street that is the meeting-place of their two paths. The other sees an object that will pass this meeting-point before he reaches it. Each slices the world from the standpoint of a different time system. Objects which in a thousand ways are identical for the two individuals, are yet fundamentally different through their location in one spatio-temporal plane, involving a certain succession of events, or in another. Eliminate the temporal dimension, and bring all events back to an instant that is timeless, and the individuality of these objects which belongs to them in behavior is lost, except in so far as they can represent the results of past conduct. But taking time seriously, we realize that the seemingly timeless character of our spatial world and its permanent objects is due to the consentient set which each one of us selects. We abstract time from this space for the purposes of our conduct. Certain objects cease to be events, cease to pass

as they are in reality passing and in their permanence become the conditions of our action, and events take place with reference to them. Because a whole community selects the same consentient set does not make the selection less the attitude of each one of them. The life-process takes place in individual organisms, so that the psychology which studies that process in its creative determining function becomes a science of the objective world.

Looked at from the standpoint of an evolutionary history, not only have new forms with their different spatio-temporal environments and their objects arisen, but new characters have arisen answering to the sensitivities and capacities for response. In the terms of Alexander, they have become differently qualified. It is as impossible to transfer these characters of the habitats to the consciousness of the forms as it is to transfer the spatio-temporal structure of the things to such a so-called consciousness. If we introduce a fictitious instantaneousness into a passing universe, things fall to pieces. Things that are spatio-temporally distant from us can be brought into this instant only in terms of our immediate contact experience. They are what they would be if we were there and had our hands upon them. They take on the character of tangible matter. This is the price of their being located at the moment of our bodies' existence. But this instantaneous view has the great advantage of giving to us a picture of what the contact experience will be when we reach the distant object, and of determining conditions under which the distance characters arise. If the world existed at an instant in experience, we should be forced to find some realm such as consciousness into which to transport the distance or so-called secondary qualities of things. If consciousness in evolutionary history, then, has an unambiguous significance, it refers to that stage in the development of life in which the conduct of the individual marks out and defines the future field and objects which make up its environment, and in which emerge characters in the objects and sensitivities in the

individuals that answer to each other. There is a relativity of the living individual and its environment, both as to form and content.

What I wish to trace is the fashion in which self and the mind has arisen within this conduct.

It is the implication of this undertaking that only selves have minds, that is, that cognition only belongs to selves, even in the simplest expression of awareness. This, of course, does not imply that below the stage of self-consciousness sense characters and sensitivity do not exist. This obtains in our own immediate experience in so far as we are not self-conscious. It is further implied that this development has taken place only in a social group, for selves exist only in relation to other selves, as the organism as a physical object exists only in its relation to other physical objects. There have been two fields within which social groups have arisen which have determined their environment together with that of their members, and the individuality of its members. These lie in the realm of the invertebrates and in that of the vertebrates. Among the Hymenoptera and termites there are societies whose interests determine for the individuals their stimuli and habitats, and so differentiate the individuals themselves, mainly through the sexual and alimentary processes, that the individual is what he is because of his membership within those societies. In the complex life of the group, the acts of the individuals are completed only through the acts of other individuals, but the mediation of this complex conduct is found in the physiological differentiation of the different members of the society. As Bergson has remarked of the instincts, the implements by which a complex act is carried out are found in the differentiated structure of the form. There is no convincing evidence that an ant or a bee is obliged to anticipate the act of another ant or bee, by tending to respond in the fashion of the other, in order that it may integrate its activity into the common act. And by the same mark there is no evidence of the existence of any language in their societies. Nor do we need to

go to the invertebrates to discover this type of social conduct. If one picks up a little child who has fallen, he adapts his arms and attitude to the attitude of the child, and the child adapts himself to the attitude of the other; or in boxing or fencing one responds to stimulus of the other, by acquired physiological adjustment.

Among the vertebrates, apart from the differentiation of the sexes and the nurture and care of infant forms, there is little or no inherited physiological differentiation to mediate the complexities of social conduct. If we are to co-operate successfully with others, we must in some manner get their ongoing acts into ourselves to make the common act come off. As I have just indicated, there is a small range of social activity in which this is not necessary. The suckling of an infant form, or a dog fight, if this may be called a social activity, does not call for more than inherited physiological adjustment. Perhaps the so-called herding instinct should be added, but it hardly comes to more than the tendency of the herd to stick together in their various activities. The wooing and mating of forms, the care of the infant form, the bunching of animals in migrations, and fighting, about exhaust vertebrate social conduct, and beyond these seasonal processes vertebrate societies hardly exist till we reach man. They exhaust the possibilities in vertebrate structure of the mediation of social conduct, for the vertebrate organism has shown no such astonishing plasticity in physiological differentiation as that which we can trace among the insects, from isolated forms to members of the societies of the termites, the ants, and the bees.

A social act may be defined as one in which the occasion or stimulus which sets free an impulse is found in the character or conduct of a living form that belongs to the proper environment of the living form whose impulse it is. I wish, however, to restrict the social act to the class of acts which involve the co-operation of more than one individual, and whose object as defined by the act, in the sense of Bergson, is a social object. I

mean by a social object one that answers to all the parts of the complex act, though these parts are found in the conduct of different individuals. The objective of the act is then found in the life-process of the group, not in those of the separate individuals alone. The full social object would not exist in the environments of the separate individuals of the societies of the Hymenoptera and termites, nor in the restricted societies of the vertebrates whose basis is found alone in physiological adjustment. A cow that licks the skin of a calf stuffed with hay, until the skin is worn away, and then eats the hay, or a woman who expends her parental impulse upon a poodle, cannot be said to have the full social object involved in the entire act in their environments. It would be necessary to piece together the environments of the different individuals or superimpose them upon each other to reach the environment and objects of the societies in question.

Where forms such as those of the Hymenoptera and the termites exhibit great plasticity in development, social acts based on physiological adjustment, and corresponding societies, have reached astonishing complexity. But when the limit of that plasticity is reached, the limit of the social act and the society is reached also. Where, as among the vertebrates, that physiological adjustment which mediates a social act is limited and fixed, the societies of this type are correspondingly insignificant. But another type of social act, and its corresponding society and object, has been at least suggested by the description of the social act based upon physiological adjustment. Such an act would be one in which the different parts of the act which belong to different individuals should appear in the act of each individual. This cannot mean, however, that the single individual could carry out the entire act, for then, even if it were possible, it would cease to be a social act, nor could the stimulus which calls out his own part of the complex act be that which calls out the other parts of the act in so far as they appear in his conduct. If the social object is to appear in his experience, it must

be that the stimuli which set free the responses of the others involved in the act should be present in his experience, not as stimuli to his response, but as stimuli for the responses of others; and this implies that the social situation which arises after the completion of one phase of the act, which serves as the stimulus for the next participant in the complex procedure, shall in some sense be in the experience of the first actor, tending to call out, not his own response, but that of the succeeding actor. Let us make the impossible assumption that the wasp, in stinging a spider which it stores with its egg, finds in the spider a social object in the sense which I have specified. The spider would have to exist in the experience of the wasp as live but quiescent food for the larva when it emerges from the egg. In order that the paralyzed spider should so appear to the wasp, the wasp would need to be subject to the same stimulus as that which sets free the response of the larva; in other words, the wasp would need to be able to respond in some degree as the larva. And of course the wasp would have to view the spider under the time dimension, grafting a hypothetical future onto its passing present, but the occasion for this would have to lie in the wasp's tending to respond in rôle of larva to the appropriate food which it is placing in storage. This, then, presents another possible principle of social organization, as distinguished from that of physiological differentiation. If the objects that answer to the complex social act can exist spatio-temporally in the experience of the different members of the society, as stimuli that set free not only their own responses, but also as stimuli to the responses of those who share in the composite act, a principle of co-ordination might be found which would not depend upon physiological differentiation. And one necessary psychological condition for this would be that the individual should have in some fashion present in his organism the tendencies to respond as the other participants in the act will respond. Much more than this would be involved, but this at least would be a necessary precondition. A social object answering to the responses of dif-



ferent individuals in a society could be conceived of as existing in the experiences of individuals in that society, if the different responses of these individuals in the complex acts could be found in sufficient degree in the natures of separate individuals to render them sensitive to the different values of the object answering to the parts of the act.

The cortex of the vertebrate central nervous system provides at least a part of the mechanism which might make this possible. The nervous currents from the column and the stem of the brain to the cortex can there bring the acts that go out from these lower centers into relation with each other so that more complex processes and adjustments can arise. The centers and paths of the cortex represent an indefinite number of possible actions; particularly they represent acts which, being in competition with each other, inhibit each other, and present the problem of organization and adjustment so that overt conduct may proceed. In the currents and cross-currents in the gray matter and its association fibers, there exist the tendencies to an indefinite number of responses. Answering to these adjustments are the objects organized into a field of action, not only spatially but temporally; for the tendency to grasp the distant object, while already excited, is so linked with the processes of approach that it does not get its overt expression till the intervening stretch is passed. In this vertebrate apparatus of conduct, then, the already excited predispositions to thousands of acts, that far transcend the outward accomplishments, furnish the inner attitudes implicating objects that are not immediate objectives of the individual's act.

But the cortex is not simply a mechanism. It is an organ that exists in fulfilling its function. If these tendencies to action which do not get immediate expression appear and persist, it is because they belong to the act that is going on. If, for example, property is a social object in the experience of men, as distinguished from the nut which the squirrel stores, it is because features of the food that one buys innervate the whole complex

of responses by which property is not only acquired, but respected and protected, and this complex so innervated is an essential part of the act by which the man buys and stores his food. The point is not that buying food is a more complicated affair than picking it up from the ground, but that exchange is an act in which a man excites himself to give by making an offer. An offer is what it is because the presentation is a stimulus to give. One cannot exchange otherwise than by putting one's self in the attitude of the other party to the bargain. Property becomes a tangible object, because all essential phases of property appear in the actions of all those involved in exchange, and appear as essential features of the individual's action.

The individual in such an act is a self. If the cortex has become an organ of social conduct, and has made possible the appearance of social objects, it is because the individual has become a self, that is, an individual who organizes his own response by the tendencies on the part of others to respond to his act. He can do this because the mechanism of the vertebrate brain enables the individual to take these different attitudes in the formation of the act. But selves have appeared late in vertebrate evolution. The structure of the central nervous system is too minute to enable us to show the corresponding structural changes in the paths of the brain. It is only in the behavior of the human animal that we can trace this evolution. It has been customary to mark this stage in development by endowing man with a mind, or at least with a certain sort of mind. As long as consciousness is regarded as a sort of spiritual stuff out of which are fashioned sensations and affections and images and ideas or significances, a mind as a locus of these entities is an almost necessary assumption, but when these contents have been returned to things, the necessity of quarters for this furniture has disappeared also.

It lies beyond the bounds of this paper to follow out the implications of this shift for logic and epistemology, but there is one phase of all so-called mental processes which is central

to this discussion, and that is self-consciousness. If the suggestions which I have made above should prove tenable, the self that is central to all so-called mental experience has appeared only in the social conduct of human vertebrates. It is just because the individual finds himself taking the attitudes of the others who are involved in his conduct that he becomes an object for himself. It is only by taking the rôles of others that we have been able to come back to ourselves. We have seen above that the social object can exist for the individual only if the various parts of the whole social act carried out by other members of the society are in some fashion present in the conduct of the individual. It is further true that the self can exist for the individual only if he assumes the rôles of the others. The presence in the conduct of the individual of the tendencies to act as others act may be, then, responsible for the appearance in the experience of the individual of a social object, i.e., an object answering to complex reactions of a number of individuals, and also for the appearance of the self. Indeed, these two appearances are correlative. Property can appear as an object only in so far as the individual stimulates himself to buy by a prospective offer to sell. Buying and selling are involved in each other. Something that can be exchanged can exist in the experience of the individual only in so far as he has in his own make-up the tendency to sell when he has also the tendency to buy. And he becomes a self in his experience only in so far as one attitude on his own part calls out the corresponding attitude in the social undertaking.

This is just what we imply in "self-consciousness." We appear as selves in our conduct in so far as we ourselves take the attitude that others take toward us, in these correlative activities. Perhaps as good an illustration of this as can be found is in a "right." Over against the protection of our lives or property, we assume the attitude of assent of all members in the community. We take the rôle of what may be called the "generalized other." And in doing this we appear as social objects, as

selves. It is interesting to note that in the development of the individual child, there are two stages which present the two essential steps in attaining self-consciousness. The first stage is that of play, and the second that of the game, where these two are distinguished from each other. In play in this sense, the child is continually acting as a parent, a teacher, a preacher, a grocery man, a policeman, a pirate, or an Indian. It is the period of childish existence which Wordsworth has described as that of "endless imitation." It is the period of Froebel's kindergarten plays. In it, as Froebel recognized, the child is acquiring the rôles of those who belong to his society. This takes place because the child is continually exciting in himself the responses to his own social acts. In his infant dependence upon the responses of others to his own social stimuli, he is peculiarly sensitive to this relation. Having in his own nature the beginning of the parental response, he calls it out by his own appeals. The doll is the universal type of this, but before he plays with a doll, he responds in tone of voice and in attitude as his parents respond to his own cries and chortles. This has been denominated imitation, but the psychologist now recognizes that one imitates only in so far as the so-called imitated act can be called out in the individual by his appropriate stimulation. That is, one calls or tends to call out in himself the same response that he calls out in the other.

The play antedates the game. For in a game there is a regulated procedure, and rules. The child must not only take the rôle of the other, as he does in the play, but he must assume the various rôles of all the participants in the game, and govern his action accordingly. If he plays first base, it is as the one to whom the ball will be thrown from the field or from the catcher. Their organized reactions to him he has imbedded in his own playing of the different positions, and this organized reaction becomes what I have called the "generalized other" that accompanies and controls his conduct. And it is this generalized other in his experience which provides him with a self. I can only

refer to the bearing of this childish play attitude upon so-called sympathetic magic. Primitive men call out in their own activity some simulacrum of the response which they are seeking from the world about. They are children crying in the night.

The mechanism of this implies that the individual who is stimulating others to response is at the same time arousing in himself the tendencies to the same reactions. Now, that in a complex social act which serves as the stimulus to another individual to his response is not as a rule fitted to call out the tendency to the same response in the individual himself. The hostile demeanor of one animal does not frighten the animal himself, presumably. Especially in the complex social reactions of the ants or termites or the bees, the part of the act of one form which does call out the appropriate reaction of another can hardly be conceived of as arousing a like reaction in the form in question, for here the complex social act is dependent upon physiological differentiation, such an unlikeness in structure exists that the same stimulus could not call out like responses. For such a mechanism as has been suggested, it is necessary to find first of all some stimulus in the social conduct of the members of an authentic group that can call out in the individual, that is responsible for it, the same response that it calls out in the other; and in the second place, the individuals in the group must be of such like structure that the stimulus will have the same value for one form that it has for the other. Such a type of social stimulus is found in the vocal gesture in a human society. The term gesture I am using to refer to that part of the act or attitude of one individual engaged in a social act which serves as the stimulus to another individual to carry out his part of the whole act. Illustrations of gestures, so defined, may be found in the attitudes and movements of others to which we respond in passing them in a crowd, in the turning of the head toward the glance of another's eye, in the hostile attitude assumed over against a threatening gesture, in the thousand and one different attitudes which we assume toward different modulations of the

human voice, or in the attitudes and suggestions of movements in boxers or fencers, to which responses are so nicely adjusted. It is to be noted that the attitudes to which I have referred are but stages in the act as they appear to others, and include expressions of countenance, positions of the body, changes in breathing rhythm, outward evidence of circulatory changes, and vocal sounds. In general these so-called gestures belong to the beginning of the overt act, for the adjustments of others to the social process are best made early in the act. Gestures are, then, the early stages in the overt social act to which other forms involved in the same act respond. Our interest is in finding gestures which can affect the individual that is responsible for them in the same manner as that in which they affect other individuals. The vocal gesture is at least one that assails our ears who make it in the same physiological fashion as that in which it affects others. We hear our own vocal gestures as others hear them. We may see or feel movements of our hands as others see or feel them, and these sights and feels have served in the place of the vocal gestures in the case of those who are congenitally deaf or deaf and blind. But it has been the vocal gesture that has pre-eminently provided the medium of social organization in human society. It belongs historically to the beginning of the act, for it arises out of the change in breathing rhythm that accompanies the preparation for sudden action, those actions to which other forms must be nicely adjusted.

If, then, a vocal gesture arouses in the individual who makes it a tendency to the same response that it arouses in another, and this beginning of an act of the other in himself enters into his experience, he will find himself tending to act toward himself as the other acts toward him. In our self-conscious experience we understand what he does or says. The possibility of this entering into his experience we have found in the cortex of the human brain. There the co-ordinations answering to an indefinite number of acts may be excited, and while holding each other in check enter into the neural process of adjustment which

leads to the final overt conduct. If one pronounces and hears himself pronounce the word "table," he has aroused in himself the organized attitudes of his response to that object, in the same fashion as that in which he has aroused it in another. We commonly call such an aroused organized attitude an idea, and the ideas of what we are saying accompany all of our significant speech. If we may trust to the statement in one of St. Paul's epistles, some of the saints spoke with tongues which had no significance to them. They made sounds which called out no response in those that made them. The sounds were without meaning. Where a vocal gesture uttered by one individual leads to a certain response in another, we may call it a symbol of that act; where it arouses in the man who makes it the tendency to the same response, we may call it a significant symbol. These organized attitudes which we arouse in ourselves when we talk to others are, then, the ideas which we say are in our minds, and in so far as they arouse the same attitudes in others, they are in their minds, in so far as they are self-conscious in the sense in which I have used that term. But it is not necessary that we should talk to another to have these ideas. We can talk to ourselves, and this we do in the inner forum of what we call thought. We are in possession of selves just in so far as we can and do take the attitudes of others toward ourselves and respond to those attitudes. We approve of ourselves and condemn ourselves. We pat ourselves upon the back and in blind fury attack ourselves. We assume the generalized attitude of the group, in the censor that stands at the door of our imagery and inner conversations, and in the affirmation of the laws and axioms of the universe of discourse. *Quod semper, quod ubique*. Our thinking is an inner conversation in which we may be taking the rôles of specific acquaintances over against ourselves, but usually it is with what I have termed the "generalized other" that we converse, and so attain to the levels of abstract thinking, and that impersonality, that so-called objectivity that we cherish. In this fashion, I conceive, have selves arisen in human behavior

and with the selves their minds. It is an interesting study, that of the manner in which the self and its mind arises in every child, and the indications of the corresponding manner in which it arose in primitive man. I cannot enter into a discussion of this. I do wish, however, to refer to some of the implications of this conception of the self for the theory of social control.

I wish to recur to the position, taken earlier in this paper, that, if we recognize that experience is a process continually passing into the future, objects exist in nature as the patterns of our actions. If we reduce the world to a fictitious instantaneous present, all objects fall to pieces. There is no reason to be found, except in an equally fictitious mind, why any lines should be drawn about any group of physical particles, constituting them objects. However, no such knife-edge present exists. Even in the so-called specious present there is a passage, in which there is succession, and both past and future are there, and the present is only that section in which, from the standpoint of action, both are involved. When we take this passage of nature seriously, we see that the object of perception is the existent future of the act. The food is what the animal will eat, and his refuge is the burrow where he will escape from his pursuer. Of course the future is, as future, contingent. He may not escape, but in nature it exists there as the counterpart of his act. So far as there are fixed relations there, they are of the past, and the object involves both, but the form that it has arises from the ongoing act. Evolutionary biology, in so far as it is not mere physics and chemistry, proceeds perhaps unwittingly upon this assumption, and so does social science in so far as it is not static. Its objects are in terms of the habitat, the environment. They are fashioned by reactions. I am merely affirming the existence of these objects, affirming them as existent in a passing universe answering to acts.

In so far as there are social acts, there are social objects, and I take it that social control is bringing the act of the individual into relation with this social object. With the control of the



object over the act, we are abundantly familiar. Just because the object is the form of the act, in this character it controls the expression of the act. The vision of the distant object is not only the stimulus to movement toward it. It is also, in its changing distance values, a continual control of the act of approach. The contours of the object determine the organization of the act of its seizure, but in this case the whole act is in the individual and the object is in his field of experience. Barring a breakdown in the structure or function, the very existence of the object insures its control of the act. In the social act, however, the act is distributed among a number of individuals. While there is or may be an object answering to each part of the act, existing in the experience of each individual, in the case of societies dependent upon physiological differentiation the whole object does not exist in the experience of any individual. The control may be exercised through the survival of those physiological differentiations that still carry out the life-process involved in the complex act. No complication of the act which did not mediate this could survive. Or we may take refuge in a controlling factor in the act, as does Bergson, but this is not the situation that interests us. The human societies in which we are interested are societies of selves. The human individual is a self only in so far as he takes the attitude of another toward himself. In so far as this attitude is that of a number of others, and in so far as he can assume the organized attitudes of a number that are co-operating in a common activity, he takes the attitudes of the group toward himself, and in taking this or these attitudes he is defining the object of the group, that which defines and controls the response. Social control, then, will depend upon the degree to which the individual does assume the attitudes of those in the group who are involved with him in his social activities. In the illustration already used, the man who buys controls his purchase from the standpoint of a value in the object that exists for him only in so far as he takes the attitude of a seller as well as a buyer. Value exists as an object only for individuals

within whose acts in exchange are present those attitudes which belong to the acts of the others who are essential to the exchange.

The act of exchange becomes very complicated; the degree to which all the essential acts involved in it enter into the acts of all those engaged therein varies enormously; and the control which the object, i.e., the value, exercises over the acts varies proportionately. The Marxian theory of state ownership of capital, i.e., of exclusive state production, is a striking illustration of the breakdown of such control. The social object, successful economic production, as presented in this theory, fails to assume the attitudes of individual initiative which successful economic production implies. Democratic government, on the theory of action through universal interest in the issues of a campaign, breaks down as a control, and surrenders the government largely to the political machine, whose object more nearly answers to the attitudes of the voters and the non-voters.

Social control depends, then, upon the degree to which the individuals in society are able to assume the attitudes of the others who are involved with them in common endeavor. For the social object will always answer to the act developing itself in self-consciousness. Besides property, all of the institutions are such objects, and serve to control individuals who find in them the organization of their own social responses.

The individual does not, of course, assume the attitudes of the numberless others who are in one way or another implicated in his social conduct, except in so far as the attitudes of others are uniform under like circumstances. One assumes, as I have said, the attitudes of generalized others. But even with this advantage of the universal over the multiplicity of its numberless instances, the number of different responses that enter into our social conduct seems to defy any capacity of any individual to assume the rôles which would be essential to define our social objects. And yet, though modern life has become indefinitely more complex than it was in earlier periods of human

history, it is far easier for the modern man than for his predecessor to put himself in the place of those who contribute to his necessities, who share with him the functions of government, or join with him in determining prices. It is not the number of participants, or even the number of different functions, that is of primary importance. The important question is whether these various forms of activities belong so naturally to the member of a human society that, in taking the rôle of another, his activities are found to belong to one's own nature. As long as the complexities of human society do not exceed those of the central nervous system, the problem of an adequate social object, which is identical with that of an adequate self-consciousness, is not that of becoming acquainted with the indefinite number of acts that are involved in social behavior, but that of so overcoming the distances in space and time, and the barriers of language and convention and social status, that we can converse with ourselves in the rôles of those who are involved with us in the common undertaking of life. A journalism that is insatiably curious about the human attitudes of all of us is the sign of the times. The other curiosities as to the conditions under which other people live, and work, and fight each other, and love each other, follow from the fundamental curiosity which is the passion of self-consciousness. We must be others if we are to be ourselves. The modern realistic novel has done more than technical education in fashioning the social object that spells social control. If we can bring people together so that they can enter into each other's lives, they will inevitably have a common object, which will control their common conduct.

The task, however, is enormous enough, for it involves not simply breaking down passive barriers such as those of distance in space and time and vernacular, but those fixed attitudes of custom and status in which our selves are imbedded. Any self is a social self, but it is restricted to the group whose rôles it assumes, and it will never abandon this self until it finds itself entering into the larger society and maintaining itself there.

The whole history of warfare between societies and within societies shows how much more readily and with how much greater emotional thrill we realize our selves in opposition to common enemies than in collaboration with them. All over Europe, and more specifically at Geneva, we see nationals with great distrust and constant rebounds trying to put themselves in each other's places and still preserve the selves that have existed upon enmities, that they may reach the common ground where they may avoid the horror of war, and meliorate unendurable economic conditions. A Dawes Plan is such a social object, coming painfully into existence, that may control the conflicting interests of hostile communities, but only if each can in some degree put himself in the other's place in operating it. The World Court and the League of Nations are other such social objects that sketch out common plans of action if there are national selves that can realize themselves in the collaborating attitudes of others.

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