

Classical Sociology Theory
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Lecture 51
Mead on Self

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Mead on Self



Welcome back to the class. Let us continue our discussion on Mead. In the previous class, we discussed Mead's arguments about mind and we saw that in complete disagreement with both, behaviorists as well as with psychologists. Mead argues for an understanding of a mind, which is seen as a process, which is seen as a, as emerging from social interaction. So, for Mead, emergence of a mind in the absence of society is impossible. So that is an extremely important argument that we discussed in the previous class.

For Mead, these concepts of self as well as mind, they do not, they are not kind of completely cut off from the rest of the society, rather they emerge as a product of human interaction. And we had a discussion about his conception about mind. Mind, he understands it as a process, not as an entity. And he argues that when a child is born, the mind is not developed and the development of the mind takes place in different phases. And he has something more exciting to say about a self and in this class, we are going to discuss, we are going to look at what are Mead's arguments about the concept of self.

Again, you know that this term, self is used very, very we use it quite casually all the time; we talk about ourselves, yourself, your self-consciousness; your, a host of occasions we use the term self. But what is the sociological understanding or what is an understanding of self that emerges from an interactionist perspective?

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The Social Nature of Self



- As a “social behaviorist,” Mead emphasized that the capacity to view oneself as an object in the field of experience is a type of learned behavior. This behavior is learned through interaction with others:

“The self is something which has a development; it is not initially there, at birth, but arises in the process of social experience and activity, that is, develops in the given individual as a result of his relations to that process as a whole and to other individuals within that process”.

- Self emerges from the capacity to use language and to take the role of the other.



So Mead again, emphasizes on the social nature of self. I repeated it several times that for Mead, both, self as well as mind are the products of social interaction. As a social behaviorist, Mead emphasized that the capacity to view oneself as an object in the field of experience is a type of learned behavior. This behavior is learned through interaction with others.

So, the capacity to view oneself as an object; we, I mentioned it in the previous class that sometimes we congratulate ourselves, is not it? Sometimes we feel so angry at ourselves, sometimes we feel so pity about ourselves, is not it? So, when you talk about yourself to a third person, to somebody else, so you are actually evaluating yourself, you are, you are speaking as if you are able to see yourself as another person and then you are describing that.

When you say that okay, I felt so sorry then; you are describing a person as if you are not the person whom you are talking about, just you are able to describe yourself, the way you describe any other object. And that is why he says that you can, oneself as an object in the field of experience, and it is a type of a learned behavior, it does not come automatically.

In the case of this wolf, children whom we discussed the other day; that the children who are reared by a pack of wolves, these children do not have the ability to or talk about themselves, because, for that wolf child, the immediate members around its society are wolves, who do not interact with it in a given sense.

So you talk about this field of experience as a type of learned behavior. This behavior is learned through interaction with others. So this is again a quotation from, quote from Mead, let us read it. "The self is something which has a development; it is not initially there at birth, but arises in the process of social experience and activity, that is, develops in the given individual as the result of his relations to that process as a whole and to other individuals within that process".

So it is as is emphatically arguing that this notion of self does not arise automatically, rather it emerges only through the process of social interaction. And self emerges from the capacity to use language and to take the role of the other. We discussed that this point yesterday, in the previous class, when we discussed about the ability of human beings to use significant symbols, and especially language is the most important one and the ability to take the role of the other.

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- Mead viewed the social self as emerging from a process in which individuals read the gestures of others, or “take their attitudes,” and derive an image, or picture, of themselves as a certain type of object in a situation. This image of oneself then acts as a behavioral stimulus, calling out certain responses in the individual.



“The individual experiences himself, not directly, but only indirectly, from the particular standpoints of other individual members of the same social group, or from the generalized standpoint of the social group as a whole to which he belongs . . . and he becomes an object to himself only by taking the attitudes of other individuals toward himself within a social environment or context of experience and behavior in which both he and they are involved”.



Mead viewed the social self as emerging from a process in which individuals read the gestures of others or take their attitudes and derive an image of pictures of themselves as a certain type of object in a situation. This image of oneself then acts as a behavioral stimulus, calling out certain responses in the individual.

So Mead views, viewed the social self as emerging from a process in which individuals read the gestures of others, or take their attitude, and derive an image or pictures of themselves as certain type of object in a situation. And this is the most crucial argument that he talks about. We mentioned C. H. Cooley's Looking-Glass Self theory, and Mead is saying almost something similar to that.

So he is saying that when you develop an idea about self; who are you, if you were to answer this question; who are you, what kind of person are you? And we tend to answer this question not solely by looking at ourselves, rather we look at others and then try to understand how they perceive us. Or in other words, we see our own reflection in others, and then we try to understand that.

So he view self as emerging from a process in which individuals read the gestures of others or take their attitude. You look at the other person, the other person could be your partner, it could

be a teacher, it could be your friends, it could be your neighbors, it could be your colleagues, and these are the people who really matter to you in your everyday interaction.

You look at them, and then on the basis of their reaction, you tend to create an image for yourself and derive an image or picture of themselves as a certain type of object in a situation. This image of oneself then acts as a behavioral stimulus, calling out certain responses in the individual. So you get a crystallized idea about who you are. And again, I repeat, this crystallized idea of who you are is derived from the response of the others. So let us read again Mead, it is Mead's own writing.

“The individual experiences himself, not directly, but only indirectly, from the particular standpoints of other individual members of the same social group, or from the generalized standpoint of the social groups as a whole to which he belongs. And he becomes an object to himself only by taking the attitudes of other individuals towards him within a social environment or the context of experience and behavior in which both he and they are involved.

So, you are tend to create a sense of yourself by evaluating the response of others towards you, and who are these people? It could be your classmates, it could be your neighbors, it could be your family members, it could be your teachers, it could be your parents, people whom you, people who, really matter to you; the significant other. Not anybody, not somebody who just who is a stranger to you that hardly matters.

But for an individual, especially when the child grows up, there is a very interesting concept called as this significant other. Who are the significant other? Significant other are the people whom we consider as simply as significant, as important. And these people play a very important role in we formulating an idea about ourselves. So this, their significance is not only because they are significant, but we derive an impression about ourselves, we derive an understanding about ourselves by looking at their reaction towards us.

So that is why when as a teacher, you get an impression that okay, you are you are a popular teacher, or you are not a popular teacher. As a child, as a son, how does your family takes, looks

at you, you derive that kind of a sense. So, and this is possible only when you as well as your immediate others, your significant others share the same social environment.

They must share the same social environment, their ideas must be similar, their social milieu must be same, their cultural and social value systems must be same, must be at least similar, only then or in other words, there must be some kind of a compatibility in terms of the roles and expectations, only then, you are able to derive that.

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The Structure of Self



- Mead appeared to use the notion of "self" in two different ways. One usage involves viewing self as a "transitory image" of oneself as an object in a particular situation.
- Second, in contrast with this conceptualization, Mead also viewed self as a structure, or configuration of typical habitual meanings toward self, that people carry to all situations. For "after a self has arisen, it in a certain sense provides for itself its social experiences."
- The process of deriving self images in situations leads, over time, to the crystallization of a more permanent, transsituational set of attitudes toward oneself as a certain type of object.



Now, Mead gets into this whole notion of structures of self. Mead appeared to us the notion of self in two different ways. One usage involves viewing self as a transitory image of oneself as an object of a particular situation. Self, he uses two very interesting, in two different interesting ways. One as an object, as something which has a kind of an essence as a trans, though it is transitory image, as a kind of an image.

Second one, in contrast with this conceptualization, Mead also viewed self as a structure or a configuration of typical habitual meaning towards self that people carry to all situations. So one is a kind of a transitory image, it is an image in transition, it is nothing concrete about it; nothing, essentialistic about it. It is a kind of a, you evolve, it is an image, which is always in flux; it is always in transition, it is a transitory image.

And the second understanding is more like a structure or a reconfiguration of typical habitual means toward self that people carry in all situations. For after a self has arisen, it is a certain sense provides for itself, its social experience. So he talks about after a self has arisen, it in a certain sense provides for itself a social experience.

So it is also important for us to know that you cannot have a very, very loose and very fluid kind of self, it is very difficult to live like that, rather you because then, it leads to whole kind of uncertainty, whole kind of anxiety, you do not know who you are, you do not know what are your positions, you do not know what are your priorities, your taste, your ideas; you do not know what to expect from others. So that is impossible for a person to live.

So Mead argues that, after a self has arisen, it is a certain sense in a sense, provides for itself a social experience. So you create a kind of a crystallized idea about who you are and that provides a kind of a experience in itself to understand how you would behave, why that you behave in such a manner, and all these arguments.

The process of deriving self-images in situation leads over time to the crystallization of a more permanent trans-institutional set of attitude towards oneself as a certain type of object. So this is what I mentioned as this crystallized self; this term is very important, a some kind of a solidified self, some kind of crystallized self. So when you say that somebody is very arrogant, he has an attitude, so that person has a very strong understanding of self which he is not really ready to adjust with, or change with.

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- Anomia
- Although elementary selves are unified by a complete self, people who experience a highly contradictory social environment with disunity in the social process will also experience difficulty in developing a complete self, or a relatively stable and consistent set of attitudes toward themselves as a certain type of object.
 - Mead's conceptualization is behavioristic in that he viewed seeing oneself as an object as a behavior unique to humans. Moreover, like other objects in one's environment, the self is a stimulus to behavior. Thus, as people develop a consistent view of themselves as a type of object—that is, as their self reveals a structure—their responses to this stable stimulus take on a consistency.



Although elementary selves are unified by a complete selves, people who experience a highly contradictory social environment with disunity in the social process, with disunity in the social process will also experience difficulty in developing a complete self or a relatively stable and consistent set of attitudes towards themselves as a certain type of object.

So, people, you know that we have elementary selves, different types of selves, and they evolved into a kind of a complete self. But for people who experience a highly contradictory social environment with disunity in the social process will also experience difficulty in developing a complete self.

And this is something, maybe you can come up with this notion of Anomie of Durkheim, where there are no clear-cut norms and rules about how one should behave because you do not know how to behave; there are very, very different kinds of, you are exposed to completely different kind of social environment; very, very different kinds of social expectations.

You are, at the same time you are a member of a family, then you are a member of a criminal gang, you are also a student who was supposed to study in a very disciplined place. And the values that are celebrated in a classroom that your obedience, your silence, your intelligence is not something that is celebrated in among your, among in a criminal gang; in the family it is different.

So in such a situation, this kind of contradictory expectations from different section of people will also lead to the difficulty in developing a complete self or a relatively stable and consistent set of attitude towards themselves as a type of object. Some you will have very complicated personality. You must have seen that people with very complicated set of personality, people with who are not kind of settled sense of self.

People who are extremely complicated, people who are extremely contradictory in many of their ideas. So that is why Mead argues that this this kind of a self emerges when somebody is expected to, is exposed to a social system where there is more or less, a kind of consensus or stability in terms of what the social norms are.

Meads conceptualization is behavioristic. In that, he viewed seeing oneself as an object as a behavior unique to humans; we discuss that. Moreover, like other objects in one's environment, the self is a stimulus to behavior, thus as people develop a consistent view of themselves as a type of object, that is, as the self reveals a structure, their response to this stable stimulus take on a consistency.

So once you assume a kind of a more crystallized notion of self, and then that provides you some kind of an anchoring, what kind of a person; are you a person who will get angry very fast, or are you a person who has a larger understanding of things so that you do not get angry? When you drive on the highway, if somebody does something, some other motorists does something, so are you a person who gets angry very soon, are you a person who is susceptible to this road rages which can lead to quite a lot of very bad consequence?

Or no, you are a person with a lot of patience, other people have kind of complimented your personal quality like patience and maturity, then you tend to look at that, you will maybe neglect that person who is trying to challenge you on the road. You will ignore him, and then you know that I am not such a person who will fall for your, temptations or your provocations and I know who I am. So that, it actually leads, it provides a kind of orientation for your own understanding about yourself.

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Phases of the Self: the 'I' and the 'Me'



- Although a unified self-conception lends considerable stability and predictability to overt behaviors, there is always an element of spontaneity and unpredictability to action. This is inherent in the “phases of self,” which Mead conceptualized in terms of the *I* and *me*.
- The image that a person derives from his or her behavior in a situation is what Mead termed the *me*. As such, the “me” represents the attitudes of others and the broader community as these influence an individual’s retrospective interpretation of his or her behavior.
- “I,” is the actual emission of behavior.
- “I” can only be known in experience because we must wait for “me” images to know just what the “I” did. People cannot know until after they have acted (“I”) just how the expectations of others (“me”) are actually carried out.



Now, a very, very important, a central theme of Mead’s argument about self is his ideas about the I and the me; extremely important, extremely popular. This is a very important lesson or very important session, section in the analysis of Mead’s sociology. So although a unified self-conception lends considerable stability and predictability to overt behaviors, there is always an element of spontaneity and unpredictability to action. This is inherent in the faces of self which Mead conceptualizes in terms of the I and the Me.

We know that if we go by the Mead’s argument that everybody has a self and then the self is very, it is a crystallized self so that you always reflect over other thing, but is it how we behave or is it how ordinary people behave all the time? If that were the case, then this kind of an animal instincts or our instinctual behavior that, our extreme emotions like getting anger, getting so happy at some time, getting so sad at sometimes. So we must have been able to overcome all these very strong emotions. The animal instinct, sexual emotions, for example, sexual instincts, for example; sometimes.

But that is not, that is not how it works. So sometimes, even when we say that we are all civilized, we know how to behave in our own personal lives, we know that there are occasions where we have acted in a unreflexive one. We did not really think about it, we acted and later we thought about it. Later, we must have repented that okay, we should not have done that. You lose

your cool, you lose your temper, or you do something completely unacceptable in other situations.

You would not have done it and you repent a lot. You realize that why did I do that? You curse yourself, you get mad at yourself. So that he says is because there is something called as an I in the self. He makes a very interesting distinction between the I and the me. And the I is the faces of self which Mead conceptualizes in terms of the I and the me. So let us see what is this I and the me.

The image that a person derives from his or her behavior in a situation is what Mead terms as me. The image that a person derives from his or her behavior in a situation is what means Mead terms the me. As such the me represents the attitudes of others and the broader community as this influences an individual's retrospective interpretation of his or her behavior.

So whatever we discussed so far as this nature of self is what actually me means. The me is our generalized impression that we derive from others about us. That is, we look at ourselves as an object; that we evaluate what others think about us, and then we kind of reconciled with that image. Whereas the I is the actual emission of behavior. I can only be known in experience because we must wait for the me imagine to, me images to know just what the I did. People cannot know until after they have acted I, just how the expectations of me are actually carried out. So what is this I and me?

I is the unreflective action that we do, it is a kind of a reflexive action. I am using these two terms reflexive and reflective. Reflexive, I am using as if the kind of reflexes. When somebody hits you here, the body kind of shudders, that is kind of a reflexive action. The reflective, you reflect over certain thing. You think about certain things again and again. So the I is that spontaneous reflexive action. When somebody, you are in a heated argument and then you suddenly gives a punch to somebody, you lose your cool or you behave in a rather unconscious way, not a very well thought out action. So that is why the I part of your self becomes evident only after that it is done.

And what is being done is evaluated by the me, and then it takes a position, whether it is good to appreciate or to criticize, to curse, or to rebuke; whatever be that me does it later but the I is the kind of this animalistic instinct, the kind of unreflexive things that we do. It need not be negative all the time. It need not be negative all the time. It could be positive as well but it is kind of a very the actual emission of behavior without much of a reflection.

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- People act; they view themselves as objects; they assess the consequences of their actions; they interpret others' reactions to their actions; and they resolve how to act next. Then, they act again, calling forth new self-images of their actions.
- He left room for spontaneity in human action; if the "I" can be known only in experience, or through the "me," one's actions are never completely circumscribed, nor are actions wholly predictable.
- It gave Mead a way of visualizing the process of self-control.
- The "I" and "me" phases of self gave Mead a way to conceptualize variations in the extent to which the expectations of others and the broader community constrain action.



People act, they view themselves as objects. They assess the consequences of their action. They interpret others reactions to their action, and they resolve how to act next. Then they act again calling forth how self-image of their actions. This is what exactly what we do, is it not? We, when we sit with somebody else, we talk something, we very carefully assess their both verbal as well as nonverbal communication. There are very interesting theories that people mostly go over your nonverbal communication rather than your verbal, which I do not know whether it is correct or not.

So but we constantly evaluate the other person, especially if that person is whom you do not know much. If you are meeting for the first time or if you are not, if you do not know him for a long time, then you are even more conscious, you are even more cautious to understand how the other person thinks, what he must be thinking, his or her facial expressions, the gestures, the kind of words that they use, and then that actually further stimulates your own actions.

So people act, they view themselves as objects, they assess the consequences of their action, they interpret other's reaction to their action, and they resort how to act next. Then they act again calling forth new self-images of their action. So Mead left room for spontaneity in human action. So that is what I mentioned earlier, if this I, the component of I, were missing human action then we all would have been extremely matured, extremely some people like who are programmed people, who would, people always think after, people who would behave after so much of thinking, but it did not take place. Mead left room for spontaneity in human action.

If the I can be known only in experience or through the me, one's action are never completely circumscribed, or nor are actions wholly predictable, that is, that is the most important point. So there is always a tussle between the me and I. The I acts on the basis of instincts, I is highly unpredictable, it is something like it is uncircumscribed, it is something which is not completely contained, it is not a process of your reflection. Whereas the me is more settled, it is evaluative, other thing.

So that is why there is some kind of a spontaneity. That is why a human being, there is some amount of spontaneity in our life. We sometimes, we do certain kind of out of impulses, it could be violent, it could be nonviolent, anything whatever be that. But that element of unpredictable impulse is something what is important according to Mead.

It gave Mead a way of visualizing the process of self-control; how does one control oneself. So the I and the me phases of self gave me the way to re-conceptualize variations in the extent to which the expectations of others and the broader community constrain action. So you know that the me is always trying to evaluate your actions on the basis of what is expected from the others.

And you know these expectations could vary significantly in a community where violence is very much appreciated, where violence is very much appreciated, and encouraged. Then the mean will be always ask you, push you to engage in violence, I am not saying that me is always peaceful. This me could be extremely violent, if you are living in a society, community where violence is encouraged and appreciated then the me would always want you to be violent.

Then not engaging in violence could be an act of I, you are afraid, you are so scared. Then the me would ask you to be courageous and then unleash violence. So this idea that the I and me face of self gave Mead a way to conceptualize variations in the extent to which the expectations of others and the broader community constrained action.

So what are the things that we do in our every day? We know that in most of the time 90 percent or 99 percent of the time, we do things that are expected of us by others. We know what are the things that we are supposed to do in the classroom, at your house, in the marketplace, in a bus, in a train, in a public rally; we know, what are the things that are expected of you, and the me is there always as somebody who is owns, who is trying to take control over you, somebody who is trying to observe you.

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The Genesis of Self



- For self to develop, a human infant must acquire the capacity to use significant symbols. Without this ability, it is not possible to role-take with others and thereby develop an image of oneself by interpreting the gestures of others.
- The use of significant symbols, the ability to role-take, and the behavioral capacities of mind are all preconditions for the development of self, particularly a more stable self-conception, or "unified" self.
- Mead visualized self as developing in three stages, each marked by an increased capacity to role-take with a wider audience of others.
- The first stage is *play*, which is marked by a very limited capacity to role-take. A child can assume the perspective of only one or two others at a time.



So, Mead then comes to this interesting question about the genesis of self, something similar to the genesis of mind, Mead also is talking about the genesis of self. For the self to develop, a human infant must acquire the capacity to use significant symbols, we discussed this in the previous class.

When a child is born, it only cries or it is only able to, it only knows how to cry. It does not know whether, when it cries whether it will get milk, nothing is known, it only cries. And after some time, the child realizes that when it cries, it is taken care of or when somebody, when there is nobody around the child, the child will begin to cry.

Maybe initially, without any understanding but later, the child understands that when it cries, other people will come. So without, and later, this significant symbols reaches much more complexity and it uses a lot of gestures, it uses a lot of language; maybe small words initially and then sentences, and of course, as the child grows up, it uses quite a lot of complex languages.

So without this ability, it is not possible to role-take with others and thereby develop an image of oneself by interpreting the gestures of others. This already be repeated, we discuss this a repetition. So we use complicated language and this complicated language is able to send out a common meaning, set of meaning that is understood uniformly by others. It is not only to one single person but uniformly understood by everybody.

The use of significant symbols, the ability to role-take, and the behavioral capacities of mind are all preconditions for the development of self, particularly a more stable self-conception or unified self. So this ability to use significant symbols or language, then ability to role-take, and the behavioral capacity of mind are, they are all precondition. Unless, until you have all these things in place, you cannot have a self.

Mead visualized self as developing in three stages, each marked by an increased capacity to role-take with a wider audience of others. So this again, a very important contribution of Mead, he talks about play, the game, and then this a significant others. So he says that in there are three stages, and these three stages, the complexity increases, and along with the growth of the child, and these complex stages are very important phases through which a child develops a concrete sense of self.

So the first stage is play, which is marked by a very limited capacity to role-take. A child can assume the perspective of one, only one, or two others at a time. Very simple kind of play that

we can play with infants or we can play with toddlers. You push, you throw a ball, the child also throws the ball back, and the child knows that he or she supposed to throw the ball back at you. Or it does a particular activity, it also might expect you to do the same. So the child understands what he or she supposed to do, the child also understands you also supposed to do that.

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- The second stage is what Mead termed the *game* in which individuals can role-take with multiple others at the same time.
- Children begin to see themselves as objects in an organized field, and they begin to control and regulate other people's responses to themselves and to others in order to facilitate the coordination of activity.
- In both the play and game situations, individuals view themselves in relation to specific others. By role-taking with specific others lodged in particular roles, individuals derive images of themselves from the viewpoint of these others.



And the second stage is what Mead refers to as the game in which individuals can role-take with multiple others at the same time. So when it comes to a game, you are supposed to, at the same time, you will be able to occupy the roles of different people, you will be able to play the roles of people in different positions.

For example, the example that Mead gave us about something like a football game. A player, a good player must be able to play at different positions in a game. If a goalkeeper or a central forward, or a defender, or a winger. So, on depending upon the requirements, a person must be able to take different positions and then play according. So here the ability is not only to understand what you are supposed to do, but then what you are not supposed to do when you assume another's role or another person's role. You must be able to identify what are roles played by others and then act accordingly.

And children begin to see themselves as objects in an organized field and they begin to control and regulate others people's responses to themselves, and to others in order to facilitate the coordination of activities. So this is what when you talk about the game, children begin to see themselves as objects in an organized field. And they begin to control and regulate other people's response to themselves, and to others in order to facilitate a coordination of the activity.

In both, play and game situations, individuals view themselves in relation to specific others. In a, in the time of game as well as in the time of play, they are talking about the specific others; whose role are you taking? By role-taking with specific others lodged in particular roles, individuals derive images of themselves from the viewpoint of these others.

So when, for example, when a child takes the role of a mother, the child understands that what is the role of a mother; what that particular mother, his, the child's mother is expected to do. Or what does that particular mother does, the child tries to imitate that. That is a time when you see a child is imitating a father or imitating a mother. And here, but this imitation is only restricted to that particular role.

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- Third stage is role-taking with the generalized other. He saw the generalized other as a "community of attitudes" among members of an ongoing social collective. When individuals can view themselves in relation to this community of attitudes and then adjust their conduct in accordance with the expectations of these attitudes, they have reached the third stage in the development of self. They can now role-take with the generalized other.
- Without the capacity to view oneself as an object in relation to the generalized other, behavior could only be situation specific.
- The capacity to take the role of multiple and diverse generalized others—from the perspective of a small group to that of an entire society—enables individuals to engage in the processes of self-evaluation, self-criticisms, and self-control from the perspective of what Mead termed society.



And the third stage is, according to Mead, third stage is the role-taking with the generalized other. He saw the generalized other as a community of attitudes among members of an ongoing social collective. When individuals can view themselves in relation to this community of attitudes and then adjust their conduct in accordance with the expectations of these attitudes, they have reached the third stage in the development of self. They can now role-take with the generalized other.

So this is the most important aspect when he talks about a generalized other. So generalized other is not one particular person or the other particular person but a people in general, and it is a community of attitudes towards you. How should you dress up? For a boy or for a girl, what constitutes this decent dressing? What constitutes this decent dressing? It is a very interesting example.

You know, this decent dressing has very different connotations in different places, very different connotations. Or very, people with a lot of discipline, how do you display discipline in a public place? How do you display obedience in a public place? How do you appear to be a well-behaved boy, a well-behaved girl? How are you supposed to appear like a well-behaved girl?

Are you expected to laugh out loudly? Are you expected to sit in different positions with cross-legged? Is it a symbol of a disciplined girl or a disciplined boy? What kind of dresses are we supposed to wear? Can we wear too revealing dresses and then in a place where you are supposed to be seen as a well-mannered, disciplined, and traditional in that sense?

So we know that we are responding to, in such situations we behave in particular expected way. We know that we are behaving not towards a particular person, we are not really afraid of, say, one elderly man who might ask you why are you wearing such short dress; we are not responding to that particular person, but we assume that there is a general attitude in that particular situation, that particular context which expects you to dress up in a particular manner or behave in a particular manner.

Not to laugh out, not talk very loudly or to show certain kinds of gestures of respect, and other thing. So this is the most important face what Mead argues is that when person understands what is expected of these generalized others and that he says is that is the pinnacle, it is the complete form of behavior.

So it is not what one understands what one is supposed to do, it is not that what one understands, what one or two other people supposed to do, but you understand how there is a general attitude, a community of attitude and how you are supposed to respond to that. So they can now role-take

with the generalized other. Without the capacity to view oneself as an object in relation to generalized other, behavior could only be situation-specific.

And children will find it very difficult to adapt and adjust with different situations, especially when fast-changing scenarios. Children without this ability will be able to behave “properly” in their own family, but once they are taken out in a different setting, they will be completely perplexed. So the capacity to take the role of multiple and diverse generalized others from the perspective of a small group or to that of an entire society, enables individuals to engage in the process of self-evaluation, self-criticism, and self-control from the perspective of what Mead termed the society.

So we are, from the mind, through the self we have reached the concept of society. So the capacity to take the role of multiple and diverse generalized others, when you go out for a picnic or when you go out for a just to go to the to the town, go to the market, how do you dress up? How do you dress up?

This you know is you, every day we do it very unconsciously. But we do it unconsciously, but by then, it has already crystallized. We know that we are supposed to be seen in certain manner, we are supposed to be seen in certain manner. And in whole lot of example, I do not think that I need to give you examples. So we are supposed to be seen in certain manner and that ability something extremely important.

From the perspective of a small group of people to that of an entire society, enables individuals to engage in the process of self-evaluation, self-criticism, and self-control from the perspective of what Mead terms as the society. So this society is the larger generalized other. And so, by now, I think it is clear for you that Mead is arguing vehemently that without this generalized other, without this community of attitude, you cannot really form a self. And without a clear self, you cannot form a clear mind.

So that is the beauty of his argument about his mind, self, and society, which all revolve around this idea of social interaction. How the individual mind interact with others and with the larger

society and how they mutually constitute? So this argument, Mead's argument about society, we will take up in the coming class. So see you for the next class. Thank you.

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