The Hobbesian Microcosm: On the Dialectics of the Self in Social Theory*

Donald L. CARVETH York University, Glendon College

If Parsons is not guilty of holding an over-socialized conception of man, Wrong's critique does apply to the work of the "reality-constructionists" and "symbolic interactionists." In underemphasizing Mead's "biologic individual" or "I," contemporary sociological social psychology manages to evade the Hobbesian problem and, hence, amounts to a largely disembodied dialectic. By way of contrast, the compatibility of the Meadian and Freudian perspectives is stressed and the need for further development of a psychoanalytic sociology reaffirmed.

In his now classic paper on "The Oversocialized Conception of Man in Modern Sociology," Wrong (1961) argues that modern sociology fails to honestly confront the problem of social order by embracing images of man and society which deny the meaningfulness of the problem. When it appears as the Marxist question concerning the social macrocosm and the processes of interpersonal and intergroup conflict and cooperation, the problem is evaded by the evolution of an over-integrated view of society which is blind to the existence of conflict and, hence, to the problematic nature of social integration. When it appears in a socio-psychological mode as the Hobbesian question concerning the process of socialization and the intra-personal conflicts it establishes in the microcosm of the self (which make the continuance of stable interpersonal relations problematic), the problem is evaded by the evolution of an oversocialized conception of man. Once again, a real problem—which in this case concerns what in Cooley's (1964 [1902]) terms are the relations between "human nature and the social order"-is made to disappear by denying the existence of any human nature which is not itself entirely a product of the social order.

In so dismissing the Hobbesian question, modern sociology is merely remaining faithful to Cooley whose theory of the false separation of individual and society and, therefore, of the spuriousness of the problem of the individual versus society, remains the paradigm for the repression of the Hobbesian problem from sociological consciousness. It is my aim in this essay to stress once more the significance of this problem and to contribute to an understanding of how so much of contemporary sociological theory concerning socialization and personality could have come to perceive it as a spurious one, to

pride itself on its freedom from any conception of a human nature which is not thoroughly socially determined, and to embrace such a thoroughly oversocialized conception of man.

THE PARSONS-WRONG DEBATE REVISITED

In accepting Wrong's thesis that "Much of our current theory offers an oversocialized view of man in answering the Hobbesian question" (1961: 184), I wish to exempt from this critique the work of Parsons (1962; 1964) to which Wrong certainly intended his critique to apply. In a major statement on this issue, Parsons begins by pointing out that, especially in America, interpreters of Freud's work have emphasized "the power of the individual's instinctual needs and the deleterious effects of their frustration" (1964 [1958]: 78) by society and culture. In emphasizing the role of "object-relations" and the mechanisms of identification, object-cathexis and internalization or introjection, Parsons is not rejecting the valid insights contained in that side of Freud's work which emphasizes conflict between instinctual needs and social pressures, but simply endeavouring to supplement the former, rather "undersocialized" view with one which more adequately takes account of the profound importance of social learning in personality development, even at its very earliest stages. While arguing that "the interpretation of the id as a manifestation of 'pure instinct' is, in Freud's own terms, untenable, Parsons goes on to state that although "it also is structured through internalized object-relations," the id is the "primary channel of transmission of instinctual energy and more particularized impulses into the personality" (1964 [1958]: 81).

While an oversocialized view of man would necessarily deny the existence or the importance of inborn patterns, or of the organism as such, in personality development, and would regard the personality as essentially an epiphenomenon of

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social processes, Parsons states that "the personality is not a mere epiphenomenon of society"; and, on the issue of innate responses, he concludes "That these and other patterns are definitely inborn is not to be doubted" (1964 [1958]: 82-83). Parsons is clearly aware of the somatic character of the id, of the distinction between instinctual and learned impulses, and of the existence of intrapsychic conflicts. In stressing the early social shaping of instinctual impulses and the acquisition of purely learned inclinations which together constitute the id. Parsons is arguing that intrapsychic conflict must not necessarily be conceived as the socially learned versus the innate, culture versus nature, or society versus the individual. Most of what constitutes the conflict between superego and ego on the one hand, and id on the other, is conflict between those impulses which have been shaped in aim and object or acquired completely in early social learning, and those which have been learned at later stages (1964 [1958]: 110).

In his rejoinder to Wrong's critique, Parsons argues that "Wrong falls for the old fallacy that the id of the late Freud is a simple expression of biological 'instinct'" (1962: 74). Since I believe that Wrong is not guilty of what Parsons wishes to call "Wrong's fallacy," I prefer to refer to it as the biologistic fallacy. But the important point here is that in repudiating this fallacy and in elucidating that non-reductive perspective which recognizes both repression and the human need for cultural learning, Parsons at the same time stresses that "Of course there are basic problems of continuing and, at the extreme, ineradicable conflict between the 'individual' and 'society'" (1962: 73; Parsons' emphasis), and goes on to state that there is no reason to depreciate the importance of "biological" and "psychological" factors resisting socialization. Clearly, this is not an oversocialized view of man.

Just as Parsons is not guilty of Wrong's accusation, Wrong is not guilty of Parsons'. Having quoted Dollard (1935) to the effect that Freud did not conceive of the "instincts" as having biologically-fixed goals but receive their objects through social learning, Wrong argues that "The drives or 'instincts' of psychoanalysis, far from being fixed dispositions to behave in a particular way, are utterly subject to social channeling and transformation. . . ." (1961: 192.) In arguing that "To Freud man is a social animal without being entirely a socialized animal," Wrong points out that "His very social nature is the source of conflicts and antagonisms that create resistance to socialization. . . ." (1961: 192.) Clearly, Wrong does not naively identify the forces which resist socialization with "pure instinct." In pointing out that "All cultures, as Freud contended, do violence to man's socialized bodily drives," Wrong is careful to qualify "bodily drives" with "socialized," and to stress that "this in no sense means that men could possibly exist without culture or independently of society" (1961: 192-193). In his reply to Parsons' rejoinder, Wrong (1963) repudiates the biologistic fallacy and the notion of a culturally autonomous "natural man" even more explicitly.

But if Wrong is not guilty of the biologistic fallacy, the mythology of "natural man" is still evident in contemporary manifestations of the Hobbesian and Rousseauian perspectives. the Hobbesian camp (the modern representatives of which are the later, increasingly pessimistic and instinctivist Freud (1961 [1930]) and such neo-Darwinists as Lorenz (1963) among a host of others), man is an instinctually aggressive animal who, if permitted to act according to his "innately depraved" nature, would engage in a Hobbesian "war of each against all" in which life would be "nasty, brutish and short." From this premise the conclusion is drawn that men ought to subordinate themselves to an authority powerful enough to establish and enforce collective orderat least until men are capable of sufficient rationality to appreciate the necessity for inhibition of their impulses and to control themselves. For the Hobbesians, human evil is "natural," and "artificial" cultural inhibitions are the essential foundation for both individual and collective goodness. For those Freudians who follow this element of the later Freud's pessimistic instinctivism—an outlook which it must be admitted was softened somewhat by the presence of Eros as a counter to Thanatos in the primal structure of human nature 1—inhibition of man's natural destructiveness is essential; the only alternatives to repression, which in relegating the destructive instincts to unconsciousness simultaneously conditions a return of the repressed in the distorted form of neurotic symptomatology, are rational and conscious suppression by the ego and sublimation.

On the other hand, there are the contemporary Rousseauians who see human nature as naturally benign—either as instinctually oriented towards "mutual aid" and altruistic cooperativeness, or as

¹As Fenichel (1945: 12) has pointed out, Freud's Trieb, which refers to impulses shaped in aim and object under environmental influence, has been mistranslated as "instinct"—a concept which implies an inherited and unchangeable pattern. Freud seems to have been ambiguous on this issue. While much of his work stresses the early social shaping of the impulses, his later work exhibited an increasingly instinctivist tone. But if we disagree with the later Freud's view that "the inclination to aggression is an original, self-subsisting instinctual disposition in man' (1961 [1930]: 122), we need not go to the other extreme and embrace a naively Rousseauian view. I am inclined to account for the universal and unavoidable fact of human destructiveness in terms of the universal and unavoidable frustrations of and insults to infantile narcissism constituted by reality.

tending towards the innocent playfulness and serene independence of the happy child or enlightened Taoist or Zen man who flows through life as a river finds its way down a mountainside. In these views, everything admirable in man is "natural," while everything deplorable is due to the perverting effects of "artificial" socio-cultural influences. Hence, in their desire to undo the damage effected by civilization upon the "noble savage," the followers of Reich (1973 [1951]), Brown (1959; 1966), Laing (1967) and many others call for an antinomian revolution in which the benign body of natural man will be resurrected during a "natural healing voyage" (Laing, 1967) in which all repressive socially induced "false selves" will be progressively set aside as the immanent divinity of the "true self" emerges. Whereas even those psychoanalysts who reject the Freudian theory of innate depravity wish to strengthen the human ego and man's capacity for enlightened self-control, the antinomians seek enlightenment precisely by abandoning all control in favour of a life-style of spontaneity and impulsiveness and by attempting to eliminate the ego altogether. If the later Freud wanted to establish a dictatorship of the ego, our modern Rousseauians are clearly advocating a revolutionary dictatorship of the id (which they of course evaluate as divine rather than demonic).

Thus, while Parsons' accusation of biologism was inappropriate when applied to Wrong, the shoe certainly fits those Hobbesian and Rousseauian perspectives which, although they differ radically both in the content they ascribe to human nature and the implications they derive from it, both embrace the mythology of a culturally autonomous "natural man." And while Wrong's critique was misguided insofar as it was intended to apply to Parsons, Parsons was himself naive when in his rejoinder to that critique he argued that:

It is . . . difficult to avoid the impression that this school-masterish admonition to the sociologists is unnecessary. The danger of their forgetting their limitations is not so impressive as all that (1962: 79).

At least insofar as the increasingly influential "social construction of reality" perspective and large segments of "symbolic interactionism" are concerned, such forgetting has been impressive—to the point where another school-masterish admonition to the sociologists is necessary.

SOME OVERSOCIALIZED CONCEPTIONS OF MAN

In marked contrast to the above varieties of instinctivism are the two major types of environmentalism: sociologism and behaviourism. In these perspectives man is largely or totally lacking

in instincts and his behaviour is almost entirely a product of environmental learning. For the behaviourists, human personality amounts to an elaborate system of learned responses. And according to sociologists Berger and Luckmann (1966) man's "biological insufficiency" is such that, lacking a "species-specific" or "given" orientation, he must replace his missing human nature with a culturally and historically relative social nature internalized in socialization. Individual personality is virtually entirely a social product and, in the somewhat similar view of Goffman (1959) and other neo-Meadians, is essentially the sum of the social roles one plays.

This view of personality as performance defines identity almost entirely in terms of Mead's (1963 [1934]) "me" and eliminates virtually all consideration of the organismic and impulsive "I" with which such "me's" may be more or less congruent. At least in Goffman's work one gets the feeling of a relatively active "I" striving to "sell" the others on the particular "me's" he wishes to have them "buy"—as opposed, say, to the perspective of Berger and Luckmann (1966) in which the "I" seems to be entirely absent and the individual absorbs his identity, either passively or actively, from ongoing socially constructed institutions. But despite Goffman's emphasis upon active manipulation ("impression-management") and his recognition of the possibility of attaining "roledistance," he gives little consideration to the source and nature of the impulses or motives which guide such strategic behaviour. Although he recognizes the existence of an actively manipulative "I," this concept remains as an essentially empty category in Goffman's work; hence, little consideration is given to the question of relative congruence or incongruence between particular "me's" or "presented selves" and the reality of the "I," or to the real consequences of incongruence.2

The result of this repression of the "I" from sociological consciousness is a relativistic sociologism in which, according to Berger:

Sincerity is the consciousness of the man who is taken in by his own act. Or as it has been put

²Zeitlin (1973) appears to agree with this critique of Goffman. He writes that in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, "Goffman [1959] points to the impulsive side of man . . . but quickly resolves whatever little tension it implies in favour of society" (1973: 193), citing Durkheim and appearing to follow his one-sided social determinism. Zeitlin goes on to argue that although in *Asylums* Goffman (1961) presents a more adequate "view of the self as a stance-taking entity that resists and opposes domination," he "abandons these important concepts in his subsequent work" (1973: 204). Although reached independently, the conclusions of this paper are in substantial agreement with Zeitlin's (1973) interpretation of Mead, Blumer and Goffman.

by David Riesman, the sincere man is the one who believes in his own propaganda (1963: 109).

Goffman's and Berger's only alternative to such "sincerity" (Berger's "alienation") is the supposedly non-alienated conduct of the man who, recognizing that his act is an act, steps outside the taken-for-granted routines of society (Berger's "ecstasy") which he may now consciously manipulate by performing tongue-in-cheek ("role-distance").³

It seems fair to say that although he was leaning in the direction of sociologism due to his overwhelmingly optimistic assessment of man's capacity for happy cooperation due to the emergent miracle of role-taking, and to his consequent underemphasis upon both interpersonal and intrapersonal ("me" versus "I") conflict, Mead (1963 [1934]: 347-378) clearly recognized the existence of the active, impulsive and unpredictable organismic "I" which he sometimes described as the "biologic individual." Although he failed to really develop its implications for intrapsychic conflict, Mead knew perfectly well that the "I" often comes into conflict with the internalized social expectations of the "generalized other" and the "me" which is seen in terms of the former's "universe of discourse." The major sociological interpreter of Mead is Blumer (1969), whose work—in spite of its emphasis upon the processes of definition and redefinition through which human conduct is formed over time by means of the actor's self-interaction—has done little to emphasize the importance of Mead's "biologic individual," or to explore the consequences for the "I" of its domination by the "me," or to counteract a very one-sided sociologistic reading of Mead.

Blumer has performed a valuable service to social psychology by repeatedly emphasizing Mead's point that much of human action is built up or molded over time through symbolic processes of self-interaction, rather than simply being released by antecedent factors. But while correctly asking social psychologists to penetrate beneath the structural surface of social life to study the processes of self-interaction through which values, norms, roles, and so on, have their effect on conduct, Blumer draws attention only to conscious processes. While he cannot be accused

of embracing a naive model of rational man (because he admits that the processes of deliberation in which action is worked out may seriously err in various respects), Blumer nevertheless restricts such processes to the conscious level.

While referring to Mead's category of nonsymbolic interaction, Blumer nevertheless concludes that "Mead's concern was predominantly with symbolic interaction" (1969: 66). Whether or not the category of non-symbolic interaction in Mead's thought is as unimportant as Blumer alleges (and I for one do not think that it is), Blumer insists that "What he [the actor] takes into account are the things that he indicates to himself," and that "his acts are still constructed by him out of what he takes into account" (1969: 64). This entirely ignores the role of preconscious and unconscious factors and processes in human conduct; the resulting image of man as a conscious deliberator is extremely naive in light of Freud's classic studies of the psychopathology of everyday life. Unconscious intentions and processes cannot be dismissed as pertaining only to unusual or "pathological" forms of human behav-Freud demonstrated that the distinction between "normal" and "pathological" in human conduct is an extremely arbitrary one in light of such universal neurotic symptoms as errors and dreams, and in view of the "over-determination" of action in which conscious processes are often assisted by unconscious factors. In contrast, Mead's categories of the "I" and of non-symbolic interaction could well be elaborated and interpreted in such a way as to include Freud's observations.⁴

Not only are the "I" and non-symbolic interaction consistently downplayed in his interpretation of Mead, but even where Blumer recognizes impulsive outbursts he writes of them in a way which implies that their perpetrators have been "half-hearted in contending with recalcitrant dispositions" (1969: 64). For Blumer, those instances in which the individual "loses his head" constitute a threat to group life, for "If everyone expressed freely his felt tendencies and attitudes, social life would become a state of anarchy," and "there would be no human group for sociologists to study" (1969: 97). While Freud certainly shared this rather Hobbesian and conservative attitude, he went on to describe the psychological and social consequences of man's inhibition of his "felt tendencies and attitudes" in neurotic symptomatology, distorted returns of the repressed, and

³This is not the place to explore the functions of this ideology in rationalizing the urbane intellectual's desire to avoid mentioning or acting upon the Emperor's (or his own) nakedness, while still priding himself on his recognition of the fact. But it must be pointed out that in the terms of this rather bizarre universe of discourse it is finally possible to be an "authentic" phoney, a "non-alienated" or "ecstatic" man, while continuing to present a range of "me's" in which one may have no genuine belief and which may well seriously conflict with the real nature and tendencies of the "I."

^{&#}x27;Wrong appears to be in substantial agreement with this criticism of symbolic interactionism. Seeing "all conduct as controlled by the self and as an expression of the self," the "symbolic interactionists also hold an oversocialized conception of human nature," since "the self is, of course, ultimately a social product containing the built-in reflections of common experience and consensus" (1963: 313).

man's discontent in civilization. But while explaining Mead's theory of social control as self-control, Blumer tells us nothing about the costs and consequences of this inhibition of the "I" by the "me."

On Mead and Freud

Although no perfect theoretical convergence exists, there is certainly no justification for Blumer's recent insistence on the existence of a radical incompatibility between Mead and Freud such that Freudian theory is alleged to be incapable of conceiving of the act of reflective self-interaction. According to Blumer, "There is no indication that Freud saw the 'ego' as viewing and addressing itself; indeed in his scheme there is no possible way by which the ego could become an object to itself" (1975: 60). Parsons correctly regards Blumer's allegation as "nothing less than a caricature of Freud's theory" (1975: 64), as the following passage from Freud's own writings makes clear:

After all, the ego is in its very essence a subject; how can it be made into an object? Well, there is no doubt that it can be. The ego can take itself as an object, can treat itself like other objects, can observe itself, criticize itself, and do Heaven knows what with itself. In this, one part of the ego is setting over against the rest. So the ego can be split; it splits itself during a number of its functions—temporarily at least. Its parts can come together again afterwards. That is not exactly a novelty, though it may perhaps be putting an unusual emphasis on what is generally known (1964 [1933]: 58).

Although Mead shared with many contemporary sociologists a somewhat less than enthusiastic attitude toward what he termed "the more or less fantastic psychology of the Freudian group . . . (1963 [1934]: 211), a careful reading of his work clearly establishes the fundamental compatibility of the Meadian and Freudian perspectives, at least insofar as the crucial issue of intrapsychic conflict is concerned. For Mead, the "biologic individual" or "I" often comes into conflict with the internalized expectations of others ("me"), and the outcome of such conflict can either be conformity effected through repression of the impulsive "I," or self-assertion through the dominance of the "I" over the "me." In many places Mead employed characteristically Freudian concepts to refer to these processes:

Impulsive conduct is uncontrolled conduct. The structure of the "me" does not there determine the expression of the "I." If we use a Freudian expression, the "me" is in a certain sense a censor. It determines the sort of expression which can take place, sets the stage, and gives the cue. In the case of impulsive conduct this structure of the "me" involved in the situation does not furnish to any such degree this control. . . . Then the "I" is the

dominant element over against the "me" (1963 [1934]: 210; my emphasis).

Those proponents of sociologism who claim to abjure all assumptions regarding human nature will derive little support from Mead who, while he regarded it as a "more or less fantastic psychology," appeared to accept the Freudian belief in the presence of powerful sexual and aggressive impulses as a part of human nature. For Mead, the mob situation is one in which "the 'me' . . . simply supports and emphasizes the more violent sort of impulsive expression," and such tendencies are "deeply embedded in human nature" (1963) [1934]: 213). And Mead clearly believed that the impulsive inclinations which make up our human nature often suffer the fate of repression by the socially constituted "me." Such repression leads to a build-up of intrapsychic tension such that when a social situation favourable to impulsive expression occurs there is a return of the repressed or acting-out of the inhibited impulses:

A mob is an organization which has eliminated certain values . . . , has simplified itself, and in doing that has made it possible to allow the individual, especially the repressed individual, to get an expression which otherwise would not be allowed (1963 [1934]: 218).

In these respects, Mead's theory of "group psychology" is rather similar to Freud's.

That type of relativistic sociologism best represented in the work of Berger and Luckmann (1966) often describes human personality as almost entirely a social product as if, in the absence of any human nature which could in any way conflict with the social mold, we are simply clay in the societal hands. The aim of socialization for Berger (1969: 81-101) is the establishment of as much symmetry as possible between the cultural pattern and the subjective consciousness of the individual—although Berger stresses that complete symmetry is an unrealizable goal. If relatively successful socialization has taken place the individual should be able to "discover himself" as an uncle or whatever he has been socialized to be by means of an analysis of the depths of his subjective consciousness. Now even the depths are virtually entirely socially constituted. As Berger puts it:

Nor is it possible within this framework of understanding to take refuge in the unconscious as containing the "real" contents of the self, because the presumed unconscious self is just as subject to social production as is the so-called conscious one, as we have seen. In other words, man is not also a social being, but he is social in every aspect of his being that is open to empirical investigation. Still speaking sociologically, then, if one wants to sak who an individual "really" is in this kaleido-scope of roles and identities, one can answer only by enumerating the situations in which he is one thing and those in which he is another (1963: 106).

The result of this fundamentally totalitarian conception of the relations between the individual and the social order is an extreme sociologistic relativism in which "self-discovery" or "self-realization" is redefined as social conformity and in which all processes of personal and psychotherapeutic change are necessarily interpreted as conversion or alteration from one socially constructed identity and ideology to another.

We do not need to deny the fact that much personal and therapeutic change does really amount to little more than conversion, to leave open the possibility that sometimes such change may entail a progressive recognition or realization of hitherto repressed realities of our impulsive human nature. Certainly for Mead "self-realization" is far from a mere process of conversion in which one "me" is exchanged for another. Rather, it is an essentially therapeutic process in which a condition of real self-division in which the impulsive "I" is thwarted or frustrated gives way to a new condition of intrapsychic harmony in which the "I" is expressed through a range of "me's" which more accurately express its nature and needs:

It is the "I" which we may be said to be continually trying to realize, and to realize through the actual conduct itself. One does not ever get it fully before himself. Sometimes somebody else can tell him something about himself that he is not aware of. He is never sure about himself, and he astonishes himself by his conduct as much as he astonishes other people. . . . The possibilities of the "I" belong to that which is actually going on, taking place, and it is in some sense the most fascinating part of our experience. It is there that novelty arises and it is there that our most important values are located. It is the realization in some sense of this self that we are continually seeking (1963 [1934]: 203; my emphasis).

This remarkable passage is an almost perfect description of both the goal and the (often painful) process of psychoanalytic therapy in which, through interaction with another, we come to realize that which is most unique about ourselves.

To cynically interpret this process of authentic self-discovery in the superficial terms of sociologistic relativism as a mere process of conversion from one socially fabricated "me" to another, rather than as the accommodation of all "me's" to the living reality of the unfolding "I," is simply a travesty of both the reality of human growth and of Mead's thought. And this is precisely what Berger (1969: 85; 1965) perpetually does with his glib identification of policemen and psychotherapists and his analogy of psychoanalysis and conversion to various systems of "true Naturally, this is not to deny that very often in the name of realization of the authentic "I," a person will merely convert to some alternative and equally self-estranged "me." But the dynamics of this sort of self-deception are far

more familiar to practising psychoanalysts and their analysands who wrestle with the problem continually than they could ever be to those sociologists who appear to be so firmly enamoured with self-deception that they have ceased to believe in the possibility of authenticity and honesty.

In fairness to Berger it must be admitted that he does speak of a type of self-division or "duplication of consciousness" established by socialization, but his concept refers to a split between alternative forms of consciousness—a socialized and non-socialized self-consciousness (1969: 83-84)—and not to the conflict between a socially derived "me" and the actively impulsive reality of Mead's "biologic individual" or "I." As opposed to Berger's idealist reduction of the "I" to a mere subjective consciousness, Mead conceived the "I" as an organismic reality, as well as a sort of Cartesian "cogito" or Kantian "transcendental Admittedly, Mead is ambiguous on this point. But we are not justified in resolving this ambiguity by conveniently forgetting about what Mead referred to as "the passionate assertive biologic individual that loves and hates and embraces and strikes" (1963 [1934]: 370), and his stress on the impulsive organism which actively selects stimuli in relation to its needs and interests. simply in order to retain our oversocialized assumptions with a clear conscience.5 more, there are clear indications that Mead was prepared to recognize unconscious impulses and inclinations—at least in the sense of Freud's "preconscious," if not in the sense of his dynamic unconscious—in addition to conscious ones. In addition to his recognition of non-symbolic interaction, Mead's entire discussion of the "I," as we have seen above, stresses that "one does not ever get it fully before himself," that it is a perpetual source of surprise and astonishment-in other words, that it is a "non-conscious" aspect of the self.

The parallels between Mead's concepts of "I," "me," and "generalized other," and Freud's structural categories of "id," "ego," and "superego," have often been recognized. The correspondence is less than perfect, however. While, as we have seen, Mead's "I" refers ambiguously to both the impulsive, "biologic individual," as well as to a sort of cognitive subject, Freud's "id" was, especially in his later work, given a fairly specific and somewhat "innately depraved" content. The Freudian "super-ego" would seem to subsume both Mead's "me" and "generalized other"; the

⁵Here I am compelled to disagree with Wrong's emphasis upon "The purely cognitive nature of the Meadian self, its lack of any motivational energies of its own . . ." (1963: 313). This is certainly the self of the Meadians; but, fortunately, just as Freud was not a Freudian, so Mead was not a "symbolic interactionist."

conscience results from taking the role of the "generalized other" and seeing oneself as a "me" from its perspective and in terms of its "universe of discourse." The Freudian "ego," which refers to the rational and calculating function of the psyche, would have to refer in Meadian terms to the dialogue between the "I" and "me" which constitutes reflective thought. These parallels are at best resemblances and they fail notably to do justice to the Freudian insistence that significant portions of both "ego" and "superego," as well as of the "id," are unconscious (although as we have seen, Mead stressed the unconsciousness of the "I").

Such theoretical compatibilities are pointed out simply to remind us of the existence and importance of the "I." We need not embrace the fallacy of biologistic mysticism which subscribes to the notion of a culturally autonomous human nature composed of specific, determinate, peremptory biological instincts pressing for satisfaction—a view which can take the form either of Hobbesian pessimism or Rousseauian optimism with their antithetical evaluations of cultural inhibitionsin order to recognize man's somatically-based propensities and potentials. And we need not deny for a moment that by nature man is a creature of culture—that his genetically based potentials require cultivation for their full development-to recognize that culture can sometimes frustrate some of man's innate inclinations and fail to provide those conditions necessary for the full development of his inherent potentials.

THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS

Cooley's argument that "individual" and "society" are inseparable phenomena and that, hence, any alleged conflict between them is essentially illusory is almost a paradigm for the pseudoresolution of the Hobbesian problem in modern sociology. Since some sociologists even regard Cooley's position as the classic statement of the sociological resolution (I would say evasion) of the problem, his argument is worth examining in this context. In Social Organization, Cooley (1962 [1909]) writes that "self and society are twin-born." In Human Nature and the Social Order, he explains that the problem of the individual versus society is a false one because:

A separate individual is an abstraction unknown to experience, and so likewise is society when regarded as something apart from individuals. . . . "Society" and "individuals" do not denote separable phenomena, but are simply collective and distributive aspects of the same thing (1964 [1902]: 36-37).

In criticizing this position, we must begin by admitting that in one sense it is both correct and

profound. If by "self" and "individual" we understand Cooley to refer to the social and symbolic self which emerges from symbolic interaction, which is distinctively human because it is dependent upon the existence of human language, which Mead called the "me," and which Cooley himself referred to as "the looking-glass self" (1964 [1902]: 184), then we must agree that this individual self is inextricably interdependent with society and the problem seems to be a false one. Insofar as we are concerned with the self-concept, "the imagination of our appearance to the other person" (1965 [1902]: 184), then truly self and society are twin-born.

But by "self" do we always mean "self-concept"? Surely "self" is often understood to mean the bodily organism which breathes and bleeds? When I say "I've hurt myself," I may refer to some action which has lowered my esteem in my own or others' eyes; but more often I mean that I have cut my finger or stubbed my toe. And this complex of finger and toe and emotions and pain and hunger and sexuality is quite often considered by me to be my "self"-or at the very least a very important aspect of it. In noting that finger and toe, etc., are part of my self, I am thinking conceptually and, in effect, bringing the image of my body into my overall concept of my self. In fact, all that I "think," "note," or grasp conceptually about myself is my self-concept. In one sense, I cannot conceptually grasp my nonconceptual self. But I can grasp my toe with my hand rather than my mind. In such a physical grasp I have succeeded in grasping a part of my non-conceptual self. In other words, I exist both as existence and as essence. It would appear that my existence is a prerequisite, a necessary condition, for the presence of my "essential" or conceptual self. Let us not become so enamoured of our conceptual selves that we forget that we are existential selves as well-and if we can no longer perceive this fact behind the images, let us seek some therapeutic remembrance.

Now Cooley is quite correct in arguing that the conceptual self is interdependent with society. As Mead shows in greater detail, without communication with others on a symbolic level, without the ability to imaginatively see one's self from the vantage-point of others, of society, no conception of self could arise. One must be aware of the existence of other selves and, through reflexive role-taking, to see one's self from what one imagines to be their point of view if one is to have the concept of himself as "one" (Heidegger, 1962 [1926]), as a "me," as an object, as a "self." But with or without this self-concept, there is still that complex of fingers and toes, of impulses and desires, which Mead had the good sense to recognize and identify as the "I."

Knowing, thinking and talking are all labeling activities; they conceptualize. But in addition to the conceptual self, which Mead conceptualized

as the "me," he recognized a non-conceptual self which he conceptualized as the "I." Recognizing the contradiction involved in attempting to think (i.e., conceptualize) about this non-conceptual self, Mead pointed out that it could never be entirely "known." As soon as some feature of the "I" is noted, perceived and conceived, it becomes an object of knowledge, a "me," and no longer a part of the "I" which is, by definition, non-objective and unknown. What Mead seems to have done here is to recognize non-conscious aspects of the self. Whether this is the dynamic unconscious of Freud, or merely his preconscious, is open to debate. However, Mead did state that "If we use a Freudian expression, the 'me' is in a certain sense a censor" (1963 [1934]: 210). It therefore seems legitimate to say that as soon as some hitherto "unconscious" content is perceived and conceived, it enters consciousness as a part of the "me" or self-concept. Since science proceeds by conceptualizing and labeling reality, the self we know will always be the "me" and never the "I." Hence, in one sense the "I" is unknowable, at least to one's "self." Perhaps it was this statement by Mead which accounts for the fact that while proclaiming their allegiance to his "symbolic interactionism" most sociologists have entirely forgotten about the "I."

But when Mead said that the "I" is unknowable, he meant only that as it becomes known it ceases to be the "I" and becomes the "me." In other words, as the hitherto unconscious contents are assimilated by consciousness, what previously belonged to the "I" (unconscious) now belongs to the "me" (conscious self-concept). We can study the "I" and in doing so we incorporate it in the "me." (Such is the nature and aim of that peculiar type of scientific research which is psychoanalytic therapy.) What we are presented with is a shrinking subject-matter. As knowledge progresses, ignorance diminishes. As the unconscious enters consciousness, self-ignorance gives way to self-knowledge. Of course, unconsciousness and ignorance (the "I") can never be entirely eliminated; as existentialist philosophers, philosophers of science, and modern theoretical physicists all tend to agree, reality can never be subsumed in any system of concepts. Due to inherent limits of cognition, an inescapable core of mystery remains in the self: the unconscious or the "I." But to recognize that the unconscious can never be entirely assimilated by consciousness is no justification for abandoning the attempt to render as much of the "I" as possible a part of the "me." This effort to expand the "me" or self-conception to incorporate as much as possible of the "I" or unconscious is the psychoanalytic pursuit of self-knowledge; it is the psychological equivalent of the general scientific effort to expand the boundaries of human knowledge of the empirical world.

Now Cooley and Mead are correct to stress

that the human capacity for conceptual knowledge of the world and the self is dependent upon language and is a social product. The self-conception or "me" could not arise except in social interaction. But in saying this we must not forget that conceptual knowledge can be a more or less adequate representation of its subject-matter. Generally speaking, science progresses by increasing the complexity and adequacy of its symbolizations of reality, eliminating distorsions, oversights, and one-sided oversimplifications. history of atomic theory might serve as an example. From being thought of as the final, irreductible and ultimate particle, the atom was discovered to be a universe containing electrons, protons, neutrons, mesons, and a host of other subatomic particles and anti-particles. Similarly, the self-conception or "me" can be a more or less adequate representation of the reality of the self. Psychological research, which in this case amounts to the pursuit of self-knowledge, will aim to differentiate and expand the "me" so as to incorporate as much of the "I" as possible. Just as a superficial and one-sided scientific theory is likely to be misleading as a guide to dealing with the reality it represents so that we trip over phenomena our theory failed to lead us to expect and waste time looking for things that are supposed to be there but aren't, so a superficial and onesided self-conception constitutes a poor guide to dealing with ourselves. In misrepresenting the facts about ourselves, such a self-conception places us in a dangerously false relation to reality in which we are ever prone to disillusionment; in omitting important facts about the "I" such a "me" makes us vulnerable to shattering encounters with these facts or their effects as they act, as it were, behind our backs. Further comment on these issues can safely be left to the textbooks on psychoanalysis.

Hence, knowledge of the self is a socially derived capacity. But to say this is most definitely not to say that the self that we come to know using these socially derived capacities is itself entirely a social product. While the capacity to have a "me" is a social product, the "me" which results from the use of this capacity may well refer to relatively non-social aspects of the self, such as fingers and toes, pleasures and pains, socially unacceptable impulses and desires (which may themselves have been profoundly influenced by social learning). Further, some self-conceptions correspond more adequately to the empirical reality of the self than others; one "me" flies in the face of the reality of the "I," while another takes the latter more adequately into account. Some of the "reflected appraisals of others" correspond fairly accurately to the facts of the "I:" others are completely unrealistic. Obviously, it makes sense to inquire whether the self that we are may conflict with the self we are alleged (by ourselves or others) to be.

Why, then, do sociologists so seldom thus inquire? We appear to have forgotten that maps refer to territory, menus to meals, "me's" to "I's," theories to empirical referents. And we appear to have forgotten our fingers and toes. Perhaps they have gone to sleep? Are they numb? this merely a problem in social theory, or are we disembodied selves, consciousnesses estranged from the unconscious grounds of our being, at least partly owing to a social theory which has lost existence in essence, the organismic and emotional facts in the socially and symbolically constructed conceptual "reality"? Have I lost my senses at least partly because of a social theory which has abandoned sensuality to symbolism? Or is the theory a reflection, a symptom, of a condition in which our bodies and unconscious selves have been sacrificed to our ego's, our hearts to our heads, our embodied selves to the "reflected appraisals of others"? We are surrounded by mirrors and images. We think we are nothing but images in mirrors. Where is the real referent of all these refractions and distorsions? How can it be distinguished from the images surrounding it? Will the real person please stand up? He cannot. He has forgotten his fingers and toes and now they are asleep and so he cannot stand on his own two feet.

CONCLUSION

Contemporary sociological social psychology is a largely disembodied dialectic—a study of the social construction, maintenance and presentation of a disembodied consciousness estranged from the organism and unconscious. In a sense such a social psychology is profoundly empirical: it is an accurate description of the self-estranged condition of that all-too common "one" who fails to realize that his mask is a pseudo-reality disguising his existential and unconscious reality. And if contemporary social psychologists are unable to recognize pathology because it is virtually universal, a part of their insensitivity must be due to a peculiar blindness inherent in the work of Mead

Against the earlier capitalist emphasis upon ruthless competition and individual enterprise (the attitudes and values associated with Riesman's (1950) "inner-direction"), Mead's thought reflects a liberal and optimistic enthusiasm for cooperation and community ("other-direction"). For Mead, the remarkable human capacity to imagine the self as an object from the standpoint of the other, which makes possible the control of the self so that its actions dovetail with the expectations and actions of others, is the miracle which defines the essence of man's uniqueness and provides the foundation for human cooperation. But Mead's liberal optimism inclined him to minimize

the obvious potential for intrapersonal conflict which his own concepts virtually compel us to acknowledge.

In Fenichel's statement of the orthodox psychoanalytical position on the issue of "human nature and the social order," he stresses that "The instinctual needs are the raw material formed by the social influences," and that "it is the task of a psychoanalytic sociology to study the details of this shaping" (1945: 588). It should be clear by now that one of the aims of this paper has been precisely to point out the necessity for sociologists to further the development of such a psychoanalytic sociology capable of recognizing conflict between persona and personality, conscious and unconscious, "me" and "I," as well as the more or less unconscious consequences of such conflict. The major consequence of the absence of the "I" in contemporary sociology is ignorance of the unconscious costs and consequences of adaptation to various "me's," identities, cultural patterns and life-styles. When we no longer see the battlefield and remain oblivious to the fact of conflict, we remain unaware of the carnage. There are relative costs in repression and unconscious tension and stress associated with adaptation to specific social and cultural patterns and identities. Some "me's" fit the real dimensions of the "I" better than others. Others amount to a more or less severe Procrustean bed upon which the "I" is forced to lie down— with what consequences in unconscious tension and returns of the repressed in neurotic symptoms and derangements of character only a psychoanalytic social science could begin to say.

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