

George herbert mead



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

George Herbert Mead, 1863 -1931, an American pragmatist, sociologist, social psychologist and philosopher, was graduated in Oberlin in 1883 and in Harvard in 1888 and also studied in Berlin and Leipzig. He worked as a lecturer in University of Chicago from 1904 till his demise. Basing on Charles Cooley and Dewey, Mead insisted that “ the self-awareness, the conscious mind and self-regulation of social actors”. Mead works relate to the development of the mind and the self, considered mind as the natural sprouting from the interface of human organism and its social environment.

Within this biosocial setup, the gap between reason and impulse is connected by the tactical use of language. With the help of language mastering, humans conceive assumptions as to their functions in self and in life and consciousness of-self-emerge, thereby offering intelligence, a historical development that is both moral and natural. Mead named his ideology as ‘ social behaviorism ‘ employing conduct of human being -both biological and social - as an advance to all experience.

All Mead’s work, posthumously gathered and published as books which includes ‘ The philosophy of the Act’[1938], Mind, self and Society [1934] and The Philosophy of the Present “[1932]. [The Colombia Encyclopedia, 2004]. Mead classified the self into two parts namely the “ I” and the “ Me “. The “ I” symbolizes the impulsive, natural and unique behavior of each person, such as uncontrolled impulses and forces observed in every typical individual. The “ Me” particularly symbolizes the social part of the self which is the internalized expectations of society and the person’s awareness of these demands.

The “ I” originates first . The “ Me” consumes much longer time since the individual must first understand society’s demands and rules. Mead recommended that the development of self encompasses a continuing ‘ conversation’ between the ‘ I’ and ‘ Me’. According to Mead, the “ Me’ usually plays as a kind of censor of the “ I”. It is founded at first on the demands of crucial socializing agents like the schools and the family and later on the expectations and demands of the larger society.

As per Mead, the ‘ Me’ develops in latter stages of the socialization process: the ‘ play’, ‘ the imitative’ and the ‘ game’ stages as children engage in ‘ conversation of gestures’ with their mother’s, imitating her movements. Later, however, they find that there is a distance between their own intentions and mind and those of their mother. In general, this notion dawns when the mother declines to meet their wants and they felt upset. In retaliation, the children start to assume the role of the other -that is, to learn the expectations of others by positioning oneself in their place.

At this juncture, children start to assume the characteristics especially of significant of others. Mead viewed the ‘ Self’ as originating from the social communication of humans in which the individual takes on the role of the ‘ other’ and internalizes the approaches he observes in both real and imagined others. The interface of an individual’s self-conception ‘ I’ and the comprehensive perceived view that others have the individual ‘ Me’ is the focal point in Mead’s sociological perspective.

According to Mead, without symbols there might be nil human communication or interaction or society, as it is through symbolic gestures, particularly language that we, as social actors, depict our ‘ self’ for.

According to Mead, symbolic interactions is a must and essential, as humans have no instincts for which to generate or direct behavior, once again reassuring the uniqueness of the social over the innate. The opinion of a 'self' is socially attributed throughout childhood and is not an inborn property of the human being.

Hence, social roles are not predetermined or unchanging but are in a continuous state of instability, repeatedly being modified and evolved to cater the societal and cultural demands faced by the actor . [Giddens , 1997]. Thus, Mead's writings are unambiguously socially relevant and constructed. According to Mead, there is only the 'social' for it is through socialization that the self builds up as there is no manipulation of a biological, natural or physiological kind for instinctive responses which do not shape the self in society.

For Mead and the fellow followers of the symbolic interaction philosophical system, human beings are social actors contained by a symbolic world, quite distinct from that of lower animals and it is the communication between actors which is overriding as we are quiet symbolically encircled by symbols with prominence being placed upon linguistics, process of socialization and the capability to witness into ones self which decide human behavioral personality.