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TRAVELS IN SEARCH OF THE SELF

by

JULIE M. FORD

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Sociology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York.

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Abstract**TRAVELS IN SEARCH OF THE SELF**

by

Julie M. Ford

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Through an analysis of the work of Mikhail Bakhtin, George Herbert Mead, and Jürgen Habermas, the dissertation explores the particular historical connections between discourses and material practices and how they relate to the fundamental issue of the formation of the self, and their empirical articulation in literature and film through the motif of the "road." Specifically, the project attempts to provide a theoretical basis from which to examine meanings and interpretations of cultural objects, both in terms of their historical transformations and discontinuities, as well as their stabilities and persistences. In particular, the project focuses on the debates in what Habermas refers to as "post-metaphysical thinking," philosophies of language, and the pragmatic turn in theories of language and meaning. This turn allows for a reconceptualization of traditional notions of the formation of self and subjectivity, wherein the self not treated as something immanent or transcendental; instead, the self is seen as a construct, which, in its attempt to negotiate the world, emerges through interaction with others. It is argued that this reformulation offers a more adequate model of culture and its relation both to "subjects" and to society as a whole, one which allows for a non-deterministic way of considering the relation of cultural systems or structures to social individuals and their social experience.

For historical sociology of culture, the metaphor of the "road" constitutes a rich thematic from which to address these issues surrounding the understanding of "self-hood," culture and society. Through an examination of this motif in three cases studies--*Don Quixote*, *Jude The Obscure*, and the film *Mad Max*--the project explores the changing forms of articulation of the self (especially gendered) at a sociohistorical level. At a very general level, the trope has been linked to questions of self-hood since antiquity, albeit in radically varying ways. Indeed, it is precisely the historical transformations which such a trope undergoes that allows an investigation into the understandings which a particular society has of itself. Thus, the epic road of Odysseus is not the mundane and commonplace byways of Don Quixote's journeys, nor the futuristic and nihilistic highway of Mad Max, and neither are the articulations of the self in each work. And, equally, the selves which are discovered, won, or escaped from throughout these travels are not the same. In each, however, a comprehensive notion of the meaning of self is articulated, and a contextualizing reference made to a definite social reality.

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Chapter One

Introduction

For historical sociology of culture, the metaphor of the "road" constitutes a potentially rich thematic from which to address issues surrounding the understanding of "selfhood," culture and society. At a very general level, we can point out that this trope has been linked to questions of selfhood since antiquity, albeit in radically varying ways. Indeed, it is precisely the historical transformations which such a trope undergoes that allows us to investigate the understandings which a particular society has of itself. Thus, the epic road of Odysseus is not the mundane and commonplace byways of Don Quixote's journeys, nor the futuristic and nihilistic highway of Mad Max, and neither are the articulations of the self in each work. And, equally, the selves which are discovered, won, or escaped from throughout these travels are not the same. In each, however, a comprehensive notion of the meaning of self is articulated, and a contextualizing reference made to a definite social reality. This project should not be taken as a "sociology of literature" as it is generally understood. Rather than generating a "framework" of understanding of the ways cultural objects are constitutive of the social world (or vice versa), the goal here is to explore the historical understandings of the formation of the self, using the theme of the road in literature and film as illustrative of this larger problematic. One of the central concerns of modernity is the self and its fragmentation, and much of cultural production throughout history deals with the self and its problematic nature. The primary focus

of this discussion deals with the problem of the self--that is, the self has historically been taken as a given, but closer examination of notions of selfhood belies such a reading. Thus, to an extent, this project can be understood as a variant of "normative" sociology--the normative understanding of the self as it changes historically. Literature and film are used as an index of normatively valid understandings of self that are operative at any given moment. The project proposes to look at novels historically in order to examine the transition in modernity from a "conventional" to "post-conventional" understanding and experience of the self, particularly as expressed in a specific time consciousness and moral understanding, all of which is integrated with the idea of literature as social knowledge. In looking at cultural objects in such a manner, it is necessary to have a theoretical approach which acknowledges the thoroughly social character of the "journey" to selfhood. The formation of selfhood always implies an interactive dimension, one which entails relations both to specific individuals and to a "generalized other." However, acknowledgement of the social dimension of issues of selfhood entailed by these objects demands consideration of another theoretical matter. Namely, we must avoid being burdened by conceptual schemes--often employed by sociology in the past--which address the relations between culture and society by reducing one to the other (and thus, for example, seeking the "truth" of culture in the sphere of production, or treating it merely as a mechanism for the socialization of individuals into pre-existing roles).

In order to properly situate this project sociologically as a historical analysis of

selfhood, and not as a sociology of literature, Mikhail Bakhtin's understanding of the status of literature is crucial. Bakhtin's interest in literature arises from the emphasis he places on communicative interaction in understanding the formation of self and the nature of social relations. Indeed, insofar as Bakhtin's primary interest is in exploring social relations, he is fundamentally a social theorist. However, with respect to our original problematic, we are now confronted with a specific theoretical task: it is necessary to be able to account for the self in terms of its own inherent reflexive concern for the social interactions which constitute the very conditions of its selfhood. Bakhtin's philosophy is one of several modern theories of knowledge that seek to understand behavior and action in terms of the use individuals make of language. Among these, the work of George Herbert Mead and Jurgen Habermas also figures prominently. Specifically, for Bakhtin, Mead and Habermas, the self emerges in dialogic or communicative interaction with others--that is, humans constitute themselves as individuals and as social beings through the same process, dialogue.

In this first chapter, we will begin by reviewing Bakhtin's understanding of the formation of self as a dialogic process, and the reasons that this understanding leads him to treat literature as a form of social knowledge. The concepts he develops in this process will also provide us with some of the central categories with which to interrogate the various historical notions of selfhood present in literary texts. The second chapter will examine Mead, his theory of intersubjectivity and the socialization processes, and how he locates the development of the self in the conditions of the

emergence of language, a move which is necessary in order to specify the socialization process as constitutive of selfhood which provides the space for a historical analysis of self. However, both Bakhtin and Mead, in very different ways, have an inadequate account of the conditions and the relationship of the social to the self. A means must be sought to link the analysis of selfhood to that of historical experience. To this end, the work of Reinhart Koselleck on what he refers to as "the semantics of historical time" provides the initial connective concepts. It is only with the work of Habermas, however, that the social and historical conditions will be specified.

Bakhtin, the Self, and Literature as Social Knowledge

Since Descartes, the notion of individuality has been associated with the spontaneous ego, or the "I." In considering the self from the standpoint of this spontaneous ego, the metaphor of a mirror takes precedence: consciousness gets hold of itself by being reflected back on itself out of the world of objects of which it is conscious. The "I" is hence seen as coming into being through an *act* of self-consciousness.¹ However, a persistent paradox lies behind such a notion, for to carry out this act, the "I" must already be present. Thus, what is "gotten hold of" is not, in fact, the spontaneous ego as the subject of consciousness, as this would require that the subject be an object of consciousness. In other words, the being of self-consciousness presupposes the act, but the claim is made that the act is what generates the being of self-consciousness. This

¹ Jurgen Habermas, *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical Essays*, tran. W.M. Hohengarten (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 159 (hereafter *PMT*).

subject-object model of consciousness, which makes the self-relation of the knowing subject the starting point of analysis, is thus clearly inadequate. For in order to develop a notion of individuality, self-consciousness cannot be treated as an original phenomena; whenever the knowing subject turns back upon itself in order to grasp itself as an object,

[t]he spontaneous subject recedes from consciousness of itself. At best, then, consciousness can come to know the empirical ego; but this appears as merely one more object. So there remains no place for the individual between consciousness in the first-person, as the receding subject, and consciousness in the third-person, as a causally determined object. (*PMT* xii-xiv)

Mikhail Bakhtin works out the problem of self-reflexive access to consciousness by rejecting the idea that the genesis of self is something immanent, and he instead theorizes that the possibility of self and the capacity for consciousness is based on the individual's relations to others. In this manner, Bakhtin orients his theory of knowledge and of social interaction towards the pragmatic use humans make of language, and thematically pursues that which he sees as the inescapable nature of interaction--the struggle for meaning and voice.

Educated in the atmosphere of neo-Kantianism prevalent in Russia (as in Germany) in the early part of this century, Bakhtin accepted the notion of a split between the mind and the world, but he attempted to reconceptualize how this gap is bridged. He spurns the prioritization of the mind or the internal in bridging the gap, and redirects attention to the (lived) world. Adapting the work of Hermann Cohen (one of the leading

figures of neo-Kantianism at this time), Bakhtin appropriates as his basic principle that "the world is not given, but conceived," while adamantly rejecting Cohen's idealizing and unifying position.² It is the "ungiveness" of experience, not the desire for unity, that Bakhtin finds attractive in Cohen. To this end, he takes the Kantian "transcendental" categories of space and time instead as "forms of the most immediate reality" in an attempt to gain a "fuller understanding of lived experience" (*Bakhtin* 59).³ In his attempt to reconceptualize the mind-body split in order to achieve a more adequate understanding of the formation self and its relation to the world--one which did not impose what he saw as a false "unity"--Bakhtin needed a different model of the world (of how we "see" the world). Einstein's physics provided such a model. Einstein's theory regards the physical universe as comprehensible in relative terms (that is, the particular position of the observation of a given phenomenon determines the meaning of that phenomenon) and posits that physical objects are not static. Bakhtin employs similar relational and dynamic understanding which theorizes consciousness as the emergence of self in particular or "relative" relations with others.

When I contemplate a whole human being who is situated outside and over

² See Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability: Early Philosophical Essays*, eds. M. Holquist and V. Liapunov, trans. V. Liapunov (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990), xiii-xvi (hereafter *AA*); Katerina Clark and Michael Holquist, *Mikhail Bakhtin* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), 57-62 (hereafter *Bakhtin*); Gary Saul Morson and Caryl Emerson, *Mikhail Bakhtin: Creation of a Prosaics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 25-26 *passim* (hereafter *Prosaics*); and Michael Holquist, *Dialogism: Bakhtin and his World* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 1-7 (hereafter *Dialogism*).

³ "In his 'Transcendental Aesthetics' (sic)...Kant defines space and time as indispensable forms of any cognition, beginning with elementary perceptions and representations. Here we employ the Kantian evaluation of the importance of these forms in the cognitive process, but differ from Kant in taking them not as 'transcendental' but as forms of the most immediate reality." M.M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, ed. M. Holquist, trans. C.E. Emerson and M. Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 85 fn2 (hereafter *DI*).

against me, our concrete, actually experienced horizons do not coincide. For at each given moment...I shall always see and know something that he, from his place outside and over against me, cannot see himself. (AA 22-23)

In this early work, Bakhtin emphasizes the indispensability of the self and the other to each other; self-actualization and self-realization without the other (as a virtual witness to the actions of the self) is impossible.⁴ As in relativity theory, Bakhtin assumes nothing can be perceived except against the perspective of something else--there is no figure without ground. This manner of conceptualization, however, means not only that the position of the "observer" is fundamental, but that the observer is simultaneously an active participant. Hence, "insofar as everything is perceived from a unique position in existence, its corollary is that the meaning of whatever is observed is shaped by the place from which it is perceived" (*Dialogism* 21). Although several individuals may be part of the same event, that event is different for each as their places are different. This is the case not only because the bodies occupy different places, externally, but because they regard the world from different "cognitive time-space" positions. From this formulation of the relativity of self (and other), emerges two, related, concepts critical to Bakhtin's conception of understanding and action--temporality and non-unity.

Time-space is a central category of structuring figure and ground, or otherness, from

⁴ In this complex relation between the self and other (with primacy being given to the other), Bakhtin's interest in ethical action--responsibility--begins to take on a new form. Where ethical action had been taken as responsibility, later it expands to signify "response." "One's obligation in answerability is to rescue the other from pure potential; reaching out to another consciousness makes the other coalesce, and turns the others's 'mere potential' into space that is open to the living event" (quoted and translated in *Prosaics* 76).

the position of the observer. Specifically, the particular configuration of time-space to the observer is different from the time-space configuration imputed to the other of the observer. When a self contemplates an other situated outside the self, the perception of the time-space structures of the two do not coincide.⁵ The self/other relation is one of simultaneity then--simultaneity dealing with "ratios" of sameness and difference in space and time (*Dialogism* 19). This incommensurate relation between the self and other (world), expressed in these differential ratios, forecloses the possibility of any sort of "underlying structure"--that is, a final (monological) system, or an acceptance of an all-ready-given (false) *unity*. Importantly, as we shall see, Bakhtin does not find this cause for despair. The full importance of time-space in framing and interpreting specific relations for Bakhtin will be explored further in the later discussion of the chronotope. For now, what needs to be stressed is the implication of this non-unity of self and other in order to complete Bakhtin's understanding of the self, and ultimately language. That is, the differential relation inherent in the relation between the self and the other which renders the self always relative⁶--the self is fated to need the other in order to be able to consummate itself--can only be bridged, provisionally, in communication. Indeed, consciousness is otherness which, in turn, only arises through communicative interaction:

⁵ The self sees its place in the world from a "horizon"--in a perpetual present, without beginning or end, surrounded by specific meanings, determined by its own ends. The other, however, is placed in an "environment"--limited in time, with a perceivable beginning and end, in a world not conditioned by uniqueness of his or her intentionality, but the same for that other as for any other. See *AA* 97-9.

⁶ From such language, Bakhtin has often been misunderstood as some sort of "relativist." But, as Morson and Emerson point out, for Bakhtin relativism is itself a form of "monologization." The dialogic quality of events is lost with pure relativism, "where responsibility in any meaningful sense is absent." See *Prosaics* 59.

I am conscious of myself and become myself only while revealing myself for another, through another, and with the help of another. The most important acts constituting self-consciousness are determined by a relationship toward another consciousness (toward a *thou*)... The very being of man (both external and internal) is the *deepest communion*. *To be means to communicate*. (Dostoevsky 287)

In other words, for Bakhtin, the "self" is dialogic, it is a *relation*. Bakhtin uses the term "dialogism" to describe human existence as inherently bound up with dialogue, a communicative relation which is based on the assumption of the perspective of the other. This occurs in language, or, more specifically, in utterances, replies, and the relation between the two, as individuals attempt to make sense out of shared existence. In this process of making shared existence sensible through language, particular "values"--differential relations--are *attached* to otherwise unmarked differences. Values, or, differential relations, are specified socially and historically. However, the differences of relativity, differences between self and other, the necessary multiplicity of perception, and the questioning and responding, agreement and disagreement cannot be overcome--life is dialogic (Dostoevsky 293).

As dialogue is such a fundamental relation, it can assist in understanding other relations. In other words, dialogue, in its broadest sense, is a "model of the world" (*Prosaics* 49).

All the diverse areas of human activity involve the use of language.... Language is realized in the forms of individual concrete utterances (oral and written) by participants in the various areas of human activity. These utterances reflect the specific conditions and goals of each area.... (*Speech Genres* 60)

[L]anguage enters life through concrete utterances (which manifest language) and life enters language through concrete utterances as well. (*Speech Genres* 63)

Literature is a particular form of speech that corresponds to "forms of thinking"⁷ and experience, and whose status, like any other utterance,⁸ is fundamentally social and historical, regardless of any other aesthetic considerations. Thus, as a form of communication, literature must also be considered a form of social knowledge.

But why should Bakhtin--trained in philosophy and linguistics--accord such importance to one form of discourse, literature, or more specifically, the novel? According to Bakhtin, most existing forms of knowledge (utterances) inevitably "summarize" the open-ended dialogue of life into some sort of monologic statement. The novel, however, does not. The "novel," for Bakhtin, does not indicate a specific genre in the sense it is commonly taken, but rather a particular form of utterance that retains the dialogic nature of existence and communication. The novel is not to be distinguished

⁷ Bakhtin's interest in Dostoevsky and Einstein, for example, stem from the fact that each, according to Bakhtin, employ a new way of thinking, a new conception of the world. Bakhtin states in the opening paragraph of *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* that Dostoevsky "created, in our opinion, a completely new type of artistic thinking, which we have provisionally called *polyphonic*" (*Dostoevsky* 3).

⁸ By the use of the term "utterance," Bakhtin seeks to make the relation of speakers to listeners, and their topics, explicit and central. Discourse is not to be regarded merely as linguistic (or imagistic) instantiations, but rather as "utterances." Utterances are a dialogue; someone is saying something to someone, anticipating a response, to which a response is indeed offered and whereby something is accomplished by this process. Discourse is not constituted from an individual's instantiation of a code, but is instead a product of a complex social situation. Furthermore, the context and reasons of each utterance differ from that of every other utterance. Indeed, "real or potential audiences, earlier and possible later utterances, habits and 'genres' of speech and writing, and a variety of other complex social factors shape all utterances from the outset." Utterances engage an "already-spoken-about" world and emerge out of a socially constituted "field of answerability." In contrast to "language," the use of the term utterance attempts to animate the communicative process, to emphasize language as "living." There can be no "monologue" because, by definition, language is universally dialogic.

by contrasting styles--prose verses poetic--nor by an analysis of the plot or by the study of tropes--of a particular (systemizing) stylistics. Such approaches to the novel fail to capture the very essence--the novelness--of the novel. Rather, novelness is a way of conceiving events and of understanding the interrelations of character, action, social context, space and time (*Poetics* 19). Using the language of traditional literary analysis against itself, Bakhtin defines the novel as follows:

The novel as a whole is a phenomenon multiform in style and variform in speech and voice. In it the investigator is confronted with several heterogeneous stylistic unities, often located on different linguistic levels and subject to different stylistic controls.... The stylistic uniqueness of the novel as a genre consists precisely in the combination of these subordinated, yet still relatively autonomous, unities (even at times comprised of different languages) into the higher unity of the work as a whole: the style of a novel is to be found in the combination of its styles; the language of a novel is the system of its "languages."... The novel can be defined as a diversity of social speech types...and a diversity of individual voices, artistically organized.... [The] internal stratification present in every language at any given moment of its historical existence is the indispensable prerequisite for the novel as a genre. The novel orchestrates all its themes, the totality of the world of social diversity of speech types [*raznorecie*] and by the differing individual voices that flourish under such conditions. (*DI* 261-63)

The novel is not a genre *per se*, but a "perception of language" that refuses the "absolutism of a single and unitary language" (*DI* 366). At its fullest, the novel best embodies the essential feature of communication, of interaction: the simultaneity of dialogic exchange occurring at different levels, where "*coexistence* and *interaction*" are the fundamental categories of the world, and where the multiplicity of voices, always encountering, contradicting, struggling with each other, can be heard. Indeed, as the self is understood dialogically--a conversation of discrepant voices, often struggling

against each other, speaking from different positions--it is novelistic. The intimate connection of the self and "novelness" becomes apparent by virtue of the fact that Bakhtin's discussion of selfhood takes place *within* his discussion of the novel, where the dialogic aspect is central to both.⁹ In the manner that the degree of novelness can be evaluated through the type of speaking relations which dominates a work--monological or dialogical--so too can the (ethical) nature of the self be determined by the form of "inner speech" that predominates evaluations and interactions. Thought, for Bakhtin, is inner speech; becoming human is a process of the selective assimilation of the words of others (*DI* 341).

Again, Bakhtin emphasizes the necessary simultaneity of two types of discourse in order to account for both stability and creativity--that is, "authoritative" discourse and "internally persuasive" discourse, respectively. Authoritative discourse is the given word--the word of religion, politics, morality, parents, teachers, and of all authority and dogma.

The authoritative word demands that we acknowledge it, that we make it our own; it binds us, quite independent of any power it might have to persuade us internally; we encounter it with its authority already fused to it. The authoritative word is located in a distanced zone, organically connected with a past.... It is, so to speak, the word of the fathers. Its authority was already *acknowledged* in the past. It is a *prior* discourse. It is therefore not a question of choosing it from among other possible discourses that are its equal. (*DI* 342)

We are born into the authoritative word, and its force and position are unquestionable.

⁹ See especially "Discourse in the Novel," in *DI*, 259-422.

We may disobey, but we cannot argue with the word. Nor does authoritative discourse permit us to "play with its borders," to integrate it with other voices. If, however, the authoritative word was all that constituted the self, there would then be no possibility for creativity, nor, as we shall see, ethical action. Internally persuasive discourse destabilizes this otherwise static configuration to the extent that in recognizing otherness--in "distinguishing between one's own and another's discourse [and] thought"--and the uniqueness of one's own world, individual consciousness emerges. In internally persuasive discourse, the authoritative is taken and reshaped, reorganized and reworked into something "half-ours and half-someone else's."

It [authoritative discourse] is not so much interpreted by us as it is further, that is, freely, developed, applied to new material, new conditions; it [now as internally persuasive discourse] enters into interanimating relationships with new contexts. More than that, it enters into an intense interaction, a *struggle* with other internally persuasive discourses. (DI 345-46)

When authoritative discourse is, therefore, *assimilated* into the inner speech of an individual it involves a reaccentuation whereby new meanings, new nuances, and even distortions can emerge. In the process of assimilation and reaccentuation, the authoritative discourse loses its taken for granted status and, in this manner, is dispossessed of its absolute authority. Both authoritative and internally persuasive discourse are always present, but it is only "when thought begins to work in an independent, experimenting and discriminating way," that internally persuasive discourse, and the creative self, can move to the fore and engage with other such discourses (DI 345-6).

The novel is anti-authoritative: the essence of the novel is the engagement, the *struggle*, of multiple and situated discourses and voices. As epitomized by Dostoevsky, the novel for Bakhtin is able "to conceive all of its [the world] as simultaneous, and to *guess at their interrelationships in the cross-section of a single moment*" (Dostoevsky 28). The novel is unique in that it is the one genre that, by definition, is dialogic; it possesses a reflexive awareness of the multiple forms of thinking that is definitive of social life and presents the variety of particular understandings that is constitutive of everyday experience. Thus, for Bakhtin, the novel is the most precise conceptualization of human experience yet to arise, and, as such, it constitutes a form of social knowledge.

The "discipline" which Bakhtin calls the "human sciences" has a unique purchase on this particular form of social knowledge, one which is inaccessible to more traditional modes of inquiry that reduce the multiplicity, the dialogue, to a monologue.

The exact sciences constitute a monologic form of knowledge: the intellect contemplates a *thing* and expounds upon it.... In opposition to the subject there is only a *voiceless thing*. Any object of knowledge (including man) can be perceived and cognized as a thing. But a subject as such cannot be perceived and studied as a thing, for as a subject it cannot, while remaining a subject, become voiceless, and, consequently, cognition of it can only be *dialogic*.
(*Speech Genres* 161)

Bakhtin is concerned with revealing and deciphering the true multiplicity of everyday life that such monologic theorisms--including Marxism and Freudianism, as well as neo-Kantianism and Formalism--obscure.

Not only does the fixing of the temporal and spatial opposition between self and other (relativity) form the basis of experience, the fixing of the experience of time (and the relations of time and space) itself "determines to a significant degree the image of man" (*DI* 85). That is, how time and space--and their relation to each other--are perceived informs our relation to and our perception of the world. Moreover, these senses of time are themselves historical, as are other conditions of experience. These time-space parameters (conventions) of meaning and experience shape any given account, be it of life, or within a text. Life as it is lived does not unfold as it does in a written text; ideas, meetings, persons, full of potential, do not always fulfil their potential; life, as it is lived, occurs in fits and starts--veering this way, then that--choices are made with unforeseen consequences, opportunities are unknowingly lost. However, in looking back, causal connections between events and direct correlations between thoughts can be *imposed* on the happenstance of experience. In order to make the elements cohere, to form some sort of order, interpretive work must be done. This intervention can obscure the contingency of events and thought--"we imagine only the outcome realized to the exclusion of others equally possible...and apparent resemblances across time may testify to little more than characteristic habits of thought" (*Prosaics* 3). This process occurs within the diverse forms of knowledge as well as in life itself through the ways in which time is used to represent life, thought, and self. These representations vary in their depiction and understanding of the relation of people and events to time.

However, according to Bakhtin, these revisionistic temporal representations often fail to capture the openness, the "unfinalizability," the inherently dialogic nature of human experience. Specifically, in language, experience and meaning are represented and organized in a distorted time-space formulation: linearly.¹⁰ And this is especially true of academic discourses and non-novelistic literary texts. With respect to non-novelistic literature, for example, Bakhtin discusses three basic forms this "linearity" has historically taken: ends-determining, where the end or final outcome defines all that had preceded it; one in which life ("essence of man") merely "unfolds" rather than authentically develops; or one in which the whole is given at the outset, "predetermined," and that which follows merely "distributes itself within these already existing contours."¹¹ In each of these instances, as with any mode of thinking or inquiry that imposes an order on the depiction of thought, experience, or self, the various forms of representation fail to capture the real sense of time as Bakhtin sees it—that is, a sense of time whereby "becoming"¹² and unfinalizability¹³ can be acknowledged. The dialogic word, and world, is monologized.

This is not to say that our experience of life is un-mediatly dialogical; cultures do

¹⁰ "Linearity" is my term for this particular representation of experience in time and space.

¹¹ *DI* 130-143.

¹² "[B]ecoming [is] a man's *gradual* formation.... [A] certain duality, a lack of wholeness characteristic of living human beings...." (*DI* 392-93).

¹³ In discussing Dostoevsky, Bakhtin's own understanding of "unfinalizability" may also be summed up: "*nothing conclusive has yet taken place in the world, the ultimate word of the world and about the world has not yet been spoken, the world is open and free, everything is still in the future and will always be in the future*" (Dostoevsky 166).

strive for unity and order, but it is a *created* order nonetheless, and must be recognized as such. For Bakhtin, the world is essentially heterogeneous. To the forces that order this heterogeneity he gives the name "centripetal." Centripetal forces coexist with and struggle against "centrifugal" forces, forces that, *for no necessary reason*, disrupt order. The world is comprised of centrifugal ("unofficial") and centripetal ("official") forces,¹⁴ and each language embodies a particular and unsystematic gathering of the specific historical and social forces that made it. A central element of the heterogeneity of the world we experience is the multiplicity of "languages." From the diversity of experience, evaluations and understandings, each of which are contingent upon historical and social forces, many diverse ways of speaking, many languages, are *produced*--that is, the diversity of social experience, normativity and conceptualizations generate multiple languages that are "socio-ideological" (DI 272). This multiplicity is a centrifugal force, whereas the particular "socio-ideological" position each language embodies represents the contrary, a centripetal force of unification. Furthermore, the multiplicity of meanings that circulate in a dialogue are always contextually bound by the time and place in which they occur. Speaking and acting subjects are always located within this multiplicity of languages, and must select their responses from this multitude of historically specific, value-laden sets of possibilities (DI 271). Bakhtin's term "heteroglossia" indicates this idea that the world is made up of a multiplicity of

¹⁴ In response to some admirers of Bakhtin ("especially Marxists") who misinterpret a unified opposition in the term, Morson and Emerson correctly emphasize that the centrifugal or unofficial forces may "either operate purposefully or *for no particular reason*" in disrupting the *imposed* order. This is not *necessarily* the case. Although organized forces of opposition sometimes do coalesce, centrifugal forces "are generally speaking messy and disorganized." See *Bakhtin* 30.

languages, and that, at any particular time and place, there will be a set of conditions--social, historical, etc.--which guarantees that any utterance will have a different meaning than it would have had under any other set of conditions. Heteroglossia is "as close a conceptualization as is possible of that locus where centripetal and centrifugal forces collide..." (*DI* 428).

Centripetal forces also serve to "unify and centralize the verbal-ideological world," to prevail in the struggle between centripetal and centrifugal forces of heteroglossia--that is, certain ways of speaking, certain languages dominate any given historical moment (*DI* 270). From the multiple discourses and languages--ways of seeing the world--centripetal forces seek to guarantee a certain level of mutual understanding among social actors by "crystallizing" the multiplicity of languages into a "real, although still relative, unity" (*DI* 270). For Bakhtin,

Unitary language constitutes the theoretical expression of the historical processes of linguistic unification and centralization, an expression of the centripetal forces of language.... A common unitary language is a system of linguistic norms. But these norms do not constitute an abstract imperative; they are rather the generative forces of linguistic life, forces that struggle to overcome the heteroglossia of language.... What we have in mind here is not an abstract linguistic minimum of a common language.... [B]ut rather language conceived as ideologically saturated, language as a world view.... (*DI* 270-1)

Nevertheless, centripetal forces are always still operating in the midst of even the strongest centrifugal tendencies:

Alongside the centripetal forces, the centrifugal forces of language carry on their uninterrupted work; alongside verbal-ideological centralization and

unification, the uninterrupted processes of decentralization and disunification go forward. (*DI* 272)

Bakhtin does not mean to say that there is something inherently wrong with the imposition of order, but that this *imposed* gathering--any order--must be recognized as such. "A unitary language is not something given [*dan*] but is always in essence posited [*zadan*]" (*DI* 270).

The problem with academic disciplines and other monologizing tendencies, therefore, is that they take as real what is essentially an ideal, "something merely posited in a social struggle for unity. The *constructed* system is reified...and then mistaken for what language really is and for an account of how it really functions" (*Bakhtin* 140). The object of study of these disciplines is unity--to explain it or to provide it--whereas for Bakhtin, the goal is to reintroduce the forgotten twin, multiplicity, and their tension-filled coexistence in discourse. And, for Bakhtin, it is only novelistic discourse that *dialogizes* heteroglossia. Only in the novel does one language *engage* another, are languages made to speak to one another, and, in this manner, shatter the illusion of any monological understanding or experience of the world. It is only with the novel that we can perceive, that we can come to know, the dialogical essence of experience.

One means by which Bakhtin attempts to assess forms of experience and the variety of ways the relation of humans to their world may be understood, is to examine the ways

in which actions are related to contexts. The particular nature of time and space in operation fundamentally shape all contexts; the particular configurations of "real historical time and space in literature" for what he calls a chronotope (*DI* 84).

Borrowing the term, Bakhtin conceives of chronotopes as particular understandings or senses of the world; and, for Bakhtin, Einstein's theory of relativity demonstrates, that there are a *variety* of senses of time and space. Since different orders or aspects of the universe cannot be assumed to operate within the same chronotope (e.g. biological rhythms v. astronomical ones) this, for Bakhtin, would also hold true for individuals and social activities as well (e.g. rhythms of labor v. those of conversation); since there are a variety of chronotopes, it follows that they may change over time in response to specific needs of an era--chronotopes are *historical*--and they are also dialogic in that they can agree or compete with one another; and finally, chronotopes are more the *ground* for activity, rather than visibly *present* in activity (*DI* 368-9).

Before continuing on to the next chapter, two further notes regarding the chronotope are in order. First, the framing of action, events and experience that any chronotope provides is implicit. Chronotopes operate to *represent* action, events and experience in particular ways, to circumscribe possibilities of action and being, and these ways of representing are grounded in different conceptualizations of history, society, time and space. For example, in inquiring into what kind of initiative do people have in a text (e.g. do things just happen to them, or do they have some sort of control), or in asking if identities are fixed or not, the chronotope does not provide the explicit answer.

Rather, the chronotope shapes the ways in which the text answers these questions. The very sense of time and space that shapes a narrative is what determines its chronotope. "In short," says Morson and Emerson, "Bakhtin understands narrative as shaped by a specific way of conceptualizing the possibilities of action. It is as if each genre possesses a specific *field* that determines the *parameters* of events even though the field does not uniquely specify particular events" (*Prosaics* 370). Secondly, one of the most significant aspects of the term "chronotope" lies in the implication that literary texts are not cut off from the social and cultural environments in which they arise:

Out of the actual chronotopes of our world (which serve as the source of representation) emerge the reflected and *created* chronotopes of the world represented in the work...there is a sharp and categorical boundary line between the actual work as a source of representation and the world represented in the work.... However forcefully the real and the represented world resist fusion[,]...they are nevertheless indissolubly tied up with each other and find themselves in continual mutual interaction.... (*DI* 253-4)

From this, Bakhtin insists that there are differences in the communicative self-other relation that cannot be overcome. As words are placed in different contexts, transformations of meaning take place, since they never have a status outside "real" life relations. But these transformations occur not merely in the attempt to achieve consensus or shared understanding with others in shifting contexts. Rather, the world is seen as a site of *contested* meanings; and, furthermore, the effects of contextual variation are considered to preclude the possibility of a unity of meaning.¹⁵ There is

¹⁵ Compare this to Mead's idea regarding "universal discourse": "Universal discourse is then the formal ideal of communication. If communication can be carried through and made *perfect*, then there would exist the kind of democracy...in which each individual would carry just the response in himself that he knows he calls out in the community... The ideal of human society cannot exist as long as it is impossible for individuals to enter into the

no one meaning, or even a *possibility* of such. And, in keeping with the inherently contestable character of dialogic meaning, words are also "deployed." They are not neutral. All meaning is achieved only through struggle, and there is no ultimate resolution to the struggle over meaning. Bakhtin's dialogism understands language as essentially a medium for incomprehensibility. Individuals do not share the same meanings due to the ongoing movement through contextually distinct communicative interactions with a successive variety of others, as well as the asymmetries inherent in these actions and positions of the actors. As one would suspect, Bakhtin asserts that the chronotope of the novel is the one that best assimilates "real historical time and space." As we saw in the discussion of heteroglossia, the novel, for Bakhtin, has the most complex sense of language; so too does the novel have the most complex chronotope and thus the fullest sense of the world.

Once Bakhtin's notion of literature as social knowledge is taken seriously, the manner in which we treat these cultural objects changes radically. Rather than treating literature as, for example, mere reflections of social formations, or as consisting of purely of formal devices, literature instead is seen as containing within it, and participating in, the problematic instantiations of systems of language; in literature we see the diverse languages of everyday life heterogeneously coming together in the particular ways of conceiving and understanding events, space, time, and relations

attitudes of those whom they are affecting in their performance of their own peculiar functions" (MSS 327-8, italics mine). Universal understanding is not possible only insofar as we do not take on the attitudes of others—but it is hypothetically possible.

between self and others. However, Bakhtin's reformulation of the monologic self according to a dialogic model leaves the question of reflexivity--the signature trail of the old model--undertheorized (i.e. reflexivity is not transformed according to the dialogic model). In other words, the content of social knowledge concerns, at least in part, the emergence of the self. In order to explore these conditions of selfhood, as well as specifying the processes of its emergence, Bakhtin's assessment of the self needs to be expanded and supplemented. The work of Mead and Habermas provide this supplement.

Chapter Two

The Self: Mead and Bakhtin

In our discussion of literature as social knowledge in Chapter One, we introduced Bakhtin's reworking of the traditional understanding of selfhood. Such an understanding, however, requires an inquiry into the conditions of the formation of the self, which Bakhtin leaves under-specified. So that we may be able to explore these conditions, as well as articulate the processes of its emergence, Bakhtin's assessment of the self needs to be expanded. The work of Jurgen Habermas provides this. In order to bring about this linkage between these two theorists, George H. Mead and his theory of the self serves as an intermediary. By exploring the similarities and differences, the points of convergence and divergence, between Bakhtin and Habermas with respect to Mead, we hope to bring about a productive emendation to the contributions of each in our analysis of the formation of self, and, through such an alliance, discern a way in which the problem of the self in history can more adequately be addressed and understood. Thus, our aim in this section is to retain Bakhtin's insights as to the nature of cultural objects and their relation to notions of self, while expanding his investigations to include a more adequate specification of the conditions under which the formation of the self occurs.

As Bakhtin would be a generation later, Mead's early years of study were deeply

influenced by Kant.¹ However, as Bakhtin would also do years later, Mead rejected Kant's understanding of the relation of the subject to nature, and attempted to formulate a new theory of the emergence of self. Mead shared Kant's universalistic orientation--his questioning of the conditions of the possibility of universally valid knowledge and moral orientation. But what he found unacceptable was Kant's transcendental solution, one which entailed the assertion that this universality belonged to the conditions of all cognition, inherent in the cognizing subject prior to all experience. Instead, Mead proposed a more pragmatic answer: that knowledge emerges from the social individual's practical engagement with his or her environment, and from his or her communicative interrelationships with others. To bring this about, Mead draws on Fichte's answer to question of how the world, which is independent of the self, can enter into immediate self-experience. The self is formed through the "objectifications of our praxis" and not through introspection, as introspection fails to turn the individual's attention to the external world (*Mead* 49).

One does not get at himself simply by turning upon himself the eye of introspection. One realizes himself in what he does, in the ends which he sets up, and in the means he takes to accomplish those ends. He gets the rational organization out of it, sees a relationship between means and ends, puts it all together as a plan; and then he realizes that the plan of action presented in this situation is an expression of his own reason, of himself. And it is not until one has such a field of action that he does secure himself. This process, according to Fichte, is what is continually taking place. The self throws up the world as

¹ For a history of Mead's intellectual development I have drawn upon many sources, most notably Hans Joas' book, *G.H. Mead: A Contemporary Re-examination of his Thought*, trans. Raymond Meyer (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985) (hereafter *Mead*).

a field within which action must take place; and, in setting up the world as a field of action, it realizes itself.²

Mead shifts the basis of understanding the formation of self from the realm of consciousness to that of language by emphasizing symbolically mediated interaction in the second-person, and thus works out the dual problem of self-reflexive access to consciousness and the genesis of self by theorizing the self as that which first emerges in context of interaction with an other, an alter ego.

With the observation that, unlike physical phenomena, the behavior of social selves can be influenced by their perception of their own actions, Mead begins at the pre-linguistic, "instinctual" stage of gestures in order to account for the genesis of the self. Indeed, for Mead, "the field of the operation of gestures is the field within which the rise and development of human intelligence has taken place through the process of the symbolization of experience which gestures--especially vocal gestures--have made possible."³ With the vocal gesture, which both "organisms" perceive simultaneously, the actor affects itself at the same time and in the same way that it affects its opposite number. This coincidence is supposed to make it possible for one organism to have an affect upon itself in the same way it affects the other, and thereby learn to perceive itself as it is perceived from the view point of the other, as a social object. The self

² George H. Mead, *Movements*, 90.

³ George H. Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society*, ed. C.W. Morris (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1934), 14n (hereafter *MSS*).

learns to understand its own behavior from the perspective of the other and, most significantly, in the light of the other's *interpretive* behavioral reaction. These vocal gestures become significant symbols when they have the same effect--call out the same "attitude"--in the individual making them as they have on the individual to whom they are addressed (or who explicitly responds to them). Thus, significant gestures or symbols involve a self-reference on the part of the individual making them. The significant gestures make the individual conscious of the attitude of others toward her gestures, and enable her to adjust subsequent behavior to others in the light of that attitude (MSS 46). Self-consciousness is then seen as the "ability to call out in ourselves a set of definite responses which belong to the others of the group" (MSS 162). To be self-conscious is to essentially become an object for one's self due to one's social relations with others.

This taking up of a relation to one's self in interaction constitutes the basis of Mead's discussion of the "I" and the "me." The "I" is that aspect of the self which reacts to the self which arises in the taking of the attitudes of others. In taking the attitudes of the various others, the "me" is that which the "I" reacts to. This is to say that, in a given situation pragmatically understood, the "me" provides the self with a set of possible reactions of others to its potential behavior on the basis of its understanding of others' attitudes or social conventions; the "I" must therefore spontaneously choose the course of action that will call out the most "appropriate" response of these others (to which, in turn, the self will be in a position to further respond). However, the

response of the "I" is "something that just happens, there is no certainty in regard to it" (MSS 178). In other words, no matter how overwhelming the self's concern is for fulfilling the demands of conventionality (and, in turn, for having others fulfill them), there is never an absolute guarantee that the course of action it chooses will conform to normative expectations. Additionally, this "I," comprising as it does the individual's self-intervention into her own conduct, only enters her awareness *after* she has carried out the act of choice. Only then does she become aware of herself as the "author" of her response. Thus, the "I" is a "historical figure"; it is what the "me" was a moment ago. It is in memory that the "I" is constantly present in experience"; the "I" in memory is the "spokesman" (*sic*) of the self past.⁴ To a degree, then, Mead retains the mirror-model of self-consciousness of modern philosophy, according to which the subject only comes upon itself via the mediation of its object.⁵ Now, however, this "object" is understood not from the third-person perspective of an observer, but from the *second-person* perspective of a participant in linguistic communication--the other is an alter ego. *The self is conceived of as the alter ego of this alter ego.* With his formulation of the "me" in this manner, Mead is able to avoid the dilemma inherent in the philosophy of the subject, where the self is either conceived of in the first person, as the "singular and universal receding subject of knowledge and action," or in the third person, as one more empirical object among others (PMT 172). Instead, an

⁴ MSS 175-8.

⁵ For a more thorough discussion of Mead's theory of self formation, as well as an analysis of Mead's conceptualization of social individualization and his relationship to the philosophic tradition of the self, see Jurgen Habermas, "Individuation through Socialization: On Mead's Theory of Subjectivity," in *PMT*, 149-204.

individual first takes up a relationship to itself--and is thus first constituted as a self--in the moment when communicative relations are established with others. Subjectivity (in the second person) and intersubjectivity (between "second persons") are therefore coeval.

If, however, the individual is to develop a self in the "fullest sense," she must not only take the attitude of another towards herself and towards other individuals in interaction, thereby bringing this social process into her individual experience, but, in the same manner, she must also take over the attitudes of the social group to which she belongs "toward the organized, co-operative social activity or set of such activities in which that group is engaged."⁶ This is Mead's "generalized other." In this context, the "me" now comes to represent the definite normative organization of the community in the individual's own attitudes; it is the "bearer of a moral consciousness that adheres to the conventions and practices of a specific group." The "me," as the conventional, represents the power of a *particular* collective will over an individual will "that has not yet come into its own" (*PMT* 182). Mead, however, continually emphasizes the unpredictability and spontaneity of the "I" in the way the individual behaves interactively in taking the attitude of other(s). In this manner, Mead will reverse the primacy of the conventional "me" over and above the spontaneity and autonomy of the "I" when he goes on to discuss the nature of the self under conditions of increasing

⁶ *MSS*, 155. In fact, these complex cooperative activities and "institutional functionings are also possible only in so far as every individual involved in them or belonging to that society can take the general attitudes of all other such individual with reference to these...activities and institutional functionings...." (*ibid*).

social differentiation.

Throughout *Mind, Self, and Society*, Mead makes it clear that the relation between the self and its society is one of mutual influence.

The changes that we make in the social order in which we are implicated necessarily involve our also making changes in ourselves[;]...the relations between social reconstruction and self or personality reconstruction are reciprocal and internal.... (MSS 309)

In the early stages of self-development, the "me" operates to establish a practical relation to herself by adopting the normative attitude of an other toward her own behavior. Again, this second-person perspective is enlarged to encompass the *generalized* expectations of all members of her society. Since the practical "me" represents the pre-given normative expectations of society as a whole, it can be understood as a conservative moment of selfhood. (An identity constituted entirely by this "me" would have to be wholly conventional in character and utterly lack any spontaneity). At this conventional stage, the relationship between the "I" and the "me" is one in which the "I" is suppressed or repressed. That the "I" is "suppressed" is meant to indicate that, according to Mead, a conventional identity can at best be a substitute for a "true" one.⁷ Indeed, Mead claims that whereas in a "primitive society," the self is constituted more or less through the realization of a "given social type" (meaning that the responses of the self are in accordance with the normative

⁷ Mead's discussion of democracy conveys this idea of the "true" self as an autonomously acting individual manifesting and employing "freedom of choice." See MSS 326.

conventions of the group), with the emergence of so-called "civilized society," the self is constituted through the departure from--or the "modified realization" of--any given social type (*MSS* 221). The "civilized" self tends, in other words, towards greater autonomy and singularity (*MSS* 221). This process derives from the fact that social differentiation weakens the ability of the conventional "me" to provide the ground from which responses are possible, since the anticipatory context of futurally oriented interactions is rendered unstable and/or unclear (with respect to its past). In other words, the conventionalism given by "me" can no longer be taken for granted as valid in all potential future interactions; it loses, we might say, much of its "anticipatory validity." A pragmatic demand is made on the self by changing social relations, one which renders recourse to a conventional self problematic. The present is no longer comprehensible solely on the basis of the past--it is no longer a sufficient foundation from which to orient one's actions--and the present now obtains a future-oriented gaze, thus implying that the source of action requires a nonconventional self. The spontaneous, creative "I" emerges as that source. It projects the context of interaction that "makes the reconstruction of a shattered conventional identity possible on a higher level" (*PMT* 187). Instead of looking to others for *agreement* ("my acts are similar to your acts"), the individual now seeks *recognition* ("my acts are not like your acts, but they are still valid, and ought to be recognized by you as acceptable") for the acts of the generating "postconventional" "I."⁸

⁸ This is Habermas' term to describe the emergence of a morally autonomous "I," particularly in modernity. See "Individuation through Socialization: On George Herbert Mead's Theory of Subjectivity," *PMT*, *op. cit.*

Modernity radically prioritizes this postconventional self: the acceleration of historical processes and technical developments, the loss of conventional supports, dissolution of traditional "lifeworlds," and the normality of transformation, all greatly widen the discontinuity between the present's relation to the past and its orientation towards future actions and responses. A mode of anticipation is required and expected. And, to the degree that the self, be it conventional or not, is always conceptualized in terms of the recognition of a larger, communicative community, a postconventional self can be stabilized only in the anticipation of symmetrical relations of mutual recognition. Thus emerges the moral component in Mead: as the normative and cognitive move apart, the normative, which had once relieved the individual of moral responsibility, no longer holds, since, as conventional and antecedent, it no longer suffices as a source of understanding and grounding for the self. Significantly, this development forms the basis of a morally autonomous self, and hence opens a new site of agency in the face of the conventional.⁹

Thus, like Bakhtin, Mead recognizes that the self arises through the process of communication and its ability to take the attitude of an other. Again like Bakhtin, Mead's analyses of language occur within the same epistemological shift with respect to theories of knowledge and consciousness. Each rejects the notion that the genesis of self is something immanent and, instead, views the possibility of the self, and the

⁹ It is important to note, as Joas points out, that Mead's theory of the stages of moral consciousness, albeit incomplete, had a direct influence on Lawrence Kohlberg's formulation of the stages of moral development. See *Mead* 135. The significance of Mead's influence on Kohlberg will become evident later, in the discussion of Habermas' moral theory.

capacity for consciousness, in terms of the individual's relations to others. Indeed, both Mead and Bakhtin recognize that thought is not just inner speech but inner *dialogue*, and, as it is the foundation of thought, language is thus the basis of all self-other relations.

[O]ut of this process thought arises, that is, conversation with one's self, in the role of the specific other and then in the role of the generalized other.¹⁰

One's own discourse is gradually and slowly wrought out of others' words that have been acknowledged and assimilated, and the boundaries between the two are at first scarcely perceptible. (*DI* 345n1)

If, however, Mead and Bakhtin share an orientation towards a theory of knowledge of human behavior that is pragmatically directed towards the use humans make of language, they diverge in their particular emphases. Bakhtin seeks to illuminate the dialogic nature of existence--the struggle between centripetal and centrifugal forces, which he sees as the inescapable characteristic of interaction--through an analysis of language. By contrast, Mead elaborates a theory of intersubjectivity in order to provide an account of the self as socially constituted--individuation is seen as the consequence of socialization processes. In other words, Bakhtin examines those features of language and utterances that are constitutive of dialogic relations, whereas Mead concerns himself with exploring the conditions of the emergence of language and the development of the self.

¹⁰ George H. Mead, *On Social Psychology*, ed. Anselm Strauss (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, 1956), 349.

This divergence should not be seen as a parting of ways, with Bakhtin and Mead perusing irreconcilable research programs, but instead should be taken as separate elaborations of complementary interests; each explores a thematic which, when brought together, enriches the other--a dialogue to be engaged in. Mead is among the first to theorize the emergence of self through an analysis of the fundamental characteristics of linguistic intersubjectivity. However, in specifying the *social* nature of the self and consciousness, Mead fails to adequately problematize individual and group relations. Indeed, he never makes clear the distinctiveness of the social bond. In fact, the "generalized other" often appears like an attempt to model relations between the individual and the collective in the manner of relations between individuals, and thus what is distinctive about the collective *as such* threatens to disappear. Moreover, although Mead intimates that the experience of the individual is present in cultural objects (e.g. literature),¹¹ the role of culture is neglected as part of his general lack of specificity regarding the social. Before an actual argument can be made in support of these criticisms, we must once more look to the work of Bakhtin. While sharing many of Mead's concerns, Bakhtin again proves valuable, now in our attempt to overcome some of the limits of Mead's theory, especially its lack of specificity with respect to culture, while moving towards a more adequate theorization of culture and society predicated on communicative interaction. Later, Habermas will be employed to address the issue of Mead's conceptualization of the generalized other.

¹¹ See, for example, *On Social Psychology, op cit.*, 33-4.

Bakhtin asserts that language and the history of language are not autonomous with respect to extra-linguistic forces, but rather are constituted by them. Language must be understood "metalinguistically." Speakers and their utterances are situated; they are in an intimate relation with their interlocutors and the world, within a configuration of the "given" [*dan*]. The given includes all that has been already finalized, such as language, norms, and personal histories. But for Bakhtin, as discussed earlier, utterances and actions are never just products of these givens. If this were so, there would be no possibility for agency or novelness. The present is more than a derivative of what preceded it; there must be the potential for the "created" [*sozdan*]. Bakhtin's emphasis on the "eventness" of the event leaves time--and the self--open to multiple possibilities. In language, in our utterances, claims Bakhtin, the site of creativity lies in how we *use* language, how the givens are used in communicating with others about our world, that is, how we represent the present.

Every utterance participates in the "unitary language" (in its centripetal forces and tendencies) and at the same time partakes of social and historical heteroglossia (the centrifugal, stratifying forces)... The authentic environment of an utterance, the environment in which it lives and takes shape, is dialogized heteroglossia, anonymous and social as language, but simultaneously concrete, filled with specific content and accented as an individual utterance. (*DI* 272)

Thus, in order to acknowledge the order and structure of the world without reducing human action to mere instantiation of rules (and foreclosing the possibility of the new or novel), Bakhtin's theories of culture, self, language, and literature attempt to provide images of the world where freedom and unfinalizability--creativity--are real possibilities (*Prosaics* 170). Indeed, as more than just a possibility, freedom is an

inevitable part of life and demands responsibility (answerability), which is the basis of a genuine ethics. In an admittedly melodramatic remark, he states that "there is no alibi for being."

Thus, Bakhtin's theory of the novel cannot be adequately understood unless it is framed within the boundaries of his philosophical discourse on ethics. As we have seen, Bakhtin strenuously opposes the tradition in philosophy which treats ethics as a matter of general norms or principles, where the individual action is merely an instance of its application or failure to apply. This approach, he claims, neglects all that is essential to genuine ethical thinking. Bakhtin sees ethics and morality as being an issue of "the historical concreteness of the individual fact, and not...the theoretical truth of a proposition."¹² Ethics and ethical action cannot be understood as abstract principles, but as actual, *creative* and responsible actions performed in everyday life. This understanding of ethical action is what leads Bakhtin to reject the traditional subject-object model of the self--one which assumes a stable self in a stable "given" world--in favor of a dialogical understanding of the formation of the self and its relations to other, one which makes *creativity*, and not general norms or abstract principles, the basis of ethical action. Any account of action and thought conceived of causally or systemically, according to Bakhtin, denies the self freedom of response--true responsibility of ethical action. Ethical action, as conceived of by Bakhtin, forces a reexamination of the conception of the self, one which would include the possibility

¹² "K filosofii postupka" [Toward a Philosophy of the Act], in *Filosofia i sotsiologiya nauki i tekhniki* (Moscow: Nauka, 1986), 84, translation and citation in *Bakhtin, op cit.*, 177.

of acting in a personally responsible manner. Responsibility understood in this fashion means that the self must be recognized as unique, acting in a particular time and place. Moreover, the unrepeatability of the situation demands a "creative" response from the actor, and the responsibility to respond is nontransferable due to this unrepeatability. For Bakhtin, the "eventness" of events, or their novelty, precludes the option of acting in accordance with preset rules which inadequately capture this very "eventness" (and to which an actor must respond). To understand the self as one who acts and faces ethical choices is to acknowledge the particularity of moments and the novelty of circumstances which demand a creative response from the actor to these events or conditions in the world of everyday lived experience. That is, to be ethical is to take responsibility, to "sign" one's actions: it is the moment when internally persuasive discourse supersedes authoritative discourse.

An understanding of the self as a unique being, situated in specific and unrepeatable conditions, is necessary to the understanding of the self as one who acts and makes ethical choices. For it is only with the recognition of uniqueness that internally persuasive discourse, the source of "true" ethical action, can assert itself. And in order for the self to recognize its own uniqueness, and hence be capable of this sort of ethical action, Bakhtin claims that it must first be in an interrelation with others--in reaction, response, interaction. For it is only in such a relation with others that there emerges the recognition of the reciprocal uniqueness of each participant, a relation which must then be shaped into a coherent (but not unified or identical) form.

The notion of creativity is also central to Mead's ethics. In order to describe the nature of human ethical action, he seeks to identify the "social conditions and functions" of *reflexivity*, rejecting, as Bakhtin does, abstract principles as the basis of such action. Both theorists explain self-reflexivity through the sociality of actors; it is the necessary condition that allows for their creative responses to external situations. As we have seen, for Mead self-consciousness emerges when the subject comes upon itself via the mediation of its object in the second-person in linguistic communication with *others*--through the sociality of subject-actor--and whereby the "I" is the means by which "adaptation" of the given is possible (MSS 214). From within these conditions, it is with the capacity of the "I" to project a alternative future from a shared, given past that creativity arises. In order to account for how this is possible, Mead turns to Einstein's theory of relativity, which provides the necessary conceptual apparatus by means of which sociality can explain creativity and ethical action as the organization of perspectives. Thus, like Bakhtin, Mead turns to a theory of the relativity of time to account for the creative capacities of human beings, focusing instead on the formation of self rather than on the nature of language.

It is in the Carus Lectures, published as *The Philosophy of the Present*, that Mead provides his most systematic, albeit oblique, account of time and self.¹³ In these essays, Mead grounds the self-generating process of the assumption of the role of the

¹³ G.H. Mead, *The Philosophy of the Present*, ed. A.E. Murphy (La Salle, IL: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1959) (hereafter *PP*).

other (particularly as related to a historical situation of rapidly increasing change) in the general theory of relativity, expanding the notion of relativity to provide an account of time as it is experienced by human actors. In the pragmatics of interactive experience, "reality exists [only] in a present," and the world is "a world of events," where thought (as part of the cognitive process) is "reconstructive" (PP 3). The meanings ascribed to experience arise only when the individual can react to her own reactions in the role of other, and can take the standpoint gained as authoritative for the direction of her own activity. Hence, to take the role of the other is to see all experience in terms of what it means relative to others which the initial standpoint defines as central. The organization of relative experiences occurs in terms of the "real" others to which these experiences refer, "involving not a non-empirical reality to which they must somehow correspond, but rather a way of acting which relates past and future to the present from the standpoint or perspective of its widest social meaning" (PP xxiv). In order to understand the conditions of interaction possibilities, time must also be theorized, since the past and future are also conditions of the pragmatically oriented present.

Mead explores these possibilities in a lengthy discussion of the relativity of time. His argument rests on the concept of emergence. According to Mead, the emergent is the novel in the present and always follows from the past; however, *anterior to its appearance*, it does not, "by definition," follow from the past. "[T]here is and always will be a *necessary* relation of the past and the present, *but...the present in which the*

emergent appears accepts that which is *novel* as an essential part of the universe, and from that standpoint *rewrites* its past. The emergent then *ceases* to be an emergent and follows from the past which has replaced the former past" (*PP* 11, italics mine). This is to say that although it may appear that only our viewpoint of the past alters, and not the past itself, Mead is indeed claiming the latter. There is no past "in itself"; the past's *relation to the present* is the sole basis of its "pastness." To ask what status the past has with respect to any present is not to ask what it was when it was the present, for then it was not the past. There is no casual relation of the past to the present.

The *relation* of any event to the conditions under which it occurs is what we term causation. The relation of the event to its preceding conditions at once sets up a history, and the uniqueness of the event makes that history relative to that event. The conditioning passage and the appearance of the unique event then give rise to past and future as they appear in *a present*. All of the past is in the present as the conditioning nature of passage, and all the future arises out of the present as the unique events that transpire. (*PP* 33, italics mine)

From a past present of multiple possibilities emerges a present; this present now turns backwards in order to discern *its past*, appropriates a particular past *as such* (thus stabilizing itself *qua present*), and projects a causal meaning onto the succession it has constituted--a pragmatic project of the interpretive reconstruction of experience. In this way, the present comes to determine a past as *its own condition*; the present, in other words, equally determines itself as a *consequence* of the past it has "selected" (and thus constitutes itself as a future now present)--where "new events constitute new pasts," and any historical reconstruction of the past is "necessarily referred to the

future" (*Mead* 178).

We orient ourselves not with reference to the past which was a present within which the emergent appeared, but in such a restatement of the past as conditioning the future that we may control its reappearance. (*PP* 15)

This knowledge of reality (historical reconstruction) does, however, obtain "objectivity"--understood not as an absolute structure, but as something reached by means of a "progressive universalization; through the constitution of the world not from every individual perspective separately, but rather in a common praxis as a common world" (*Mead* 181). This understanding of temporal knowledge also applies more generally; objective knowledge obtains through the universal taking of perspectives. Mead applies this understanding in his reformulation of ethical action, and centers on a critique of utilitarian and Kantian ethics. Briefly, although the move by utilitarians to make ethics a practical matter is welcomed by Mead, the dissolution of action from motives is unacceptable. Kant, on the other hand, makes the intention, not ends, the basis of moral action, universalizing the motive of the action. Although he embraces the notion of universality, according to Mead the limitations of the Kantian categorical imperative (which demands self-examination) occurs precisely when it is no longer a matter of deciding what is one's duty, but rather when one must adjudicate among conflicting duties, or, even more problematic, when one must decide in what manner to best fulfil one's duties.

Kant's categorical imperative assumes that there is just one way of acting. If that is the case, then there is only one course that can be universalized; then the respect for law would be the motive for acting in that fashion. But if you

assume that there are alternative ways of acting, then you cannot utilize Kant's motive as a means of determining what is right. (MSS 381)

How one discovers what one's duties are, and how to fulfill them, cannot be prescribed in advance but must be creatively discovered. It is not motive alone, nor the end itself, that frames ethical action, but intersubjectivity. Moral action is that which is oriented toward the common good¹⁴; it must "take into account all the values involved" (MSS 388), and, hence, "you have to universalize not the mere form of the act but the content of the act" (MSS 382), and the "content is always of a social character" (MSS 385). Universal validity obtains through intersubjectivity. Thus, "knowledge" of the moral, as with knowledge of reality, has its ordinary source in relations with others.

Ethical ideas, within any given human society, arise in the consciousness of the individual members of that society from the fact of the common social dependence of all these individuals upon one another...and from their awareness or sensing or conscious realization of this fact. (MSS 320)

The ability to make moral decisions and to act as a responsible moral agent is conditioned upon the ability to take the role of the other--to put social considerations above individual ones--in the moral realm. Thus, moral action depends upon the ability to enter into a universal perspective. A crisis of action arises when particular values of an individual are experienced as being in conflict with values of specific or

¹⁴ "Both Kant and the Utilitarian are fundamentally hedonists, assuming that our inclinations are toward our own subjective states--the pleasure that comes from satisfaction. If that is the end, then of course our motives are all subjective affairs. From Kant's standpoint they are bad, and from the Utilitarian's standpoint they are the same for all actions and so neutral. But on the present view, if the object itself is better, then the motive is better. The motive can be tested by the end, in terms of whether the end does reinforce the very impulse itself" (MSS 384-5).

generalized others.

But ethical problems arise for individual members of any given society whenever they are individually confronted with a social situation to which they cannot readily adjust and adapt themselves...realize themselves...[or] immediately integrate their behavior. (MSS 320)

Such crises in action cannot be resolved by referring to a pre-given, decontextualized principle, but only through the creativity of actors. "Creativity" is the effort put forth by actors to give consideration, to "rationally" examine, all the values that are involved in a particular crisis.

The only rule that an ethics can present is that an individual should rationally deal with all the values that are found in a specific problem. That does not mean that one has to spread before him all the social values when he approaches a problem. The problem itself defines the values. It is a specific problem and there are certain interests that are definitely involved; the individual should take into account all of those interests and then make out a plan of action which will rationally deal with those interests. That is the only method that ethics can bring to the individual. (MSS 388)

That is, in Mead's ethics action and discourse are intimately linked; ethics is a matter of a rational examination of validity claims--and, to Mead, values, of course, are not objective givens nor subjective evaluations, but arise from the interrelationship of individuals to the changing social order.¹⁵

¹⁵ See George H. Mead, *Philosophy of the Act*, ed. C.W. Morris (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1938): "We are all of us in some sense changing the social order in which we belong; our very living does it, and we ourselves change as we go on; there is always action to answer to reaction in the social world. That process of continuing reconstruction is the process of value, and the only essential imperative I can see is that this essential social process has got to go on--the community, on the one hand, and the selves that make up the community" (460).

Mead frames ethical problems in terms of the conflict between what he calls the "social" and the "asocial" aspects of the *individual* (MSS 321). The social aspect of the self integrates the individual with the group, and is characterized by feelings of cooperation and equality in the individual towards other members of the group. The asocial aspect of the individual is that which differentiates her from "or sets her in distinctive and unique opposition to," other members of the social group. This "asociality" is, of course, fundamentally social for Mead in that it is derived from involvement with other social individuals. Whether or not a social situation brings about a crisis--a conflict between social and individual interests--depends upon the ability of the individual to integrate his or her own behavior with the behavior of others (MSS 322). The ability to resolve such a crisis (a lack of "fit," if you will), and the manner in which this resolution will occur, is contingent upon the particular stage of the "I"- "me" relation. When the social aspect of the individual is constituted primarily by an orientation towards a generalized other, moral action is conventional--the "creative" is subsumed under the existing normative order.¹⁶ However, when the "I" comes into its own, it is able to project an alternative community of others within which actions contra the conventional may be recognized as valid, and thus the self maintains its connection to the now idealized social world.

When one realizes himself, in that he distinguishes himself, he asserts himself over others in some peculiar situation.... If he could not bring that peculiarity of himself into the common community, if it could not be recognized...he could not be the very self he is trying to be. The author, the artist, must have his

¹⁶ Of course, no normative order is utterly inflexible; problems arise which must be dealt with, but the degree of latitude of "social reconstruction" is minimalized within a society at the conventional stage.

audience; it may be an audience that belongs to posterity, but there must be an audience. (MSS 324)

The group advances from old standards toward another standard; and what is important from the standpoint of morality is that this advance takes place through the individual, through a new type of individual--one who conceives himself as individuals have not conceived themselves in the past. (MSS 386)

In other words, the creativity essential for ethical action results from the "novelness" generated in asociality when the "me" no longer dominates the "I." It is in this manner that Mead conceives of the particular stage of the "I"- "me" relation--the conflict between the "social" and "asocial"--the *explanans* of moral consciousness.

The original problematic of this section was twofold: first, to develop a theoretical approach which would acknowledge the thoroughly social character of the formation of self; and second, in doing so, to be able to provide an account of the self as having an inherent reflexive concern for the social interactions which constitute its conditions. The work of both Mead and Bakhtin provide the fundamental framework of such a theory by conceptualizing the self as emerging in dialogic or communicative interaction with others, and, successfully escape many of the dilemmas generated by metaphysical notions of the genesis of consciousness. Moreover, in the same manner, both conceive of moral action, in terms of the sociability of actors, as a central category through which to understand self formation and relations with the social world. Neither Mead nor Bakhtin is, however, unproblematic. Many of the oversights

and weaknesses (as well as strengths) arise, naturally, from their own specific concerns. For example, although the rejection of philosophy's traditional understanding of the formation of the self was a critical and defining moment for both Mead and Bakhtin, it is clear that Mead was far more interested than Bakhtin in formulating an alternative theory based on intersubjectivity. Consequently, his work on the process of self formation in interaction is much more comprehensive than that of Bakhtin. Conversely, Bakhtin was more concerned with the development of a theory of language which could provide an "image of man" that was truly creative; such a theory, then, required a revised understanding of the nature of the self and its formation and, as such, was secondary to the other issues. However, as we shall see, in addition to these differences in interest, there are instances where the two theorists are irreconcilable. There are also many points where they are in agreement. Even more importantly, there are many points in which they complement one another. Moreover, there are certain points where a comparison between the two reveals that both need further development. The following comparison, broadly speaking, will have two stages. First, it will begin by looking at the version of a socially-embedded self provided by each. Subsequent to this, it will investigate how this self is incorporated into a theory of history and some of the problems that arise therein.

Mead's primary contribution has been to work out a detailed theory of the self. Far more than Bakhtin, Mead is able to specify the processes of self formation necessary for a reformulated understanding of selfhood, and, in doing so, he illustrates how this

process (self-reflexivity) can only occur through the sociability of actors, and how individualization itself is a consequence of socialization. The process by which self consciousness arises when an actor orients herself to another in communicative interaction (i.e. the self as the alter of another) is the same process whereby that actor becomes socialized (i.e. the self takes on the expectations the other has of an alter)--the former as the genesis of self consciousness in the *formation* of the "I"-*"me"* relation, and the latter as the basis of action in the particular *relation* between the "I" and the "me" as the self makes the expectations of the other her own and gains autonomy. In this manner, Mead is able to provide a detailed argument for the way in which individualization occurs--not as the realization of an independent subject, but as a discursively mediated process of socialization.

Ironically, it is Mead's strength at the individual level of analysis which contributes to one of the more serious weaknesses of his work. Mead begins his revision of a theory of the self by outlining phylogenetically the "evolution" from mechanical to gestural interaction. Later, the emergence of normative relations are explained at the ontogenetic level, or solely as they develop in the child.¹⁷ This focus on the individual allows Mead, for example, to stipulate the formation of conventional and, by implication, "post-conventional" moral action. However, in his subsequent discussion of the relation of the self to others, and specifically the generalized other, he implicitly remains locked at this level of analysis. The problem with Mead's notion

¹⁷ Further implications of this switch will be addressed later when discussing Habermas and his critique of Mead.

of a generalized other is that it conceptualizes the relation of the individual to the social as if it was a relation with another individual. To talk about *the* generalized other in this manner is to homogenize the meanings, interpretations, utterances and actions of a plurality of others. As is often the case with many of his central concepts, Mead has a rather ambiguous definition of the generalized other. For example, at one point Mead states that it is an "organized community or social group" which may be called "the generalized other," and, in the next sentence, he calls a ball team a social group, thereby seeming to *imply* that insofar as there can be many "social groups" (understood in this manner), so too can there be many generalized others (MSS 154). But, in the sentence immediately following, Mead claims that the "generalized other is the attitude of the *whole community*" (MSS 154, italics mine).

The problems that arise with a homogenous generalized other are not, however, fully resolved if we instead talk about generalized others, in the plural. Mitchell Aboulafia, for one, does argue that Mead's understanding of the generalized other is an expressly plural one. He emphasizes that "for Mead the generalized other exists in relation to various communities, and while it is possible to conceive of a community as a nation whose members share traditions, there are many types of groups or subgroups which have generalized others. 'Some of them are concrete social classes or subgroups.... The others are abstract....'"¹⁸ Nevertheless, even if we grant to Mead this

¹⁸ Mitchell Aboulafia, *The Mediating Self: Mead, Sartre, and Self-Determination* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1986), p. 13. See also pp. 12-21.

"pluralization" of generalized others, these now-plural others are still conceived of as a more or less internally coherent, integrated, or at least unproblematical set of expectations. There is still no acknowledgement that any single generalized other may be internally conflictual and contested. Indeed, Mead's own examples, which Aboulafia cites, are telling; these "subgroups" include "political parties, clubs, corporations" (MSS 157). It needs hardly to be commented on, given the current nature of political group formations, that such "subgroups" are *not* unproblematically unified and that their members are in even partial agreement with one another on all issues. In treating society at large as *an* individual, the plural-vocality of the generalized other is effaced. Or, in other words, because the society at large to which the individual is relating is forced into the mold of *an* individual, the plural-vocality of relations to the world is suppressed and rendered monological. Culture, as represented by Mead's generalized other, stratified, or antagonistic, and is only differentiated internally in a relatively weak manner.

But the norms and conventions that make up society at large are not uniform; they are, in fact, often contradictory, contested and mutually incompatible (and, thus, so too are subject positions). Subgroups or social groups are also more internally differentiated and stratified, and less coherent in terms of the experiences of their members. Under Mead's treatment, what is distinctive about the social--what distinguishes the social from individuals--is lost. Mead never clarifies the distinctiveness of the social bond, he fails to explore the individual-group relation itself as problematic, and, indeed,

inadequately accounts for the very genesis of the generalized other.¹⁹ We will return later to this question of the genesis of the "generalized other" in the section below. For now, what we wish to emphasize is that, although Mead does stress the conflict between the individual and the generalized other, he does not, however, acknowledge that the generalized other *itself* is internally conflicted. In short, the notion of a generalized other simply does away with the plurality which, especially in a modern society, can, and often does, lead to a conflict of interpretations. Indeed, in the modern period, such conflicts are virtually a matter of routine.

¹⁹ This weakness makes clear why Mead has been assimilated primarily to the micro-sociological tradition, and why, from a macro perspective, his theory needs reworking. Indeed, this attempt to narrowly model the social at the level of the individual is characteristic of symbolic interactionism. For example, Herbert Blumer, in a move towards the individualistic side of pragmatism, emphasizes the more subjective aspects of social life to the ultimately detrimental exclusion of social factors and forces. Blumer was concerned that functionalists treated action merely as an expression or a product of factors or conditions antecedent to interaction. In place of this, Blumer posited an interpretive theory of interaction, wherein the individual "has to construct and guide his action instead of merely releasing it in response to factors playing on him." However, while he acknowledges Mead's view of the self as emerging in interaction with others, Blumer seems to leave "the other" behind, and the influence of structural factors drops to a far distant second place.

Manfred Kuhn also viewed the capacity of humans to use symbols as the fundamental basis from which to understand the world. Unlike Blumer, however, Kuhn felt that, through socialization, individuals acquire a relatively stable "core self." This strain of interactionism looks at the individual's socially constituted identity as the source of action. Behavior is, in principle, predicated on the internalization of external "rules" or the structured norms and attitudes of society. But Kuhn never explains where and how these rules and norms themselves come into being.

Finally, Erving Goffman's "dramaturgical approach" emphasizes, as Blumer did, the situatedness of interaction and the ability of actors to manipulate their "performances" with others. However, Goffman places the individual at a distance from the roles performed; actors are not merely individuated but "alienated," their "true selves" never revealed. Furthermore, his analyses are almost exclusively limited to face-to-face interaction, ignoring the larger context in which such interaction is embedded and which operates as a constraining force on action.

See Herbert Blumer, *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1969); Manfred Kuhn, "Major Trends in Symbolic Interaction Theory in the Past Twenty-Five Years," *Sociological Quarterly* 5 (Winter 1964): 6-21; with C. Addison Hickman, *Individuals, Groups, and Economic Behavior* (New York: Dryden Press, 1956); and Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1959).

This understanding of the generalized other is, perhaps, one reason why Mead is unable to specify the postconventional at the societal level. The self, on the basis of the "I"- "me" split, will often individuate itself by the interrogation of generalized expectations. In a relation with a generalized other conceived of homogeneously, this self will never be in the position of having to take an evaluative stance vis-a-vis a plurality of competing, contradictory, and contestatory interpretations--it will never have to "enter the fray," so to speak--and thus will ultimately fall outside the social. Postconventional individuation at this level becomes only "desocialization," only an individual that differentiates him or herself from the generalized other--that is, postconventionality takes on an asocial character. With this notion of the generalized other, one cannot speak of any sort of postconventionality except in terms of individual differentiation from a set of conventions or norms that are otherwise homogeneous. Only when the idea of a homogenous generalized other is dispensed with does there no longer exist the absolute opposition of solidarity and individuation that derives from a postconventional self. The tension between solidarity and individuation persists, but now postconventionalism can be conceived of in terms of an internally heterogeneous social body, one that is fractured into smaller groups who attempt to achieve different balances between solidarity and individuation. This heterogeneous social body is one where at each level there is an ever-shifting balance between solidarity and individuation--individuals contesting other individuals, groups contesting other groups--but also one in which there are solidaristic ties that stretch across all these relations. Only when the social body is conceived of in this manner

can the institutional mechanisms that make societal postconventionality possible be articulated. As we shall see in the next chapter, this is precisely what Habermas attempts to do. Although Habermas also locates the postconventional possibility in the ability of the "I" to project a futural arena of interaction, his insistence on the necessity of institutional support--most notably legal--in the formation of this postconventional attitude returns the idea of a social group to its formation, a social group, however, which is also internally breaking with tradition itself (creating its own normativity out of itself). Thus Mead, by treating the generalized other according to the model of an individual, can neither provide an adequate account of moral action in modern, heterogeneous society, nor specify the conditions under which postconventionality at the social level becomes possible.

In contrast, for Bakhtin, antagonisms, contradictions and contestations over and in meaning and action are of fundamental importance. In his analysis of the dialogic nature of language and utterances, and the inherent tension and struggle of different voices, Bakhtin theorizes far more explicitly than Mead the nature and function of cultural objects, and opens a distinct space from which to consider agency. And, as his concern is not so much to understand how things work, but rather how they change, he considers the ways in which communication and interaction are generated in social life, and how this socially-grounded process is reflected in the change of language forms and speech genres ("ways of speaking"). The first half of this statement sounds remarkably like Mead. But it is with the last clause that Bakhtin's

thought distinguishes itself. In that individuals are social through and through, both constituting and constituted (and never coeval with their selves or others), Bakhtin maintains that meanings are always struggled over and are ever changing, and that this condition is embedded in ways of speaking--voices may be silenced, go unheard, or be marginalized, but a "polyphony" is the very nature of social life. Bakhtin therefore insists that analyses of cultural objects should not be limited to their representational function. He follows through these theoretical concerns in an (empirical) analysis of narratives. Bakhtin's discussion of the novel calls attention to form not for its own sake, but to specify that discourse of life and discourse of representation are not different.²⁰ When literary texts are conceived of as utterances which cannot be separated from particular subjects in specific situations, literature, as we have seen, can then be treated as another form of communication, and, as such, another form of knowledge. The everyday as constituted, not incorporated, in literature and other cultural objects. Moreover, there is no group made up of "non-contradictory, self-same individuals, but rather only groups of individuals whose many interests and identifications exceed the framework imposed by a sociological analysis."²¹ Thus, the speech genres available never allow the individual to always and fully articulate all their dimensions.²² The dual emphasis on the production of utterances and social

²⁰ The novel, for Bakhtin, is defined differently than it is for literary theorists--"novel" equals narrative. The novel is multiform.

²¹ George Yudice, "Rethinking the Subject of Postmodernity" (1988, unpublished).

²² See Susan Stewart's "Bakhtin's Anti-Linguistics," in *Bakhtin* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1986), 46: "Bakhtin is the master of what we might call 'unhappiness conditions,' those circumstances in which the utterance stands in tension or conflict with the utterances of others. For utterances are always preceded by alien utterances which face them in the form of an addressee or social Other and which surround them with an always

relations, on the one hand, and the unavoidable and inherent struggle over meaning and voicedness, on the other, provides the means by which to recognize the repressed polyphony, and allows for the possibility of re-articulation of the collective's repressed voices.²³

It is in the moral realm, however, that Mead's intensive individual-level analysis, so problematic in conceptualizing the nature of the social, reestablishes its advantage, albeit not without a significant weakness. Both Mead and Bakhtin hypothesize a self with potentially two forms of action orientation (but both social in nature); in the first orientation, actions are based on a congruence with society at large (the "generalized other" and "authoritative discourse," respectively)--the self acts on the basis of the socially shared expectations *writ large*; the second form of action orientation occurs when the self moves past mere consideration of the demands of the group ("conventional" and "centripetal" forces, respectively), and grounds action in the interests of a (now increasing) individuated self--a self "coming into its own" through its interactions with others ("postconventional" and "internally persuasive discourse," respectively). It is with the later orientation that both Mead and Bakhtin locate creativity and their ethics. Accounting for the first form of action orientation is relatively unproblematic. From their similar understanding of self formed in relations

significant silence."

²³ Nancy Fraser's examination of the struggle over needs in the welfare state is informed by this aspect of Bakhtin's theorization of dialogism. See her article, "Struggle over Needs: Outline of a Socialist-Feminist Critical Theory of Late Capitalist Political Culture," *Unruly Practices* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1989).

with others--where the self emerges as it is recognized by others as a legitimate interlocutor--the power and significance of identifying, acknowledging and conforming to the demands of others by such an individual is clear. However, the process whereby an individual moves beyond this stage, towards greater individuation, requires a well thought out analysis of the formation of the self and its relation to others and the social world to adequately account for the shift. Mead's conceptualization of the "I" and "me"--and especially his bestowal upon the "I" of the creative capacity to project an alternative future from a shared, given past--provides the necessary framework from which to adequately consider the shift, while Bakhtin's less detailed analysis does not.

However, Mead's temporal analysis is not historicized. While positing the means by which "objective" knowledge is obtained through progressive universalization, this process is only intimated in his general discussion of intersubjectivity, or the universal taking of perspectives. He does not make explicit a "process of universalization of praxis taking place in history" whereby the historical conditions of objective knowledge of temporal experience can be specified (*Mead* 181). That is, although Mead theoretically raises the temporal structure of historical experience to the status of an essential condition of self-formation, its empirical conditions are left untheorized. His *theoretical* treatment of time specifies the reconstructive impulse exerted by the emergent present on the past, and the subsequent interpretive work humans perform on meaning and history, but his *empirical* observations--as well as his devotion to the

"scientific method" and a "naturalistic" perspective--leave unexplored the forms, especially in modernity, that would constitute a "creative" impulse outside any developmental account of human society. In other words, Mead guilty of a form of linear thinking which, as Bakhtin asserts, fails to capture the inherently dialogic nature of human experience.

Bakhtin, like Mead, maintains that a condition of openness and unfinalizability--creativity--is indispensable for his ethics. The shift from authoritative to internally persuasive discourse occurs when "thought begins to work in an independent, experimenting and discriminating way" (*DI* 345), but the precise manner in which this occurs is left highly underspecified. Bakhtin begins by stating that

One's own discourse is gradually and slowly wrought out of others' words that have been acknowledged and assimilated, and the boundaries between the two are at first scarcely perceptible. (*DI* 345 fn31)

He then goes on to say that the internally persuasive word is contextualized.

It is either a contemporary word, born in a zone of contact with unresolved contemporaneity, or else it is a word that has been reclaimed for contemporaneity.... (*DI* 346)

But the *process* of its "birth" or "reclaiming" and the conditions under which this becomes possible are never fully elaborated. Moreover, the internally persuasive word is partially "one's own word" and partially "someone else's," but exactly how someone else's word becomes distinctly one's own word is unclear. Neither the difference

between "assimilation"--taking on another's word *as if* it were one's own--and modification or adaptation--altering another's word to make it one's own--is established, nor is the *means* by which a word is "made one's own" specified. Indeed,

[The internally persuasive word's] creativity and productiveness consist precisely in the fact that such a word *awakens* new and independent words....
(DI 345)

[T]he essence of the internally persuasive word...[is] its capacity for further creative life in the context of our ideological consciousness.... We have not yet learned from it all it might tell us; we can take it into new contexts, attach it to new material, put it in a new situation in order to wrest new answers from it, new insights into its meaning, and even wrest from it new words of its *own* [since another's discourse, if productive, gives birth to a new word from us in response]. (DI 346-7)

Neither Mead nor Bakhtin provide the necessary historical grounding that would allow an analysis to move from a generalization concerning the nature of the postconventional self towards specifying the conditions under which such a shift occurs. This issue will be dealt with in greater detail in the next chapter.

Mead also remains implicitly tied to another equally problematic--and monological--concept, that of progress, to explain societal level change. Despite his notion of a continuous, radical revision of the past, Mead's vision of the future within this model remains very much bound up with this utopianism characteristic of modernity.²⁴ A.E.

²⁴ See MSS 310: "The human social ideal--the ideal or ultimate goal of human social progress--is the attainment of a universal human society in which all human individuals would possess a perfected social intelligence, such that all social meanings would each be similarly reflected in their respective individual consciousness--such that the meanings of any one individual's acts or gestures...would be the same for any other individual whatever who

Murphy summarizes Mead's lectures on the philosophy of the present as follows:

The more of the past and future such a standpoint commands, the more will it transform experience into the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen and the more, above all, will it enlighten action by giving a present relevance and value to occurrences not literally given in immediate experience. The ordinary function of standard objects is to mediate action by bringing within the range of conscious selection alternatives that only this wide standpoint can encompass.²⁵

Furthermore, while Einstein allows him to recognize that to conceive of the self is also to conceive of situatedness in time, Mead fails to appreciate the fact that one must also attend to the constraints--practical and historical--that are placed on the possibility of action. The relation to the past and future are acknowledged as part of the conditions of the communicative genesis of the self and the conditions of possible actions, but Mead fails to consider that *how* these historical-temporal dimensions are conceived, to a large degree, *circumscribes the possibilities of selfhood in action*.

Bakhtin also makes use of Einstein's theory of relativity to articulate the positional nature of dialogic interaction, asserting that the process of taking the role of the other in communication both distinguishes the self and the other, and ties them together.

Meaning, arising in dialogue, is relative in the sense that it emerges only as the result

responded to them." This utopian premise is situated immediately prior to a summation of progress in modern "civilized" time, which "exhibits the constant evolution of human social organization in the direction of greater and greater relational unity and complexity, more and more closely knit interlocking and integrated unifying of all the social relations of interdependence..." (ibid).

²⁵ PP xvii.

of the relation between two "bodies" occupying "simultaneous but different space."²⁶

However, although Bakhtin addresses the phenomena of culture far more explicitly than Mead does, his notion of chronotope does not address the significance of historical time-consciousness when located at the level of social actors own self-understanding. Conversely, whereas Mead provides a basis from which to consider the implications of such a self-understanding, his theoretical construct leaves little or no room to address relations of power, and of the substantive constraints on selfhood. In sum, while Bakhtin does not provide the comprehensive framework through which to systematically explore and interrogate the process of self formation and action that Mead does (although both do arrive at similar conclusions),²⁷ he does, however, supply a more grounded analysis of some of the implications of a intersubjective theory of the self in the realm of culture.

We have attempted to underscore some of the sympathies between Mead and Bakhtin's theories of the self in order to indicate the manner in which the various oversights and weakness of each can reasonably be amended--Mead's more thorough-going analysis of the formation of the self coupled with Bakhtin's insights into the relationship between the self and culture. As has been suggested, however, a comparison between Mead and Bakhtin's relation to a theory of history is far more problematic than their

²⁶ See *Dialogism* 20-21: "...[B]odies may be thought of as ranging from the immediacy of our physical bodies, to political bodies and to bodies of ideas in general (ideologies)."

²⁷ For purposes of this project, the extent to which Mead reformulates a theory of the self in contrast to Bakhtin's relative paucity of detail need not be explored in any greater detail than has been done so above (and any cursory reading of both theorists will immediately reveal Mead's exceptional position in this matter).

respective formulations of selfhood. Specifically, although Mead and Bakhtin theoretically raise the temporal structure of historical experience to the status of an essential condition of self-formation, its empirical conditions are left relatively unexplored. Each theorizes the social nature of the self, but both fail to adequately specify the interaction of self and society historically, to define the precise formation of socio-structural components within which all action and selves are embedded, and, most importantly, they fail to examine the role and nature of historical time in all understandings of self and society. In order to address these weaknesses, we must turn to Jurgen Habermas and his theory of communicative action.

Chapter Three

The Self Continued: Habermas and Koselleck

Like Bakhtin and Mead, Jurgen Habermas is among the many contemporary theorists critical of the Western metaphysical tradition and its subject-centered model of reason. Unlike many of his contemporaries, however, Habermas retains a conviction in an unrealized emancipatory potential of modernity. He maintains this position through a revised conceptualization of reason. The misconceptions which adhere to the current understanding of modernity obtains, claims Habermas, from a remnant of metaphysical thinking, held even by those who seemingly reject the tradition of a philosophy of consciousness--that is, reason is still conceptualized exclusively in terms of a purposive or instrumental rationality. Habermas takes up Mead's reconceptualization of the formation of the self in his project of developing a theory of communicative action in order to overcome the weakness and dangers inherent in metaphysical thinking with regards to reason and subject/object model of consciousness, and attempts to overcome the limits of this paradigm by reformulating the concept of reason itself to be understood more broadly as communicative rather than merely strategic action. This chapter will trace Habermas's own understanding of the self as formed in communicative interaction.¹

¹ The following summation draws extensively upon on the introductory comments in Habermas' *Communication and the Evolution of Society* (hereafter *CES*).

Habermas' work can be understood as an attempt to articulate and ground an expanded conception of rationality in a theory of communicative competence (conceptualized in terms of the conditions of speech and action) and not solely in objectivistic or instrumental ones. This revision of rationality extends to a reformulation of the understanding of self formation. Instead of the monological model of reason, where the self is conceived of as an isolated individual with various projects and intentions who stands over against a world which is available primarily for strategic intervention, Habermas offers a dialogic conception of rationality which is worked out according to the pragmatics of language use and by virtue of which the self can be conceptualized in inherently intersubjective terms. He makes a fundamental shift by emphasizing the social coordination of the individual's "goal-directed" actions and the structures of social interaction in which these actions are situated. Coordination and interaction occur communicatively, making the analysis of language central to social theory. The point of departure for Habermas is the inadequacies of a subject-centered reason inadequate. Habermas claims, to be precise, that modernity is often understood--whether at the thematic level or the merely presuppositional--on the basis of a "one-sided rationalization" that fails to engage the concept of "reason" in its fullest. This failure, he claims, is present not only in Weber and other critical theorists, but is also characteristic of much of contemporary philosophy--both modern and postmodern--and results from the limits of the philosophy of consciousness, which these various approaches, more or less directly, draw upon. Thus, the move from purposive rationality (philosophy of consciousness) to communicative rationality (philosophy of

language) must begin with a redefinition of reason. His theory of communicative action attempts to supply such a rearticulation and provide the ground for a broadened conceptualization of rationality. To this end, *The Theory of Communicative Action* begins with an analysis of the concept of rationality that assumes an intimate relation with knowledge, but a relation that is less tied to the *possession* of knowledge than to the manner in which individuals "*acquire and use knowledge*."² This emphasis on the acquisition and use of knowledge opens the way for Habermas to argue for the primacy of language--that is, the *reliability* of the knowledge embodied in an expression is the condition upon which to evaluate its rationality.

Taking up first purposive expressions and goal-directed actions, Habermas asserts that the rationality of the expression is evaluated in terms of the veracity of its *truth claim*, and the rationality of the action is assessed in terms of the effectiveness of the means chosen to achieve the goal, where such selection is based on a relationship to a truth claim. Truth is related to states of affairs existing in the world, and effectiveness to interventions in the world that can bring about the existence of states of affairs.

With his assertion, A makes reference to something that *in fact occurs* in the objective world; with his purposive activity, B makes reference to something that *should occur* in the objective world. In doing so both raise *claims* with their symbolic expression, claims that can be criticized and argued for, that is, *grounded*. (TC1 9)

² Jurgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action, Volume One: Reason and the Rationalization of Society*, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1984), 8 (hereafter TC1).

Hence, the rationality of an expression is evaluated in terms of the "internal relations between the semantic content" of the expression, the conditions of validity, and the reasons which, if necessary, could be provided through argumentation for the truth of the assertion or for the effectiveness of the action (TCI 9). However, the manner in which one analyzes the *use* of this knowledge can vary. One can analyze the use of knowledge in teleological action from a *noncommunicative standpoint*: an assertion is considered rational if the speaker merely satisfies the conditions necessary for successful intervention in the world. On the other hand, one can analyze the use of knowledge *communicatively*: the assertion or utterance of facts is rational only if it makes possible an understanding among individuals about something in the world so as to coordinate their actions and pursue their particular aims. "From one perspective the telos inherent in rationality appears to be *instrumental mastery*, from the other *communicative understanding*" (TCI 11). This shift in the focus of social action from the teleological to the communicative dimension makes the analysis of language, the medium of communication, central to Habermas' theory.

In order to develop his theory of communicative competence, Habermas, like Bakhtin, rejects analyzing language abstracted from its pragmatic aspects, and instead focuses on utterances--the "use" of speech in specific situations.

The basic universal-pragmatic intention of speech-act theory is expressed in the fact that it thematizes the elementary units of speech (utterances) in an attitude similar to that in which linguistics does the units of language (sentences). The goal of reconstructive language analysis is an explicit description of the rules that a competent speaker must master in order to form grammatical sentences

and to utter them in an acceptable way.... [S]peech-act theory postulates a corresponding communicative rule competence, namely the competence to employ sentences in speech acts. It is further assumed that communicative competence has just as universal a core as linguistic competence. A general theory of speech actions would thus describe exactly that fundamental system of rules that adult subjects master to the extent that they can fulfill *the conditions for a happy employment of sentences in utterances*, no matter to which particular language the sentences may belong and in which accidental contexts the utterances may be embedded. (CES 26)

Thus, for Habermas, an understanding of communicative action rests not only with linguistic competencies--use of phonetic, syntactic, and semantic features of *sentences*--but also with certain pragmatic features of *utterances*. Understanding the rules of grammar cannot explain why an action was carried out; the competence of a speaker not only includes the capacity to produce and understand well-formed grammatical sentences, but also the capacity--necessary if speech is to be possible--to establish and understand those modes of communication and connections that establish relations with aspects of reality.³ That is, not only does linguistic competence (syntactic, etc.) admit of a universalistic rational reconstruction, but so too does communicative competence. Habermas must therefore specify those "rules for situating sentences in any speech act" (universal pragmatics), as distinct from those rules specifying the generation of sentences in language (grammatical theory). These pragmatic rules that specify the *employment* of sentences form the "infrastructure of speech situations in general" (CES 27). This infrastructure, for Habermas, may be understood by considering the "relations to reality" that collect around a grammatical sentence which is uttered in a

³ See TCI 98.

particular situation. These relations, in turn, situate the sentence in relation to an *external or objective* reality ("the' world of objects and events about which one can make true or false statements"), the *normative or intersubjective* reality ("our' social life-world of shared values and norms, roles and rules, that an act can fit or fail to fit, and that are themselves either right--legitimate, justifiable--or wrong"), or *inner or subjective* reality ("the speaker's 'own' world of intentional experiences that can be expressed truthfully/sincerely or untruthfully/insincerely") (CES xviii). Seen in this fashion, when a speaker utters a sentence, he or she necessarily (and usually implicitly) makes different types of validity claims. The speaker claims that the utterance is comprehensible (grammatical); that a statement is true (or if no statement is made, that the "existential presuppositions of his utterance's propositional content are fulfilled"); that the utterance qua speech *act* is right or appropriate to a given normative context ("or that the normative context it satisfies is itself legitimate"); and that the expression of intentions is truthful.⁴ Only the first claim of comprehensibility is "language-immanent"; each of the other three claims place the speaker's utterance in relation to orders of reality that are *extralinguistic*. The general rules for organizing elements of speech situations within a coordinated system formed by the objective, normative and subjective worlds constitute its "pragmatic infrastructure" (McCarthy 280). We understand a speech-act (i.e. it is rational) when we know what makes it acceptable. The sense or meaningfulness of an utterance is a product of the sentence's meaning and the context of the utterance, and not, as it is typically understood, of the

⁴ Thomas McCarthy, *The Critical Theory of Jurgen Habermas* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991) 280.

sentence's meaning and the speaker's intention. Utterances situate sentences in relation to the world--this is the pragmatic aspect of utterances. The pragmatic rules for situating sentences in speech actions concern the relations to reality that accrue to a grammatically well-formed sentence in being uttered. Thus, rather than merely focusing on the linguistic, Habermas looks at speech acts--the employment of a sentence in an utterance--under certain conditions aimed at reaching understanding. The intersubjectivity of utterances is as built-in as the grammar and the content, each is necessary to achieve understanding. Utterances, then, can be analyzed as having a "double structure"--a propositional content and an illocutionary force (*CES* 42ff). Each speech act consists of two interwoven (but analytically separable) components: the level of intersubjectivity, where illocutionary acts enable participants to establish relations that allow them to reach understanding with one another; and the propositional content, which participants communicate.⁵ This double structure of speech implies that participants communicate on *two* levels simultaneously; "they combine communication of a content with communication about the role in which the communicated content is used" (*CES* 42). The meaning of an utterance or expression, for Habermas, arises then with regard to these pragmatic functions of establishing interpersonal relations as well as with representation of facts. A third category of meaning corresponds to the function of expression: the disclosure of the speaker's subjective states (e.g. wishes, feelings, intentions, etc.)(*CES* 49).

⁵ The dominating, or performative, component of a sentence establishes the illocutionary force of the utterance, the mode of communication between speaker and hearer, and thus the pragmatic situation of the dependent sentence. See McCarthy 275.

For a theory of communicative action, the importance of speech act theory is that it provides an explanation of the illocutionary force of performative utterance--that is, the power of utterances to engender the intended interpersonal relations between speaker and hearer. Thus, the success or failure of an utterance lies not in its comprehensibility but, rather, in its acceptability.

An uttered content receives a specific communicative function through the fact that the standard conditions for the occurrence of a corresponding interpersonal relation are fulfilled. With the illocutionary act, the speaker makes an offer that can be accepted or rejected. (CES 59)

Communicative competence indicates an ability to embed language in a network of relations to the different orders of reality and makes central the issue of interpersonal relations.

But what is the source of the illocutionary force of the speech act? To answer this, we must return to Habermas' reformulation of reason, for it is this reformulation which provides the answer, and is a source of the uniqueness and originality of his approach. The hearer's belief in or reliance on the seriousness of the intersubjective relation indicated by the speaker is not merely a matter of "suggestive influence," but it can have a "rational basis."

With their illocutionary acts, speaker and hearer raise validity claims and demand they be recognized. But this recognition need not follow irrationally, since the validity claims have a cognitive character and can be checked. I would like, therefore, to defend the following thesis: *In the final analysis, the speaker can illocutionarily influence the hearer and vice versa, because speech-act typical commitments are connected with cognitively testable validity claims-*

-that is, because the reciprocal bonds have a rational basis. (*CES* 63)

Every utterance makes three distinct validity claims: a truth claim relating to the objective world, a rightness claim relating to the social (normative) world, and an expressive claim relating to the subjective world. Only one of these claims, however, is thematized by the illocutionary component in a given utterance. Moreover, there are two sorts of universality that attach to each of these three claims: first, each of the three claims is raised either implicitly or explicitly in each utterance (a universal formal feature of linguistic communication); second, each claim in turn lays claim to universal validity for what it declares to be true, right or subjectively the case. That is, validity holds for every subject, not just the speaker, or the specific group. In contrast to the traditional metaphysical model,

The concept or idea of a world is no longer projected by a monological consciousness but by interacting subjects who raise validity claims in communicative acts. And the concept of the one objective world consisting of all existing objects or all true states of affairs is augmented by two analogous world-concepts corresponding to the two other validity claims: the concept of a social world consisting of all normatively sanctioned actions or of all legitimate norms themselves and the concept of a subjective world consisting of all experiences to which the subject has privileged access and to which she can give expression in truthful utterances. (*PMT* ix-x)

What Habermas is attempting here is to transform speech-act theory into a full blown theory of rationality. Just as the analysis of universal pragmatics draws out the multifaceted character of language in use, so the theory of rationality will not be limited in its concern solely to question of truth or effectiveness. In order to make this transition, we can ask the question "what does it mean to claim validity for one's

utterance?" If we recall, a truth claim about the objective world is evaluated in terms of the *reasons* that could be provided in support of the claim--that is, in claiming that one's statement is true is equivalent to claiming that good reasons could be given for the for the claim. Moreover, as indicated above, these reasons themselves are, in turn, evaluated in terms of their intersubjectivity--that is, the reasons that could be given are recognized as good reasons for making the claim. This is what is meant by saying the meaning of an utterance can be known only by taking the context or situation into account. One cannot explicate what it means to understand an utterance without referring to the speaker's or hearer's knowledge of meaning or sense, and one cannot explicate the speaker or hearer's knowledge of meaning without reference to the situation or context in which that knowledge is revealed. This meaning-in-use is the pragmatic dimension of Habermas' theory. Knowledge of the acceptability conditions of utterances must be formulated at a level of generalized knowledge of meaning. There are two knowledges here: one, the general knowledge of linguistic expression (formal semantics) and, two, occasional knowledge of the use of linguistic expression in a performative utterance. The first can only be understood in the context of the second. The use of an expression entails knowledge of the conditions of acceptability. What, then, is the acceptability criteria? The meaning of an utterance is understood when one knows what makes the illocutionary act acceptable. And the illocutionary act is acceptable when the speaker can, if required, give good reasons for the truth of the asserted proposition. These "reasons" are located in or refer to the intersubjective domain of the speaker's and hearer's social world. Thus, the meaning of an utterance

cannot be abstracted from the "yes" or "no" position taken by the hearer towards the utterance, but rather, when, in argumentation, reasons could be given would be intersubjectively recognized as valid for holding such a claim. When a hearer does not subscribe to the conditions of acceptability proffered by what the speaker, the validity claim is thematized. This thematization or disruption in communication gets settled in what Habermas calls "discourse." Generally, a great deal of communication (and the basis of the understanding between speaker and hearer) is supplied by the background in and through which they are tied. This background, or "lifeworld," provides the resources available for speaker and hearer to recognize the conditions which satisfy an acceptable and meaningful utterance. However, when the background fails to provide the resources necessary to come to a mutual understanding about, for example, the "truth" of a statement (when lifeworld is unable to supply the resources that enables speakers and hearers to make the utterance acceptable), then speaker and hearer must establish new grounds of acceptability. This is discourse--to engage in argumentation regarding the acceptable grounds for the validity of an utterance. What participants are concerned with in discourse, claims Habermas, cannot be pre-delineated in advance--what "truth" is--they can only provide the procedures for how the question of truth is to be arrived that is mutually acceptable.

However, as we have seen, our relations to reality are not only to the objective world, or in terms of truth and effectiveness.

[T]here are communicative actions characterized by other relations to the world

and connected with validity claims *different* from truth and effectiveness. (TC1 16)

Hence, one cannot limit this process of evaluation of the rationality potential of an expression to claims of propositional truth and to claims of the effectiveness of particular means to a given end. Rather, the process must be extended to include claims about the rightness or appropriateness of an action in relation to a given normative context, as well as to claims about the sincerity or truthfulness of an individual's utterance with respect to his or her subjective experiences. In other words, by extending argumentation--understood as the criteria of evaluation of the validity of right, sincerity, and truthfulness--we must admit another kind of "rationality": communicative rationality.

This digression into Habermas' theory of language, although necessary to understanding the manner in which one-sided rationality is reconceptualized communicatively and the universalistic aspects of its pragmatics, it is far too abstract to meet the requirements of a revised *theory* of rationality. Specifically, it is presented without any acknowledgement of the context formed by social structure or historical conditions. It does serve, however, as a lead-in to the remaining portion of this section, which is devoted to explicating Habermas' *theory of the self*. Habermas himself has presented his theory of the self, and its many component parts, in a wide variety of ways, and whatever approach one may take skews the emphasis. Moreover, no summation can adequately hope to address all the issues, interconnections, or

controversies of such a theory. As the primary focus of this project is self formation and its relation to modernity, we will limit ourselves to those certain aspects which allow Habermas to embed his theory of rationality in a framework that is more sensitive to social and historical contexts: to the distinction between the conventional and postconventional, the implications of a postconventional moral orientation, and the conditions for its emergence.

For Habermas, Mead's description of the genesis of self and society provides such a framework by reworking the monological conception of self-formation into an intersubjective account of consciousness and the conditions of a "communicative sociation" of individuals as being built into the "linguistic medium of the reproduction of the species" (*TCI* xxii). Mead serves to concretize the theory of rationality by conceiving of the individual as one who performs speech-acts. The formation of self is understood in terms of a competent language user, one capable of living up to the requirements of speech act theory, including the ability to recognize the three different types of validity claims and evaluate them as such, on the one hand, and the ability to engage in the argumentation necessary to ground each type of claim, on the other. Mead, in other words, uses an intersubjective model of communication to explicate the structure of the individual, thus shifting the critical site of orientation towards the self--its emergence and formation--from an internal, acontextual relationship with itself, to an externalized contextual relationship with another. In this respect, for Habermas, Mead's work has a tremendous advantage over most modern philosophy and most

social theory in that he begins from a dialogical formulation, and then looks at certain historical (and, to his mind, evolutionary) developments, including that which is conceptualized as a communicative rationalization of the lifeworld. The purpose of reintroducing Mead at this point is that he serves as a locus around which we can specify those aspects of Habermas' work which enable the necessary contextualization of his theory of rationality. However, despite supplying the essential elements required for a communicative reformulation of social action theory, Mead does not extend his analysis beyond the point of the lifeworld and into what Habermas calls the "system," nor does he provide an adequate account of the external factors that influence the course of development of the self. Habermas' attempt to meet these criticisms and contextualize Mead's theory of socialization and moral categories raise those very issues which sustain his project of analyzing modernity in terms of communicative rationality. Moreover, Mead fails to provide an adequate account of those *social* structures and the normative expectations according to which the self is intersubjectively oriented. This failure derives from an inadequate conceptualization of what distinguishes the social collective from the individual self. As pointed out above, Mead is guilty of a conflation in which the *individual* other becomes the model for the *generalized* other. Habermas picks this up in a slightly different vein: Mead treats the phylogenetic emergence of the generalized other as if it was identical, or at least analogous to, the emergence of an individual self at the ontogenetic level. However, since the individual self can only emerge in relation to a generalized other, the analogy

leads to an infinite regress.⁶ Habermas seeks to dissolve this fusion by exploring the normative background of communicative action, first by turning to Durkheim's discussion of the collective consciousness--a.k.a. Mead's generalized other--and the formation of social solidarity, and then by situating this account within his general theory of communicative rationality.

Durkheim sees certain similarities between moral obligation and the devotion to the sacred. In fact, they seem so similar that Durkheim asserts that morality has a certain basis in the sacred. Indeed, he believes, ultimately, that the binding power of the normative derives from what is held to be sacred. The sacred, in turn, which exercises this moral authority, is that which is referred to and experienced via religious rituals (e.g. divine being, mythical order, or any sacred power). But for Durkheim, this something is almost "ideological" in that what people conceive of as some kind of sacred authority is in fact a symbol. It is a symbol for society *at large*, the collective, a reality understood as existing beyond the aggregation of the individuals. Now, this society, which is the hidden "reality" behind religious beliefs, is the system of values held in common by the members of the society, and the system of morally binding norms which derive from these values. This formulation, says Habermas, is a circle, but one we can break out of. Recalling that the sacred itself is often represented by symbolic objects (totems, etc.), what is decisive for Durkheim is the moment when the

⁶ "Mead is moving in a circle: in order to explain the phylogenetic transition from symbolically mediated to normatively guided interactions, he resorts to something that figured in ontogenesis, even though the ontogenesis of this 'generalized other' cannot itself be explained without recourse to phylogenesis" (TC2 44-5).

world understanding of the group (including the group's place in the world, its norms and values) first receives symbolic form. By achieving a symbolic status the world understanding of the group has been "exteriorized," and thus becomes public for the first time. In other words, by means of the sacred symbol, individuals may affirm that they share the same "state of mind." Once this externalization has occurred, the shared value system takes on something of an "independent existence." It is only when the shared values system achieve an independent existence can we speak of the genesis of the collective consciousness (generalized other); only after externalization occurs does the collective consciousness exist *as such*, as something individuals must come to terms with (as opposed to dealing just with other individuals).

Religious symbols have the same meaning for the members of the same group; on the basis of this uniform sacred semantics, they make possible a kind of intersubjectivity that is still this side of the communicative roles of first, second, and third persons, but is nevertheless beyond the threshold of sheer collective contagion by feelings. (TC2 52)

When religion is no longer presented in a positivistic manner, religious symbolism can be taken as the medium of a special form of symbolically mediated interaction, where their recognition and celebration puts in to effect and renews a consensus.

[T]he presence of the sacred...is only the form in which the collectivity experiences "its unity and its personality." Because the basic normative agreement expressed in communicative action establishes and sustains the identity of the group, the fact of successful consensus is at the same time its essential content. (TC2 53)

The function of the sacred is to make manifest for all to see the commonly held value

system--the normative consensus--which renews the unity of the group (i.e. finds consensual reaffirmation) by means of ritual. In and through communicative action, the "energies of social solidarity attached to religious symbolism brand out and [are] imparted, in the form of moral authority, both to institutions and to persons" (TC2 61). The unifying force of the sacred symbolic structure is effected by defining and coordinating all aspects of life in terms of the sacred/profane distinction; the sacred provides the taken for granted background of traditional definitions, interpretations and understandings of situations against which all actions in everyday life are coordinated. This unthematized horizon of meanings that makes up the background of action is what Habermas calls the "lifeworld." The lifeworld is the "preinterpreted," taken for granted universe of social activity, the shared, ingrained, unquestioned background of tradition and cultural givens, handed down from previous generations in culture and language, from which communicative participants draw their agreed-upon patterns of interpretation, and which guarantees interconnection and coordination of multiple actors, groups and orientations.

Through his analysis of the structural complexity of the lifeworld, Habermas is attempting to offer an alternative to traditional "one sided" approaches, approaches that either overemphasize the transmission and renewal of cultural knowledge (e.g. Schutz, Berger and Luckmann), or social integration (e.g. Durkheim and Parsons), or socialization (e.g. Mead). Instead, Habermas' approach seeks to integrate these different aspects, and to illustrate the manner in which the medium of communicative

action symbolically produces and reproduces the lifeworld. In this way, rationalization can be understood primarily as a transformation of the implicit, "unproblematized, nonobjectified, and pretheoretical" structures of the lifeworld, instead of being taken as the explicit, intentional orientations of action (*PMT* 38). In other words, the lifeworld is the "context-forming horizon" of social action, and it is the means by which the theory of communicative action becomes contextualized. In the form of language and culture, then, this archive of implicit knowledge provides the unproblematic background convictions upon which individuals draw in their attempts to come to common definitions about the world--and not merely about the intersubjective world. That is, this background, or lifeworld is not only made up of cultural knowledge, but includes institutional orders and personality structures as well; the solidarity of groups integrated through values and the competencies of socialized individuals also serve as resources for action oriented toward reaching understanding.⁷

In coming to an understanding with one another about their situation, participants in interaction stand in a cultural tradition that they at once use and renew; in coordinating their actions by way of intersubjectively recognizing criticizable validity claims, they are at once relying on membership in social groups and strengthening the integration of those same groups; through participating in interactions with competently acting reference persons, the growing child internalizes the value orientations of his social group and acquires generalized capacities for action. Under the functional aspect of *mutual understanding*, communicative action serves to transmit and renew cultural knowledge; under the aspect of *coordinating action*, it serves social integration and the establishment of solidarity; finally, under the aspect of *socialization*, communicative action serves the formation of personal identities. (*TC2* 137)

⁷ Jurgen Habermas, *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action*, trans. C. Lenhardt and S.W. Nicholse (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991) 136 (hereafter *MCC*).

McCarthy sums up the implications of this statement as follows:

[T]o the different structural components of the lifeworld (culture, society, personality) there correspond reproduction processes (cultural reproduction, social integration, socialization) based on the different aspects of communicative action (understanding, coordination, sociation), which are rooted in the structural components of speech acts (propositional, illocutionary, expressive). These structural correspondences permit communicative action to perform its different functions and to serve as a suitable medium for the symbolic reproduction of the lifeworld. (*TCI* xxvii)

Although individuals can no more "step out" of their lifeworld than they can step out of their personalities or become "desocialized," certain aspects of the lifeworld pertinent to given action situations can be thematized and criticized, but this always takes place against the lifeworld which, in its totality, is "indeterminate and inexhaustible" and "prior to any problems or disagreements" (*TCI* xxvi). The lifeworld, then, is a "conservative counterweight" to the risk of disagreement that arises in actual process of reaching understanding. It supplies in advance a preinterpreted background of definitions that is assumed by participants to be unproblematic, and against which they can refer to in their attempts to ground or challenge validity claims. Worldviews (or cultural interpretive systems) reflect this background knowledge of the group; it lays down the framework of fundamental beliefs within which members interpret all that appears in the world. The structures of a worldview not only determine the life practices of cognitive-instrumental interaction with the objective world, they also determine the practices of understanding and socialization which occur in relation to the orders of the social world and experiences

of their subjective worlds (*TC1* 63). In other words, the lifeworld is constitutive for mutual understanding *as such*, and the worldview makes up a reference system for that *about which* mutual understanding is possible; from out of their common lifeworld, individuals come to an understanding about something in the objective, social or subjective worlds (*TC2* 126).

When the sacred defines the structure of the action-orientating worldviews, cultural reproduction, social integration and personality formation are circumscribed by ritual practice and religious symbolism, and "rationality" is characterized by normatively ascribed agreement.

The more cultural traditions predecide which validity claims, when, where, for what, from whom, and to whom must be accepted, the less the participants themselves have the possibility of making explicit and examining the potential grounds on which their yes/no positions are based. (*TC1* 70-1)

With a "centered" worldview there is no clear demarcation between the three worlds of the objective, normative and subjective--they cannot develop their own "rationalities"--and the specific content of the world is removed from discussion and thus critique (*TC1* 51). To the extent that the lifeworld supplies their interpretive framework *in advance*, individuals' own interpretive capacities are not called upon and the rationality potential inherent in communicative action is obstructed. When archaic worldviews are no longer able to provide such an interpretive framework, however, structures of action oriented towards reaching understanding take over functions from ritual and sacred consensus, and discursive means becomes more of a force in cultural

reproduction, social integration, and personality formation. The domain of the sacred is disenchanted and disempowered by means of a "linguistification of the ritually secured, basic normative agreement."

[T]he socially integrative and expressive functions that were at first fulfilled by ritual practice pass over to communicative action; the authority of the holy is gradually replaced by the authority of achieved consensus. This means a freeing of communicative action from sacrally protected normative contexts. (TC2 77)

That is, the linguistification of the sacred denotes the rationalization of the lifeworld.

However, Habermas claims that "external" explanations are not enough to account for systematic changes in worldviews; rather, these changes must also be conceived of as a "learning process."

The caesurae between the mythical, religious-metaphysical, and modern modes of thought are characterized by changes in the system of basic concepts. With the transition to a new state the interpretations of the superseded stage are, no matter what their content, *categorically devalued*. It is not this or that reason, but the *kind* of reason which is no longer convincing. (TC1 68)

Using Piaget's model for the ontogenesis of the structure of consciousness in terms of a learning process, Habermas analyzes these transformations in worldviews as a "devaluative shift" in the explanatory and justificatory capacities of entire traditions. Such shifts seem to be connected with to new "levels of learning" that alter the nature of objectivating thought, moral-practical insight, and aesthetic-expressive capacity (TC1 68). This alteration is characterized by a general differentiation between the three worlds of the objective, normative, and subjective--that is, a *decentration* of an

egocentric understanding of the world.

The more the worldview that furnishes the cultural stock of knowledge is decentered, the less the need for understanding is covered *in advance* by an interpreted lifeworld immune from critique, and the more this need has to be met by the interpretive accomplishments of the participants themselves... Thus for the time being we can characterize the rationalization of the lifeworld in the dimension "normatively ascribed agreement" *versus* "communicatively achieved understanding." (TC1 70)

Only when the three worlds become demarcated from one another, claims Habermas, can a reflective concept of "world" be formulated; such reflexivity allows the interpretive efforts of individuals to come to the fore in the interrogation and negotiation of problematic claims for which "no justification is possible except through argumentation."

Earlier we discussed how, in rendering an utterance, a speaker has the option of focusing on one of the three always-present validity claims--of taking a specific perspective on the world--in order to concentrate on specific (problematic) issues. For example, the speaker can assume a cognitive mode of language use, where the constative allows the speaker to concentrate on issues of truth. And, if this form of communication is not sufficient to actualize the communicative goal of reaching understanding, the option exists to shift communication to the reflexive level, that of discourse, whereby the external/objective world can be theorized--where facts that had previously gone unquestioned can be queried as to their truth or falsity. This transition to the level of discourse, however, can only occur when individuals are *reflexively* able

to conceive of their lifeworld and worldviews as such. Only when participants are able to "temporalize" their culture and become aware that "interpretations vary in relation to nature and social reality, that beliefs and values vary in relation to the objective and social worlds," can concepts, interpretations, values and beliefs be subject to rational discussion (argumentation) and be open to critique (*TCI* 51). For this to occur, formal concepts about an external world--as *distinct* from the social and internal worlds--must be developed, along with complementary distinctive concepts about the latter two worlds. And, the same preconditions apply to the discursive evaluation of normative and expressive claims.

Only against the background of an objective world, and measured against criticizable claims to truth and efficacy, can beliefs appear as systematically false, action intentions as systematically hopeless, and thoughts as fantasies, as mere imaginings. Only against the background of a normative reality that has become autonomous, and measured against the criticizable claim to normative rightness, can intentions, wishes, attitudes, feelings appear as illegitimate or merely idiosyncratic, as nongeneralizable and merely subjective. (*TCI* 51)

This "decentration" occurs as the pregiven background is no longer able to supply *in advance* the interpretive conditions or parameters for valid claims, and individuals must then turn to their own reflexive interpretive abilities to reach consensus, thus freeing the rationality potential of communicative action.⁸

⁸ We have seen how, on the one hand, various *philosophical* considerations have lead Habermas to reformulate the concept of rationality in a communicative direction, while, on the other, the theoretical need to understanding it in a contextualized manner has lead to a *historical* elaboration of the "rationalization of the lifeworld." These moves were initially triggered by a dissatisfaction with the "monological" model of consciousness. Though we shall not address his position in any detail here--it shall be dealt with in the final chapter--it is necessary to point out that, for Habermas, this model--which tends to conceptualize knowledge as a "possession" which facilitates strategic intervention in the various worlds--is not simply supposed to be jettisoned in favor of the communicatively oriented alternative. Rather, it too is subject to both philosophical and historical elaboration. From the former perspective,

Moral Theory

Of the many changes in modern experience brought about by the dissolution of sacral worldviews and the decentration of the lifeworld, the destabilization and fragmentation of moral "sources" or normative orientations are among the most problematic developments in both the public and private spheres. Questions of what constitutes the "good life" can no longer be satisfactorily answered by reference to a single, unifying normative order. The plurality of particular life histories and traditions does not admit a universal formula for how life should be lived, and some of the fiercest debates are thus concerned with how to adjudicate between conflicting perspectives of the good life. Yet, there is another consequence of the fragmentation of worldviews and pluralization of lifeworlds--as discussed above, it is under these conditions that, according to Habermas, the rationality potential of communicative action is released. Hence, on the one hand there is the recognition of the irredeemable *plurality* of visions of the good life, while on the other there is a *universalizing* conception of justice.

One manner in which the multiplicity of conceptions of the good life is dealt with is by elevating a particular one to the standard of "meta-interpretation," i.e. the background against which, or according to which, any conflict in the foreground must

the analysis simply follows various theorizations of Durkheim, Weber, and Parsons: the "rationality" of an action can be evaluated on the basis of the potential efficacy with which a proposed set of means will bring about a given end. The evaluation, in turn, finds its standard in the hypothetical vantage point of a "third person" (non-participating) observer subject to the methodological strictures of scientific validation. And, therefore, this standard is *not* consensually grounded. This contrast forms the basis of Habermas' theoretical distinction between the lifeworld and system, between social integration and systemic integration.

be resolved. In other words, according to Habermas, one can resort to a *conventional* attitude in the face of modern experience--if one is willing to accept the consequent *exclusivity*. Another way to deal with this issue is to only admit questions of justice into the debate, or as issues suitable for potential resolution--that is, not to infringe upon the plurality of answers to the questions of the good life. In turn, the attempt to resolve issues of justice is effected by appeal solely to an *empty normative procedure*, rather than a particular conception of the good life. In other words, according to Habermas, one can take a *postconventional* attitude towards modern experience. Thus, we must explicate more specifically Habermas' conceptualization of these two orientations towards modern experience. In doing so, we will also discuss how, according to Habermas, communicative rationality (modernity) has only been realized in distorted forms. On the one hand, the project of modernity has been subject to continual conservative and neoconservative attempts to resurrect the prereflexive authority of tradition. For Habermas, this is no less so in realms of the academic philosophy and sociology than in the public sphere. These attempts remain inherently self-contradictory, though; they amount to little more than an argument for the detrimental consequences of argumentation. On the other hand, and more importantly for Habermas, there has been a continual and ever expanding distortion of the lifeworld, especially the public sphere by the "steering mechanisms" of money and power--i.e. by the systematized realms of economy and state.

Habermas can both take seriously the plurality of modern lifeworlds *and* hold out the

possibility of a universalizing force for reason deriving from his theory of rationality. "Discourse ethics" is the moral point of view from which multiple and competing normative claims can be "fairly and impartially adjudicated" by means of the universalizing process that comprises the central component of communicative action--argumentation (*MCC* viii). That is, when conflicting normative claims are proffered, the validity of any and all claims is based on the reasons that could be given--the potential justification--in support of the claim. As we saw, all speech acts, at least implicitly, point to this argumentative procedure where justification of a norm (vision of the good life) hinges upon reasoned (i.e. argumentatively constituted) agreement between affected individuals. Understood in this manner, the validity of a norm implies that the consequences of its satisfaction must be acceptable to all participants or those affected by the norm. What Habermas has attempted here is a shift from a monological to a dialogical understanding of moral consciousness--that is, the justifiability of a norm is not determined by the solitary moral subject, but through a *discursive* evaluation of its claims to universality (*MCC* 67-8). Such evaluation, in turn, occurs by means of taking the role of the other, the very process described by Mead. Indeed, Mead's formulation of the intersubjective means by which consciousness is formed--which allowed Habermas to articulate his version of a philosophy of language and is the foundation of communicative reason (linguistic competence)--also provides the basis upon which he formulates a more thoroughgoing moral theory, one that more adequately addresses the very issues of modernity (*TC2* 95) that Mead himself recognized (as central to modernity) but failed to fully

conceptualize. It was left to Kohlberg to build upon Mead's insights and specify the manner in which competence in evaluating norms is acquired. Mead's theory of competence of language use, in general, and Kohlberg's theory of competence in evaluation norms, specifically, are key components of Habermas' theory of moral rationality.

Thus, a fundamental assumption underlies this project: any account of the social actor cannot address issues of self formation and identity separate from moral theory, insofar as the formation of self occurs in and through processes of moral orientation. The self and moral identity are formed in social relationships with others as the individual orients him or herself in relation to an increasingly complex understanding of the "other" and the world. As we have seen, both Mead and Bakhtin make central to their theories of the self the moral dimension and its intersubjective formation. Habermas draws upon Mead's theory of self formation, and takes as the basis of understanding moral action the idea that, as the individual is socialized, he or she becomes *at the same time* individualized--an individual moral agent who develops in relation to society and others. In other words, *moral competence* is understood in terms of *interactive competence*.

Habermas begins by employing Kohlberg's theory of moral development, which hierarchically orders into various "stages" the ability to make moral judgements. Kohlberg claims that "truly moral reasoning involves features such as impartiality,

universalizability, reversibility and prescriptivity," and thus presents the ability to make moral judgements as stages of cognitive structures emerging from learning processes (MCC 119). These features, says Habermas, can be grouped under the philosophical concepts of cognitivism, universalism, and formalism: moral judgements are cognitive in that they represent something more than just the subjective preferences of the individual, and moral-practical issues can be determined on the basis of reasons; universality indicates that all who engage in moral argumentation will, in principal, be able to reach the same judgements on the acceptability of a norm; formalism is opposed to ethical relativism or material ethics in that the criterion of evaluation is not based on issues of happiness or values specific to a particular culture or form of life, but demarcates moral validity from value contents (MCC 120-20). As these are the criteria or assumptions which informs Habermas' discourse ethics, Kohlberg's work on the stages of moral judgement are appropriated, but not without some crucial revisions. Contrary to Kohlberg's substantive orientation, discourse ethics establishes a procedure formulated to guarantee the impartiality of the process of judging.

Practical discourse is a procedure for testing the validity of hypothetical norms, not for producing justified norms. It is this proceduralism that sets discourse ethics apart from *other* cognitivist, universalist, and formalist ethical theories... (MCC 122)

That is, up to the stage where reflection enters into the process, Kohlberg's model of natural stages is tenable. However, with the emergence of a reflexive capacity on the part of individuals, the social world loses its quasi-natural validity and moral judgements need to be evaluated in terms of "moral-philosophical" considerations

rather than "empirical-psychological" ones. Therefore, for Habermas, Kohlberg's model, which presents stages of moral judgment as "gradual approximations" of "reversibility, universality, and reciprocity to structures of impartial or just judgements about morally relevant conflicts of action," is plausible to the point of reflexivity (*MCC* 123). We must now look to Kohlberg's model of moral judgment.

The model presents the development of moral judgment in six stages, grouped into three levels: preconventional, conventional and postconventional. At the preconventional level, only the consequences of action are judged in terms of their physical or hedonistic effects, and the individual (socio-cognitively) is oriented towards particular expectations of behavior; at the conventional level, the orientation to norms and the intentional violation of them are already judged, maintaining the expectations of one's family or community (e.g. loyalty) is perceived as valuable in its own right, regardless of consequences, and the individual is oriented towards norms; finally, the postconventional level, the norms themselves become subject to critique, there is an effort on the part of the individual to define moral values and principles apart from authority of the group or identification with the group, and the individual is orientated towards principles.⁹ The transition from one stage to the next is conceived of as learning by Kohlberg. The cognitive structures which form the basis of the capacity of moral judgment are taken as the consequences of a "creative reorganization of an existing cognitive inventory that is inadequate to the task of handling certain persistent

⁹ Habermas variously summarizes Kohlberg's model in several texts. See "Moral Development and Ego Identity, in *CES*, 122-27.

problems"--and not of environmental influences or "inborn programs and maturational processes" (MCC 125). Discourse ethics, says Habermas, is compatible with this constructivist notion:

it conceives discursive will formation (and argumentation in general) as a reflective form of communicative action and also in that it postulates a *change of attitude* for the transition from action to discourse. (MCC 125)

Thus, instead of grounding the stages of moral judgment in socio-moral perspectives, as Kohlberg does, Habermas looks to stages of interaction (conceptualized in terms of social perspectives) to accomplish this task. He wants to utilize the action-theoretic framework, introduced by Mead but now expanded into communicative action theory, to provide the logic for the development of moral judgement. In this manner, stages of moral judgement are predicated upon the individual's relation to the social world--as such a relation forms the basis of action orientations--which culminates in a decentered understanding of the world wherein action is oriented towards reaching understanding and moral judgements are formulated based on principles. In other words, the manner in which the growing child acquires an understanding of the symbolic universe--intersubjectively through the assumption of perspective and attitudes of a reference person--is extended to action contexts.

The child's participation in the symbolic universe, or its development, is presented as a three stage process: at the first level the child has learned to distinguish its body from the environment, but not between the "social objects" in this environment, "there are

natural agents to whom comprehensible intentions are ascribed, but not yet subject whom one could *hold responsible* for action with a view to generalized behavioral expectations." At the second level identity is detached from the "bodily appearance of the actors," and the child can assimilate the symbolic generalities of a few key roles in the family environment, and later of expanded groups; "at this level actors appear as role-dependent reference persons and, later also, as anonymous role bearers." Finally, at the third level individuals are transformed from role bearers into "persons who can assert their identities independent of concrete roles and particular systems of norms" (CES 85). Habermas calls these three stages the general structures of communicative action. Up to this point attention has only been directed to the aspects of the symbolic universe that "acquire reality" for the growing child in stages. However, this does not address the acquisition of the abilities necessary to move about in these structures, the perspectives from which individuals formulate and pursue action plans. In other words, the child has acquired the ability to establish reciprocal relationships at the level of communication, but not at the level of action. Along side the progressive proficiency of the general structures of communicative action there correspond three interactive competencies or stages of interaction: preconventional, conventional, and postconventional.

In *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action*, Habermas employs R. Selman's stages of perspective taking to illustrate this process for the preconventional and

conventional stages.¹⁰ The preconventional is made up of two levels. At level one, the child distinguished between the interpretive and action perspectives of others in interaction. However, in judging the action of others, the child is unable to maintain at the same time her own perspective *and* the perspective of the other, and thus is unable to judge her own actions from the perspective of the other. Differentiation between outer and inner is just beginning, whereas the sociocognitive concepts of the normative world are lacking. The move to the second level is characterized by the child's ability to make a reversible connection between the action perspectives of self and other. The child can now assume the action perspective of the other and knows the other can do the same. Because the self and other can take each others attitude towards their own action orientations, the first- and second-person *communicative* roles are extended to the coordination of *actions* (MCC 145). At this second level, two different types of interaction can exist in the same self-other ("I-thou") perspective structure: the child can distinguish between the outer and inner world of a person, is able to "impute intentions and need disposition," and is therefore capable of employing deception and engaging in competitive action (MCC 147).

The conventional corresponds to Selman's third level, where the structure of perspective changes again when the observer perspective is introduced into interaction.

Although children have been able to use the third-person pronouns in reaching

¹⁰ In *CES*, Habermas uses Mead and role theory to a similar end. Although he has since revised some of the specific details (see *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action*), the central argument and goal remains: the ability to make moral judgements is coordinated with the stages in the development of interactive competence.

understanding *about* other individuals, their perspectives, possessions, etc., as well as able to take an objectivating stance towards things and events, it is only at this stage that the adolescent is able to take this attitude in interaction with another at the same time as a performative one. This shift makes it possible to "*objectify the reciprocity of action orientations*" achieved at earlier stages and become aware of the *systemic aspect* of this reciprocity (i.e. as a generalizable condition applicable to any interaction) (MCC 146). The social world comes into being for the individual.¹¹ This ability to turn the "spiral of reflection" around once again--the ability of ego to put herself in alter's place, while retaining her own perspective--means that strategic action can now take place. However, it is also at this stage that a means for nonstrategic (understanding-oriented) coordination of action emerges through the formation of a "suprapersonal will."

At the preconventional level the child views authority and friendship relations as relations of exchange (e.g., exchange of obedience for security or guidance, of demand for reward, of one achievement for another or for a show of confidence). At the conventional stage, however, the notion of exchange no longer fits the now reorganized relations. At this point the child's views of social bonds, authority, and loyalty become dissociated from specific reference persons and contexts. They are transformed into the normative concepts of moral obligation, the legitimacy of rules, the normative validity of authoritative commands, and so on. (MCC 153)

When the individual is able to conceive of herself as part of this larger community and recognize the intersubjectively binding force of its norms, action begins to be oriented towards a "higher-level imperative." In performing social roles that are part of the

¹¹ It should be clear that these three stages correspond to Mead's stages of play, games and generalized other.

larger group's normative expectations, the individual now realizes that both self and others are *entitled* to expect certain actions from each other in certain situations, and that they are also each *obliged* to reciprocate. Thus emerge sociocognitive concepts that structure normatively regulated (nonstrategic) action.

At the postconventional stage, the model of natural stages cannot support the decisive development characteristic of this mode of action orientation--reflexivity. With the decentration and pluralization of lifeworlds, the "devaluation of naively accepted institutions makes necessary a transformation of the sociocognitive inventory of the conventional stage" (MCC 156). Habermas thus amends the Kohlberg model by adding a third stage of interaction. The development of the preceding stages are necessary structural preconditions of communicative action. Normatively regulated action is one of several types of understanding-oriented actions. However, when communicative action becomes reflexive, participants move to the third stage of interaction, that of discourse. Argumentation serves to explicitly thematize validity claims that were initially raised only implicitly in communicative action. For an individual participating in discourse, the relevance of the experiential context, the normativity of existing orders, and the objectivity of things and events recedes. With the introduction of the "hypothetical attitude" into the model of interaction, validity claims pertaining to the objective world are theoreticized, and claims pertaining to the normative world are moralized (MCC 161).¹² With respect to the normative, it is

¹² Validity claims pertaining to the expressive world, as indicated above, can only be redeemed through consistent behavior, and thus are not at issue here.

through this moralization that the social world is problematized, undermining its "quasi-natural" character, and hence breaking the ties between the social world and the lifeworld.

As the social world is dissociated from the context of a form of life that used to be its ever present background of certitude and habituation and is put at a distance by participants in discourse who take a hypothetical attitude, the uprooted and now free-flowing system of norms require a *different* basis. (MCC 161)

This new basis is the same perspective of a decentered understanding of the world that generated the problem. "Norms of action are now conceived as subject to other norms in turn. They are subordinated to principles, or higher level norms" (MCC 161). At the postconventional stage, the individual makes the validity of the norm, and not its social currency, the grounds for action. Freed from tradition as the basis for action, the meaning of responsible action also changes; to act in a morally responsible manner is to base one's actions on agreement that is rationally motivated, i.e. reasoning that is based on reflectively tested claims to validity. "Moral action is action guided by moral insight" (MCC 162).

Returning to Kohlberg, Habermas goes on to describe how a specific perspective structure has a corresponding idea of the moral. The point Habermas wants to emphasize is that the normative component of the social perspectives emerges from the sociocognitive configuration of the corresponding stages of interaction. Following Durkheim, Habermas claims that "the normatively integrated fabric of social relations

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must now be justified in terms of principles. In this manner, Habermas attempts to demonstrate the structural relation between social perspectives and interaction stages on the one hand, and moral stages on the other. This model embodies a logic of development, in that it distinguishes stages of interaction in terms of coordination achievements, and reveals the inherent intersubjective orientation of moral judgement and action.

These stages of moral consciousness correspond to the cognitive side of identity formation--in Meadian terms, the relation between the "me" and the "I." Under a conventional identity formation (a role identity) the system of action orientations and internal behavior controls is taken from the expectations of the generalized other which shapes the "superego"--the "me"--and conforms to the normative order. The "unity" of the individual is formed in the internalization of roles, and the continuity of such identity is based on the "intersubjective validity and temporal stability of behavioral expectations" (CES 109). This relationship between the "I" and the "me" is inverted when the unifying power of traditional worldviews disintegrates, lifeworlds become pluralized and fragmented, and moral decisions come to overburden a conventional moral consciousness. The reflexivity required for moral judgments based on principles presupposes a nonconventional sort of identity, one that no longer adheres to a social type. An ego expected to reflexively evaluate any norm on the basis of principles and to provide justification can no longer safely secure her identity through pregiven roles and norms. In contrast to role identity, ego identity can be understood as the

individual's ability to construct new identities when older ones come into conflict, to integrate these new identities with those that have been superseded, and to achieve continuity through her own integrating accomplishments (*CES* 90-110). The formation of the postconventional ego-identity *frees* the individual from a monologic relation with the cultural tradition by making discourse the central means by which to construct identity and establish relations with others and society.

Having outlined Habermas' theory of rationality, we are now in a position to confront two issues--one regarding Mead the other Bakhtin--before moving on to the next section. The first is a more historical concern, and deals with Mead's general inadequacy when it comes to specifying phylogenetic genesis of the postconventional, and certain ambiguities regarding the generalized other. The second issue is more system-theoretical, and pertains to an implied proceduralism in Bakhtin's ethical theory.

Mead devotes much of his work to specifying the ontogenetic emergence of normative relations, and stresses the significance of the social world as the arena in which the self is formed and maintained in role-taking. However, he does not account for normative action nor the emergence of the normative world itself which the individual refers to in taking the attitude of the generalized other. Consequently, when it comes time to discuss "the social organism within which this self arises" (*MSS* 227), he leaps ahead to already existing institutions and social phenomena. This failure to explain the

emergence of institutions forecloses the possibility of an analysis that could distinguish between different forms of system differentiation, and their empirical connection to action orientations. This lack of historical grounding has even greater implications in the realm of the ethical. As we have seen, Mead attempts to describe stages of self formation as stages in moral development. Self-consciousness emerges in linguistic communication when the subject comes to recognize itself in others--through the sociality of subject-actor--and where the "I" is the means by which "adaptation" of the given is possible (MSS 214). It is with the capacity of the "I" to project a alternative future from a shared, given past that creativity arises though intersubjectivity.

The only way in which we can react against the disapproval of the entire community is by setting up a higher sort of community which in a certain sense out-votes the one we find. A person *may reach a point* of going against the whole world about him; he may stand out by himself over against it. But to do that he has to speak with the voice of reason to himself. He has to comprehend the voices of the past and of the future. That is the only way in which the self can get a voice which is more than the voice of the community. (MSS 168)

From within these conditions, Mead neither specifies the manner in which this adaptation at the individual level--the stage of self formation corresponding to the move from conventional to postconventional action--occurs, nor does he ever identify those aspects of modern society which allow, or even encourage such a shift to a postconventional orientation. Mead claims that it is "enlarged experience" that stimulates individual deviation from the conventional (citing only the situation an individual leaving a familiar community and entering into a new one as an example of this "enlargement") (MSS 219), and later states that "civilized" societies offer greater

opportunities for individuality than "primitive" ones (*MSS 221*). As we have seen, it was Kohlberg who was to supply the comprehensive theory of the stages of moral socialization that now allows Habermas to provide an account of the postconventional orientation for the individual from a revised theoretical framework of a communicatively interactive understanding of selfhood.

The postconventional possibility theoretically holds not only for the individual but also at the societal level--that is, an individual and/or society itself can be considered as operating according to a postconventional moral orientation. Although Mead intimates, from within his temporal understanding of intersubjectivity, conditions of postconventional ethical development that are demanded with the universalization of norms and generalization of values characteristic of modernity, he utterly neglects to specify the preconditions of the postconventional at the societal level (i.e. beyond the individual). In other words, Mead does not specify the conditions under which social differentiation takes place, differentiation that allows for the formation of those mechanisms necessary for the stabilization of an individualized ego-identity, and, thus, a societal postconventional moral orientation. Again, it is to Habermas that we must turn to for an account of the cultural and historical variability of social life, and the conditions which admit stabilization--that is, a modern time consciousness. Not only does Habermas incorporate a reformulation of self on a linguistic or communicative model with an ontogenetic-level analysis of the self, but, more importantly, he also *historicizes* this self. Such historical grounding and specificity is lacking in Mead

(and, to a lesser extent, in Bakhtin as well). Habermas asserts that if indeed the self, as described by Mead in *Mind Self and Society*, only emerges in the course of historical development, then the form of temporal orientation appropriate to this kind of selfhood, that is, a futural orientation as discussed in *Philosophy of the Present*, must also emerge historically, i.e. with modernity. In other words, the temporal self-understanding of a postconventional self is itself historical--a modern time consciousness, where access to the past is grounded in present's orientation to future. Mead, however, never considers the possibility that the temporal consciousness he is describing may itself presuppose certain historical conditions.

The final critique that will be leveled here concerns an important ambiguity in Bakhtin's ethical theory. Specifically, the question arises as to whether his opposition to an ethics based on generalized norms or abstract principles is unreconcilably at odds with the Kantian tradition as reformulated in Mead and, more significantly, Habermas. Or, as it will be argued, do the differences between the ethical theories of Bakhtin and Habermas lie more on the surface, and by using Habermas' own understanding of the ethical to probe into some of the assumptions behind Bakhtin's own theory, a productive rapprochement between the two can be effected.

Bakhtin asserts that, contrary to Kant, a "true" ethics cannot be founded on the abstraction entailed in generalized norms or principles. Instead, the ethical character of an action can only be determined by the degree to which it forecloses or permits

"plural-vocality." From this claim the following question arises: if an ethical action is taken as a function of "plural-vocality," then, in saying this, has Bakhtin not tacitly admitted an abstract general principle (i.e. all voices must be heard)? This principle, of course, echoes Habermas' own understanding of the grounding of moral norms in "discourse ethics," which insists on the participation of all potentially affected individuals in the evaluation of a norm. In order to answer this question and indicate how Bakhtin can be read in terms of a Habermasian ethics, we will interrogate some of reasons (as cited above) why he opposes designating general norms as the basis for ethical action.

First, Bakhtin claims that ethical action cannot be based on general principles due to the historical concreteness of an individual fact, its unrepeatability, as distinct from the theoretical truth of a proposition, which is ahistorical and aspecific. Bakhtin's second objection claims that abstract principles somehow foreclose the creativity of everyday life, and is intimately tied to his first concern, insofar as the historical concreteness of an individual fact demands, by definition, a *creative* response from the self, a response attuned to the specificities of the context. Abstract propositions or general norms are ahistorical and relatively uncontextualized, and therefore are insensitive to the very conditions from which a moral or ethical dilemma arises. Lastly, the general norm or abstract principle potentially denies the self freedom of response by predetermining the form a response might take, thus threatening responsibility.

These are precisely the types of potential criticisms that Habermas tries to answer in an essay on Kant and Hegel.¹³ In this essay, Habermas attempts to address Hegel's objections to Kantian moral philosophy. From this argument we hope to indicate how a general norm or principle may still have universal validity or applicability, and may still be deontological, without contradicting or contravening Bakhtin's primary concerns. This is possible, specifically, because of the *unique* characteristics of a *purely proceduralist* general norm. One of these objections addressed by Habermas is the abstract universalism of Kantian ethics, whereby the categorical imperative separates the universal from the particular, rendering that principle, in Hegel's view, external to particular contexts and specific cases (*MCC* 195). This objection corresponds to Bakhtin's concerns. Habermas responds to Hegel by distinguishing between issues of *justification* and issues of *application*. In order to insure that the primary condition of the principle of universalization is met--that is, all who are affected by a norm can accept its consequences, and thus all points of view which are affected are to be taken into consideration--an abstract proceduralism must be the manner in which moral issues are addressed. If a problematic norm is *not* abstracted from its context--that is, if arguments are not subjected to evaluation based *solely* upon rules of argumentation (i.e. evaluation based solely upon the force of the better argument)--then the process cannot satisfy the dialogic precept of taking all points of view into consideration. Conversely, however, if the process simply stops with that

¹³ Habermas, "Morality and Ethical Life: Does Hegel's Critique of Kant Apply to Discourse Ethics," *MCC* 195-215.

abstraction the result is a resolution that lacks all applicability to the situation in which the moral (normative) question initially arose. Habermas responds to this dilemma by asserting that the same principles informing the justification of a norm--principles of practical reason--can be applied to the application of that norm (MCC 206-7). In other words, one can employ abstract principles for the resolution of moral questions without neglecting the specificities of the context from which it emerged.

Habermas' response here to the Hegelian objection can be applied to Bakhtin by recognizing that Bakhtin does not seem to distinguish between a substantive ethics (i.e. ethics predicated on a certain view of the good life) from a proceduralist ethics which, says Habermas, is not tied to *any* view of the good life. Bakhtin's objection to Kantian proceduralism would seem to apply to rules and norms formulated on abstract *a priori* principles divorced from the actors involved, and not to a revised proceduralism, as offered by Habermas, where rules and norms are formulated in open discourse, and where the process of discursive engagement, and only this process, is what is based on an abstract principle, that of argumentation. Such a revised understanding of proceduralism does not violate Bakhtin's primary concern regarding the nature of ethical action; the obligation or "oughtness" of responsibility is maintained insofar as all individuals who are affected participate in the process, and individual acts are not mere instantiations of a norm, but where the application of norm also demands recognition of the particulars of the situation and recognition of others. It must be admitted, however, that such application presupposes the

institutionalization of a postconventional moral orientation.

Practical discourse does disengage problematic actions and norms from the substantive ethics (*Sittlichkeit*) of their lived contexts.... This causes norms to become removed from the world (*entweltlicht*)--an unavoidable step in the process of justification but also one for which discourse ethics might consider making amends. For unless discourse ethics is undergirded by the thrust of motives and by socially accepted institutions, the moral insights it offers remain ineffective in practice. Insights, Hegel rightly demands, should be transformable into the concrete duties of everyday life.... [A]ny universalistic morality is dependent upon a form of life that *meets it halfway*. There has to be a modicum of congruence between morality and the practices of socialization and education.... In addition, there must be a modicum of fit between morality and socio-political institutions. Not just any institutions will do. Morality thrives only in an environment in which postconventional ideas about law and morality have already been institutionalized to a certain extent. Moral universalism is a *historical result*. (MCC 207-8)

Nevertheless, for Habermas, the abstract and formal character of the proceduralistic principle leaves open the intrinsic possibility of a creative response demanded by Bakhtin (and Mead), simply by virtue of the fact that the principle absolutely lacks the concrete content which would constitute an acceptable response in *any* concrete situation. Indeed, if Bakhtin really does embrace a respect for "plural-vocality" as a general principle, albeit tacitly, then it is not difficult to give a proceduralist interpretation of this principle.

The major difference we detect between Habermas and Bakhtin on this issue is the absence in Bakhtin's work of a specification of *consensus* as the (counterfactual) terminus of moral discourse. But this difference, we would suggest, is more one of emphases rather than of two antagonistic or incompatible moral theories. Furthermore,

if Bakhtin is interpreted in this way (implicit proceduralism), can an implicit proceduralism operate without some sort of implicit terminus? In Bakhtinian terms, what does it really mean to "respect plural-vocality?" Does it simply mean *acknowledging* the fact of plural-vocality (i.e. "OK, we have different views")? How can merely acknowledging a fact have ethical significance? Or, conversely, what is the ethical aspect of this fact for Bakhtin? What does this respecting entail if not some sort of recognition of the potential for at least some sort of limited consensus?

In arguing for an interpretation of divergent emphases, we must recall Habermas' understanding of consensus as the factual force exerted by *counterfactual* assumptions--that is, "*in principle* a rationally motivated agreement must always be reachable," where the always counterfactual reservation *in principle* indicates if argumentation was openly conducted and continued long enough (MCC 105). It is highly important to not lose sight of the counterfactual nature of consensus in reading Habermas' theory of argumentation. Habermas recognizes that although full consensus is ideal or counterfactual, *nevertheless*, it is the operating premise, the factual force of a true or "strict discourse" (MCC 107). Indeed, this counterfactual characteristic of consensus (not *all* who will be affected can participate, e.g. future generations) is precisely what causes moral discourse to remain open--it imposes a degree of "unfinalizability" on any "factual" moral dialogue.

One could argue that, perhaps, Bakhtin would prefer *dissensus*. But, as Habermas

maintains, notions of dissensus unavoidably, and unsatisfactorily, get caught up with coercion. A post-modernist, such as Lyotard for example, would claim that it is consensus which engenders coercion. Against such a position, Habermas claims, that, in principle, humans are rational enough that they would not assent to a norm that would result in their own coercion--provided that they are not coerced--but that is a basic assumption of the principle of discourse ethics. Perhaps it is better to view Bakhtin's emphasis on dissensus as one similar to the position taken by Nancy Fraser towards Habermas.

Fraser is interested in the issue of contestation and struggle, and many of her reservations concerning Habermas' ethics arise from this position. For example, she claims that Habermas' discourse ethics is at odds with feminist concerns in that the model of the public sphere as site of ethical discourse erroneously presents the public sphere as unified, and thus fails to recognize the disperse multiplicity of subject positions; it privileges rationalistic discourse over more evocative forms of speech; and evades the issue of the role of the body in self-presentation.¹⁴ However, in line with our own position, Seyla Benhabib argues that although the second and third criticism are warranted, they *do not* affect the *principle* of discursive justification. Moreover, with respect to the first claim--the one more at issue here--Benhabib also asserts that

¹⁴ See Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy," in *Social Text* 25/26 (1990): 56-80; and *Unruly Practices: and "What's Critical about Critical Theory? The Case of Habermas and Gender."* *Power, Discourse and Gender in Contemporary Social Theory* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 113-143. Fraser's justifiable concerns over issues of access to "voicedness" is a separate topic altogether, and are not part of this critique regarding consensus.

Fraser has misread Habermas. Indeed, "in principle there can be as many publics as there are discourses concerning controversial norms."¹⁵ Understood in this manner, discourse ethics similarly does not undermine Bakhtin's emphasis on plural-vocality, and nor does it disallow contestation. Indeed, discourse ethics does not preclude the possibility that moral discourse will not take the form of contestation, albeit with a certain minimum of respect of the position of the other (*MCC* 202). However, this minimum degree of respect--the terminus--is essential to contestation if the dominant is to be at all affected by the dominated--without this minimum degree of respect, there are really few possibilities of the latter, except as an attempt to exercise power (something that is not, strictly speaking, contestation). Admittedly, Habermas certainly does not stress the contestational nature discourse can take. Nevertheless, he does acknowledge that contestation is possible, and indeed, particularly when conflicting life worlds come into contact, contestation obviously becomes very real, and this especially so under conditions of modernity.

We have looked at Habermas' dialogic theory of rationality and the intersubjective formation of self, situated this in his theory of language which, in turn, was contextualized in his theory of the phylogenesis of the "generalized other" or lifeworld, explored the repercussions of decentration and the pluralization of lifeworld, and the implications of this process for moral judgment and action. We must now historicize this entire model.

¹⁵ Seyla Benhabib, *Situating the Self: Gender, Community and Postmodernism in Contemporary Ethics* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1992), 118-119 fn43.

The decentration and pluralization of the lifeworld, and its linguistification and rationalization, are the processes involved in the transition to the "modern age." The central outcome of these processes is that tradition loses its power to define and organize social interaction, and the universalistic potential inherent in communicative rationality can be set free and "find expression in worldviews, moral representations, and identity formations" (*CES* 98). As traditional structures dissolve, fundamental religious norms are replaced by a more or less "rationalized" process of consensus formation (the "linguistification of the sacred") and a separation occurs between action and object domains (system and lifeworld) which were previously unified in the religious worldview--the "uncoupling" of the lifeworld and the system. With respect to the newly separated lifeworld, the dissolution of religious worldviews which had once provided a relatively undisputed order opens the way for disputable and competing interpretations. Rules of social life that once were "dogmatic" now break up into conventions that need to be legitimized. Patterns of individuality are no longer reducible to the decaying broad-based rules of social life, and instead become amplifications of particularized ways of life, animated by a transformed moral consciousness. This process can be restated as a shift in time consciousness.

When social life is grounded in tradition, the past functions as the source of understanding, and the future is but an extension of what has come before (either empirically taken from experience or conceptually derived from worldviews). With the dissolution of tradition, a break between the past and the present occurs. The

present must now look to itself and not the past for its own self understanding and "self reassurance," and the future now becomes the horizon against which this attempt at self understanding is situated. Habermas draws on the work of Reinhart Koselleck and his account of the *new age* for an articulation of this development. Moreover, as Mead and Bakhtin demonstrate, insofar as one of the "conditions of selfhood" is that of *time*, the analyses being undertaken here are historical and comparative, thus, Koselleck's studies of what he refers to as "the semantics of historical time" are of great relevance. For in examining the dawn of modernity, Koselleck demonstrates that the temporal experience of history is *itself* historically mutable. In doing so, he provides us with a means of linking the analysis of selfhood to that of historical experience.

Until the sixteenth century, the "history of Christianity [had been] a history of expectations," or the anticipation and the continual deferment of the End of the World (FP 6). The advent of the idea of modernity, as a "distinct" historical present, occurred around the year 1500 with the onset of Renaissance, the Reformation, and the discovery of the "new world."¹⁶ Koselleck describes how at this time "modernity" loses its merely chronological meaning and takes on the "oppositional significance" of an emphatically "new" age, indicating a fundamental and qualitative shift in understanding of the contemporary experience.¹⁷ This new age, modernity, is

¹⁶ See also Jurgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, trans. F.G. Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987), 1 (hereafter *PDM*).

¹⁷ *FP* 3-20.

characterized by a shift in the present's relation to its future and thus to its past.

Whereas previously, in the Christian West, the new age was projected into the yet-to-come age of the future, "one which was to dawn only on the last day." In this manner, the break in time was located in the future, and the past and present cohered in tradition which organized and defined social life. With secularization, however, the relation with tradition is ruptured, and the temporal break shifts to the past, at the very point where modernity starts--the future has begun.

[T]he secular concept of modernity expresses the conviction that the future has already begun: It is the epoch that lives for the future, that opens itself up to the novelty of the future. (*FP* 251)

This occurs in "the philosophy of historical process which first detached early modernity from its past and at the same time inaugurated our modernity with a new future" (*FP* 16). Koselleck differentiates, within the realm of politics and philosophy, "prognosis" (prediction) and "progress":

The prognosis implies a diagnosis which introduces the past into the future. This always-already guaranteed futurity of the past effected the closure and bounding of the sphere of action available [to the state]. To the extent that the past can only be experienced insofar as it contains an element of that which is to come (and vice versa), the [political existence] of [the state] remains trapped within a temporal structure that can be understood as static. Progress opened up a future that transcended the hitherto predictable, natural space of time and experience, and thence--propelled by its own dynamic--provoked new, transnatural, and long-term prognoses. (*FP* 17)

The futural dimension of this progress comes to be characterized by, first, the increasing speed with which it approaches us and, second, its unknown quality.

Indeed, the future of a modern present is "unknown" precisely "because this accelerated time, i.e., our history, abbreviated in the space of experiences, [robs] them of their constancy, and continually [brings] into play new, unknown factors, so that even the actuality or complexity of these unknown quantities [can] not be ascertained" (*FP* 17). Nonetheless, such a future can still be anticipated, but this is now possible only because of the inherent *difference* it is expected to have from the past and the present.

In considering the question of how, "in a given present, are the temporal dimensions of past and future related," Koselleck demonstrates that the historical consciousness expressed in the concept of the "modern age" comes to constitute a historical-philosophical perspective, in the sense that one's own standpoint is now brought to reflective awareness within the horizon of history as a whole.¹⁸ Within this process, events lose their historically secured character, and instead take on the novelty of a history in emergence (in the Meadian sense); due to the passing of time, "history [is] altered according to the given present, and with growing distance the nature of the past [is] also altered" (*FP* 250). Koselleck articulates the nature of this break in terms of time and space, specifically through a consideration of what he calls the "space of experience" and the "horizon of expectation."

[E]xperience is present past, whose events have been incorporated and can be remembered. Within experience a rational reworking is included, together with

¹⁸ See also *PDM* 6.

unconscious modes of conduct which do not have to be present in awareness... Similarly with expectation: at once person-specific and interpersonal, expectation also takes place in the today; it is the future made present; it directs itself to the not-yet, to the nonexperienced, to that which is to be revealed.... (FP 272)

It is reasonable, says Koselleck, to conceive of experience based on the past as spatial, since it is "assembled into a totality," a totality within which the remnants of former times are simultaneously present, yet without any intimation of "the before and after" (FP 273). Events of the past may be assigned dates, of course, but experience does not generate continuity in an additive sense. Expectation, on the other hand, is well-served by the image of a horizon as "that line behind which a new space of experience will open, but which cannot yet be seen" (FP 272). Despite any projections in to the future, it cannot be experienced *now*.

Koselleck's analysis thus serves to codify the disparate social and cultural processes usually associated with "modernity" by linking them to a decisive alteration in the *experience of historical temporality*. With the onset of these processes, past experiences can no longer be depended upon to provide one with the contents of an anticipatory futural orientation; the future takes on an independence from the past (and its quasi-"natural" experiential possibilities), and thereby becomes imbued with utopian expectations stemming from present-day concerns (concerns whose "resolution" moreover, is foreseen on the basis of "prognostically" anticipated transformations that

are to be wrought by historical "progress").¹⁹ With modernity, what is expected of the future is limited in a different manner from what had been experienced in the past. The role of the past and the future for the present is decisively altered--the space of experience no longer provides the horizon of expectation.

Amplifying Koselleck's work, Habermas suggest that the modern age, having broken with tradition, is cast back upon itself and must "create its own normativity out of itself" (*PDM* 7). Moreover, modernity is experienced not only as a new age; indeed, the present, as always the "actuality of the most recent period," must constantly recapitulate the break with the past in a process of continuous renewal, and thus it is also always a period of *transition*. Because each present always needs to revitalize the break with the past, to reassure itself, crisis becomes a "normal" part of history (e.g. Marx, Nietzsche, postmodernism).²⁰ The problematic paradox of modernity is, then, one of obtaining some standard for itself out of its own contingency, of establishing for itself a normativity based on the very "diremptions" it has created (*PMT* 16). At the center of modernity's self-understanding is its relationship with rationality, which has become obscured as a very consequence of that relationship (*PMT* 4). Habermas wants to reinsert what he considers an appropriate *historical* understanding of modernity in order to bring about a reconceptualization of rationality, and possibilities for action in the modern lifeworld. Mead and Bakhtin provide an initial theoretical

¹⁹ See "Modernity's Consciousness of Time and Its Need for Self-Reassurance, *PDM*, op cit.

²⁰ This point is central to Habermas' critique of "post" modern philosophy, i.e. such "posts" are all just one more modern breaking with the past (see *PDM* 13, *passim*).

framework from which to carry out this task. In rejecting traditional philosophies of consciousness in favor of more pragmatically oriented theories of language, they emphasize the communicative interaction of the self with other(s) in order to account for the emergence of self and to describe the nature of social life. Since the self is something only achieved in relations with others, the "search" for self is taken as a fundamental condition of life. The *search* underscores or highlights what kinds of selves are possible. However, as the self is sought in relations with others, as this group of "others" become fragmented and detraditionalized, the search becomes *problematic*.

From the structure of language comes the explanation of why the human spirit is condemned to an *odyssey*--why it first finds its way to itself only on a detour via a complete externalization in other things and in other humans. (*PMT* 151-53, italics mine)

Through the metaphor of the road, the search for self, the various possibilities of particular selves, and the continuing anxiety engendered by the modern consciousness of time can be explored historically. Selfhood is found, emerges--in communicative engagement with others--outside habituated activities, outside the mundane and stabilizing everyday; to go or be on the road is to search for something *else* (self and other, here and there). Bakhtin, Mead and Habermas each acknowledge time as a central component in this formation--i.e., as part of the (practical) interactive context from which social individuals communicatively engage one another. Koselleck's study allows for a empirical and comprehensive link to be made between experience, on the one hand, and societal and cultural modernity, on the other. For in examining the

dawn of modernity, Koselleck demonstrates that the temporal experience of history is *itself* historically mutable. In doing so, he provides us with a means of linking the analysis of selfhood to that of historical experience. Finally, Bakhtin's emphatic denial of the possibility of achieving discursive consensus alters us to the always potentially dystopic nature of social interaction. When culture is conceived of as the contested arena wherein the normative and exceptional engage, not only is a practical space revealed in which a reflexive and reciprocal constitution of selfhood occurs; it also allows us to confront the fact that culture, as a form of self-understanding, serves as social knowledge--and not merely a reflection of other, more "real" processes--which is available for practical employment by social individuals, and must be treated as such by social theorists.

Chapter Four

Methodologic Considerations

In the previous section, we discussed several theories of the self and the manner in which social formations and time consciousness are intimately tied to how the self is conceived of and experienced. But what about the road? What is "the road?" And why involve it in a discussion of the self? This section will outline the reason why an analysis of the trope of the road comprises an exemplary means by which to understand the ways in which the self has been reflexively problematized in literature. Literature has been one of the major vehicles by which questions of the self have been theorized. As argued in the first chapter, literature is a particular form of knowledge uniquely capable of providing insight into forms of the self, understood in terms of its realization of inherent dialogic potential. And the road has been one of *the* most persistent and pervasive tropes or narrative devices in the history of literature: *The Odyssey*, *Exodus* in the Old Testament, *Canterbury Tales*, *Amadis de Gaul*, to name but a few. Indeed, Michel de Certeau has even gone so far as to proclaim that "every story is a travel story."¹

This omnipresence of the road, however, is obviously not a sufficient explanation of why such a trope should figure into a project concerned with the formation of the self. In order to apprehend the significance of the road, we first need to ask *why* the trope

¹ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984), 115.

of road is so prevalent. And, in order to answer to this question, we must, in turn, ask another: what is it that *happens* on the road? Briefly, in road narratives, one leaves a place, encounters others, engages in some sort of activity, arrives someplace else, and then may or may not return to the place of origin. That is, in going on the road, one leaves the group or community, ventures outside the familiar and encounters someone or something alien; the road narrative is often a matter of where one has been and where one is going, but it always a confrontation or an encounter with others.

This project asserts that it is this *meeting of others* that is of central importance in understanding the historical endurance of the image of the road. Insofar as the very nature of being on the road--and the confrontations or encounters with others--is also the central characteristic of self formation, the road, as a literary trope, therefore provides fitting access to the problem of changing notions of selfhood. Going on the road is always a process, one that thematically problematizes the relation between the self and society. Although the self has been taken historically as a given (e.g. the Protestant relation of private self to God), everything we look at in texts negates this interpretation. In being on the road and meeting others, characters must engage in dialogue with one another--linguistic interaction--around issues concerning normative behaviors, beliefs, and action orientations. Such interaction, as discussed in Chapter Two, is constitutive of consciousness, self and identity. This essential discursive engagement with others is why Bakhtin views literature as *the* best way to understand the self. How these engagements are variously represented in literature give clues to

the historical conceptions of the individual and society, and their relation to one another. For example, the self, as an achieved, more or less stable formation which emerges through a process of "enlightenment," is characterized in road texts in a multitude of ways: flight, escape, discovery, etc. Thus, although the image of the road is continually winding its way through literature and film, what happens on that road, how it is experienced and how it is interpreted, have changed historically, and especially with the advent of modernity. But for a project concerned with the formation of the self, the significance of the road is not merely that of a device for bringing people together. The road also allows something unique to happen: it is where the spatial and temporal paths of diverse individuals, normally separated, can meet at one place and at one time, and, in doing so, collapse social distances (*DI* 243). In other words, as the site where space (place)² and time converge, the road is a specific chronotope. Thus, by explicating the nature of this chronotope, we will be able to more clearly discern the critical role the trope of the road plays in understanding historical formations of the self.

What, then, is the "chronotope of the road?" Bakhtin discusses the road as a chronotope in which time and space come together, and where that which is successive

² de Certeau makes a useful distinction between place and space: place is "an instantaneous configuration of positions"; whereas, space "exists when one takes into consideration vectors of direction, velocities, and time variables. Thus space is composed of intersections of mobile elements" (117). The opposition made here between place and space is articulated according to a distinction between two "determinations" in stories where, on the one hand, in place, objects are "ultimately reducible to the *being-there* of something dead." On the other hand, in space, "operations" take place on the part of "the actions of historical *subjects* (a movement always seems to condition the production of a space and to associate it with a history)" (*ibid*). As we shall see, this deadening or animating imagery can be extended to the road chronotope to the extent that the space of experience renders static or closes the future to any animating interrogation or problematization.

in time becomes simultaneous in space. It is this feature, says Bakhtin, that is the source of the metaphor of the road as a "course:--with, for example, the "road of life" or the "course of history." The "fundamental pivot" of the road chronotope is, according to Bakhtin, "the flow of time" (*DI* 244). He emphasizes that this aspect is essential in the portrayal of events "governed by chance," and that chance, in turn, "explains the importance of the road in the history of the novel" (*DI* 244). Although chance may indeed be one key feature of the road chronotope, it is not the only one. In order to expand upon Bakhtin's conceptualization of the road, and thus more fully understand the significance of the road in the representation of self in history, we must return to his definition of the road chronotope as depicting the flow of time. Koselleck's work on historical time consciousness allows us to accomplish this.

As we have seen, in *Futures Past*, Koselleck demonstrates how our understanding of the "flow of time" has itself changed historically. In modernity, time is no longer merely the "medium in which all histories take place; it gains a historical quality.... Time becomes a dynamic and historical force in its own right" (*FP* 246). This occurs, according to Koselleck, through a shift in the ratio between the space of experience and the horizon of expectation, whereby the experience in which the past is codified is no longer sufficient to provide a framework for understanding that which is to come in the future. In this manner, we can conceive of the chronotope of the road as a site where space (place) and time coincide in terms of the particular ratio of experience and expectation. And, to the extent that the road portrays the horizon of expectation

as diverging from the space of experience, can we detect the self's postconventional emergence.

With this working definition of the chronotope of the road, we now need a means by which to determine a conventional or postconventional orientation, one which would also illustrate or highlight the relation between the space of experience and horizon of expectation. When we examine the nature of human interaction under conditions where experience and expectation have diverged, we are able to arrive at categories that allow us to capture the manner in which the self is conceptualized of in a novel. As we have seen, with decentration, the space of experience no longer supplies the horizon of expectation, and individuals themselves must provide their own interpretive contexts. This divergence frees the "rationality potential" of interaction and, together with a futural time consciousness, constitutes the intersubjective grounding which allows individuals to reflexively enter into communicative relations oriented towards understanding. It is this orientation towards communicative interaction, emanating from the individual's relation to the past (experience) and the future (expectation) which, Habermas argues, is constitutive of the type of self that is formed, i.e. conventional or postconventional. Thus, we can determine a conventional or postconventional orientation by identifying those characteristics of the self that emerge when the space of experience and horizon of expectation diverge.

If the social context within which the individual finds him or herself is circumscribed

by a lifeworld that provides a unifying framework of understanding based on tradition--when the space of experience is roughly equivalent to the horizon of expectation--the self that emerges is conventional in nature, in that the identity that is formed is a *role* identity.

[A] person understands himself in such a way that he answers the question, what kind of person he is (has become), what character he has (has acquired) by means of ascribed predicates. (TC2 106, *sic*)

Conversely, when tradition's hold over the interpretive framework weakens--when the horizon of expectation diverges from the space of experience--*ego* identity supplants role identity, and we can begin to speak of a postconventional self.

[A] person understands himself...by answering the question, who or what kind of person he *wants* to be. In place of an orientation to the past, we have an orientation to the future, which makes it possible for the past to become a problem. (TC2 106)

Importantly, both the acquisition of role competence *and* the formation of will occur intersubjectively, and thus are socially constituted through and through. With respect to the former, adequate performance of roles requires that the individual become aware of the interchangeability of self and alter's position, whereby individuals are entitled to expect certain actions from others in particular circumstances and, simultaneously, are obliged to fulfill the justified behavioral expectations of others (MCC 154-55). In other words, role identity formation requires the *recognition* on the part of participants of the symmetrical reciprocity of role behaviors. With respect to the latter, the will formation of an ego identity must also be stabilized intersubjectively in the *recognition*

granted by others, however, recognition not of adequate role performance, but of the individual's claim to individuality *as such*. In either case, intersubjective recognition is required by both the conventional and postconventional self.

We can now hypothesize one reason why the road has been a persistent trope throughout much of the literary history of the West, and suggest a concrete reason for employing it in the analysis of selfhood and its formation. The self, as something constituted intersubjectively, is inherently predicated on *recognition*: the recognition required by role identity, by definition, must be conferred by an already existing and successfully unified and unifying normative community; by contrast, ego identity must *seek out* the necessary recognition, since, by definition, it *cannot* be automatically forthcoming from any given normative community. Thus, the road can be treated as a quasi-public space, wherein the claims of identity are subject to rejection or acknowledgment either in terms of satisfactory fulfillment of role, or in terms of the self's claims of "itself as a free will" (TC2 181). The *experience* of being on the road is distinct for the conventional and the postconventional self by reason of the different forms this need for recognition takes. In other words, the experience of being on the road for the conventional and postconventional self is, respectively, one of an affirmation, or one of a search for self. With respect to the chronotope, going on the road, for the conventional self, constitutes the actualization or affirmation of an identity already ascribed to the individual--the expectation of what the road trip will provide is relatively equivalent to the space of experience from within which the

individual originated (and will return). By contrast, for the postconventional self, going on the road is a search for the self--decentration and modernization have rendered the space of experience an inadequate grounding upon which to establish and anchor identity. Thus, the self must establish its own normativity and seek out a horizon where this nonconventional self can be recognized. In being on the road, the postconventional self leaves the past and moves towards a horizon of expectation, where the future (a new space) is not subject to the eschatological closure of either immortality or apocalypse.

Since recognition for claims of identity is so important to the formation of the postconventional self, and these claims are only secured communicatively in interaction, discourse or communicative interaction comes to figure prominently in the "novel." In addition, at the social level, the problematization of the lifeworld which arouses the demand for a ego identity *also* has the effect of bringing communicative interaction to the fore in the novel. Hence, if the self and its formation are understood as being constituted in communicative interaction with multiple others, then what ever might be said about that self in isolation from the many voices that constitute it, and those with whom that self speaks with and responds to, is *inherently unsatisfactory*. An analysis of the self must take into account the ongoing linguistic interaction with others. More specifically, these interactions are comprehensible only when they are situated against the "background of understanding" in which they are uttered (*DI* 281)-
-in other words, against the lifeworld(s) of the participants. Bakhtin states that the

"actual meaning" of a given utterance is

understood against the background of other concrete utterances on the same theme, a background made up of contradictory opinions, points of view and value judgements.... Only now this contradictory environment of alien words is present to the speaker not in the object, but rather in the consciousness of the listener, as his apperceptive background.... And every utterance is oriented toward this apperceptive background of understanding, which is not a linguistic background but rather one composed of specific objects and emotional expressions. (*DI* 281)

These "specific objects and emotional expressions" are themselves construed by certain worldviews embedded in particular lifeworlds. If we can again recall, the lifeworld is the unproblematic background of convictions which serve as the source of definitions--the "totality of sociocultural facts" (*TC2* 136). In their interactions, language-using individuals come to an understanding with one another about situations by referring to this lifeworld. In this manner, in traditional or conventional societies, the lifeworld fulfills the need for social reproduction by ensuring both continuity of tradition and coherence of knowledge: interaction relies upon membership in the social group, thereby reinforcing integration, and, by internalizing the value orientations of the lifeworld, individuals become socialized. Communicative actions are not only "processes of interpretations," they are simultaneously "processes of social integration and of socialization" (*TC2* 139). Thus, when individuals' "cultural stock of knowledge can no longer cover the need for mutual understanding that arises with new situations," not only is meaning jeopardized, but so too is solidarity and identity (*TC2* 140). In other words, with decentration, the lifeworld becomes problematized, fragmented and pluralized, and individuals themselves must supply meaning context to replace what

has been lost. This is risky proposition at best.

The degree of differentiation also determines how great the need for consensual knowledge, legitimate orders, and personal autonomy is at any given time. Disturbances in reproduction are manifested in their own proper domains of culture, society, and personality as loss of meaning, anomie, and mental illness (psychopathology). (TC2 142)

With such differentiation, everyday communicative practices can no longer simply "go back to an ascribed normative consensus" (TC2 146), and questions of "How should I (or one, or we) live" become problematized and thematized. Instead, communicative practices must "issue *from* the cooperative interpretation processes of participants themselves" (*ibid*). The extent to which the lifeworlds individuals refer to are pluralized and fragmented can be taken as an indication of the degree to which the individuals must themselves forge a "common" meaning--that is, the degree to which a text can be considered dialogic. However, the incomprehensibility, "inaudibility," the "foreignness" of the lifeworlds to which individuals refer set the stage for potential dialogism at a society-wide level *only if* the horizon of expectation has diverged from the space of experience, and the meaning system can admit alternatives to the given in the face of contradictions, discrepancies, and contestations.

Insofar as this plurality of lifeworlds is the most significant aspect of the road--the road brings different lifeworlds into contact--an analysis of the self which operates via the trope of the road must examine how these encounters between different lifeworlds are seen and dealt with by the characters. Such an analysis, as Bakhtin argues, must

address the tension in discursive interaction between forces that tend to impose a unity on the multiplicity of languages (or ways of being in the world) and forces that encourage this multiplicity--that is, the ongoing struggle over moral and normative categories, definitions and content in everyday experience. Moreover, as the significance of communicative interaction escalates within this increasingly problematic and plurality of lifeworlds, we must also explore changes in discursive strategies: what meanings or norms are being contested, how are "sides" drawn, and what arguments are made for particular positions and identity claims when looking at specific narratives? Do characters refer primarily, or exclusively, to "authoritative discourses"--the prereflexive ideological "word" connected to the past (*DI* 342)--or to "internally persuasive discourse"--discourses of others that have been subject to critique--in their interactions? Which particular norms are being problematized? Who is able to engage in discursive challenges? And what are the consequences of accepting or rejecting these claims? These are some of the questions that must be addressed in the analysis of the self, as it takes to a road where the space of experience has separated from the horizon of expectation.

The Texts

The search for understanding of the self as been a dominant and persistent concern in social and cultural life, and, from *Odyseus* to *Thelma and Louise*, the trope of the road has been one of the most pervasive images in literary and cinematic history with which to grapple with this issue. These two topics have been rewritten in many

different ways and in many different contexts, and the collection of texts from which to select is vast. The road, like the self, has many texts. How, then, to single out which texts to examine? One criteria has been to not place any severely strict limiting factors on this selection process at the outset, as this would have the unwanted effect of closing the analysis before it has begun. For example, including only texts from 1800 to 1850, concerning young girls of a marriageable age, etc., precludes the ability to examine the discursive practices enacted at large around the gendered self. Thus, the manner in which the selection of text is made must remain somewhat "pre-theoretical."³

Although it is impossible to provide any kind of absolute justification for the texts which will be used, certain limiting considerations have entered into the process. The first concerns what constitutes a "road" novel or film. The trope of the road has been treated in a variety of manners: these include the "travel novel" as one specific type of chronotope,⁴ wanderings, quests or pilgrimages,⁵ the act of traveling as voyage,⁶ adventure- or saga-like journeys,⁷ travel as pleasure or tourism,⁸ or the road as the

³ Furthermore, since the possibilities are so numerous, any necessarily limited selection is bound to exclude some texts some readers would deem crucial, and include others that seem less so.

⁴ Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, eds. C. Emerson and M. Holquist, trans. V. W. McGee (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), 10ff.

⁵ Evelyn Birge Vitz, *Medieval Narrative and Modern Narratology* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 1989).

⁶ The voyage has a specific aim, either pleasure, profit or education. See Georges Van Den Abbeele, *Travel as Metaphor* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1992).

⁷ Steven Hutchinson, *Cervantine Journeys* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992).

milieu of adventures and adventurers.⁹ In all but the first two, it is primarily locomotion--movement and its implications--that are dealt with. Only Bakhtin and Vitz make interactions themselves a primary focus in their work.¹⁰

In a similar manner, this project employs the road trope in order to examine understandings about the self by making central the events of meeting and interacting with others. Moreover, as the concepts of "home" and "goal" become murkier prospects in modernity, the definition of the "road," for purposes of this study, will be a much broader one. The road novel will be defined not solely as representing a journey with a specified destination or goal--again, as this becomes less and less the case in 20th century narratives--but as a type narrative that depicts a hero or protagonist as a moving in space, outside the familiar, and focusing on the encounters therein. The particular type of locomotion or the goal of this movement is less important than what being on the road allows us to examine: the tensions between the familiar and unfamiliar, the self and other, the old and the new, each of which throws into relief the normatively valid understandings of self that are developed, struggled over, contested or reinforced.

⁸ See, for example, Mary Campbell, *The Witness and the Other World: Exotic Travel Writing, 1400-1600*.

⁹ Michael Nerlich, *Ideology of Adventure, Vol. 1* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

¹⁰ Bakhtin also severely limits his description of travel or adventure chronotope. Although he admits the richness and diversity of this theme, he fails to adequately trace its development past the 17th century, dealing primarily with its epic and early modern forms.

Another issue in the selection of texts concerns the question of whether to use more canonical popular texts, or instead use those texts are (or have been) marginalized. Marginalized, suppressed or repressed works, especially those written by or about subaltern groups, have received a great deal of attention in recent years. Critical studies of these texts often tend to focus on the "otherness" of the writer, the subject, or topics of these works, in specific contrast to canonical works and writers. One of the goals of this study, however, is to explore those very aspects of struggle over meaning and interpretation, representations and understanding of the world, and actors' relations and positionings in that world, which are always at work, even in the most seemingly hegemonic representations, and that contribute to the marginalization and repression of particular groups. Therefore, canonical popular texts will therefore be used for their distinct social presence; the popularity and persistence of certain texts demonstrates that they have resonated with some primary aspect of social life. This is not to say they these types of texts are wholly representative of a society or a community, but rather that the concerns and ways of seeing the world presented in these texts seem to dominate, more or less, other positions or concerns.

In a similar manner, this same rationale is why works by women were not considered in and of themselves as a selection criteria. The concern here is not with how women see themselves *per se*, but rather how they are seen *qua* women by society at large, the moral and normative implications of these definitions, and how these definitions and their consequent social positions are maintained, negotiated and challenged through

communicative interactions which come to be represented in texts. In each of the three texts selected, however, norms surrounding gender are some of the most problematic issues raised, either explicitly or implicitly.

The study will cover a rather broad time frame in the attempt to present three case studies in the historical shifts in perception of the self. The first novel to be investigated is Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra's *Don Quixote*. Published in 1604, this work is considered by many to be the "first" novel. Regardless of the literalness of this claim, *Don Quixote* is an appropriate work with which to begin this study. First, it appeared on the threshold of what has been called "modernity," a central thematic of this project. Second, the story itself locates the action and narrative almost entirely on, or near, the roads of La Mancha, primarily recounting the adventures of the "knight" and his squire, Sancho Panza, the consummate "other."

The second text that will be examined, Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*, is from the late 19th century, the period of the bourgeois novel's maturation. The leap from early 17th century Spain to the England of 1894 (the date of *Jude's* publication) is made here primarily on the basis of what did and did not occur in these two countries--modernization and modernity. The defeat of the nascent bourgeoisie in the later part of the 16th century meant Spain developed differently from the rest of Europe; there arose the formation of the absolute monarchy and the retention of some of the structures of feudalism. What this means for Spain and Spanish identity is not the

subject of inquiry here, but rather, what occurs to notions of selfhood in modernity. Thus, we turn to England as the site of one of the most significant forces in decentration and the shift in modern time consciousness--the industrial revolution. The novels of Hardy, in general, present a vivid portrayal of the encroachment of the modern, developing world on rural traditions. The harsh realism of *Jude* is part of the systematic challenge made by the 19th century novels to the high-toned, morally responsible works of the preceding century. Following a development heralded by Richardson, Hardy also utilizes another feature which is central in the development of the modern novel: the overwhelming emphasis on the minutia of the everyday.

Finally, in the 20th century, having seemingly arrived at a point of near-total alienation from any sort of stabilizing structures, coupled with a complete loss of faith in modern notions of both political and economic progress, where everything is "post" and none of it good, we witness the emergence of a new type of hero/narrative. The film *Mad Max* is a paradigmatic example of chaos or "crisis" cinema.¹¹ In this cultural strain of dystopia, the future is projected as beyond the complete control of anyone, and where justice (in the political arena), equality (in the political and economic arenas), and stable cultural traditions are either absent, unavailable or void of any practical legitimacy. The dystopian "heroes" no longer share the values of their community, but seem entirely alienated from it. Even when they are represented as agents of the

¹¹ I have taken this term from a book edited by Christopher Sharrett, entitled *Crisis Cinema: The Apocalyptic Idea in Postmodern Narrative Film* (Washington, DC: Maiseonneuve Press, 1993).

community (e.g. police), they act not out of a desire for justice, but for some private reason (often revenge), and if their action somehow serve the social well being, this is incidental or inadvertent. The *Mad Max* trilogy has been one of the most popular of these apocalyptic films.¹²

A film was included because, like popular novels, films are generally produced for mass audiences, and, more importantly, film has come to possess a strong presence in contemporary society. The dominance of film in the 20th century, as Fredric Jameson indicates, has led to its replacement of the novel as the primary vehicle for depicting social life, and hence the necessity of including a cinematic text.

In sum, drawing upon Bakhtin's theory of literature as social knowledge, and a theory of the self suggested by Mead and Habermas as well as Bakhtin, the project will take the trope of the road as a textual problematization of the search for selfhood in three case studies, and explore the dual processes of individualization and socialization in this endeavor, the effect of modernity's time consciousness, and how these dynamics are historically worked out, especially through "moral" categories. The trope of the road is useful one in that it traverses the changing configurations of certain basic structures of social life, e.g. lifeworld and system, public and private. The goal here is not merely to provide a method for an exhaustive textual analysis. Textual analyses in

¹² As a foreshadowing of what is to come, it would be well to remind ourselves here that, contrary to its popular usage, apocalypse is defined not as disaster or the end, but as revelation, the expectation of cosmic cataclysm in which God destroys the powers of evil and raises the righteous to His kingdom.

the sociology of literature or literary studies can often assert, to varying degrees, a reductive primacy--that is, reducing the sign, ideology, language or theme to the mere manifestation of some other underlying reality--effecting closure, in one direction or the other, between speaking subjects. Instead, the goal here is to use texts in order to illuminate the problem of the modern self, examine the concerns and experiences of these speaking subjects, the world in which they live, and the communicative means by which they problematically come together.

Chapter Five

Don Quixote

Reinhart Koselleck opens his book, *Futures Past*, by describing two responses to Albrecht Altdorfer's painting, *Alexanderschlacht*, in order to illustrate the shift in modernity's consciousness of time. In Altdorfer's painting (one in a series commissioned in 1528 by Duke Williams IV of Bavaria), which depicted the 333 B.C. Battle of Issus, the ancient battling warriors of Persia possessed the faces and the costumes of contemporary Turks, who had in that very year, 1528, unsuccessfully laid siege to Vienna. In other words, Altdorfer had captured in one painting two moments--the historical and the contemporary. What strikes Koselleck as remarkable about this representation is that the temporal difference between the two events--1800 years--was not, "as such, at all apparent" to the painter or his contemporary audience (*FP* 4). However, some 300 years later, Friedrich Schlegel was to view this same painting and be astonished, recognizing in it "the greatest feat of the age of chivalry" (*FP* 4). In other words, Schlegel was able to see the painting as the product of an era distinct from his own time, as well as from that of the period (Antiquity) that it attempted to represent. Schlegel had acquired a critical-historical distance from the work; history had gained a specifically temporal dimension absent for Altdorfer.

What does this anecdote have to do with the novel *Don Quixote*? The whole of Cervantes' work, the effectiveness of its humor, the bite of its parody, the drama of the story, obtains from an anachronism that indicates an awareness of historical

temporality and a recognition of the contradictions between past and present. In other words, the presence of an incipient modern consciousness of time is embodied in the absurd figure of an old *hidalgo* raggedly garbed in the costume of knights from a time past wandering the dusty roads of La Mancha. This sense of historicity represented by the anachronistic dress and actions of Don Quixote echoes a new sense of time that was beginning to surface throughout post-Renaissance Europe. A future-oriented view of human events emerged whereby people began to reflexively experience their own age, the present, as something distinct from the past which preceded it (as well as from the future which has the potential to be something new and unknown).¹ As we have seen, Habermas and Koselleck (among others) trace this shift to the growing secularization of worldviews and the dissolution of tradition as the grounding source of action. The "space of experience" is in transition, it is receding from its long standing intimacy with the "horizon of expectation."

In Spain, many of the changes that took place at the end of the 16th century centered around tensions over presumptions of social hierarchy.² The growing promise of

¹ See Jose Antonio Maravall, *Culture of the Baroque: Analysis of a Historical Structure*, trans. T. Cochran (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1986). "What is certain that...there also began to develop in the individual the capacity to understand that things were not going well...this modern individual began to wonder whether things could be better. This consciousness of unrest and unease.... [P]eople were directly concerned with those disruptions of the common and the established mode--or at least what they assumed to be such.... Therefore, in addition to economic and social disturbances that prevailed, individuals acquired relative consciousness of the phases of crises that they were undergoing. They also showed a difference in their attitude...an attitude not limited to passivity, but postulating and intervention" (*ibid.* 20-21).

² See Jose Antonio Maravall, "From the Renaissance to the Baroque: The Diphasic Schema of a Social Crisis," trans. T. Cochran, in *Literature Among Discourses: The Spanish Golden Age*, eds. W. Godzich and N. Spadaccini (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1986) 3-40.

social mobility of the previous century, coupled with economic near-catastrophe, fueled expectations for the future on the part of many, but also engendered a counter-reaction of those who were threatened by the dissolution of the traditional order.³

Working against the forces that struggled for change within the dramatic breakdown of Spanish society were other, ultimately more powerful, forces whose aim was to contain those forces of dispersion that threatened the traditional order. An absolute monarchy was taken as the instrument of counter-revolution, and disciplined the course of development. The weakening of tradition's strong-hold, coupled with deep economic crisis, fueled a shift in society's perception of the role of human intervention in social life; not only were there deep economic and political problems, but traditional ways of life were inadequate to the new crisis situation. The question being asked was "could things, *with human intervention*, get better in the future?" In other words, in addition to economic and social disruptions, people acquired a relative consciousness of the phases of crisis that they were experiencing. Moreover, their stance towards the events they were witness to was not merely one of passivity, but included the recognition that purposive intervention was an alternative--that the future was potentially open to new possibilities and new developments. The "horizon of expectation" was expanding.⁴

³ See especially J.H. Elliott, *Imperial Spain: 1469-1716* (London: Edward Arnold, Pub., 1963); and James Vives Vicens, *An Economic History of Spain* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969).

⁴ Again, this is not to say that there were not those who were deeply interested in maintaining tradition and leveling the disruptive forces of change. Indeed, Spain of this era is often defined in terms of this tension between Reformation and Counter-Reformation groups--and the ultimate victory of the latter. The reaction by the Counter-Reformationists to the threat "individualist forces" posed to the hierarchically established order was particularly severe, and successful, in Spain. The politics of closure and policies of refeudalization instigated in 17th century served to calcify the social system of hierarchy, and kept Spain isolated for centuries from the rest of Europe.

The trope of the road registers this shift in the relation between experience and expectation. The road thematizes the individual's (the traveler's) relations with others and society: the very nature of being on the road, the contact with new people and places, problematizes interaction--one leaves the taken for granted group or community, ventures outside the familiar and encounters others. How these encounters are variously represented, the norms and expectations of interaction that different individuals labor under, and the manner in which problematic interactions are resolved all give clues to the historical conceptions of the individual and society and their relation to one another. Such relations ultimately allow us to analyze the changing notions of selfhood. In *Don Quixote*, the road winds its way through a world in the very process of breaking with the past, one whose diversity has dramatically increased, and where this transition is still highly problematic. With respect to the self, along side this new sense of time and the attendant tensions with tradition, there emerges a growing emphasis on the individual's own interpretive capacities, which must *reflexively* be brought to bear on events and experiences--that is, in essence, the *experience* of experience becomes problematic and the self turns inward. For Cervantes' Don, this translates into a shift in emphasis from the objective representation of events on the road (as with the epic, for example) to an exploration of the protagonist's subjective experience of these events (more characteristic of the modern novel). It is not the joust with the windmills, the freeing of the galley slaves, or even Don Quixote's wanderings on the road *as such* that are the focus of the novel, but rather what *arises* out of these events--the encounters with others which show him

to be a madman, someone oriented towards a worldview no longer contemporaneous.

The problematization of experience that takes place when individuals' find themselves dislodged from traditional definitions and relations also has significant repercussions for the self and for identity. When the social context that once provided a relatively stable and circumscribed set of behavioral expectations around which identities are formed becomes destabilized, so too do these identities. That is, with the divergence of experience and expectation, not only is experience problematized, but so too is the self, and individuals must apply their interpretive capacities to themselves as well as to the social world. The new focus on the experiential perspective and the problematization of identity brought about by the divergence in experience and expectation signals an important textual development: dialogue takes on a new significance and moves to the fore within the structure of the novel. That is, the text is dialogized and becomes novelistic. This is, in part, the uniqueness or the *novel-ness* of *Don Quixote*. As "experience" is problematized in 17th century, events lose their taken for granted character and aspects of the lifeworld become subject to discursive thematization and interrogation. The adventures Don Quixote's claims engender require him to explain, either to himself or others, and often both, the meaning of his actions, his understanding of the world, and his very identity. Don Quixote has placed himself in a certain *problematic* relation to the past and the present; each character he encounters questions the validity of this position, and, in turn, he must offer arguments and reasons for his actions. This realignment of self understanding necessitated by an

altered experience of the past applies to the other characters in the novel as well.

Although the other characters are more successful in negotiating the emergent forms of temporality, as of yet, no vantage point has developed from which this critical capacity can be fully and freely engaged. Thus, neither they nor Don Quixote possess the degree of reflexivity required of a postconventional self and moral orientation, and ultimately they revert to the conventionality and particularity of their own worldview--and the critical moment falls off into parody. In other words, the power of the collective will still presides over an individual will that "has not yet come into its own," a conventional orientation predominates.

The expressiveness that we today seem to value--and which we are also a little suspicious of, aware of the possibility that it has been banalized and commercialized--as well as the individualization of the self are only beginning to develop in *Don Quixote*. In these terms, the novel can be read as a quest for a moral center or grounding, an exploration of the question of meaning within a context in which the devaluation of the given (the past) is a very real--but also unsure--possibility. When individuals were understood more in terms of rank, status and roles, the integrity of that rank, status or role was paramount, and moral action centered around evaluations in terms of such concepts as honor, obedience, purity, etc. However, as the integrative and interpretive force of tradition weakens, as selves become more and more individuated (and are understood as such⁵), and the expressive capacity of individuals

⁵ See Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989).

takes on new importance, those activities, principles and concepts tied to maintaining the integrity of this expressiveness come to be seen as the foundation of moral action. The emphasis on expressive power means that a respect for individuals, for their "integrity," includes protecting their freedom to "express and develop their own opinions, to define their own life conceptions, and draw up their own life-plans" (*Sources* 25). Thus, in the moral arena, the pluralization of visions of the good life increasingly becomes a source of tension and conflict *within* the social group or collectivity; moral life becomes problematized as these contingent and opposing visions struggle with one another.

In *Don Quixote*, the old *hidalgo's* movement on the road textually brings the different aspects of the fading world of tradition and the community of the Middle Ages into contact with the emerging world of social and economic mobility and the sense of individuality characteristic of modernity. What arises from this historical transformation--via a shift in time consciousness--is a problematization of experience, of identity, and the basis of moral action. The emphasis on the experience of events is associated with a turn inward, a turn towards representing individuals as individuals involved in interpretive work. What we see in *Don Quixote* is a tension between different interpretations of the gap left by the changing relation between experience and expectation. One of the main narrative strategies by which these themes are

played out and interact in the novel is Don Quixote's madness.⁶ Focusing the discussion primarily around the theme of madness, in this section we will examine how the novel articulates different relations of past and future, potential relations of the self to its own experience, and the various understandings of moral action implied by these relations. The road operates to bring together, in space and time, various and competing understandings of the world, whereby the problematization of these worldviews brought about by Don Quixote's madness effects a dialogic struggle over meaning around these themes. We will take particular note of gendered relation and the manner in which this problematization of worldviews takes place *without* a resolution--either for the characters or the reader. This absence of resolution occurs, it will be argued, as a result of the lack of a critical *and* reflexive position from which either the reader or any character in the novel is able to interrogate the unsatisfactory content of the competing worldviews. This lack arises, in part, from the absence of a sufficiently stable site from which the process of "true" individuation (in Bakhtin's sense) is able to "come into its own," and hence supply both the critical and reflexive moments necessary to move from a conventional self (and moral) understanding to a postconventional one.

⁶ The theme of madness in *Don Quixote* has been one of the primary topics of focus for literary critics, and has been treated in a multitude of ways. Two of the more popular readings are, first, to see Quixote's madness as a means by which scenes of burlesque may be set up, for the novel is "really" just a funny book, or second, to interpret madness as a front behind which Cervantes hides his "true" intention, that of social critique, from the Inquisition. Undoubtedly, the madness of Quixote does offer the opportunity to construct some highly amusing situations and dialogues; and equally, anyone writing during this period had to keep in mind the presence of the Inquisition. But to focus solely, or primarily on either mode of interpretation is to lose sight of the tension that is at work in the novel as a whole.

The shift in the relation of the past to the present that constitutes the anachronism that is Don Quixote's madness is thematized in the opening paragraphs of the novel. This emergent modern time consciousness problematizes the manner in which the relation of a particular present to a given past--that of an old *hidalgo* to the fading Spanish chivalric order--is articulated, and signals a shift in temporal understanding via the past's unsatisfactory realization in the present.⁷ The first paragraph describes a "gentleman" who lived "not long ago" with a lance *in the rack*, an *ancient* shield, and a lean *hack*. When he had nothing to do--"as was the case for most of the year"--he would *read books about* knight errantry, neglecting the care of his small property. This paragraph introduces an old *hidalgo*⁸ for whom the meaningfulness of his position has long since past. The lance is unused, the armor lays "long forgotten...and eaten with rust," he does not have the *stead of war* of his forefathers, but rather a lone horse, worn out from menial service, and the man himself has nothing to do the year long but to read fanciful books. Spain no longer requires the *hidalgo*.⁹ Even in these

⁷ All references are from J.M. Cohen's translation of Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *The Adventures of Don Quixote*, (London: Penguin Books, 1950) (hereafter *DQ*).

⁸ The word "*hidalgo*" is a conjugation of *fijo de algo*, or son of someone or something, and refers to a knight of "good background." Although technically considered of the noble class, during the period of the *Reconquista*, the need for soldiers increased considerably and many new *hidalgos* or knights were added to the lists. Although these new *hidalgos* were not necessarily drawn from the noble class, they did obtain the status of belonging to the *hidalguia*, or the nobility, along with the key privileges of owning land and of being exempt from taxation. Thus, although we are probably meant to assume, from Don Quixote's impoverished state, that his title came from the warring period at least 100 years prior, what is clear is that his title of *hidalgo* does imply an inherited status, one that is directly tied to the legitimate Spanish knightly tradition. See Michael Nerlich for an analysis of the transformation of the role of knighthood in *Ideology of Adventure* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 20-44.

⁹ The role of the knighthood in Spain was particularly unique. Whereas for the rest of Europe the high point of knighthood roughly coincided with the centralized feudal power or centralized monarchy of the ninth to thirteenth centuries, Spain was more or less constantly at war against the Moors from 711 to 1492, extending the period where the role of the knight was that of a very real and central figure. After the reconquest, knights were

few images, the waning of the signifying force of the past for the present is effectively intimated. Those icons of a 700 year way of life lie nearly forgotten, and the cause to which Spanish knights pledged their lives is no more; the glory and honor that once came with the rank of *hidalgo* has passed away, to be replaced only by the duties of tending the land and reading books that glorify and idealize this fading tradition.¹⁰

Once the taken for granted has been problematized--as was the case in 16th and 17th century Spain--once the unthematized background assumptions have been questioned, the explanatory and justificatory force of tradition weakens. The realities of the present are far distant from the experience of the past. What, then, can be expected of the future? What is an old *hidalgo* to do?

In this space of uncertainty, individuals must now turn towards their own interpretive abilities to orient themselves in the world. Furthermore, as it becomes necessary to supply new meaning in a changing world, and as the diversity of life situations and conflicting behavioral expectations increases, a space opens up for individuals themselves (and not the traditional order) to make decisions on how to live one's

deposed from their central position in Spanish life to become unneeded, functionally obsolete within the new social order. The problem arose of how to assimilate the massive warring class into the extremely unstable economic system. This impoverished, unemployed mass of *hidalgos* becomes an acute problem for Spain in the 16th and 17th centuries.

¹⁰ It is only with the final triumph of the *Reconquista*--which marks the beginning of the erosion of the status and meaning of knighthood--that Spain develops its own tradition of chivalric romances. Thus, for Don Quixote to even be reading books of chivalry indicates that the tradition it represents is past history.

life.¹¹ It becomes possible to intervene in one's own life history, to make one's own road, to actively participate in defining one's self. This is precisely what Don Quixote sets out to do. Don Quixote's attempts to define himself, and the novel's emphasis on the experience of this attempt, indicate both the shift in time consciousness and the problematization of self formation. Textually, this transformation is embodied in the main characters who, finding themselves dislodged from traditional definitions and relations, are able, or must, make implicit or explicit claims about their own identity. In *Don Quixote* this move is explicit.

From the point at which Don Quixote asserts his right to define his own identity against all that is expected, he is placed in the position of continually being forced to defend the contrary identity claimed. He must repeatedly reassert his position, reply to the responses of others regarding these claims, justify his reasons and, at times, readjust his claims in light of the rejection of (reaction to) his assertions. He cannot, isolated from others, live out a private belief but must coordinate these beliefs with the plurality. Don Quixote's attempt at--and experience of--self-definition depends on and is influenced by the recognition and validation of his claims to selfhood which others provide, or fail to provide. His adventures on the road become the means by which he is able to act upon his capacities for self definition. The road is also the site of a tension between inner experience and the necessity of public justification. The

¹¹ "In past generations birth, family, marital partner, career, and political position formed a constellation that was specific to one's social stratum and largely determined the pattern of one's biography; but now life situations and life plans that had been normatively bundled are becoming even more splintered. The need for individually processed decisions grows with the expanded range of options" (*PMT* 195).

struggle in *Don Quixote* over identity, and the tension between inner and public experience, occurs in his interactions with those he meets on the road. The struggle centers upon his ability to maintain sovereignty in defining "reality"--based on chivalric romances--in face of mounting challenges to these claims made by others, and their appropriation from Don Quixote of the means which he had used to actualize his interpretation. Ultimately, however, the road also becomes the site of his undoing as it becomes increasingly difficult to support his claims. We will first examine Don Quixote's attempts at self definition, and then explore the source of his undoing--his anachronistic worldview--which, coupled with the various competing and conventional worldviews, is the source of parody in the novel.

The old *hidalgo* takes to the road in order to open up a future--to expand the horizon of experience which had collapsed upon him with the dissolution of the tradition of knighthood. As things stand, the past offers him no meaning, provides no validation (recognition)--either as an individual or as the bearer of a status--and the future holds out no hope to an unneeded, impoverished *hidalgo*. To continue as he had been living would amount to a condemnation to a perpetual present. His madness jump-starts time, so to speak. Don Quixote moves out *into* the world again, demanding recognition, when he takes to the road to live like the knights he has read about. However, he moves backwards; he attempts to bring the past into the present, and this is the source of his madness (as well as the parodic situations which it leads to). In the opening chapters, Don Quixote repairs the family's ancient armor "as best he

could," makes a visor out of pasteboard, his hack is grandly renamed, and, after eight days of thought, he finally selects a suitable title for himself. In these scenes, Don Quixote is not only attempting to collapse--or rather repair--the distance between past and present, he has also begun constructing his new identity. As we will see, Dulcinea will become the primary, and ultimately the only means by which Don Quixote is able to define himself as a knight errant. The very character of Dulcinea is a creation of Don Quixote's imagination, as the aging hidalgo completes the list of requirements necessary to become a knight errant as depicted in chivalric romances. After obtaining armor, a steed, and a name for himself, he realizes that he also needs a lady love, for "would it not be well to have someone to whom I could send [some giant] as a present..." (*DQ* 35). Thus, loosely based on a local farm girl, he invents Dulcinea, and she will remain a stabilizing construction throughout the novel for Don Quixote.

Initially, his attempts to redefine situations and self meet with some limited success. Don Quixote begins his adventure very sure of himself and quite in charge of defining his reality. In one of the earliest episodes alone on the local roads of La Mancha, Don Quixote encounters several merchants from Toledo. In the fashion of the knights in chivalric romances, he confronts them and demands they affirm the supreme beauty of Dulcinea. At first amused, the merchants soon become aggravated over the delay Don Quixote presents, and so they beat him. Undaunted, Don Quixote blames this failed challenge on his horse; the dilapidated beast, unused to charging about, stumbled, throwing the knight. He then makes the plausible declaration that his mounted

opponents took unfair advantage of this situation, as he would have never been beaten if properly horsed (*DQ* 52). However, as the narrative progresses these attempts are increasingly frustrated as others challenge his efforts by refusing to take him seriously—they refuse to validate his claims. In particular, once Sancho joins the adventure, Don Quixote finds that he now must continually explain and justify his foolish and often unfortunate encounters to a skeptical witness. Nevertheless, Don Quixote remains determined "to conform to what he had read in his books about knights errant," but he now elects to do so in a manner safe from Sancho's scorn. For example, Don Quixote recalls that knights errant often spend many a sleepless nights "dwelling on the memory of their ladies." Therefore he too will stay awake all night, thinking about *his* lady, Dulcinea (*DQ* 70). His thoughts, at least, are not openly subject to ridicule and are a safe vehicle for living out his project.

But things continue to deteriorate. Further along, they chance upon a chain of galley slaves sentenced by the Holy Brotherhood (i.e the Inquisition). Against the protests of his "squire," Don Quixote frees them, as it is the duty of knights to "succour...those oppressed by the strong." The knight then orders that they too should go to Toboso and report to Dulcinea "every detail of this famous adventure," at which point he is stoned. However, after this beating he admits, for the first time, that Sancho was right, "doing good to base fellows is like throwing water into the sea" (*DQ* 178-181).

These brief examples indicate the general development of the novel—the complex,

gradual and subtle erosion of Don Quixote's ability to define himself apart from the reactions of and interactions with others. Initially, Don Quixote is invincible in his ability to define; when he fails he remains undiscouraged, as the disasters are explained away within the terms provided by the chivalric romances, and he is immediately able to reestablish his interpretation. Indeed, these romances provide excuses for his failures as well as supplying the structure for his self-conception and world view. However, as the novel progresses and the world widens, others witness challenge his vision. In fact, throughout most of the second part, the other characters he meets will use his "madness" against him for their own amusement. These pranks and hoaxes of the other characters also serve to bring the world of illusion hitherto located in--and controlled by--Don Quixote's imagination into the world of reality. He finds that he can no longer freely impose his will and hence is deprived of his imaginative sovereignty (his ability to define himself in isolation)--that is, he is increasingly forced to explicitly justify his position. A key episode in this gradually shifting tone of interactions occurs when Don Quixote sends Sancho to arrange a "audience" with Dulcinea.

Continuing his project of imitation, Don Quixote decides that he must "go mad" for love in the fashion of knights in the romances. Thus, a letter is to be brought to Dulcinea via Sancho, begging her to receive his affection and knightly devotion, or he will "be mad in earnest" (*DQ* 203). When it comes time to give instructions as to where to find Dulcinea, Sancho discovers that Don Quixote's "lady love" is none other

than Aldonza Lorenzo, the daughter of a local peasant farmer. Sancho recognizes this girl:

I know her well...and I can tell you that she pitches a bar as well as the strongest lad in the whole village. Praise be to God! She's a brawny girl, well built and tall and sturdy... O the wench, what muscles she's got, and what a pair of lungs! (*DQ* 209)

Sancho is quite surprised that it is Aldonza who is the knight's *amante*, as he "really and truly thought" that Dulcinea was "some princess...or at least a person of quality."

Don Quixote must now respond to Sancho's contradictory, firsthand acquaintance with his idealized "Dulcinea" (whom, even in the form of Aldonza, he has never met). He calmly tells Sancho a little story about a beautiful young woman who was chastised for falling in love with a less than suitable man. When asked how could she, a "woman of quality," fall in love with "such a coarse, low ignorant fellow," the woman responds that "for all I want of him, he is not a bad choice, idiot though he may seem..." (*DQ* 210). It is in the next words of Don Quixote that we can fully appreciate what is taking place:

So, Sancho, for what I want of Dulcinea del Toboso she is *as good as* the greatest princess in the land. (*DQ* 210, italics mine)

Up to this point, Don Quixote has not admitted to any facts or arguments that contradict his basic framework. But now he has been forced to respond to the undeniable knowledge Sancho has of the real Aldonza, and the challenge it represents

to his vision. Don Quixote cannot address Sancho's damaging knowledge simply by subjecting it to a rereading in the terms provided by the romances--it is a reality beyond his control. Don Quixote continues:

For not all those poets who praise ladies under names which they choose so freely, really have such mistresses. Do you think that the Amaryllises, the Phyllises, Sylvias, Dianas, Galateas, Phyllidas, and all the rest...were really flesh-and-blood ladies, and the mistresses of the writers who wrote about them? Not a bit of it. Most of them were invented to serve as subjects for verses, and so that the poets might be taken for lovers, or men capable of being so. I am quite satisfied, therefore, to *imagine* and *believe* that the good Aldonza Lorenzo is lovely and virtuous...for my part, *I think* of her as the greatest princess in the world. (*DQ* 210, italics mine)

Don Quixote has admitted the unreality, the idealization of part of his credo. He has recognized and responded to the undeniable force of Sancho's rejection of his claim regarding Dulcinea. Previously, he alone had defined the conditions of interpretation and meaning by reference to books of chivalry taken as true histories. But now his responses must be formulated within a significantly revised understanding of chivalric romances, the only one which would still allow him to maintain as much of his vision as possible--i.e. they give guidance on how to live the good life. Although his discourse concerning Dulcinea is still set in terms of the logic of the romances, these are now admitted to be the creation of poets and writers, and not the true stories of knights errant. A reality outside the texts has been conceded to, whereas before he had been living only the unreality within the texts. Once he has acknowledged the legitimacy of Sancho's own assertion, and offered a counter-claim consistent with both of their understandings, Don Quixote then continues to elaborate upon the theme of

Dulcinea within the now-altered framework.

The erosion of Don Quixote's ability to define reality and self in isolation begun here with Sancho continues and expands when he meets others who further test his ability to solely define reality and his identity. As the novel progresses, and the embroilments and confusions increase, with each new response and redefinition Don Quixote becomes ever more disconnected from the narrative, until he seems to almost stand outside the book. He now watches as others manufacture reality instead of constructing it in his imagination in the manner he chooses. His adventures are increasingly unsuccessful and painful, past "successes" return as failures,¹² and the terms of his existence as a knight errant get turned back on him in an ever-more complicated manner. All that once seemed sure is undone by the very logic of his own vision. The only thing that remains constant is Dulcinea. His steadfast proclamations of his adoration and her beauty are the only claims which can be defended, as they are totally subjective in nature (Habermas's third world); these types of claims are not easily challenged (how do you measure "more beautiful") or tampered with except by manipulation--i.e. enchantment. Enchantment, therefore, becomes the means by which other characters use Don Quixote's visions against him.

Don Quixote decides to ride to Toboso and proclaim his knightly devotion to Dulcinea

¹² For example, several of the freed galley-slaves turn to highway robbery and holdup a priest, incurring the wrath of the "Holy Brotherhood" against the man who freed the slaves--Don Quixote--who remains mute as to his involvement in this incident in front of friends and witnesses.

in person. Upon arrival, he sends Sancho ahead to ask permission for an audience. However, having never delivered the letter professing the knight's love and only inventing her reply, Sancho is in a panic over this prospect. Suddenly, three peasant girls from the village come riding by. Sancho hurries back to Don Quixote, crying out that the lady Dulcinea and her damsels are approaching. "I see nothing but three village girls on three donkeys," replies Don Quixote. They argue back and forth. Finally, weakened in his ability to define and increasingly unsure of the responses of others, Don Quixote concedes. He again refers to the formula, but this time to make sense of what others claim. Don Quixote *asks* "Do *you* see now what a spite the enchanters have against me, Sancho....[they] transformed her and changed her into a figure as low and ugly as that peasant girl's" (*DQ* 531 *italic mine*). From this point on Dulcinea's enchantment, created by *Sancho*, reverberates throughout the novel not only as a primary means by which Don Quixote's sovereignty is weakened, but also strengthens her role as his sole anchor to logic of the romances.

As their journey continues, Don Quixote and Sancho meet up with a Duke and Duchess who use the enchantment of Dulcinea for their own amusement. They construct a complicated hoax involving dozens of costumed servants and a lady's maid dressed as the enchanted Dulcinea. Their deception is so realistic that both Sancho and Don Quixote are confounded and amazed--"Sancho at their insistence, in defiance of the truth, that Dulcinea was enchanted; and...Don Quixote since he could not be

certain whether what had happened in Montesinos' cave was true or not" (*DQ* 697).¹³

This episode demonstrates the shift in the control of Don Quixote's reality by others through the manipulation of the knight's own terms, events which he must now coordinate into his framework as they have emerged from within the logic of that framework. But now this framework is turned against him, and the knight's own beliefs are used to undo him.

In another episode, the Duke and Duchess orchestrate an even more elaborate prank--a ride through the heavens on the mount of the mythical horse Clavileno. Sancho is convinced of the reality of the experience. Don Quixote is not. His comment to Sancho is illustrative of the degree to which Don Quixote must now engage and negotiate with others. He must reconcile his ability for self-definition with the arguments and counter-claims of others:

But Don Quixote went up to Sancho and whispered in his ear: 'Sancho, if you want me to believe what you saw in the sky, I wish you to accept my account of what I saw in the Cave of Montesinos. I say no more.' (*DQ* 735)

Ultimately, even his steadfastness towards Dulcinea falters. Throughout the novel, Don Quixote has unwaveringly maintained that his lady love is unsurpassed in beauty, but along the road he continues to meet, one after the other, a series of high-born and

¹³ Earlier, in a dream-like sequence, Don Quixote claimed to have seen the enchanted Dulcinea romping gaily in the fields of Montesinos. Having instigated the hoax of Dulcinea's enchantment, Sancho laughingly taunts the knight and his "vision." However, at this point Don Quixote is so confused--with his definitions of reality from chivalric romances, others' manufactured hoaxes playing off this "imaginary reality," and reality itself all colliding--that he is truly unsure what actually happened when he entered the fabled cave (621-24).

well-bred women, each more lovely than the last. Finally he arrives at the wedding of the rich Camacho and the lovely Quiteria. The party toasts the bride, declaring her the fairest maid in all the world. Where once chivalry would have demanded that Don Quixote leap to challenge such effrontery, he now remains silent, thinking *only to himself that* they would be more sparing in their praises if they had seen his Dulcinea (DQ 597).

These few scenes offer a limited sketch of the manner in which Don Quixote's attempt at self definition is ineluctably intertwined with the actions (challenges, counter claims, arguments) of the other characters he meets on the road; *who he wants to be is severely mediated by what others will allow him to be*. The events on the road, and the people he meets there, influence how Don Quixote is able to define himself. Early in the novel the confident Don Quixote, along with grumbling but loyal Sancho, ambles along La Mancha, running into a succession of characters on the road in a series of casual encounters, as he challenges and defies the world. Deception on the part of others is temporary and unsystematic. Don Quixote himself is free and unfettered, seeking only to wander about in search of adventures as knights are wont to do. As the novel progresses, however, more and more, he becomes the one who is challenged, systematically deceived, and compelled by others to act. After the enchantment of Dulcinea, the superiority of a master over the squire begins to erode. This inversion culminates in the episode of the Cave of Montesinos: Sancho impertinently questions what his master claims to have witnessed, and Don Quixote is

reduced to begging and bargaining with Sancho to believe him. Don Quixote's inability to define himself in isolation illustrates that any claims to selfhood (identity) can only be stabilized through the recognition of these claims by others (*PMT* 192).¹⁴

An exploration of the tension between inner experience and the desire for self definition, on the one hand, and their inescapable reliance intersubjective or public recognition, on the other, does not, however, exhaust the analysis of the particular forms of selfhood in the novel. Such an analysis must address the nature of Don Quixote's madness, specifically as a particular worldview: Don Quixote's response to the uncertainty provoked by the loss of the taken for granted character of Spanish social life is to submerge himself in the past. But this past, in its unmediated form--the chivalric tradition--is no longer a legitimate source of orientation, and its mediated form--the strategies of refeudalization undertaken by the nobility and monarchy--is itself but one of many competing worldviews. That is to say, Don Quixote is "mad" because of his refusal to be contemporaneous. His "madness" originates in the struggle over meaning which occurs between competing worldviews and their associated understandings of selfhood--between the near defunct traditional worldview of Spanish knighthood and the emerging, more dominate worldviews of a nascent Spanish

¹⁴ Although Habermas is referring here to a strict distinction between communicative and strategic action--where, in communicative action, the suppositions of self-determination and self-realization are firmly intersubjective, versus strategic action, where these aspects of the self withdraw from intersubjective relations, and the self acts solely from subjective considerations--the distinction should only be seen as a formal one. In most relations in everyday life, the "pure type" of strategic action is mediated by other, intersubjective, concerns. See Calhoun on intersubjective relations as a base for moral orientation.

modernity.

Moreover, the specific orientation of Don Quixote's claims does not break out of a generalizing (unreflexive) normativity, but rather, remains conventional in nature. As discussed earlier, with the transition to modernity the "functions" of social integration, cultural reproduction, and socialization shift from the domain of the sacred to that of everyday communicative practice (TC2 91). Accompanying this development is the emergence of a modern time consciousness, which impacts upon the nature of experience, and has as well crucial implications for the potential emergence of a postconventional identity formation. Within this text, however, the postconventional potential remains largely unrealized. Indeed, the conventionality of an orienting worldview is not limited to Don Quixote. What we find, as a result of this, is a conventional orientation that extends to nearly every character in the novel, and takes the form of a *plurality* of worldviews, each competing for definitive dominance in the newly opened space of uncertainty and potential created by the waning influence of tradition. In other words, although the sacred is no longer the primary source of orientation and the interpretive capacities of individuals have instead come to the fore, the nature of normative social relations remains conventional, in that sanctioning power lies at the heart of moral and ethical action--although it is now that of a *particular* collective will formation rather than that of a sacred tradition. In the novel, we see the battle between these competing worldviews being waged around Don Quixote's "madness." His refusal to be contemporaneous--and the intersubjective

demands this places on other characters to respond--discursively reveal both Don Quixote's inappropriate and conventional worldview *as well as* the inadequate and comparably conventional nature of the worldviews of other characters. Don Quixote may be "mad," but the text also exposes the equally unsatisfactory position of those who see him as such. One way this mutual problematic reveals itself is the self presentation of the other characters.

In his travels, Don Quixote meets many disguised characters; those who seek to conceal or alter their "original" identity for their own purposes (usually love), as well as those who pretend to be someone else in order to play upon Don Quixote's madness (either solely for entertainment or in order to help him regain his sanity). Both situations, however, share a critical distinction. In each there is a failure on the part of the characters to reflexively interrogate their own worldviews due to the distorting effects of interaction based on deception or misrepresentation. Although it seems as if the characters are attempting to participate or enter into the worldview of another, they in fact remain within their own--distorted communication does not allow for the interrogation of norms. Thus, the attempts at self definition throughout the novel not only illustrate that identities are in flux, but also that this process is formed by one's worldview. How characters construe themselves or how others construe them, becomes "mobilized" on the road: one takes to the road in disguise; travelers come upon "scenes" of transformed self presentations in progress, disrupting their stability; or one joins the movement of the road-story by altering or masking one's identity.

Deceptions over identity effected through disguise, name changes, costumes, and imitation not only serve to raise questions regarding "who" someone is--who they were in the past, who they want to be in the future, what the reasons are for the alteration--but also restricts the manner in which these questions can be answered. That is, within distorted communication, selfhood and moral orientation are limited to a normatively or strategically oriented conventional worldview (MCC 151). Thus, how questions of identity and moral orientation are answered by Don Quixote and the other characters for themselves and each other highlight not only the differences between the respective worldviews, but also illustrates that although characters in the novel can assume a reflexive standpoint--an awareness that they and Don Quixote share two different lifeworlds--they are incapable of acknowledging the *relativity* of their *own* worldview.

Part One of *Don Quixote* is dominated by characters altering their appearances for reasons of love.¹⁵ One group of this sort includes Cardenio, Lucinda, Don Ferdinand and Dorothea. The novel follows the adventures of these four characters as, chapter after chapter, they dress up, alter and disguise their "identities" in order to achieve, or as a consequence of the failure to achieve, their mate.¹⁶ The early interactions of

¹⁵ The distinctions between Parts One and Two of the novel have been extensively commented on. For a summary of these differences see Nicolas Spadaccini and Jenaro Talens, *Through the Shattering Glass: Cervantes and the Self-Made World* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).

¹⁶ The rich and noble Cardenio exiles himself to the mountain over a thwarted love affair with Lucinda (193ff); the lovely and wealthy Lucinda travels, veiled and covered from view, with four masked guards; one of these masked guards is the very rich and very noble Don Ferdinand who has married Lucinda against her will, and has betrayed his friend Cardenio, as well as his first lover, Dorothea (325ff); and Dorothea herself, after Don Ferdinand's betrayal, now lives in the mountains dressed as a shepherd (241ff).

these four are characterized by one lover seeking to *influence* the other in order to achieve the desired goal--a specific marriage. When the lover becomes thwarted (by outside forces, such as a more socially powerful figure), he or she makes no "rationally motivated" attempts to reconcile the situation through discursive means, but instead responds with punitive or strategic actions aimed at repairing the disruption to the normative order brought about by the other without interrogating underlying assumptions of the disrupted interaction. One such engagement centers around the young nobleman, Cardenio. Cardenio and the beautiful Lucinda are in love and they marry. However, Lucinda is not only the most beautiful woman in town but also the most wealthy, and thus the most eligible. To be able to offer the hand of such an eligible daughter in marriage is a very strong bargaining chip for Lucinda's father, one not to be given away merely for "love." Thus, Lucinda deceives her father, who then forces her to marry Don Ferdinand not knowing she is already wedded. Cardenio's reaction to this event is instructive. Although he presents himself as a man crushed and nearly driven mad by the loss of Lucinda, Cardenio responds to the situation solely in terms of a failure to succeed--failure to obtain his desired marriage partner. He speaks of "honest love" betrayed, but the interactions among these three is treated a sort of contest; he who gains the prize of Lucinda is the one better equipped for the contest, a contest based on wealth and power. To Cardenio, Don Ferdinand has won the prize on legitimate grounds; he is far wealthier and much more powerful than Cardenio.

For before Don Ferdinand made his offer they [Lucinda's parents] could not

themselves reasonably have desired a better match for their daughter than myself. (*DQ* 234)

Thus, recognizing that he cannot possibly compete successfully against Don Ferdinand, the defeated contender removes himself from the competition to exile in the mountains.

Cardenio and Don Ferdinand share the same gendered cultural norms regarding marriage, which render women objects to be pursued strategically through competition based on prestige, rank and wealth. Although Cardenio gives the appearance of subscribing to an alternative set of norms--one where marriage is based on the affective bonds between two people--his worldview has not changed. He cannot win the contest against Don Ferdinand, and his self-imposed exile removes Cardenio from the competition, closing off any possibility of resolving the conflict in terms other than strategic ones--he is unwilling or unable to entertain any other form of interaction other than strategic. Moreover, Cardenio can only understand Lucinda's actions as "ambition and the desire for greatness," wrongly attributing to her his own calculating motives.

I called her cruel, faithless, false, ungrateful, but most of all mercenary, since my enemy's riches had blinded the eyes of her love, and made her take her affections from me and transfer them to a man of greater wealth. (*DQ* 234)

Lucinda herself also remains ensnared within the gendered norms of the Spanish gentry; as a woman, she must obey her father and marry a man of his choosing, one

who will increase the prestige of her family. But the deception regarding her marriage, which brings about the unwanted betrothal to Don Ferdinand and Cardenio's subsequent flight to the mountains, also nearly costs Lucinda her life. When Don Ferdinand discovers that Lucinda is secretly married, he becomes violently furious.

[Don Ferdinand] was so enraged at finding himself deluded, mocked and slighted that he attacked her before she came out of her faint, trying to stab her with the dagger.... (*DQ* 246)

With Lucinda, even more than with Cardenio, we see the struggle between one convention--the tradition of honor and family--and another, one deriving from a newly emerging idealization of marriage based on affection and companionship between partners.¹⁷ Although, as Taylor states, "relationships" come to be viewed as "central human fulfillments" imply an opposition to traditional means of organizing family life and thus admits greater possibilities for personal autonomy (ties voluntarily formed), in the novel the honor ethic, even transposed inward into a sense of dignity, still shapes the basic framework of action as one of its central normative conventions. This is particularly clear in the character of Don Ferdinand, whose relationships with women are more explicitly calculating than those of Cardenio. Before he met Lucinda, Don Ferdinand, like Cardenio, desired the most beautiful and wealthy woman of his village, Dorothea. He pursues her, but finds her unwilling to submit to his passions, even when he offers marriage. For her part, although Dorothea finds him attractive, she is reluctant to accept his attentions, for, despite her family's wealth, she is of much lower

¹⁷ See Taylor, 289ff.

status, and it is not proper or acceptable to marry out of one's class. Don Ferdinand persists, and, after breaking into her room late one night, he finally persuades Dorothea into a secret marriage. After "she ceases to be a maid," Don Ferdinand abandons her, and marries Lucinda, a more noble born woman, a few days later. Thus, at this wedding, both bride and groom are secretly married, but only Lucinda's deception will be life-threatening.

These brief examples illustrate that, like Don Quixote, a conventional normative order remains the framework of action for these characters. The major difference between the two is that Don Quixote's worldview is anachronistic. Although the lovers are capable of criticizing Don Quixote's self-proclaimed identity, their own disguises, deceptions, motivations, and actions come under no similar interrogation. Moreover, these worldviews vary by gender. Obviously, there is a divergence between men and women and their ability to "transcend" a conventional normative order, to move beyond instrumentally oriented action in a stratified society. For the women, their disguises, indeed their very presence on the road, is an indication of their status in society--as a site of contest for men concerned with family honor and advantage. However, while the women in the novel have internalized the traditional and conventional notion of honor as a personal honor based on chastity, we also see in their actions the incipient development of individualized interests (later taken as free will) emerging in the only area possible for them--romantic love. Although Lucinda and Dorothea uncritically accept the conventions of moral action based on honor, they

have begun to reserve the right to choose, or not to choose, their marital partner for themselves. On the road, these women are in a temporary "free zone"; mobility on the road occurs for women only in terms of love and marriage, it is situated between the cast-off rule of the father and the soon-to-come dominion by the husband. Marriage, or its impending prospect, converts women back into stationary objects, their one opportunity for a public expression of their own interests now concluded. In the novel, women such as Dorothea and Lucinda take to the road in an attempt to exert some control over their own destiny, but in the limited arena of marriage; that is, mobility and action for women is exclusively tied to love and marriage, whereas for men their movements and actions often have nothing to do with either. However, although the women are unable to prescribe the precise terms of their relationships with "their" men and with the male-dominated world, and although being on the road provides them only a brief reprieve from convention, they have, nonetheless, taken action--moved themselves--to assert their interests and have contributed to the resolution of their crises, albeit to limited effect in a limited arena. As with Don Quixote, the novel emphasizes these women's experience of events--of being on the road. For them, however, the emphasis on the experience of events--the turn inward--is limited to the domestic realm of love and marriage.

But, as we have discussed, the turn inward refers not only to experience and interpretive worldviews, but also to moral capacity and the now contingent and competing visions of the good life; the understanding of self is tied up with versions

of the good and the moral. An identity formation secured via tradition is predicated on the assumption of roles, rank, and status, thereby rendering moral action equivalent to the evaluation of honor, obedience, purity, etc. However, in modernity, when the interpretive capacities of individuals increasingly serves as the integrative force in society, the expressive capacities of these individuals takes on new importance. In turn, moral action now become more an issue of maintaining the integrity of this expressiveness, in the form of a new respect for individualism and an emphasis on protecting freedom. A contrast between what we have just seen regarding Dorothea and the actions of another character, Marcela, will help illustrate the varying forms of the relation between the (gendered) nature of a worldview and one's moral orientation.

Marcela is the beautiful and rich daughter of a wealthy man. Realizing that what will be demanded of her as his daughter--a "good" marriage to an "eligible" man--will deny her the freedom she desires, Marcela leaves home to roam the mountains "dressed as a shepherdess" (*DQ* 90). However, she soon discovers that she has not escaped so easily. Tales of her beauty draw innumerable wealthy, well-bred young men to the mountains who desire to possess her. Chrysostom and his friend Ambrosio are two such men. In their fervor over Marcela, these two "threw away the long scholar's gown[s]" they used to wear and dressed up as shepherds so they could follow and seduce the young woman (*DQ* 91-92). In fact, as one (real) herder reports to Don Quixote, "I couldn't truthfully tell you how many rich youths, gentlemen, and farmers put on the same dress as Chrysostom, and wandered about these fields, courting her"

(*DQ* 94). Finding Marcela unreceptive to his courtship, however, Chrysostom kills himself. She is then blamed for the suicide. At no point do the men--either the suitors or the travelers who are told this story--see Chrysostom's own infatuation as the cause of his death. Chrysostom takes no responsibility, his actions remain unproblematic. His decision to leave his old life, dress up as a shepherd, and follow a lady he claims to love is unquestioned (whereas Don Quixote, while doing virtually the same thing, is considered a madman). Marcela, by contrast, who in no way encouraged Chrysostom or any other swain, is loudly decried as "cruel and unkind, and other such names" by the rejected young men (*DQ* 94). These "gentlemen" give no thought to her wishes or wants, but merely consider their own interests and desire as sufficient reason for their actions. They criticize Don Quixote for his strange behavior, while seeing no problem with their own. Rather, Marcela is treated as some object, as a prize to be won from their rivals, each vying to see "who will be the lucky man to come and conquer so intractable a nature and enjoy a beauty so perfect." Whereas Dorothea epitomizes a persistent theme in the novel concerning the dual demands which subject women to a lover-spouse and to family honor, Marcela alone attempts to claim some sort of autonomy and self determination apart from that which is ascribed to her by society or expected of her by others. Indeed, of all the characters in the novel it is Marcela alone who, in negotiating the world of gendered relations, comes closest to representing a type of postconventional orientation.

On the way to Chrysostom's funeral, his friends recount the sins and faults of the

young woman to Don Quixote. In the middle of their stories, Marcela appears. She has come to defend herself against the slander and vilification of her many "admirers." In parodic fashion, Marcela speaks to the young men in their own language, using their own words to mock their duplicity, to question their "honor," and challenge their "love." God may have made her beautiful but, she asks, but is "a woman who is loved for her beauty" then obliged "to love the man who loves her"? Indeed, she inquires of the men, "if the Heavens had made me ugly instead of beautiful, should I have the right to complain of your not loving me?" In a mildly sarcastic tone, Marcela rhetorically ponders the nature of true love; "as I have heard" it is something to be given freely and without constraint, not something that can be forced or demanded (*DQ* 108). In this scene, we see Marcela make recourse to autonomy and will formation in the form of the emerging norm of marriage based on mutual affection and respect. This understanding of love is of significant interest here as it demands the individual to turn away from all external determinations of the other in affairs of the heart--i.e. status, honor, tradition, social class and so forth. Instead, these bonds are to be determined--in utter disregard of these external factors--purely by the force of the other's "inner" individuated self. However, what is at stake here is not merely affective self fulfillment: the autonomy and individuality which are supposed to lie at the basis of the bond of love are also *moral* issues. Autonomy and individuation in the moral sphere demand that the individual bracket all non-affective (normative) elements in the "evaluation" (or consideration) of the other and proceed purely on the merits of the individual. This moral component in the affective relation is succinctly

captured by Calhoun in his discussion of Charles Taylor's work on moral selfhood:

Perhaps the most basic transition [in the move to a modern understanding of moral selfhood] has been the one--incomplete though it is--[away] from the honor ethic...: the shift, to put it in negative terms, from a basic fear of condemnation to a basic fear of meaninglessness. (Calhoun 234)

In these terms, then, Marcela is the one character most representative of a modern self understanding.

However, if Marcela exhibits this self understanding, no one but the reader is able to recognize it for what it is. Indeed, all of the other characters are able to respond to her self-professed autonomy only by intensifying their own concerns for status, honor and possession. After she has declared to her enraptured suitors that love must be given reciprocally and without constraint, they immediately declare her to possess a "good sense" which rivals her beauty, thus making her an even more appealing prize, and commence an even more vigorous pursuit. It is left to Don Quixote to intercede on Marcela's behalf, though not because he has recognized the validity of her claims, but rather, to preserve her honor (*DQ* 118). The irony here is, of course, that Marcela's more postconventional self-understanding can only engender a response which is precisely its opposite, resulting in another parodic situation. Consequentially, Marcela can only live autonomously--she can only retain her *dignity*--by withdrawing from social life altogether: "I was born free, and to live free I chose the solitude of the fields" (*DQ* 109).

The mad Don Quixote, the simple Sancho, the frustrated and calculating lovers, and the patronizing and arrogant nobility each constitute a diversity of speech types which correspond to particular worldviews of a decentered lifeworld, each implying a particular form of selfhood with a particular understanding of appropriate actions and behaviors (*DI* 324). The actions and moral understanding of each character are tied to concrete forms of life and institutions of a particular collective; hence, in this manner, there can be multiple--and conflicting--conventional lifeworlds. The heteroglot multiplicity of languages, or worldviews, confront one another in a struggle over definitions and values: Don Ferdinand versus Lucinda, Dorothea versus Don Ferdinand, Marcela versus Chrysostom, and Don Quixote versus everyone. These battles are waged through and felt in parody. Parody implicitly challenges the authority of taken-for-granted speech; the characters' speech is shaped the awareness of another's worldview, of other lifeworlds, in a critical manner. In parody the discourse of others has been evaluated, and found not only lacking but necessarily subject to dispute. As Bakhtin suggests, these parodic challenges are one way in which the speaker can distance her self from authoritative discourse (*DI* 60). Parody can undermine the authority which presents itself under the pretense of timelessness and absoluteness--it allows for distance, it allows the speaker to locate his or herself outside the finalizing force of an utterance. The voice of the one character is hostilely used by a second to challenge and "serve directly opposing aims," and the objectionable component of the first character's discourse is deliberately rendered palpable. Parody introduces

a critique on the one-sided seriousness of the lofty direct word, the corrective of reality that is always richer, more fundamental and most importantly *too contradictory and heteroglot* to be fit into a high and straightforward genre. (DI 55)

This is precisely what we see in *Don Quixote*; the discourse of various characters reveals the limitations and insufficiency of the taken-for-granted understanding each discursive position has of itself and the world. The contradictory nature of reality is revealed as the text steps *outside* of any one discursively constituted lifeworld position, and the blind authoritativeness of a single conventional (monologic) point of view and understanding of the world is problematized.

However, what is most notable about *Don Quixote* is that, despite the parody and the laughter, the multiple lifeworlds and the multiple levels of selfhood represented are *conventionally* played off against one another. From the beginning of the novel, there are at least two lifeworlds placed in opposition to one another--Don Quixote as an old *hidalgo* and Don Quixote as a knight. That these two are irreconcilable is, indeed, the very definition of madness--madness, as it operates in the text, is a commitment to the wrong set of norms. Moreover, each of these positions--*hidalgo* and knight--itself remains conventional in its orientation. This conventionalism also extends to virtually every other character in *Don Quixote*. Although other characters can assume a reflexive standpoint--they are able to recognize that they and Don Quixote share different lifeworlds--they are incapable of acknowledging the relativity of their *own* lifeworlds. Their lifeworlds are the yardstick by which to measure the defect of Don

Quixote's. They cannot turn this reflexivity on themselves in a radical manner. Instead, they can only acknowledge plurality by means of parody--a parody which does not problematize the relativity of their own positions. This is to say that the acceptability criteria of action have not been discursively engaged, and one can therefore only question a lifeworld in terms of the acceptability criteria of another; the multiplicity of lifeworlds is dealt with by each character's elevation of his or her particular vantage point to the standard against which to evaluate all other characters and actions (a "meta-interpretation"). And, the comic effect of the novel comes from playing one "meta-interpretation" off another.

The novel, however, does place *itself* beyond any one convention: it steps outside all of the competing and contested positions, and situates itself above, as it were, the particularities. It is therefore able to see simultaneously what can only be seen situationally by the participants. The discursive structure of the text supplies to the reader alone a perspective that enables her to perceive the limitations of the specific discourses. *This* is a reflexive moment: the *novel* steps outside any particular discourse to reveal the particularity of each. But this reflexivity is also limited. The novel only exhibits the plurality of lifeworlds; it cannot reconcile them, it cannot establish communication between them, nor can it propose a means to go beyond the pluralized particularity. The novel does not interrogate or rationally legitimate one position or the other, and neither does it offer any alternative to what is already given by experience; rather, it stops at a mere *presentation* of plurality. Indeed, although the

implied reader is able to grasp this plurality *as such*--and thus obtain the critical distance that a postconventional orientation demands--she is caught in the "third-person" attitude of an observer, and thus remains silent. As a result, from neither the vantage point within the clash (the position of the characters), nor the vantage point above the clash (the position of the reader), is there any way to reconcile or adjudicate the plural lifeworlds. A discursive engagement could occur only if these two perspectives were to lose their mutual exclusivity--that is, if the "second-person" attitude of the participant was capable of achieving the radical reflexivity here reserved for the reader. In *Don Quixote*, however, this synthesis is not yet possible. Thus, although *Don Quixote* has begun to reflexively recognize the contestation of multiple lifeworlds and admit a certain "indeterminacy or open-endedness of the present," because it has yet to *engage* the voices, it can only offer parody. The modern novel emerges at the point where, throughout society, these contesting voices become cut loose from a monologizing tradition, aided by the emergence of a futural time consciousness which fixes both the fragmentation of social life (the multiplicity of worldviews, albeit often times conventional) and indeterminacy as facts of life. This is what we *begin* to see in *Don Quixote*. However, although the other has been discovered--there is a pronounced heteroglossia of voices--she has yet to be discursively engaged.

Chapter Six

Jude The Obscure

In the previous chapter we examined the conflict in *Don Quixote* between various pluralized lifeworlds within an incipient modern time consciousness. It was argued that, despite this emergent futural orientation, self formation and moral action orientation in the novel remained primarily conventional in nature, regardless of isolated individual instances to the contrary. As discussed in Chapter Three, a postconventional moral orientation at the social level can only begin to emerge when, in Habermas' words, the "rationality potential" inherent in language is released from the inhibiting effects of the sacred through the "linguistification of the sacred," and when institutions, particularly legal, emerge that stabilize such an orientation (hitherto possible solely at the individual level). In this section, we will examine factors which contribute to the emergence of a postconventional orientation at the social level, and the means by which these factors are constitutive of a dramatic transformation in the modern understanding and definition of selfhood, as well as their problematic instantiation. We will see how this social transformation alters the ratio between the space of experience and the horizon of expectation, how the emergence of a postconventional ego-identity makes central the need for intersubjective recognition of the self's claims for autonomy and individuation, and how it constitutes the theme of the road in of *Jude the Obscure* as a search for--rather than the actualization of--the self.

As discussed in Chapter Three, the two major developments that allow for the emergence of the postconventional at a society-wide level are decentration and a futural time consciousness. In premodern societies, where actions in everyday life are coordinated by means of the shared and taken for granted definitions, interpretations, and understandings of situations and interactions supplied by tradition, there is little or no space to exercise the "rationality potential" in language (*TC2* 156). In such societies, the lifeworld is highly integrated and more or less unified by commonly shared worldviews--most notably those of religion or, derivatively, kinship; all interaction possibilities are located within this "commonly experienced social world."¹ Thus, interaction is not oriented toward reaching understanding, since meaning and action contexts are already pregiven: members of the community need to exert little interpretive effort, as virtually all aspects of the relations between the objective, social and subjective worlds have already been interpreted against the normative background of the lifeworld (*TC1* 51). Under these conditions, critique of the various segments of lifeworld is limited to existing discourse. When the past and tradition are relatively immune to critique, little reflexivity is demanded, or allowed, on the part of individual actors. This changes in modernity. The decentration of worldviews brought about through increasing complexity in all arenas of modern life weakens the ability of the lifeworld to provide the normative background against which action occurs, the space of experience diverges from the horizon of expectation, and thus, less understanding is

¹ This is not to say, of course, that the premodern world was an "orderly" place, rather that the normative background against which life was experienced was more clearly delineated by traditional meaning structures, of which the majority of any particular society shared.

"covered" in advance. The normative context must now be supplied by the communicative efforts of individuals themselves and not by the space of experience. In such a situation, communicative interaction comes to the fore as a linguistic mediation of normative action, and as the medium of cultural reproduction, social integration and socialization (TC2 86). Action becomes oriented towards reaching understanding to the degree to which the pre-interpretation of the world loses its binding authority. Moreover, the distinction made in modernity between the different "worlds" (objective, normative, and subjective), the growing separation of public and private life, and an increased pluralization among lifeworlds signifies that there is no longer one voice supplying the interpretive context, all of which further intensifies the demands on individuals' own interpretive capacities.

At the time of *Jude*'s publication in the late 1800s, decentration has become widespread and firmly established, as witnessed, most obviously, by the emergence of separate institutions for previously unified spheres of life, i.e. work, religion, health, family and education. Moreover, not only has the lifeworld splintered into separate institutions, but the well-documented influence of industrialism also changed the nature of the experiences of individuals within these spheres. In Jude's time, only one fifth of Britain's total population worked the land, while cotton, iron, and coal production increased at a fantastic rate.² This growth was facilitated with the advent of railways, whose social impact was at least equally significant in that it shattered the isolation of

² See David Harris Willson, *A History of England* (New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1972); Tertius Chandler and Gerald Fox, *3000 Years of Urban History* (New York, NY: Academic Press, 1974).

rural areas and made travel possible, even for the poor.³ Religion was still an influential force, but it too began to fragment and lose influence; splinter sects grew in popularity, and a 1851 census revealed that out of Britain's population of 17 million, 5 million--especially factory workers and the poor--were outside any religious organization (Willson 652). Although fewer attended church, more Britians could now vote. The Reform Bill of 1867 created a new and very large class of voters by lowering the voting qualifications (minimum household income) of householders in parliamentary boroughs, allowing the factory worker (but still not the agricultural laborer) the right to participate in the political process. Jude's world was thoroughly pluralized and decentered.

At the level of self-understanding (rather than social institutions) a shift in time consciousness is the second contributing factor in the emergence of a society-wide postconventional orientation. As we have seen, Bakhtin, Mead and Habermas (through Koselleck) have all emphasized, in their respective ways, the importance of time consciousness in circumscribing the possibilities of action and the constitution of a particular understanding of the world. The possibilities of action and the understanding of the world formed by a particular time consciousness are crucial to any analysis of the self, as they tie the analysis of selfhood to that of historical experience. In modernity, the accelerating the rate of change increases the degree to which the present is different from the past, and, like decentration, therefore places

³ Jane Jacobs, *The Economies of Cities* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1970).

greater demands on the interpretive efforts of actors. This generates one of the most notable alterations in the *experience* of historical temporality associated with a modern time consciousness; past experience is no longer a dependable source upon which to draw the contents of an anticipatory futural orientation, and expectations of the future became "detached" from all previous experience.

The space of experience was no longer limited by the horizon of expectations [by the end of the 18th century]; rather, the limits of the space of experience and of the horizon of expectations diverged. It became a rule that all previous experience might not count against the possible otherness of the future. (*FP* 280)

Having broken with the past and tradition, and burdened with the added expectation that the future will yet again be different from the present, the modern age must establish its own normativity out of itself by *reflexively* subjecting (problematic) aspects of the normative to critical scrutiny. That the authority of the past can no longer be taken for granted, and that normative understanding comes about more and more through the communicative abilities of actors, means actors must be able to *recognize* the now-problematic lifeworld as such, *thematize* aspects of it as problematic, and subject them to *critique*. Modern time consciousness is the *awareness* of living in a transitional period, and this allows for a reflexive distinction between experience (of the past) and expectations (directed towards the future) (*FP* 282). These two features combine to render the authority derived from a validated world-interpretation the result more and more of an *achieved* consensus brought about communicatively through argumentation and criticism of validity claims. With the

problemitization of norms, *interaction* between actors takes on a greater significance as argumentation increasingly becomes the means by which to solve disputes over conflicting claims or understandings of the good life.

Moreover, pluralized lifeworlds also implies that there are now norms and conventions that are particular to each lifeworld--that is, that the "generalized other" itself becomes pluralized. As discussed previously, the norms and conventions of a society are never unproblematically uniform, even when the lifeworld is unified. In a modern society, however, this *relatively* homogeneous generalized other explicitly fragments into a multiplicity of normative frameworks, often leading to conflicts of interpretation, and thus increasing the demand on individuals to take an evaluative stance towards this variety of competing, contradictory, and contestatory interpretations.

In the novel, the new interpretive demands placed on individuals and the problemitized lifeworld embedded in a futural time consciousness form a new chronotope. The chronotope, as we have seen, is a way of comprehending the relations of people and events to time and space, such that the different qualities of time and space shape the context and the nature of events and actions. We can treat the investigation of the "historical categories" of the space of experience and the horizon of expectation as a means to "measure" the time-space relation and its transformation from one text to the next. In turn, this self transformation can be used to explore the transformations of the self in modernity. The degree to which experience and expectation coincide can be

seen as indicative of the degree to which the lifeworld remains conventional in its general orientation possibilities; and to the degree that a divergence occurs between the two, a space is created in which the postconventional self can emerge. Although *Don Quixote* the space of experience and the horizon of expectation are relatively equivalent, this is not the case in *Jude*. It is this divergence that, in part, gives the trope of the road in *Jude* its qualitatively different function than that which was seen in *Don Quixote*.

As we saw in Chapter Five, the road as a space of experience is oriented towards a horizon which reaffirms a relatively unified lifeworld located in the past (e.g. in tradition, family, and honor). By contrast, in *Jude*, the road opens up towards the future, reaching towards a horizon distinct from the past; one leaves the known, the background of experience, and enters into the horizon of expectation. And it is the very nature of this expectation that different in the modern era. With respect to the self, the experience of the road has shifted from premodern attempts at the *actualization* of pre-given categories of selfhood (most notably, roles) to the modern *search* for self--which is now individuated. With this new chronotope, characters in the novel can *emerge* as individuals--individuals who, in the act of developing and becoming, interact with the world in a creative fashion so that a future distinct from the past becomes *reflexively* possible for the first time (FP 397).

Don Quixote's journey is undertaken to actualize the life of a knight--knights

undertake adventures, and thus to be a knight he too must have adventures. The journey is an end unto itself. Although he is aware that the present is somehow different from the past, Don Quixote does not possess the sufficient degree of reflexivity (and nor does any other character) which would enable him to project a future for himself different from that provided by tradition. His attempts to make sense of the changing lifeworld sends him unreflexively back to the past. Moreover, when the divergence between experience and expectation has not occurred, there can be no real responsibility, or, in Bakhtin's words, no real "ethics." Don Quixote claims no responsibility for acting just like any other knight in novelistic history. His adventures derive from his attempts to fulfill an anachronistic role, and his failures, to his mind, are the result not of his own actions, but from others inadequate role performance (as he ascribes them), or of the foes set upon him by "enchanters." Only when Don Quixote regains his sanity--that is, comes back to the present--does he begin to acknowledge his responsibility, his foolishness. When the action situations have *already* been interpreted, the self is finalized; when what one "should do" is equivalent to performing one's role, there is no responsibility. Only when a certain degree of reflexivity has been achieved that allows the individual to conceive of a future different from the past, and thus permit an identity different from that given by tradition, can we speak of the self as unfinalized; only when a certain degree of reflexivity has been achieved that allows the individual to thematize and critique that which has been pre-given, and thus permitting the individual act autonomously and develop their singularity, can we speak of the self as responsible and ethical. It is this

same reflexivity that is necessary for dialogic relations. It is this reflexivity that is constitutive of communicative rationality, which only emerges with the linguistification of the sacred and the rationalization of the lifeworld--that is, *dialogism is contingent and historical*. The type of action Bakhtin calls "ethical" only emerges in the formation of a postconventional ego identity. Therefore, in order to analyze the difference between *Jude* and *Don Quixote*, and further elaborate on the modern self in *Jude*, we need first to trace out certain theoretical themes or aspects of the postconventional self which illustrate the relation between experience and relation, and identify their implication for selfhood. These themes only come to light through a discussion of ego-identity formation.

Excursus on Ego-Identity

Under conditions where the past loses its hold over the normative and the lifeworld supplies *in advance* less of the interpretive framework--when experience begins to separate from expectation--the possibility arises for an increase in autonomy and individuation. As individuals become freed from tradition, conventions, and social roles (monological conceptions of action) and enter into social situations increasingly oriented toward the reflexive medium of communication aimed at reaching agreement (dialogic conception of action), moral decisions and the formulation of an "individual life project" once covered by tradition must now be formulated by means the self's own independent achievements. Identity shifts from role to ego-driven; the answer to "Who am I?" is provided by the work done by the ego, and not given by the roles the

actor "occupies." In the moral arena, the validity of an argument, rather than "social currency of a norm," operates as the basis for grounding action, and moral agents learn to orient themselves within a universalistic framework rather than to the particularities of an ethical one (TC2 97). Thus, under conditions in which the potential for communicative rationality is released, the moral actor becomes *autonomous*, in the sense that actions no longer derive solely from or are dependent upon the particularities of his or her own unique experiential and social contexts, but rather must be determined by the actor him or herself, based on justified reasoning alone.

Moral action is action guided by moral insight... Only at the postconventional stage is the social world uncoupled from the stream of cultural givens. This shift makes the autonomous justification of morality an unavoidable problem. The very perspectives that make consensus possible are now at issue. Independently of contingent commonalities of social background, political affiliation, cultural heritage, traditional forms of life, and so on, competent actors can now take a moral point of view, *a point of view distanced from the controversy*, only if they cannot avoid accepting that point of view even when their value orientations diverge. Consequently, the moral reference point must be derived from the structure in which all participants in interaction *always already* find themselves insofar as they act communicatively. (MCC 162-63)

The self-determinative aspect of the ego-identity implies that individuals learn to act autonomously in making moral decisions, and signals the emergence of a postconventional will formation.

Individuals operating autonomously within a universally oriented normative framework also come *use* this autonomy--which renders them equal to all other morally acting individuals--"to develop themselves in their subjectivity and singularity" (TC2 97).

Self-realization occurs when the individual, in departing from or modifying the realization of any given social type, gains the capacity "for exhibiting one's own peculiarities" which thus individualizes her (*MSS* 326). This too has radical implications for the conceptualization of the formation of the self. The self is now understood as an individuated entity on the basis of its individuation--that is, according to a uniqueness which it has established for itself. Moreover, as tradition cannot supply the continuity and consistency to this now unique life history upon which it depends, the self must now step up and take *responsibility* for its own life history. In other words, in order for the individual to be able to ascribe to his or herself these "unique qualities" and hold them together in some manner as a life history, he or she must be able to answer the question "*What kind of person do I want to be?*" The individual must then take responsibility for his or her life project in order to invest it with a continuity that meets the self-imposed requirements of a particular biographic content--that is, the answer to the question "What I must do to become the person I want to be" must be determined by the individual, and not, necessarily, by any normative prerequisites.

Responsibility to take over one's own biography means to get clear about *who one wants to be.... (TC2 99)*⁴

The self-realizing aspect of ego-identity means that individuals themselves now must draft their own life project.

⁴ Bakhtin claims something quite similar: "As it acts, consciousness is asking 'what for?', 'to what end?', 'is this right?'--and not 'who am I?', or 'what am I?' (cited and translated in *Prosaics* 122).

Before proceeding, however, two critical points must be emphasized. First, the formation of ego-identity is, at its core, *intersubjective* in nature. Second, *responsibility* is also a central feature in moral action as well as in the formulation and narration of the individual's life project and biography. We will briefly address each in turn.

Although self-determination signifies moral action that takes place outside a conventionally circumscribed moral context, such action must always be understood as social constituted. In the same fashion, although self-realization indicates that the individual has distanced him or herself from social roles and established conventions, he or she is always oriented to a community of others. As Mead has shown, consciousness is intersubjectively formed in language. This intersubjectivity is not lost--it does not wither in importance--merely because the individual has stepped outside certain conventions. In the same manner that consciousness only emerges in the self's relation to others--and not its relation to itself--in the epistemic sphere, so too the acting self cannot find confirmation of its own autonomy and individuality in isolation from others (*PMT* 187).

Not only as an *autonomous* being but also as an *individuated* being, the self of the practical relation-to-self [the acting subject as opposed to knowing subject] cannot reassure itself about itself through direct reflection but only via the perspective of others. In this case I have to rely not on others' *agreement* with my judgments and actions but on their *recognition* of my claim to uniqueness and irreplaceability. (*MCC* 186)

The community of others to which the self refers must, by virtue of the universalistic

orientation, be a community where each morally acting subject is equal to every other morally acting subject (in the cognitive sphere, the analogue lies in the self's return to itself as the alter ego of *all* others in every community)--that is, it must be a community similarly oriented in a postconventional fashion and capable of recognizing postconventional claims. Such a community, however, does not exist: universal discourse is always a *counterfactual* presupposition. The futural time consciousness of modernity solves this problem; it allows for the projection of such a communication community *in the future*, where the anticipation of "unforced reciprocal relations" can stabilize a postconventional ego-identity (*PMT* 188). This is why a postconventional oral orientation at the society-wide level is not possible prior to modernity; there is no general mechanism through which to project such anticipations, no horizon from which to expect the futural emergence of this ideal community of others--which is different from the traditional community given by the past--engaging in an idealized form of communication.

When moral orientation is located at the conventional stage, the issue of *responsibility* is moot. The moral questions of "What should" and "What would I do?" have already been answered by the pre-given lifeworld. The transition to the postconventional indicates a "disengagement of morality from ethical life"--that is, moral understanding and insights are no longer equivalent with culturally transmitted, taken for granted empirical motives (*MCC* 183). One cannot answer such questions as "What should, or what would I do?" by reference to the habituated lifeworld. Rather, the individual

now answers these questions by returning to his or herself as an actor oriented to others based on universal principles. In recognizing the autonomy and the individuality of others (i.e. as free and equal persons), the postconventional moral actor must take responsibility for the particular application he or she makes of a general principle, a principle, a principle which does not specify the particular form of the moral or ethical action. This action must be deemed an appropriate empirical instantiation of general principles in that situation. In a like fashion, as discussed above, the self-realizing actor does not refer to the pre-given when answering the question "Who am I?," but must instead ask him or herself "Who do I want to become?" At the conventional level of role identity, an individual understands his or herself in terms of the answer to the question "What kind of person am I?," an answer that has been *ascribed* to the individual. In this situation, "responsibility" would merely be an evaluation of how closely the individual's actions coincided with the normative prescriptions of the given particular role identity--i.e. of the adequacy with which the individual has fulfilled normative role expectations. Taken together, self-determination and self-realization of ego-identity imply that identity is no longer tied primarily, if not exclusively, to pre-given normative action orientations and social roles, but rather to the degree to which the individual can be, and is, *responsible* for his or her actions as a autonomous individual. Formation of this ego-identity requires a *reflexive* relation to society and one's own self. On the one hand, the reflexivity of the autonomous self in determining and taking responsibility for moral action is what makes possible the individual's participation in communicative discourse based on

universal principles of discourse. On the other hand, the reflexivity exhibited by the self in determining and taking responsibility for the life project permits the construction of new identities from insupportable old (traditional) roles, which, in turn, become emptied of normative content as the traditional lifeworld from which they arose atrophies or fragments. Finally, the emergence of a society-wide postconventional orientation becomes possible when modern time consciousness shifts to the future, providing, at last, an anticipatory context in which this postconventional orientation can be stabilized.

Jude and the Postconventional Self

These two aspects of ego-identity--self-determination and self-realization--become important categories from which to examine particular identity formations and action orientations in *Jude the Obscure* and the altered function of the road in this work. Specifically, when an autonomous and individuated actor reflexively engages experience and expectation, the road becomes the site of the *search* for self. The individuation associated with self-actualization implies that the individual can now identify and *plan* the self he or she wants to be, *narrate* this life history in order to provide coherence, and therefore must take *responsibility* for who he or she is and wants to become. And, the autonomy associated with self-determining means that the individual can now make moral decisions based on criteria distinct from the normative context of the lifeworld, and thus become responsible for his or her moral actions. These actions (or claims to truthfulness and rightness) need to be intersubjectively

recognized. When this recognition is not forthcoming from the community of others in which the individual is located, he or she must seek out a community where such recognition will be granted, or project into the future an anticipation of a like-minded postconventional community of others where this ego-identity can be stabilized. In either case, the individual must either metaphorically or literally leave home--take to the road--in order to seek out the needed recognition in the search for the self. The road is still the quasi-public site of recognition, but now recognition is sought for who the individual *claims* to be. This shift from an identity formulated by reference to an already given order to one constituted by the individual has the effect of making communicative interaction a central feature of the novel: it becomes the means by which these identity claims can be redeemed.

Returning to *Jude*, we can now begin to analyze how the space of experience and the horizon of expectation that was relatively conflated in *Don Quixote* has diverged.

Koselleck has suggested that one indication such a divergence is the very existence of a sense of *restrictiveness*. For example, in the economic arena:

The peasant world...lived within the cycle of nature. Disregarding the structure of social organization, fluctuations in marked conditions..., and monetary fluctuations, the everyday world was marked by whatever nature brought.... Technical innovations, which did exist, took a long time to become established and thus did not bring about any rupture in the pattern of life. It was possible to adapt to them without putting the previous store of experience in disarray.... That they [economic conditions] [began to] be felt [as] restrictive already presupposes the new horizon of expectation of a freer economy. (FP 277)

The opening scenes of *Jude* describe such a preoccupation with the restrictiveness of

village life in Marygreen, a restrictiveness that result in the need for Jude Fawley to plan his own life. The novel begins with the departure of the schoolmaster Phillotson from Marygreen to Christminster (Oxford). Despondent over the schoolmaster's absence, Jude wanders about the village. Arriving at the village water well,

He said to himself, in the melodramatic tones of a whimsical boy, that the schoolmaster had drawn at that well scores of times on a morning like this, and would never draw there any more. 'I've seen him look down into it, when he was tired with his drawing, just as I do now.... But he was too clever to bide here any longer - a small sleepy place like this!' A tear rolled from his eye into the depths of the well. (*Jude* 49)

He moves on to the large village cornfield.

The brown surface of the field went right up towards the sky all round, where it was lost by degrees in the mist that shut out the actual verge and accentuated the solitude.... 'How ugly it is here!' he murmured. The fresh harrow-lines seemed to stretch like the channel-lings in a piece of new corduroy, lending a meanly utilitarian air to the expanse, taking away its gradations, and depriving it of all history beyond that of the few recent months.... For [Jude] it was a lonely place, possessing...only the quality of a work-ground. (*Jude* 52)

Finally, he muses upon his own condition.

Growing up brought responsibilities, he found. Events did not rhyme quite as he had thought. Nature's logic was too horrid for him to care for. That mercy towards one set of creatures was cruelty towards another sickened his sense of harmony. As you got older, and felt yourself to be at the centre of your time, and not at a point in its circumference, as you had felt when you were little, you were seized with a sort of shuddering, he perceived. All around you there seemed to be something glaring, garish, rattling, and the noises and glares hit upon the little cell called your life, and shook it, and warped it. (*Jude* 57)

Jude finds Marygreen oppressive, cruel and alien. As Koselleck argues, such

sentiments are not characteristic of a unified lifeworld where experience and expectation are equivalent. The expectations of individuals living in a premodern world are formulated almost exclusively upon the experiences of those who came before them and, in turn, their experiences became the expectations of those who would come after them. A sense of restrictiveness is not part of this experience because there was nothing against which to measure hopes of a future different from the past, as each was virtually coterminous with the other. If things do change, they do so at such a gradual rate over such a drawn-out time frame that the deviation between prior experience and futural differences does not challenge the order of the traditional lifeworld. But by Jude's time, the pace of change has accelerated enough to illuminate the disparity between past and present, and thus the altered the sense of new possibilities lying in the future--that things *can* be different--gives rise to Jude's resentment towards the present and associated feeling of restriction.

The issue of planning one's life raised by the post-conventional self's question of "Who do I want to become?" is immediately problematized in *Jude*. At the beginning of the novel, Jude is a young boy newly residing with his maiden aunt, and a neighbor asks "And who's he?" (*Jude* 51). This will be Jude's own question throughout the novel: "Who am I?" "Where do I belong?" "What will I become?" Jude must himself make the effort to seek out his place in the world, based not on what had come before but upon who he wants to be, as further conversation between his aunt and the neighbor intimates.

'He come from Mellstock, down in South Wessex, about a year ago - worse luck for 'n...where his father was living, and was took wi' the shakings for death, and died in two days....' 'It would ha' been a blessing if Goddy-mighty had took thee too, wi' thy mother and father, poor useless boy!'

The local washerwoman replied that it was perhaps a very good plan...to have him with her [the aunt] - 'to kip 'ee company in your loneliness, fetch water, shet the winder-shetters o' nights, and help in the bit o' baking'. Miss Fawley doubted it.... (*Jude* 51-2)

As these lines suggest, the question of "Who am I" can no longer be satisfactorily answered merely by knowing who one's family is, or even through one's occupation or form of labor. Among other things, increased mobility, the emergence of cities, and new forms of labor (where one's form of labor is not the same as one's ancestors--but is, instead, one's own choice--and which can also change through the life course of the individual), weakens the connection individuals have to their families and to the past, and to a conventional identity formation which is grounded in the taking of roles with their foundation in tradition. Jude must reflexively plan his life and take responsibility for his actions therein construed.

Thus, the ability to plan one's own life can be gauged temporally by the degree to which the significance or understanding of everyday life proceeds from futural plans rather than from events or frameworks received from the past. Again, this point can be made by a contrast to *Don Quixote*. As discussed above, in that text expectation has only just begun to diverge from experience; Don Quixote undertakes his journey to actualize the life, the role, of a knight. Don Quixote is *already* a knight (at least in his mind), and the road is where he must go to do the things that knights feats *already*

laid out in his books (books of chivalric romance that he takes as historical fact). Jude has no such map or blueprint to follow. He is not tracing any pre-given course, and it is this *lack* that is the drama of the novel. The journeys Jude undertakes and the time he spends on the road are what brings him toward his goal, but are not the goal itself; Jude is on the road in order to *become* someone and not because he *is* someone.

(Thus, in a limited sense, the road is empty of time and space; the "action" only occurs after he arrives somewhere and he can begin to attempt to actualize his plans). For Don Quixote, the road is the site of the realization of a given, albeit a problematic and somewhat mutable, identity formation. The road is the means by which he rides out to *meet his fate*--the "sane" inhabitants of Spain. If Don Quixote had not encountered the Duke and Duchess, or Don Ferdinand, or any one of the multitude of characters, he would still have had adventures, and still would have been seen as "mad" regardless of whom he met.

For Jude, by contrast, the road brings him not to a destiny or a fulfillment of a role, but to new possibilities, new horizons never before possible (or even imaginable) under traditional conventions.⁵ In adopting a reflexive attitude by asking himself "Who do I want to become?," Jude diverges from pre-given role configurations and, instead, formulates his identity in a self-reflexive manner in line with his understanding of himself as autonomous and individuated. In so freeing himself from

⁵ In this sense, the popular 1960's musical adaptation, *Man of La Mancha*, is more akin to the post-conventionalism of *Jude* rather than the anachronistic conventionalism of *Don Quixote*. See Julie Ford, *Tilting at Themes: The Metamorphosis of "Don Quixote"* (unpublished Thesis, University of Minnesota, 1990).

conventions in the formulation of his identity, Jude gains that "unfinalizable" quality--creativity and responsibility--that Bakhtin (not unlike Mead) deems essential to a "true" ethics. However, this unfinalizability can only fully emerge and stabilize when identity formation becomes the work of the ego and not the result of roles. And, such a transformation only occurs when the individual can obtain recognition--either actually or in anticipation--for these claims. Again, these are the very conditions Bakhtin fails to recognize in stipulating (ahistorical) dialogism. To put it another way, in order to move from authoritative discourse--interactions based on the norms of convention--to innerly persuasive discourse--interaction based on validity claims arrived at discursively through argumentation--the individual must be located within or be able to project a community that has achieved some degree of reflexivity, so that it is able to thematize and submit to criticism and debate the norms of convention. Either way, at the society-wide level, this is only possible in modernity, with the development of decentration and/or the emergence of a futural time consciousness. And, the dialogization constitutive of the unfinalized is precisely the discursive interaction individuals must engage in to achieve recognition or to establish alternatives to the now-problematic norms in a modern postconventional society.

For Jude, the recognition necessary for the stabilization of a postconventional ego-identity formation is not to be found in Marygreen. The dissatisfaction and the feeling of restrictiveness experienced by Jude requires that he evaluate whether he "fits" in to the order of village life.

In one direction the question is whether the motives and actions of an agent are in accord with existing norms or deviate from these. In the other direction the question is whether the existing norms themselves embody values that, in a particular problem situation, give expression to generalizable interests of those affected and thus deserve the assent of those to whom they are addressed. (*TC1* 89)

The answer to both questions is no. However, in a pluralized society, Jude has other options, other lifeworlds into which he may attempt to locate himself, where the answers to the questions above can be "yes," and where he can hope to obtain recognition. It appears to him that Christminster is one such alternative. Christminster seems to be a place where he can develop the person he sees himself as--a scholar. However, for Jude, Christminster is not merely a place he can go to in order to obtain some pragmatic goal--a degree--but a place of like-minded people who will recognize the identity he wishes to establish. Jude imagines Christminster to be a community of others who seem oriented towards to those very themes that characterize a postconventional orientation--autonomy and equality.

Would it [Christminster] be a spot in which, without fear of farmers, or hindrance, or ridicule, he could watch and wait, and set himself to some mighty undertaking.... 'It is a city of light,' he said to himself. 'The tree of knowledge grows there,' he added.... 'It is a place that teachers of men spring from and go to.' 'It is what you may call a castle, manned by scholarship....' After this figure he was silent a long while, till he added: 'It would just suit me.' (*Jude* 66)

In the formation of his personal identity--"as a structure that results from taking over socially generalized expectations" (*TC2* 58)--the generalized other to which he refers is no longer that of Marygreen, but of a larger (imagined) community of Christminster,

where ability and knowledge are seemingly the only criteria for admittance. Jude's plans, however, do not proceed as he envisions them. To understanding this--the tragedy of *Jude*--we need to take another look at the rationalization process of the lifeworld. More specifically, that the lifeworld becomes progressively rationalized does not, of course, imply that this process will proceed free of disturbances. The individualizing process whereby actors become freed from the nonreflexive normative order and a unifying and monologic worldview, not only permits autonomy, but also engenders alienation. Moreover, despite decentration and a futural time consciousness--which initially encourage the development of self-determination and self-realization--these developments can be incorporated *ideologically*. The system imperatives of the emerging capitalist economy penetrate the lifeworld, emptying out the autonomy of self-determination of its will formation, transforming individuation of self-actualization into individualism, and thus severing the individual from a community (albeit ideal) of others oriented to universal principles inserting, instead, an instrumental action orientation. We will thus examine the alienating effects of modernity, and the ideological cooptation of postconventional autonomy and individuation.

At first glance, *Jude* seems less expressly a "road" novel in contrast to *Don Quixote*: the road in *Jude* is not where the dramatic action takes place *per se*. The continual movement, to and fro, from village, to town, to city, and back again repeatedly, represents what Lukcas calls the "transcendental homelessness" of the novel, and the fragmented nature of experience of the modern self. The road, then, is what connects

the drama of the novel. It is in traversing the rural roads of England that Jude's *search* for self occurs. He is not setting out to meet his destiny, as in an epic, nor has he claimed an identity, no matter how problematic, that must be defended, as in *Don Quixote*. Rather, as he travels across the highways and railways of Western England, Jude is ever seeking that which he might call "me," and a grounding for his identity and recognition of the self--looking first to the academy, then to the church, and finally to romantic love. Recognition, however, ever eludes him; his self is ever homeless. This situation is more characteristic of modernity. In a premodern society, a taken for granted background of tradition and cultural givens form the source from which members draw their agreed-upon patterns of interpretation, guarantees interconnection and coordination of multiple actors, and operates as the unifying conditions under which identity formation occurs in interaction. In societies so ordered, rarely would the individual find him or herself in a position *outside* the common social world. In other words, a traditional worldview provides a unity, one in which the individual can be "at home" in any arena of the lifeworld. This situation, of course, radically alters in modernity. As the realms of lifeworld differentiate from one another, the meaning systems (and forms of experience) to which these realms refer become pluralized and problemitized, and the unity is shattered.

The spheres of things about which we can reach a fallible agreement at a given point become detached from the diffuse background of the lifeworld with its absolute certainties and intuitive presence.... (MCC 138)

The individual now lives in multiple, different, and often highly discrepant arenas--

work, leisure, public and private life (and each arena itself is also highly differentiated). Moreover, each arena also has their own meaning systems and forms of experience. There is no base, no "home," except that which is constructed by the individual. Family ties are no longer a sufficient basis from which to derive identity and a sense of belonging, as the labor practices demanded by industrialization have disrupted traditional insular communities and weakened their tight network of kinship relations.

At a very basic level, we see the deteriorating importance of traditional forms of social institutions in some of the small, background details of the novel: Jude's family of origin lived in South Wessex, his aunt in North Wessex, and his cousin's family resided mainly in London. Labor is no longer intimately tied to the family unit or a family tradition. Jude's father's occupation is never mentioned, and there is no intimation that Jude has ever attempted to "follow in his footsteps," whatever those footsteps might have been; Jude works at his aunt's bakery only until he is old enough to choose for himself some other occupation; and he becomes a stonemason--his uncle had a somewhat similar occupation--on a purely practical basis, as a means to support himself until he enters Christminster. The Fawley's don't even share the same religion or attitudes towards religion. The aunt is Evangelical; Jude is aligned with the High Church, but as an alternative to the "intellectual and emulative" life which rejected him; and Sue, although she occasionally attends Anglican services, seems at times "quite Voltairean" (*Jude* 206). This pluralization of the lifeworld renders experience and the

life course more transitory and mobil, as individuals move among and between a series of fragmented, potentially unconnected, even contradictory social arenas. These "homeless" individuals must depend on their own efforts to establish a sense of coherence and identity--efforts which may or may not be successful. We encounter this sense of homelessness throughout *Jude*.

The orphaned Jude came to Marygreen to live with his maiden aunt, it is not his "natural" home. Once there, he forms an attachment to the schoolmaster Phillotson. When Phillotson leaves, however, the fragile stability of young Jude's world is shattered. Jude no longer has even his schooling to connect him to village life. As if to underscore his status as an outsider, on the same day Phillotson leaves, Jude loses the one job he was able to secure in the village, that of scaring away birds from a farmer's field. When his aunt hears of this news, she angrily asks:

'Jude, Jude, why didstn't go off with that schoolmaster of thine to Christminster or somewhere?' (*Jude* 56)

Jude belongs nowhere--or at least not, according to his aunt, in Marygreen. He must find his own place in the world. Jude begins to plan his life and prepare for his future by reflecting upon who he wants to be.

This sense of homelessness and the demands it places on Jude is the impetus for all movement through out the novel, as he seeks to find a place to realize his plans and to achieve recognition. Since Phillotson is heavy on his mind, he asks his aunt if he

could go to Christminster. She replies "'Lord, no! You didn't grow up hereabout, or you wouldn't ask such as that'" (*Jude* 57). Not only does Jude's family reject him as belonging to them and Marygreen, but his aunt's comment also foreshadows Jude's ultimate failure to achieve recognition and a home anywhere. Despite his aunt's rebuke, however, that city continues to preoccupy Jude. "It had been the yearning of his heart to find something to anchor on, to cling to -- for some place which he could call admirable" (*Jude* 65), and he decides that Christminster would be just that place. This, of course, will not be so. But he begins planning his future--learns a trade to support himself, teaches himself Greek and Latin, reading Virgil, Homer, and the New Testament--until finally he sets off on the road to Christminster, "a new start... [that] he had been looking forward [to] for about ten years" (*Jude* 123).

As the world fragments, as roles disengage from the traditional associations, and as institutions become more protean and unreliable, the sense of homelessness intensifies and the quest for identity becomes less an option and more a necessity. This fact alone, however, is not sufficient to account for the pervasive sense of alienation and homelessness in the novel--it derives from Jude's failure to achieve recognition in *any* sphere of life. This is the tragedy of *Jude*. In order to comprehend this failure, we must examine the manner in which the autonomy of the postconventional self has been historically conceived of and the means by which rights were accorded. Specifically, status became the precondition by which recognition of autonomy and rights of individuals was granted--that is, autonomy and rights became ideological. At this

point, an analogous comparison to Habermas' analysis of the bourgeois public sphere is useful in specifying the ideological closure of recognition.

The public sphere is that space where private actors, leaving their private interests behind, enter into a public debate on how the government should administer private interests once these private persons reenter the private sphere. In other words, the public sphere is where practical reason is to be institutionalized, and where the norms of reasoned discourse, rather than statuses or traditions, inform issues of justice and equality. However, the early bourgeois public spheres were narrowly configured; ideological restrictions were placed on public sphere participation, specifically, in terms of property and class.

[T]o attain the status of property owner and thus of "man," that is, the qualifications of a private person admitted to the public sphere--property and education.⁶

It was determined that, since the goal of the public sphere was to ascertain how the state should govern the private, the only people who could participate in the public sphere were specifically those that had already achieved a certain kind of success in the private. Thus, the irony here is that the so-called sovereignty of the people is extended only to those who have already achieved a certain sovereignty in the private sphere. This worked ideologically because the relations in the private sphere (economic) was not seen as domination but as a "natural order."

⁶ Jurgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. T. Burger and F. Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989) 87.

The analogy with *Jude* lies in the paradox of how recognition is conceived. As discussed, recognition is an indispensable condition of autonomy. But it seems that recognition will only be extended to those who have already demonstrated their "autonomy," only given to those who have already achieved that which is in need of recognition. Participation in the public sphere--as does participation in the academic sphere in *Jude*--depends on the recognition of the right to be part of this sphere; entry into a postconventional community--a new "home"--is contingent upon the recognition of the claim of the individual by others to indeed be worthy of or have the right to enter into this community. In each case, recognition is only extended to those who have *already* gained entry--that is, status considerations are smuggled in under the ideological cloak of individual "self-achievement." This manoeuvre is ideological in that an individual's status is regarded as a result of his or her own efforts; if one is not able to achieve high social status *in the first place*, the means for achieving a high(er) status are not going to be extended to that individual. It is a *modern* ideology to the extent that the rejection is not based on some feudal orientation (e.g. one's family), rather, rejection is grounded in the assumption that one's current status, either high or low, is something that is an individual's own achievement.

Jude, of course, has no such status and is unaware of what awaits him at Christminster. At this point in the novel, Christminster represents a place that seems to share his sensibilities, a place where he can at last find acceptance. On his first night in Christminster, he lays awake,

reading up a little about these men and their several messages to the world from a book or two that he had brought with him concerning the sons of the University... One of the spectres (who afterwards mourned Christminster as 'the home of lost causes'...) was now apostrophizing her thus: 'Beautiful city! so venerable, so lovely, so unravaged by the fierce intellectual life of our century, so serene!... Her ineffable charm keeps ever calling us to the true goal of all of us, to the ideal, to perfection.' (*Jude 128*)

After several weeks in the city, Jude finally decides to write to Christminster and present himself as a candidate for admission. Even before he receives his answer, however, he begins to worry about the letter he wrote. These worries cast a subtle light upon the nature of the admission process.

When the letters were posted Jude mentally began to criticize them; he wished they had not been sent. 'It is just one of those intrusive, vulgar, pushing, applications which are so common in these days,' he thought. 'Why couldn't I know better than address utter strangers in such a way? I may be an imposter, and idle scamp, a man with a bad character, for all they know to the contrary....' (*Jude 164*)

From this quote we discover that the selection process is indeed somewhat open; that persons unknown, from families not renowned, are nonetheless able to successfully submit requests for entry. Therefore, Jude is not completely mistaken in his impression that an unknown person--a person outside a feudalistic network of familial connections which still dominate the University--could be admitted to Christminster. What Jude has yet to realize is that although entrance is *in theory* open to all, there are other entry requirements, ones implicitly tied to *achieved* status. Jude will fail to obtain recognition not because of who his family or is not, is but because he has neither of the two requisites necessary to gain entry to Christminster: formal education

or money, each of which imply some existing degree success and status.

By indirect inquiries he soon perceived clearly, what he had long uneasily suspected, that to qualify himself for certain open scholarships and exhibitions was the only brilliant course. But to do this a good deal of coaching would be necessary, and much natural ability. It was next to impossible that a man reading on his own system, however widely and thoroughly, even over the prolonged period of ten years, should be able to compete with those who had passed their lives under trained teachers and had worked to ordained lines. The other course, that of buying himself in, so to speak, seemed the only one really open to men like him, the difficulty being simply of a material kind. With the help of his information he began to reckon the extent of this material obstacle, and ascertained, to his dismay, that, at the rate at which, with the best of fortune, he would be able to save money, fifteen years must elapse before he could be in a position to forward testimonials to the Head of a College and advance to a matriculation examination. The undertaking was hopeless. (*Jude* 165)

In other words, anyone can apply for admission, anyone, that is, who has formal training, which requires money, or anyone who simply just has money. This is the paradox of the modern ideology of autonomy and recognition: recognition is only extended to those who have already achieved that which is in need of recognition. Anyone who has already obtained a degree of success, as measured by wealth, would be recognized as worthy of being granted the means by which to obtain access to that which would grant (more) success. Indeed, as Jude is informed in a letter from a Christminster Master:

Sir, - I have read your letter with interest; and, judging from your description of yourself as a working-man, I venture to think that you will have a much better chance of success in life by remaining in your own sphere and sticking to your trade than be adopting any other course. That, therefore, is what I advise you to do. (*Jude* 167)

Thus, although the world Jude lives in renders him homeless and forces him to plan his own life, engendering in him a sense of his own individuality, in the same stroke, it also denies him the means for achieving recognition, in that the request for recognition--a prerequisite of self-realization--contains the insinuation that he has already failed. The postconventional self itself has become ideological. For Jude this means that despite his attempts to determine and actualize himself and his life course, he is *forced* back into a role, back to a "destiny" conceived of for him by others. Jude has been finalized.

It would have been far better for him in every way if he had never come within sight and sound of the delusive precincts [of Christminster], had gone to some busy commercial town with the sole object of making money by his wits.... He always remembered the appearance of the afternoon on which he awoke from his dream....Jude's eyes swept all the views [of the college]...meditatively, mournfully, yet sturdily. Those buildings and their associations and privileges were not for him.... He saw that his destiny lay not with these, but among the manual toilers in the shabby purlieu which he himself occupied, unrecognized as part of the city at all by its visitors and panegyrists, yet without whose denizens the hard readers could not read nor the high thinkers live. (*Jude* 166)

When Jude realizes the ideological nature of the conditions of Christminster, his relation to the university becomes problematized as an issue of justice--the institution has lost its "quasi-natural character." The norms of admission have become detached from the background of an unquestioned lifeworld and they now become something about which requires justification--that is, the norms of Christminster have become subject to critique. In this new-found clarity of the fate society has determined for him, Jude, quoting Job, pens his rebuke on the university wall:

'I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you: yea, who knoweth not such things as these?' (Jude 169)

Still searching for self and home, Jude must revise where this lies and how they may be obtained. Mead suggests the way in which this can occur.

The demand is freedom from conventions, from given laws. Of course, such a situation is only possible where the individual appeals, so to speak, from a narrow and restricted community to a larger one, that is, larger in the logical sense of having rights which are not so restricted. (MSS 199)

Jude must *project* an anticipated community where his claims to autonomy and self-realization would be recognized. Such a move is intimated in a subsequent conversation with Sue.

'It [Christminster] is an ignorant place, except as to the townspeople, artizans, drunkards, and paupers,' [said Sue].... 'They see life as it is, of course; but few of the people in the colleges do. You prove it in your own person. You are one of the very men Christminster was intended for when the colleges were founded; a man with a passion for learning, but no money, or opportunities, or friends. But you were elbowed off the pavement by the millionaires' sons.'

'Well [says Jude], I can do without what it confers. I care for something higher.' (Jude 205)

In this life, however, Jude will not achieve the recognition he long sought.

Nonetheless,

One appeals from fixed conventions which no longer have any meaning to a community in which the rights shall be publicly recognized, and one appeals to others...even if the appeal be made to posterity. (MSS 199)

And so it is with Jude. On his death bed, he lies, thinking of his aspirations and the

young men of Christminster, and quotes again from Job.

While he remained, his face changing, shouts and hurrahs come from somewhere in the direction of the river. 'Ah - yes! The Remembrance games,' he murmured. 'And I here....'

'Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man child conceived.'

('Hurrah!')

'Let that day be darkness; let not God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it. Lo, let that night be solitary, let no joyful voice come therein.'

('Hurrah!')

'Why died I not from the womb? Why did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the belly?... For now should I have lain still and been quiet. I should have slept; then had I been at rest!'

('Hurrah!')

'There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor.... The small and the great are there; and the servant is free from his master. Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul?' (Jude 486)

Jude's question of "Who do I want to be?" remains unanswered, recognition is never granted. However, before this end, his attempt to formulate alternative plans (to become a minster of the church) is waylaid by the problematization of another domain of social life: the domestic. In modernity, love has taken on a new significance as a pivotal realm in which to ground the homeless self in a pluralized and fragmented society.⁷ In order to understand the function of love and marriage in the novel, we first need to look at the process by which the emergent postconventionality *establishes* itself in society.

⁷ See Christopher Lasch, *Haven in a Heartless World: The Family Besieged* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1977).

Marriage and the Postconventional Society

Although a futural time consciousness is crucial to the potential for a society-wide postconventional orientation, it is not simply enough that such an orientation come on the scene. Metaphorically speaking, one could say that this emergent orientation is rather fragile. In order for it to be secured, and even become the norm--that is, not the exception as it was in individual cases in the past--it has to be "fortified" institutionally. Law is the domain *par excellence* in which this occurs. The first presupposition that must be fulfilled in order for this orientation to become secure is that certain basic rights--which incorporate the new sensibility by acknowledging autonomy and individuality--must be extended universally as law. The most important of all these basic rights is the *right of conscience*. In the narrow sense, this refers to, for example, freedom of religion. In the more significant sense, however, it refers to the freedom of individuals to determine for themselves both what constitutes the "good life" and what constitutes what is "right." The identity secured through institutionalization in this manner clearly differs from that which would arise from a more traditional institutional arrangement such as that of feudalism, in which both individual and collective matters of moral rightness belong to the institutional province of certain elites (e.g. the lord or the priest), and where the good life does not admit the kind of pluralism that would render it problematic on a consistent basis. However, with the attempt to secure a degree of postconventionalism institutionally, a whole complex of "civil" rights are established in different institutional domains of social life. Thus, in the economic domain of liberalism, one's vocation is (allegedly) as much a

matter of a quasi-existential decision as it is economic necessity; conversely, the political domain of democracy is (allegedly) opened up to a "sovereignty of the people" whose only limitation lies in the requirement that each not encroach upon the autonomy of the other. The "alleged" character of each domain refers to the fact that a purely post-conventional orientation is, in reality, counterfactual. Indeed, Habermas stresses that it withers to near-impossibility in the economic domain and, for this reason, must be strengthened in the political domain and the lifeworld. As we can see, this discussion refers to categories of moral theory--that is, question of the good life, and what is right or just. The point to be made, therefore, is that these categories are something that are protected *by law*, as a right, universally extended. Law, in turn, is itself produced according to a certain procedural paradigm in which, at least theoretically, the act of legislating occurs in response to the will of the polity (and this is where the political public sphere enters). Thus, we have the so-called "sovereignty of the people"--that is, political legislation that reflects the will of the citizenry. But, this "sovereignty" is itself something that needs to be secured by law, in this case, rights of political participation. This means that the existence of power--legitimate authority to be more specific--is also supposedly brought into a postconventional context by means of extending certain civil liberties, rights, etc.

The "right of conscience" also extends into the domain of the family and marriage, but in a manner even more problematic than in the political and economic domains. In the case of marriage, some of this same process is occurring: there is the extension of

rights to women in the sphere of marriage which, to a degree (but only to a degree) begins to overturn some of the patriarchal privileges that had previously defined the institution of the family in premodern Europe. Charles Taylor, in *The Sources of the Self*, attributes this shift, in part, to historical changes that have taken place in what we have been calling "worldviews": those action-orienting frameworks around which modernity identity is formed. Specifically, the increased importance attached to personal commitment and sentiment and the "affirmation of ordinary life," are both associated with a general trend towards individuation.

The rebellion against the patriarchal family involves an assertion of personal autonomy, and voluntarily formed ties, against the demands of ascriptive authority. But the rebellion is fired by the sense that what is at stake is a fulfillment that nature has made centrally significant. (*Sources* 290)

With the term "affirmation of the ordinary" Taylor is referring to the increased positive value placed upon ordinary productive and reproductive life (i.e. labor, marriage, family, etc.), in contrast to the opposite classical hierarchy which emphasized contemplation over labor--where life and good life were separate things. In modernity, significantly aided by the Protestant Reformation, this distinction dissolves.⁸ Puritanism, says Taylor, moves away from the traditional focus on a hierarchy of activities (*what* one does), towards a concern with *how* one fulfills the demands of everyday life, most importantly in labor and marriage (*Sources* 279). In short, under

⁸ Taylor mentions the critical stance taken by the Reformers towards mediation. In rejecting the idea that someone might be more or less devoted, more or less closer to God, no one could intervene for an individual in relation to God, as with the medieval church, and no one could win salvation for someone else. Each individual was responsible for his or her own self.

the Puritans, marriage takes on an intrinsic spiritual value. Accordingly, love and companionship within the marital relationship also take on a new significance, in order that the couple may actualize God's will in this everyday arena. Taylor quotes Benjamin Wadsworth, an American divine:

[Spouses] "should endeavor to have their affections really, cordially and closely knit, to each other". Otherwise God's law is broken. For, "the indisputable Authority, the plain Command of the Great God, requires Husbands and Wives, to have and manifest very great affection, love and kindness to one another". (*Sources* 226, *sic*)

According to Taylor, the significance of this development lies *not* in the fact that people started marrying for love (as if they never done so before), or that spouses began to feel affection for one another; rather, what is notable is that:

these dispositions come to be seen as a crucial part of what makes life worthy and significant.... The difference lies not so much in the presence/absence of certain feelings as in the fact that much is made of them. (*Sources* 292)

This emphasis on the affective represents a shift in the understanding of what constitutes the good life and, as such, marriage and family become subject to, again, only to a degree, the precepts of universalization of rights in the legal system--though again, only to a degree. That marriage should be a consensual act, predicated on love, *requires* a revised legal scaffolding (e.g. the system of dowries has to be dispensed with, etc.). Furthermore, with respect to the theme of homelessness, this growing sense of the importance of love in family life and the marital arena becomes a primary source of stability and coherence in a world that has fragmented and a lifecourse that

has lost its sense of meaning (with failure and alienation in so many other arenas, we, like Jude, pursue it even more forcefully and with ever-increasing desperation). The affective or domestic arena now operates to compensate for the alienating effects of systematically organized domains of social life as they encroach upon the lifeworld--that is, the pursuit of love becomes one avenue in the search for a home *for the self*.

This "road," however, is not free of obstacles: the norms that secure interaction in this realm of gender relations are also problematic and ideological. Specifically, there arises a conflict between principles of rights and individualism and the conceptualization of public and the private spheres. On the one hand, the aspiration towards family intimacy and marital love is itself located within a social climate where increasing value is placed on individualism that, in the political arena, centers on the rights of individuals, and extends to the domain of the family. On the other hand, these legal transformations focusing on rights touch upon the family only to a certain and limited degree. The extension of the postconventional desanctification of the normative to this area of social life is impeded by distinctions made between what constitutes the public as opposed to the private sphere; that which is public is open to debate and subject to democratic principles, and which is private is not.

The public-private distinction, as it has been frequently argued, has often served as a means of insulating the family from the kind of postconventionalizing transformation of gender roles obtained in other arenas. In modernity, issues of the good life are

relegated to the private sphere, and issues of justice to the public sphere. The private arena can be defined as a domain where individuals can be free, on the one hand, from the quasi-mythical anonymous power of the marketplace, and, on the other hand, and from the difficult and often painful business, so to speak, of trying to achieve consensus on the common good. Thus, one way in which the private sphere is "immunized" from the postconventional desanctification of the normative is through this negative characterization of the private sphere as a domain of refuge, not only from the marketplace but also from the public sphere. This move straight forwardly restricts the family to the private sphere, and politics to the public. As Seyla Benhabib succinctly puts it, "The norms of freedom, equality and reciprocity have stopped at the household door" (*Situating* 13). The increasingly sharp distinction made between public and private spheres in the emergent bourgeois society, where matters located in the private sphere are considered outside the realm of justice, placed "typically female spheres of activity" within the latter (*Situating* 108). In general, conflicts in this sphere tended to be resolved "behind closed doors," usually under the purview of male heads of households. That is, although certain *contractual* changes concerning marriage were legislated, these changes, in effect, are not about equalizing rights of women *per se*, but rather, inevitably touch upon one half of the contractual party--women--in the interest of extending general individual rights to the other half of the contractual party--men. Only to the extent that, and only in those areas where the marital relation extends into the public realm has marriage been affected by any such postconventional transformations. At home, women are still subject to a conventional

orientation deeply mired in a tradition of patriarchal authority. A tension thus exists between the general growing emphasis on individualism extending into the legal arena and a shift in worldviews with respect to love and marriage, on the one hand, and the intensified distinction between public and private spheres which places many aspects of marriage (and domains of interaction and labor typically associated with women) outside the emergent postconventional sensibility, on the other. This tension is exactly what we see in the relationship between Jude and Sue.

At a more general level, a backdrop of a post-traditional orientation towards family life is established implicitly throughout *Jude* by means of the noticeable lack of family. Except for the elderly aunt, there are no characters who are related to either Jude or Sue throughout the book. The two cousins are completely severed from any family influence; they are on their own to decide *for themselves* with whom they wish to form attachments, and who they want to marry. The traditional power wielded by parents and family with respect to these "life choices" is utterly absent. In the novel, marriage in its ideal form is presented as something to be entered into voluntarily, based on individual interests, the degree of companionship felt, and level of personal commitment.

It is the contrast, however, between Jude's relationship with Sue and the one with his estranged wife Arabella that begins to reveal the paradox that clings to relations within the domestic and affective arenas. The paradox is that, although Jude desires to select

a mate based on compatibility, shared interests, common personality (that is, he endeavors to acquire a mate in a manner similar to which he pursues a place in the world, i.e. by reflexively turning away from tradition in favor of individualized interests), the manner in which he expects this mate to behave, in public and behind closed doors, remains thoroughly conventional. The contrast between Sue and Arabella demonstrates a conventional, objectifying attitude at odds with Jude's relative "enlightenment" regarding labor and status.

The manner in which Jude acquires a wife is purely physical. Arabella, a country girl, tricks Jude into marriage by (falsely) claiming she is pregnant. Even though Jude would indeed be the father, his position is due not to any affection towards Arabella, nor to any desire to acquire a wife, but simply to his "uncontrollable" sexual urges. Returning home after work one day, along a route not normally taken, Jude is lost in "imaginary conversation" with himself, evaluating how his studies and plans have progressed so far, and what needs to be done in the future to attain his goal.

'I have acquired quite an average student's power to read the common ancient classics, Latin in particular....' 'I have read two books of the Iliad.... I have also done some Hesiod, a little scrap of Thucydides, and a lot of the Greek Testament.... I have done some mathematics, including the first six and the eleventh and twelfth books of Euclid; and algebra as far as simple questions. 'I know something of the Fathers, and something of Roman and English history.

'These things are only a beginning. But I shall not make much further advance here.... Hence I must next concentrate all my energies on settling in Christminster. Once there I shall so advance, with assistance I shall there get.... I must save money, and I will... 'I'll be D.D. before I have done!' (*Jude* 78-9)

He is *bodily* startled out of these mental musings about his future as an high-brow scholar.

Of a sudden something smacked him sharply in the ear, and he became aware that a soft cold substance had been flung at him, and had fallen at his feet. A glance told him what it was - a piece of flesh, the characteristic part of a barrow-pig, which the countrymen used for greasing their boots, as it was useless for any other purpose. On the other side of the hedge was a stream, whence, as he now for the first time realized, had come the slight sounds of voices and laughter that had mingled with his dreams. (*Jude* 80)

It is Arabella, a pig-breeder's daughter.

She whom he addressed was a fine dark-eyed girl, not exactly handsome, but capable of passing as such at a little distance, despite some coarseness of skin and fibre. She had a round and prominent bosom, full lips, perfect teeth, and the rich complexion of a Cochin hen's egg. She was a complete and substantial female animal - no more, no less.... (*Jude* 81)

Jude's plans for the future, his studies in Greek, Latin, and Mathematics, fade as

the unvoiced call of woman to man, which was uttered very distinctly by Arabella's personality, held Jude to the spot against his intention - almost against his will, and in a way new to his experience. (*Jude* 83)

After a brief, physical courtship, Arabella springs her trap, and they marry. It is disastrous for both of them--neither is the person the other had hoped for. Arabella thought she had gained a husband--"and that was the thing"--someone, anyone, to buy her frocks and hats and such. On Jude's part, he is aware what power has seized him:

something which had nothing in common with the spirits and influences that had moved him hitherto. This seemed to care little for his reason and his will, nothing for his so-called elevated intentions, and moved him along...towards the

embrace of a woman for whom he had no respect, and whose life had nothing in common with his own except locality. (*Jude* 87)

But he does his duty and marries Arabella, "such being the custom of the rural districts among honourable young men who had drifted so far into intimacy with a woman."

And although he tries to believe things will settle down to the normal rhythm of rural married life with a simple country girl,

There seemed to him, vaguely and dimly, something wrong in a social ritual which made necessary a canceling of well-formed schemes involving years of thought and labour, of fore-going a man's one opportunity of showing himself superior to the lower animals...because of a momentary surprise by a new and transitory instinct which had nothing in it of the nature of vice, and could be only at the most called weakness.... But the marriage remained. (*Jude* 107)

Each is disappointed in the other, but it is Arabella that leaves, Jude being "too honorable" for such an act.

Sue is a completely different sort of woman, but no less an object to Jude than Arabella. Long before Jude ever meets Sue, he is enamored of the *image* of her as a woman; his aunt possesses a photograph of his cousin portraying

a pretty girlish face, in a broad hat with radiating folds under the brim like the rays of a halo. (*Jude* 124)

And, in his early days of loneliness at Christminster, he writes his aunt, asking for the photograph. Upon receiving the requested item, he places it on the mantel piece, "kiss[es] it - he did not know why - and felt more at home" (*Jude* 132). Sue is

becoming the object which Jude looks towards to provide the sense of home he so lacks.

To an impressionable and lonely young man the consciousness of having at last found anchorage for his thoughts, which promised to supply both social and spiritual possibilities, was like the dew of Hermon.... (*Jude* 139)

Initially, Jude is afraid to even approach her, he being so "raw and unpolished" and she so "dainty and elegant." But he finds out where she works, as an artisan, and keeps watch over her, savoring her presence.

The consciousness of her living presence stimulated him. But she remained more or less an ideal character, about whose form he began to weave curious and fantastic daydreams. (*Jude* 136)

When contact is finally made, Sue seems all that he could want in a companion.

Jude was surprised to find what a revelation of woman his cousin was to him. She was so vibrant that everything she did seemed to have its source in feeling. (*Jude* 151)

[T]here was ever a second silent conversation passing between their emotions, so perfect was the reciprocity between them. (*Jude* 263)

Nonetheless, Jude tries to think of Sue in a "family way," since there were several "crushing reasons" why he should not do otherwise.

The first reason was that he was married, and it would be wrong. The second was that they were cousins. It was not well for cousins to fall in love even when circumstances seemed to favour the passion. The third: even were he free, in a family like his own where marriage usually meant a tragic sadness, marriage with a blood-relation would duplicate the adverse conditions, and a tragic sadness might be intensified to a tragic horror. (*Jude* 137)

Finally, however, Jude's loneliness and desire weigh heavier than all these reasons.

Those three enormous reasons...loomed as stubbornly as ever. But it was also obvious that man could not live by work alone; that the particular man Jude, at any rate, wanted something to love. (*Jude* 145)

Jude's early interactions with this "something" are spent admiring her beauty and sensitivity, and seeking out commonalities in intelligence and temperament as well as likes and dislikes. Although he repeatedly claims to "know her meaning," to understand the things she says and does, in fact he rarely does.

The contrast between the earthy swine herder and the ethereal artisan demonstrates a traditional orientation towards women--the "madonna v. whore" complex, if you will. Arabella is but a body, and Sue's intelligence and spirit are valued by Jude only insofar as they complement *his* own plans, desires and fantasies; her claims of autonomy are ignored, and her individuality *per se* is incidental when taken separate from Jude's interests. This failure to treat Sue--and Arabella, for that matter--as reciprocal equals can be traced to socio-historical developments discussed above; although marriage and gender relations have been thematized, they have not yet been postconventionally problematized as a moral issue. If we recall, the "moralization of society" implies that there occurs a split between norms and values, a distinction between the realms of the moral as opposed to the ethical.

The first part of the domain of the practical, which consists of norms, is susceptible to the requirement of moral justification in terms of its

deontological validity; the second part, which consists of particular values configurations belonging to collective and individual modes of life, is not. (MCC 177)

Although no existing society has made a full transition to a completely postconventional level, in England of the late 19th century certain aspects of the lifeworld have yet to be widely subjected to this moralization--most notably for this project, gender relations and marriage. In other words, these issues are not considered topics to be subject to moral debate, whereby conflicting claims would then be evaluated in terms of universal principles of justice, equality and universalizability of interests, etc. This fails to occur by virtue of the fact that these issues are considered *private issues*--that is, issues of the good life--and thus, by definition, *closed off* to these universalistic criteria of evaluation. Only when issues of the lifeworld become moralized can they be dealt with "autonomously as issues of justice" (MCC 178). In being relegated to the private sphere as issues of the good life, marriage and gender relations have been effectively removed from *systematic* debate. Questions of the good life only become subject to rational discussion within *particular* historical or individual experiences or relations. What this means to suggest is that issues traditionally defined as belonging to the realm of the good life can be subject to rational scrutiny, but only in particular contexts, by particular individuals, in particular relationships, and not on a society-wide level. Thus, it would make sense to look to the social relationships an individual forms with specific (as opposed to generalized) others in order to gain insight into how specific issues become thematized for the individual, regardless their conventional (or normative) treatment in society at large. To take Craig Calhoun out

of context,⁹ perhaps an understanding of the *particular* moral development of an individual would be enhanced by attending to "our strongest social relations, [to] 'significant others'...." This is what occurs textually in the relationship between Jude and Sue.

Jude's early detachment and propriety towards Sue lasts only briefly. His sexual desire brings him into extended contact with Sue, this contact slowly--but never thoroughly--dissolves his idealized image of her, and ultimately forces him to confront her as an person; for it is in his attempts to spend time with her that Jude is time and again drawn into conversations and debates regarding Sue's beliefs and opinions towards marriage, which stem from her aversion towards physical intimacy. For reasons unexplained, Sue has a terror of physical intimacy: although she freely associates with men as companions, Jude included, she refuses to have any sort of intimate sexual relations. Indeed, she wishes that she could be treated as much as a sexless person as she perceives herself to be. Jude is completely baffled and disconcerted by this attitude. Sue tries repeatedly to explain these feelings to him.

'My life has been entirely shaped by what people call a peculiarity in me. I have no fear of men, as such, nor of their books. I have mixed with them...almost as one of their own sex. I mean I have not felt them as most women are taught to feel.... (*Jude* 201-2)

⁹ In Calhoun's lengthy review essay of Taylor's book, *Sources of the Self*, he is responding to Taylor's neo-Aristotelian position which claims no principles of legitimacy can be formulated without presupposing some theoretical version of the good life somewhat more sympathetically than is being argued for here. See "Morality, Identity, and Historical Explanation: Charles Taylor on the Sources of the Self," *Sociological Theory* 9:2 (Fall 1991): 232-263.

Jude felt much depressed; she seemed to get further and further away from him with her strange ways and curious unconsciousness of gender. (*Jude* 203)

Unlike the reflexive stance he takes towards the educational institution, Jude's initial orientation in these conversations regarding marriage and family remains tied to existing norms--"it is just how things are done"--and refuses to recognize Sue's claims that she indeed could feel such a way. Women are finalized by being reduced to a role.

The tension discussed earlier, between the increasing emphasis on individualism, which spills over into the legal arena, and new worldviews regarding love and marriage, on the one hand, and the heightened "domestication" of the private sphere that inhibits women's participation in the emergent postconventional sensibility, on the other, finds its dialogic expression in Jude's attitudes toward marriage when confronted with those held by Sue. Sue maintains her opposition to intimacy, and argues that one ought to be able to form these relationships based on the interests of the particular parties, and not on given law or tradition. As their views on this matter sharply diverge, Jude and Sue must discursively engage one another regarding their beliefs and personal desires in order to attempt to negotiate and formulate a relationship that is, more or less, mutually satisfying. Ultimately, it is Sue who will compromise. Although Jude has attained a level of ego-identity formation that begins to separate the moral (self-determining) from ethical (self-realizing),¹⁰ it is thoroughly gendered in that he has

¹⁰ Where, as Habermas says, "moral insights and culturally habituated empirical motives are no longer one and the same" (*MCC* 183).

yet to make the transition to a fully postconventional level in his interactions with women and around gender roles.

By the time Jude meets Sue, he has claimed for himself a certain degree of autonomy and individuation, and has established his postconventionality in one arena. However, when the norms that secure gendered interaction are problematized by Sue, Jude initially reverts to conventions in his attempt to stabilize their interaction. He refuses to extend to Sue that which is definitive of a post-conventional orientation--mutual recognition of claims to autonomy and individuality--in essence rejecting the validity of her claims by not recognizing them as claims at all. But when Sue continues to assert her position, Jude is forced to acquiesce if he wishes to continue a relationship. This acquiescence is, however, only superficial. When Sue tries and fails to explain her fear and distaste of physical intimacy to Jude, she offers another explanation for her reluctance, one she (rightly) thinks will be more successful in convincing Jude to forego intimacy with her. She intimates that there is a family curse of sorts (a claim that is indeed supported by historical family evidence), and that the Fawley's only come to misery in marriage. *This* reason convinces Jude. Not Sue's own reluctance, fear, or desires, but his own dread of a bad marriage and losing Sue--yet only for awhile.

After Sue leaves her husband (she has married the schoolmaster Phillotson in the intervening chapter), she and Jude are free to live together, but Sue of course will only

do so under platonic conditions:

'My liking for you [says Sue] is not as some women's perhaps. But it is a delight in being with you, of a supremely delicate kind, and I don't want to go further and risk it by - an attempt to intensify it! I quite realized that, as woman with man, it was a risk to come. But, as *me* with *you*, I resolved to trust you to set my wishes above your gratification. Don't discuss it further, dear Jude!' (*Jude* 304)

After much discussion, Jude seems to agree, but then asks Sue to declare some affection towards him, and for a kiss--he is still trying to break her will. When this doesn't work, he tries a little guilt a mild insult.

'This is a queer elopement!' he murmured. 'Perhaps you are making a cat's paw of me with Phillotson all this time. Upon my word it almost seems so - to see you sitting up there so prim!' (*Jude* 305)

Finally, he agrees to her conditions, but only for the time being; he never ceases to press Sue into marriage and towards physical intimacy. Although they never marry, Jude is obviously successful on the other front. The novel cuts ahead several years and finds Sue selling Gingerbread in a marketplace with three small children waiting at home. Jude had taken ill and, near destitute and burdened with children, the only means of income the family has--despite Sue's skills as an engraver and training as teacher--was for Jude to make bread and Sue to sell them in the market. Sue has been thoroughly domesticated. This literal domestication is just the final stage in a long process. Although Jude eventually concedes to Sue's wish not to marry, she had always been a "domestic subject." That is, all the contestations, all the debates and conversations surrounding Sue dealt solely with private issues of the domestic sphere.

The issues Jude thematizes are not those concerning equality and the rights of individuals (men and women) in general, rather they concern the specifics of the marriage contract; the issues problematized are not about recognizing Sue as an individual person responsible for her own life, or as an individuated an autonomous subject, but are about *how Sue as a woman* will be defined as a uncontested privatized entity.

Chapter Seven

Mad Max

Modernity, it seems, is that experience of social life that holds out the promise, indeed the demand, for individuation and autonomy. It emerges when the disintegration of religious worldviews releases the communicative rationality potential inherent in human interaction; when the normative order and moral judgment derive from a process of thematization, critique and debate of problematic norms and values, rather than unreflexive consent; when justice is conceived of in terms of the interests of everyone involved, rather than as the privileges of a few; and when identity is achieved by the individual's own efforts in light of subjective and intersubjective interests rather than ascription. The forces of modernity--decentration, the weakening power of tradition, and the pluralization of lifeworlds--breaks apart monologic and monolithic worldviews, or ways of being and understanding, and instead emphasizes universalization of norms, freedom from conventions, and reciprocity of recognition of the equality of all individuals.

There is, of course, another side to modernity. The individuation and autonomy of the pluralized and disenchanting society is accompanied by the threat of an increased sense of alienation, anomie, and a feeling of homelessness--the distortions and discontents of modernity. Habermas speaks of the distortion of the "project of modernity" in terms of the "colonization" of the lifeworld. When lifeworld and system become uncoupled

from each other, the forms of rationality inherent in each can develop; social integration, the coordination of action, and social reproduction can now be established by means of the communicative rationality (action oriented toward understanding) distinctive to the lifeworld, whereas functional integration and material reproduction can be realized through the purposive rationality characteristic of the systematically organized domains of social life. However, when systemic imperatives evict mechanisms of social integration from arenas in which they cannot be replaced (i.e. processes of symbolic reproduction), purposive rationality intrudes into these arenas with detrimental consequences. The lifeworld becomes instrumentalized as systemic constraints force the communicative practices of everyday life towards purposive action orientations, and moral elements are driven out of all spheres of life (TC2 325). But instrumentally oriented action *cannot unify and create meaning*, as does action oriented towards reaching understanding.¹ Actions oriented towards success replace interactions oriented towards mutual understanding, and the fragmented identities which operate in the multiple instrumentalized arenas cannot be integrated in any intersubjectively meaningful manner.

¹ It is crucial to remember that, for Habermas, this colonization is *not* a necessary eventuality. "The deformations [of modernity]...ought not be attributed either to the rationalization of the lifeworld as such or to increasing system complexity as such. Neither the secularization of worldviews nor the structural differentiation of society has unavoidable pathological side effects per se. It is not the differentiation and independent development of cultural value spheres that lead to the cultural impoverishment of everyday communicative practice, but an elitist splitting-off of expert cultures from contexts of communicative action in daily life. It is not the uncoupling of media-steered subsystems and of their organizational forms from the lifeworld that leads to the one-sided rationalization or reification of everyday communicative practice, but only the penetration of forms of economic and administrative rationality into areas of action that resist being converted over to the media of money and power because they are specialized in cultural transmission, social integration, and child rearing, and remain dependent on mutual understanding as a mechanism for coordinating action" (TC2 330).

To the degree that the economic system subjects the life-forms of private households and the life conduct of consumers and employees to its imperatives, consumerism and possessive individualism, motives of performance, and competition gain the force to shape behavior. (TC2 325)

Thus, for Habermas, alienation and the unsettling of collective identity arise as systematically induced deformations of the lifeworld (TC2 384-6).

The distortion of rationality through the subordination of lifeworld processes to systemic imperatives is a crucial factor in Habermas' understanding the "pathologies" of modernity. In addition, he also confronts the issue of modernity's own self understanding and what he describes as the "exhaustion of utopian energies."² As we have discussed, the time consciousness of modernity is predicated upon the priority of the expectation of novelty over any uninterrupted continuities, a priority derived from the assumption that the transformations which will characterize the future are to be generated in order to solve the crises of the present. In other words, the expectation of the future is still informed by a past, but now that past shows us that what to expect is something always different (as new crises arise). As a result, the past can inform our expectations only in the "empty" sense that we assume no continuities to be "sacred," that ever-new crises will lead to transformative responses in which no concrete givens can be taken for granted. The exhaustion Habermas refers to arises from the

² See Jurgen Habermas, "The New Obscurity: The Crisis of the Welfare State and the Exhaustion of Utopian Energies," *The New Conservatism: Cultural Criticism and the Historians' Debate*, ed. and trans. S.W. Nicholse (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), 48-70. The term "utopia" is meant to convey not "utopianism" (in the sense of that which is intrinsically unrealizable), but rather, a "legitimate medium for depicting alternative life possibilities that are seen as inherent in the historical process itself" (*Obscurity* 50).

awareness that this "something" different will not necessarily be something "better." Our own historical consciousness is filled with examples of previous problem-solving interventions whose unintended consequences have resulted in even more radical crises. That is, historical consciousness is filled with "futures past" that were initially invested with utopian expectations, but turned out to have adverse or even catastrophic consequences, thus demonstrating the dystopic potential of a futural time consciousness. The myth of progress has been blotted out. Indeed, it seems ever more likely that the future will be filled with the bitter, frightening and dangerous consequences of past actions (nuclear energy potentially leading to nuclear war, science turned to weapons technology, biotechnological and genetic innovations appropriated for eugenics, etc.). Disillusionment, pessimism and fear now seem to form a greater part of the repertoire of expectation.

The Australian film *Mad Max* conforms to this basic outline of disillusionment and alienation. The dystopic sensibility is established in the first few seconds of the film. *Mad Max* begins with a darkened, desolate shot of a police station; against a cloudy twilight sky, the buildings appear vacant, the sign designating the "Halls of Justice" is crumbling, and there is a general impression of emptiness and deterioration. This scene cuts away to a shot of a road, equally empty and barren, set against an indistinguishable yet fiery-colored sunset; the words "A few years from now..." appear overlaid on the deserted road. These two brief shots present a modern wasteland where things are falling apart, the center is not holding, and any sense of a legitimate

authority is void. The projection of the film into the near future serves both to underscore the notion of the inevitable dismal consequences of present day actions, and to provide a site where responses to these soon-to-come conditions can be safely (for the audience) dealt with *outside* any lingering, present day moral or ethical prescriptions or considerations. *Mad Max*, it will be argued, can be seen as a projection of a certain kind of world in which autonomy, as it has been discussed in previous chapters, becomes distorted and is possible only after those things that have driven the project of modernity off course--the economic, political, and especially the legal realms--have disappeared or been reduced to (at most) vestigial remains of an evaporating past. In these terms, the film stands in a long line of dystopic narratives about modernity.

Since the sixties, horror and science-fiction genres, for example, have become negatively apocalyptic. In later futuristic films, instead of externally-imposed crises, the problems generated within the social collective become more and more unmanageable.³ Even when films present an instance of manageability, such as in the movie *Wall Street*, individual perpetrators may be punished, but the system of practices and values that gave rise to them remain.⁴ Apocalyptic or catastrophic films generally

³ Bruce Franklin comments that, since 1970, futuristic films have become "overwhelmingly pessimistic, when not downright apocalyptic. Whereas the alien and monster films of the fifties showed our worthy civilization menaced by external powers, these movies typically project our awful future as a development, often inevitable, of forces already at work within our civilization." See "Future Imperfect" *American Film* (March 1983): 48-49.

⁴ James Combs, "Pox-Eclipse Now: The Dystopian Imagination in Contemporary Popular Movies," *Crisis Cinema*, ed. Christopher Sharrett (Washington, DC: Maisonneuve Press, 1993), 24.

put forward the image of a world past redemption. Importantly for *Mad Max*, even when films provide some sort of triumphant "hero," he or she is not a source of social rejuvenation. Indeed, as is most notable in the case of vengeance films like *Mad Max*, the hero is no longer a clear agent of the community, acting on the basis of shared values and desirous of *social* justice. Instead, the hero is usually alienated from society and is an agent of revenge, acting out of some *private* motive.⁵

The road trope in *Mad Max* is intimately tied to this dystopic impulse. A discussion of what this impulse implies for the search for the self must be preceded by a specification of its relation to the road trope in terms of the unique configuration of the experience and expectation. Specifically, the configuration of the road chronotope commensurate with a dystopic vision of society is one in which the distance between the experiential and the expectative has utterly collapsed--there is no past nor any future. Not only does the past no longer serve as a source of normative orientation, but insofar as modernity's past has proven its inability to fulfil the promise it once held out, the future as well becomes drained of its redemptive capacity and emptied of its emancipatory potential. The meaninglessness and fragmentation of social life, the abstractness of all modern social institutions, and the pluralization of lifeworlds threaten the modern individual with an overwhelming sense of homelessness. With the dystopic imagery, however, the future that once provided the grounds of an

⁵ See Combs. Combs gives several examples of the vigilante hero. The Bruce Willis character in the *Die Hard* movies, Ripley (Sigourney Weaver) in *Aliens*, Harry Callahan (Clint Eastwood) in the *Dirty Harry* films, and even the superhero *Batman* "are all in different ways alienated with a purpose, even though that purpose is more or less independent of traditional heroic function and restraint" (21).

anticipatory response to this threat is closed off. *There is "no place to go."* The road is not the site of role fulfillment, but neither is it a route toward the creation of something new. In the dystopic narrative, being on the road signifies a perpetual homelessness. This dystopic fantasy of modernity and the simultaneous closing off of the past and future presents a distinctive image of social life. Specifically, the definitive characteristic of Max's world is one in which the disillusion with those systemically organized areas of interaction--the state and the economy--that have rendered modern life problematic are expunged to the point that they have essentially become vestigial, but its (alienating) *effects*--such as fragmentation and the foreclosure of the communicative potential--lingers.

The alienating and dehumanizing effects of modernity (which define the trope of the road in *Mad Max*) are imagistically and narratively tied to the ineffectualness of systematically organized domains of social action. One such imagistic example is that of the police station house. The general atmosphere of disintegration that subtly permeates the whole of the movie is crudely depicted in that most bureaucratic site of the state, the station house. Starting with the askew "Halls of Justice" sign, decay and neglect are omnipresent; from squad cars pieced together from scraps and the ragged collection of broken furniture, to the rusted fixtures and lopsidedly hung pictures, all taken together convey a sense of decomposition, disorder and collapse. But it is the ineffectualness of the legal system as a specific narrative aspect of the film that, as we shall see, underscores the fact that the road is the only place for effective and

autonomous action in *Mad Max*. Indeed, the impotence and incompetency of the legal system is the catalyst for the plot development.

The defining event which occurs early in the film is the brutalization of a young couple by a biker gang. One of the gang members, Johnny Boy, is caught by Max and his close friend Goose. However, since no one shows at the trial to press suit, the charges are dismissed and the prisoner must be released. Goose is outraged and goes wild. As he rants at the lawyers cowering in the corner, Johnny Boy taunts him, "See ya later, its been a pleasure." This so enrages Goose that he attacks the biker, and must be held off by Max and Fifi, the station sergeant. "They're laughing at us," says Goose. Max is also angry, but tells Goose to let the biker go: "You can't do anything about this." In the background the cringing lawyer exclaims repeatedly, "The courts will hear about this [Goose's attack], the courts will hear about this, it is a disgrace." Goose violently shoves the lawyer against a wall. As Johnny laughingly walks away, he threatens Goose, "We know who you are." The cops must stand aside and let the thug walk away free, they are unable to do anything--anything legal that is. However, after the lawyers leave, the Sergeant tells Max and Goose "As long as the paper work's clean, you boys can do what you want out there." The ineffectualness of the legal system that allowed a sadistic criminal to walk away unpunished that is portrayed in this scene initiates a series of events that sends Max on the road, culminating in a quest for revenge. The general historical tendency for the legal system to replace religion as the moderator of ethical issues, and as the agent that structures human

activity, has been utterly compromised in the film by its bureaucratization. The institutions of justice are thoroughly inadequate to the task of punishing the guilty or correcting societal injury. Society is unable to fulfill its obligations to its members, and hence, as will be seen, the dystopic hero must ultimately move outside the community and rely upon him or herself to effect justice.

In any event, with the decay of systemically organized domains of action, only three arenas of action remain: the gang, the family, and the road. The basic functions that have been localized in the lifeworld ever since it has been differentiated from the economy and state--integration, socialization and cultural reproduction--are fulfilled, in different ways, by the first two action domains (the gang and the family). The reason that these arenas are problematic--and that the movie does not simply depict a futuristic refeudalization of society--lies in the fact that *Mad Max* retains the quintessentially modern ideal of autonomy. The persistence of this ideal obtains significance in that *Mad Max* presents a differentiated action arena--the road--where it (and individuation can occur), albeit in a particularly brutal form. We will examine each of these constellations in turn.

There are two gangs represented in *Mad Max*--the biker gang and the "cop gang." Each is a site of socialization, which, in light of the absence of any rational or traditional basis, is structured around charismatic authority. As an "ideal type," the gang life, like a religious cult, constitutes a total institution which includes and

integrates all actions. In such a community, communicative actions are limited, and the reproduction of the group identity occurs in the personality structure of every member. The personality of each individual member stereotypically reproduces the structures of the community, and any individuality is merely the residual, nonsocialized component of a given member (TC2 87). The unity of the group is achieved through recognition of the leader's charisma (authority to lead), and thus engenders a blind solidarity. There can be little or no individuation in the context of this kind of solidarity, since the differentiation of unique identities and the personal autonomy constitutive of individuation have no opportunity for realization in a group integrated by charismatic means. Thus, in essence, the gangs are intersubjectively oriented on a preconventional level.

The biker gang conforms more closely to this ideal type, and its corresponding form of solidarity is relatively effective. The gang operates as a total institution: like a family or clan, the bikers live together, sleep together (we see their bedrolls strapped to their bikes), and all aspects of their life are dictated by their leader, Toe Cutter. Indeed, when one of the gang members, Johnny Boy, is taken into custody by the police, Toe Cutter tells another biker, Bubba, to return and retrieve him. When Bubba protests-- "He's stoned again.... You're wasting your time.... He's not a rider...."--Toe Cutter responds, "You're not doing it for him, you're doing it for me." For the members of biker gang, the binding and integrative force exercised on the individual by society at large is severely weakened--indeed, we can say that the force of the *generalized* other

is altogether absent. The only form of commitment left is to a specific individual, insofar as cohesion and integration are based solely upon the members' allegiance to the leader--Toe Cutter--and not to any generalized (or generalizable) values. Thus, although the charismatically integrated collective of the biker gang does provide a sense of continuity, coherence and meaningfulness--a "home"--it is a completely inward form of organization, in the sense that those who don't belong to the collective cannot be tolerated.

The police or the "cop gang" is also organized along charismatic lines. However, within the cop gang, the exhaustiveness of the charismatic solidarity is compromised by the bureaucracy it is situated within--the cops are still officers of the law, who must adhere to the rules and regulations of the legal system. This commitment, although tenuous, still weakens the ability of the cop gang to adequately integrate, socialize and provide meaning for its members. There are two ways a cop can respond to this weakened grounding; he can either turn to the family to offset inadequate integration and solidarity, or he can eliminate that which weakens the solidaristic ties--i.e. the rules and norms of the legal system--and become, essentially, amoral like the bikers. Max recognizes the peril inherent in the latter option, as witnessed by his reaction to the attack on Goose--a scene which also underscores the charismatic nature of the relations between the members of the biker gang. In order to fulfill their threat against Goose, the bikers track him down, cause his car to crash. While Goose is pinned in the vehicle with gas leaking out, Toe Cutter orders Johnny Boy to set fire to the car:

"Do it for me." The scene cuts to the hospital where Goose has been taken, alive but burned beyond recognition. Outraged, Max wants to quit the force, but the station sergeant Fifi tries to convince him to stay. Max replies by saying: "I'm scared, Fifi. Do you know why? It's that rat circus out there...I'm beginning to enjoy it.... Look, any longer on that road and I'm one of them--a terminal crazy, only I've got a bronze badge to say that I'm one of the good guys." The actions of the police gang, of which Max is one, are only minimally distinguishable from those of the gangs they fight: only their intentions are different, and even these intentions are threatened by the violence of the road. In response to the recognized threat of the violence of the road, Max turns to his family.

The second action arena which remains in the film is that of the family. In *Mad Max*, the family is the only institution that remains intact from the prelapsarian order; it is also is completely traditional, consisting of mother, father and child, where father works and mother stays at home. In other words, members of the domestic sphere are presented solely in terms of their roles. Because role identity is defined as the identity ascribed to an individual, autonomy, as the capacity for responsible action, cannot occur, since the behavior associated with the role identity has been pre-given. Similarly, individuation of the role identity implies merely that individual A is not individual B, rather than denoting an individual who is capable of taking responsibility for determining the person he or she wants to be. The family, like the gangs, also fulfills the function of satisfying the need for stability and meaning, as well as

providing a sense of home. Also, and again as with the gang, the orientation of the family is inward; membership is highly limited and delineated, commitment belongs to family members alone, and action and organization follow their own laws rather than any external purpose. Given this, the force of the generalized other in this arena is virtually absent. (In these terms, the family and the biker gang differ from the cop gang: whereas the force of the generalized other is weakened for Max and the other cops, it is altogether absent for the biker gang and the family.) Because the cop gang cannot be the total institution that the biker gang is--that is, it cannot sufficiently integrate, socialize or provide meaning--it must be amended by the family.

As discussed in Chapter Six, one consequence of life in a modern world characterized by shifting and disparate connections and relationships, fragile and weakened social ties, instrumentalization of work and public life, and a general loss of meaning in the social world, is that individuals increasingly turn to the affective arena to provide meaning, to generate a feeling of connection to others, and to foster a sense of self-fulfillment. The role of private sphere takes on new significance when the integrative force once exerted by religion has been removed and has not been effectively replaced, and the ensuing sense of alienation, anomie and homelessness becomes pervasive. The family fulfills a compensatory function in the face of the distortions and discontents of modernity and instrumental rationality. However, the compensatory effect of the family is transformed in *Mad Max*; instead of offsetting the threats posed by the encroachments of a market economy or the administrative state apparatus, the family

now serves to compensate for the violence of the road. The family becomes the haven in this very heartless world⁶: the home is the only site not tainted by the excesses of society--represented by both the decayed legal system and the road. *Mad Max* can therefore be seen as a one-sided reaction to the distortions and discontents of modernity: it removes the pathological components, the state and the economy; it intensifies the effects of fragmented lifeworlds, the fear of the "other," normlessness (erosion of ethical and moral) and alienation; and it and upholds the crudest forms of what is left: the family on the one hand, and the violent space of the road, on the other. The relation between the road and the family that fills the vacuum left by the erosion of systemically organized arenas of action constitutes the narrative essence of the film.

The contrast between the realm of the road and that of the family is established in the opening scenes of the film. *Mad Max* begins with the high-speed chase of a cop killer. A biker called the Nightrider has slain a rookie cop and, together with his "floozy" girlfriend, they have stolen the squad car and are now speeding down the highway in a engine-roaring, tire-smoking, high-intensity escape. All available cops are called into the frenzied chase. Along the way, images of the maniacal bikers and the equally ruthless cops are constantly juxtaposed against glimpses of families, mothers and children, and lovers as they speed past. In their high-speed attempts to intercept the bikers, each cop in the pursuit comes to a crashing end--squad cars plow

⁶ See Lasch.

into telephone poles, fly through the air and flip over, police motorcycles spill and skid across the asphalt, one squad car even literally crashes through the RV of some innocent bystanders. Finally, an official "Interceptor" must be called in. Max, the "top pursuit man," coolly enters the fray--quietly adjusting a side mirror, silently donning dark sun glasses, and calmly tugging on black leather gloves--fires up his Indy-style squad car, and roars off down the highway. Max locates the speeding biker-felons, revs his engine, and comes roaring towards them in a deadly game of "chicken." Nightrider swerves and loses. Max does a 180° spin and continues his pursuit down the highway, attempting to edge them off the road by ramming into the tail of their car. As the two cars pass a highway worker, the flagman screams and waves for them to stop. Max does so, but the bikers continue. Nightrider and his girlfriend see a large mound of petrol tanks too late, and their car skids full speed into the barrels, which explode on impact, killing both.

After this breathless nonstop action sequence, the film cuts directly to a nighttime shot of the outside view of a house, gently lit from within, with crickets chirping in the background. The camera then moves inside to a softly lit domestic scene: Max and his infant son are eating while his wife Jesse is playing the sax in the background. This scene then cuts to another intimate view of family life, Jesse toweling Max's wet hair. As the couple talks about the baby, the radio is dimly playing in the background, reporting the day's fatal car chase. Jesse's question of "who was it?" hardly intrudes on their quiet domesticity. Another quick cut to the next morning and another outside

shot. This time the ocean is visible in the near distance, and sea gulls cry overhead. There is nothing else in sight. The isolation of their house is striking, it seems far removed from anything else; there are no other houses, no other people (indeed, there is not even a driveway to connect it with the road). This feeling of being removed from the outside world is reinforced later on when Jesse goes looking for Max outside the back of the house: the scene is devoid of any indication of development or other inhabitants; there is no sidewalk, but only a ragged dirt path; there are no other buildings, just the ocean and wild bush and scrub. All shots of the house convey the impression of a place away from any human contact or influence--a little haven. Returning to the morning scene, there is another shot of intimate domesticity. Max is in a sunny kitchen making coffee, the baby is playing nearby on a blanket, and, still in a bathrobe, Jesse is sleepily looking out a window. As illustrated by this contrast between the idyllic scene of family life and the chaos wrought by the gang, the function the family fulfills in modern society has been transformed in *Mad Max*; rather than operating to counteract the threats issuing from the systemically organized domains of social life (the state and economy), it is now compensation from the perpetual violence of the road. However, this compensatory influence is fragile: it holds only as long and insofar as the family is kept separate from the alienating forces of the bureaucracy and, more importantly, from the "free-for-all" of the road. Therefore, the two arenas of family and road must be kept separate. The dramatic tension in the film arises when they can no longer be held apart, when they come together--literally in the form of a station wagon.

After the attack on Goose, Fifi is able to convince Max to take a vacation with his family, rather than quit the force. He packs up his family in the station wagon, and goes on the road. They drive aimlessly, stopping along the way for picnics, a swim in a secluded pond, to buy a puppy, and other family diversions. At one point, they stop to have a spare tire repaired, and, while Max waits, Jesse decides to take the baby down the road for an ice cream cone. At the ice cream stand, Jesse runs into the biker gang; as they taunt and follow her, the leader, Toe Cutter, approaches Jesse and menacingly asks her for a "lick" of ice cream. She violently knees him, jumps in the car and races back to Max. Jesse is now a marked woman. Max reports the incident to the local sheriff, who suggests that, as a precaution, the family should stay with his friends at their secluded farm. But the gang follows them there, awaiting their opportunity for revenge. It comes soon enough. While walking in the nearby woods, Jesse is followed by an unseen figure. As she races back to the farm, she stumbles across their puppy, which has been gutted and strung up in a tree. After telling Max what has just occurred, he takes up a rifle and returns to the woods. Thus, Max is lured away from the farm, leaving only Jesse, the child and May, the elderly farm woman, behind. In the meantime, the bikers have entered the farm by the back way, and have taken the baby hostage. As Jesse pleads with them to let the baby go, May shows up with a shot gun. She forces the bikers into a small shed, locks them in, and the three of them escape by jumping into the station wagon, crashing through the gate and driving off down the highway. The gang breaks free and, in a roaring phalanx of bikes, pursue the hapless station wagon. As the bikers approach and Max comes

running across a field, the station wagon breaks down. Jesse takes the baby and flees down the highway, leaving May with the car. The bikers zoom past the station wagon, ignoring the old woman, and, without pause, run down Jesse and the baby. Max arrives on the scene in time to witness the carnage: his infant son is killed and his wife, her body crushed and broken, is critically injured.

Max, who sacrificed autonomy to the bureaucracy must now take it back, since, as the incident with Goose has shown, the legal system is utterly ineffectual; Max realizes that if he wants "justice," he must cut himself loose of the cop gang, the charismatic leadership of Fifi, and sever all solidaristic ties to the group and family. In order to do so he abandons his wife in the hospital and virtually quits his job. Max returns home to arm himself, and takes to the road alone--no family, no other cops. One by one, he hunts down the three main perpetrators of the attack: Bubba, Toe Cutter's main henchman, is straightforwardly shot; after a high speed chase, Toe Cutter himself is killed when he plows head-on into a semi truck, his body dragged under the big rig as Jesse's and the boy's were by the bikers; and Johnny Boy is slain in the same fashion Goose was. Max finds him on the side of the road stealing the boots of a man he has just killed; he hand cuffs Johnny Boy's leg to a car leaking gas, hands him a hacksaw, tosses a match to the stream of fuel, and tells him that, if he is lucky, he can cut through his ankle before the flame reaches the gas tank.⁷ He is not. As Max

⁷ An interesting aside is when Johnny Boy pleads with Max to spare his life, the reason he gives for his past actions is that he was *not responsible*: "I'm not a bad man, I'm sick. Yah, sick you see. I'm, I'm...psychopathic, Yah... The judge says so... I was sick...."

drives away, we see the explosion in the background, and ahead, the white lines of the road disappearing into the horizon.

Thus far, we have claimed that, in *Mad Max*, after the systemically organized arena of action are discredited by the dystopic framework, three action arenas remain: the gangs, the family and the road. We have discussed the manner in which the first two arenas have stepped in to fulfill those functions once covered by the lifeworld (i.e. integration, socialization, and the production of meaning). With respect to the dystopic narrative, there is, however, an inherent weakness with the strategy of relying upon the gangs or the family to secure these functions. That the family and the gangs have now taken over these functions becomes a problem in the film *only and insofar as* these action domains cannot supply the means by which to actualize the modern ideals of autonomy and, to a lesser extent, individuation, which *Mad Max* retains. The problem lies in the fact that while the compensatory function of the affective sphere is preserved--i.e. preserved from the modern world out of which *Mad Max*'s has emerged--the postconventionalism which adhered in the modern lifeworld has, at the same time, disappeared. The *intersubjective* aspect of a postconventional moral orientation implied by self-determination (and self-realization) has been eradicated. Under such a postconventional orientation, action legitimation no longer derives solely from the idiosyncratic experiences and the conventions of the particular social context of the actor, but rather is determined by that actor him or herself on the basis of justified reasoning alone, reasons whose validity is nonetheless evaluated by a larger

community of others--even if such a community must be projected futurally. Exhibiting nothing of this universalistic orientation, the affective arenas are rather entities entirely unto themselves, and are therefore rendered conventional (the family), or even pre-conventional (the gang) in nature. As a result, the process whereby individualization arises through socialization (as described by Mead)--thus allowing for the development of autonomy--is transformed. In other words, within the family and the gangs, instead of socialization encouraging individuation and the formation of ego-identity, this *communicative* process is expunged by relations and identities defined by roles or by a charismatic leader. As a consequence, the sites of socialization split from those of individuation, and each is severed from a communicative (post-conventional) orientation that would allow for the formation of self-determination and self-realization. And, as we have discussed, autonomy, as self-determination, and individuation, as self-realization, cannot develop outside a communicatively oriented action framework. In *Mad Max*, the post-conventional orientation that is commensurate with autonomy and individuation is divested of the reflexivity and intersubjectivity which is essential to its realization (i.e. communicative rationality oriented towards reaching understanding). Under these conditions, autonomy is severed from its communicative grounding [and is secured neither by prior value consensus nor achieved cooperatively, but rather, derives from force,] and the need for meaning is relegated to the private spheres of the family and the gangs.

The road thus becomes that domain in which the quest for autonomy can be realized.

However, although the domain of the road preserves the modern ideal of autonomy, under these conditions, it does so in a distorted form; it becomes that arena in which autonomy achieves its immediate realization via *coercive* self-assertion. This distortion arises from the dystopic ratio between experience and expectation; the future no longer holds out any promise, and the past is foreclosed as a site of normative grounding.

The film appropriates the modern concept of autonomy and strips it of all postconventional implications: autonomy is secured neither by prior value consensus nor achieved cooperatively, but rather, derives from force, thus leaves behind only the violence of strategic action. This takes the form of a monologization of action orientations:

Under conditions of strategic action, the self of self-determination and of self-realization slips out of intersubjective relations. The strategic actor no longer draws from an intersubjectively shared lifeworld; having himself become wordless, as it were, he stands over and against the objective world and makes decisions solely according to standards of subjective preferences. He does not rely therein upon the recognition of others. Autonomy is then transformed into freedom of choice (*Willkurfreiheit*), and the individuation of the socialized subject is transformed into the isolation of a liberated subject who possesses himself. (*PMT* 192)

Thus, as Hirschkop argues:

[M]onologism must itself be recognized as a strategy of response toward another discourse, albeit a strategy which aims to 'ignore' or 'marginalize' the opposite discourse.⁸

Hence, the road in *Mad Max* is not simply the place where one can encounter others

⁸ Ken Hirschkop, "A Response to the Forum on Mikhail Bakhtin." *Bakhtin: Essays and Dialogues on His Work*, ed. Gary Morson (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 75.

(lifeworlds) or enact a role, as in *Don Quixote*, nor is it the means by which new sites of possibility can be arrived at, as in *Jude the Obscure*; rather, to be on the road here is to occupy the space that is outside of and removed from any residual and utterly compromised normative expectations. With no past and no future, the "open" road is to be open, metaphorically speaking, to whatever possibilities, whatever actions are not usually available in the everyday realm--even if these "possibilities" are contrary to any surviving norms, for there is no "society" on the road. Thus, coupled with the inherent isolation that being in a car entails, the road is transformed into asocial arena.⁹

The meeting of others that is definitive for understanding the ceaseless historical endurance of the road trope is crucially modified within the dystopic framework. As we have seen, the road is *par excellence* the site in which a problematization of the relation between self and society occurs by means of a *discourse* with others. Such discursivity is utterly absent in *Mad Max*. This absence of discursivity centers around the issue of autonomy; autonomy is monologized, in that it is removed from communicative considerations. Being on the road remains a search for recognition; however, recognition is sought not for role performance or claims of identity, but

⁹ When in a car, it is difficult to interact with others, and in road movies this difficulty translates into the problem of how to generate dialogue and connection between the characters. Interestingly, *Mad Max* solves this problem with the use of the police radio, operating both as a means of communication between the cops and as the voice of "big brother." When the Nightrider steals a squad car, he also acquires "air time"--he is able to hear and respond to the cops talking to each other about him on the radio. The police radio in the squad cars supplements the ever-present P.A. system at the station house, continually broadcasting, in an almost robotic voice, public service announcements, orders, casualty updates, status reports, admonishments regarding appropriate police behavior and language, etc. The radio and the P.A. system connect the cops to one another, and to the bureaucracy. By the end of the movie, such communication is gone, the voice disappears, and Max is on his own.

rather, it here amounts merely to confirmation of the ego's self-determination--a confirmation which occurs instantaneously (in the moment of alter's death). As such, this is an autonomy which can only be secured via *struggle*. Furthermore, as the closing scene suggests, the struggle for the confirmation of autonomy is somewhat contradictory, insofar as the recognition achieved is fleeting. Consequently, it has to be eternally reiterated. This is what gives *Mad Max* its truly dystopic character: *the future contracts into an endless repetition of the same struggle*. For the self which obtains confirmation of its autonomy by means of coercive self-assertion is one which is not capable of sustaining a historical self-understanding.

Chapter Eight

Conclusion

Bakhtin's assertion that literature can be understood as a form of social knowledge has provided the framework by means of which we have been able to examine some of the ways in which concepts concerning the self, as articulated in social theory, also find expression in the more "everyday" (con)text of novels and film. As argued in Chapter One, if one accepts the premise that utterances are essentially social and historical in nature, that their formulation and articulation are contextually embedded as dialogue with specific or generalized others, then textual and cinematic utterances as "forms of thinking" must similarly be accorded the status of social knowledge. Moreover, it is precisely within certain forms of literature, claims Bakhtin, that we can best find the form and experience of language most characteristic of human understanding, those types of utterances which best capture the essential features of communication and interaction, where the "novelistic" is most fully expressed--that is, dialogism. In the dialogized novel we encounter the profusion and diversity of voices, always situated, and often contradicting and struggling with one another, those discursive features which are constitutive of (and constituted by) the self and its relation with others and the world. Therefore, to the question "literature as social 'knowledge' of what?," we can answer, in part, "the self" in all its socio-historical specificity.

Before an examination of these specificities could be undertaken, however, a theoretical framework conceptualizing the nature of the self and its formation needed

to be elaborated. In other words, while Bakhtin's dialogic understanding of the self and the world is one that allows us to conceive of texts as participants in the problematic instantiations of systems of language, and thus able to provide knowledge about the social world, the self and its relations with others, his "theory" is nonetheless troubled by several exclusions. Bakhtin's interest in exploring the dialogic nature of existence through an analysis of language pushes aside methodical inquiry into the manner in which the formation of selfhood occurs, and under specifies the emergence of the moral self (saying only that internal dialogue becomes "persuasive"). To this end, Bakhtin's under-articulated and nonsystematic¹ understanding of the self was supplemented and expanded by the work of Mead and Habermas. In developing their respective theories, Bakhtin, Mead and Habermas nevertheless hold in common a linguistic turn away from the paradigm of "philosophy of consciousness" in an attempt to understand the self, its relations with others and to the world. Instead of focusing on the isolated, disengaged self cognating upon an object, or an active agent that takes on and transforms nature,² each conceives of the self as emerging and being sustained in linguistic relations with others--in a relation of subject to subject rather than subject

¹ Of course, such a failure to pursue a "systematic" inquiry is also partially due to Bakhtin's fundamentally distinctive approach to language and utterances--a "suspicion of systems" (*Prosaics* 27), an abhorrence of any monologizing tendencies. On modern stylistics, see *DI*, especially pp. 260-67: "this type of analysis...acknowledge[s] only one single language and a single authorial individuality" (265). On Saussure and the Structuralists: "everyday speech genres have been studied ...from a general linguistic standpoint.... But this line of inquiry could not lead to a correct determination of the general linguistic nature of the utterance either, since it was limited to the specific features of everyday oral speech" (*Speech Genres* 61). On dialectics: "Take a dialogue and remove the voices..., remove the intonations..., carve out abstract concepts and judgments from living words and responses, cram everything into one abstract consciousness--and that's how you get dialectics" (*Speech Genres* 147).

² See, for example, Taylor on the traditions of Enlightenment thinking representative of these two positions, as well as their implications for modern moral theory.

to object, whereby identity is now understood as intersubjectively constructed and linguistically mediated. Together, these three theorists provide the elements for a model that facilitates an empirical inquiry into the ways in which the self is continually refashioned through specific situated practices and discourses.

Mead's theory of intersubjectivity was introduced as providing a more cogent account of the formation of the self, and a clearer explication of the thesis (shared with Bakhtin) that moral development is not simply a matter of conformity or adaptation to society, but is to be understood as an expansion of the sociality inherent to humans. Like Bakhtin and Habermas, Mead theorizes the self as that which first emerges in the context of symbolically mediated interaction with an other. Specifically for Mead, the organism becomes a self--achieves self-consciousness--when, in relations with others, it becomes an object to its self "in so far as [it] can take the attitude of another and act toward [itself] as others act" (*MSS* 171). In other words, it is in responding to one's own vocal gestures (significant symbols) as the other responds that one is able to take the attitude of the other towards one's own self, thereby becoming aware of the meaning of the (one's own) gesture--that is, the response that gesture evokes in the other--and thus develop consciousness. "Reflexiveness, then, is the essential condition, within the social process, for the development of mind" (*MSS* 134). One becomes a self by becoming an object to one's self, a process which occurs by taking the attitude of an other to one's own self.

This formulation becomes the basis of the "I-me" distinction. The self cannot have immediate awareness of itself; rather self-consciousness is temporal and mediated: the "I" as the initiator of the social act can only know itself "in terms of memory," it can only become aware of itself once it becomes an object to itself as the "me." And it is the attitudes of various others that constitutes the "me" to which the "I" reacts. In other words, one can only be conscious of the "me"--become a self--by taking the attitudes of an other, be that other specific or generalized.³ Thus one of the most significant developments in Mead is that, in reformulating the reflection-model of self-consciousness in such a way that the process of self formation (self-consciousness) is one that occurs *only* through the intersubjective orientation of actors, he is able to argue that individualization itself emerges as the very result of socialization processes.

Mead's discussion of the moral emerges out of this conceptualization of the "I-me" relation and the associated claim that individualization arises through socialization. Mead's well known play-game analogy describes, in the growing child, an ever-increasing sphere of others with whom the child interacts, takes into account, is influenced by, and incorporates into her or his "identity." Through this socialization process the child also becomes individuated: in learning the "attitudes" of an ever-widening circle of concrete others until abstraction from the concrete is finally possible, the child is able to learn the (generalized) attitudes of the society in which

³ "The 'I' reacts to the self which arises through the taking of the attitudes of others. Through taking those attitudes we have introduced the 'me' and we react to it as an 'I'.... The 'I' of this moment is present in the 'me' of the next moment. There again I cannot turn around quick enough to catch myself. I become a 'me' in so far as I remember what I said" (MSS 174).

she finds herself and achieve a certain "unity." However, through this same process, she comes to achieve a certain identity by internalizing--making her own--the diverse expectations of these concrete and generalized others towards which she then, as an autonomous self, takes a stance for which she is accountable. In terms of the "I-me" formulation, the "me" is that aspect of the self that comes to represent the specific normative organization of the community. Nonetheless, the "I" still retains its unpredictability and spontaneity in its responses to the as-of-yet *conventional* "me."

A conventional moral orientation is one where the normative expectations of the generalized other (which constitutes the "me") in essence relieves the individual of moral responsibility--conventional moral action is to adhere *unreflexively* to the conventions, the norms given by the extant social order. However, Mead transposes this dominance of the conventional "me" over the autonomy and spontaneity of the "I" when he discusses the growth of social differentiation and the emergence of a moral orientation that goes beyond a conventional one. A postconventional⁴ moral orientation arises insofar as the self reflexively departs from pre-given normative expectations, and projects a context of interaction wherein recognition and thus reconciliation qua social group can be at least futurably anticipated. For Mead, modernity offers "greater scope" for individuality, autonomy and creative thinking and behavior; indeed, "civilized society" itself is made possible by the "progressive social liberation" of the self from the pre-given patterns of organized social activity (*MSS*

⁴ Again, this is not a Meadian term--it has been appropriated from Habermas. Moreover, as argued in Chapter Two, Mead never adequately specified this "level" of moral development.

221). Hence, moral action is conceived of in terms of the sociability of actors, and is a principle category through which to explore the formation of the self and its relations to others and the world. Thus, increased autonomy (the potential for autonomous action) arises when the relation between the "I" and the "me" shifts, and the "I"--always socially constituted--can posit alternatives not allowed by the tradition-bound "me" and for which the self takes responsibility, but which are always directed towards a "larger society." That is, self-determination and self-realization become independent achievements, not in isolation from but in response to the particular social context. Under these conditions, *recognition* of one's claims to uniqueness and singularity, and not agreement with one's judgments and actions, become central in relationships with others (*PMT* 186). In this manner, Mead provides an argument for the manner in which individualization occurs through socialization as a discursively mediated process, and not as the realization of an isolated subject.

Bakhtin also takes the linguistic turn and explores the nature of social relations through a theory of language, one grounded in a revised understanding of the formation of self that works out the problem of self-reflexive access to consciousness by rejecting the idea that the genesis of self is something immanent, and argues instead that it is formulated in communicative interaction. Insofar as the possibility of the self and the capacity for consciousness occurs in the individual's relations with others, and insofar as this process is communicative, the self is "dialogic." Because Bakhtin seeks to illuminate this dialogic nature of existence, he focuses on those features of language

use that are constitutive of dialogic relations, and thus orients his theory of knowledge and of social interaction towards the pragmatic aspects of language. In this way he thematically pursues that which he sees as the inescapable nature of interaction--the struggle for meaning and voice. That is, although relations are established in attempts to make sense out of shared existence, Bakhtin insists, to a greater degree than Habermas and Mead, that there are differences between self and other--the necessary socio-historical multiplicity of perception, the questioning and responding, agreement and disagreement--that cannot, in the "last instance," be overcome. The self is conceived of as a conversation of oft conflicting, inconsistent, and competing voices, each differentially positioned with varying degrees authority. Correspondingly, the world of heterogeneous experience is understood as constituted by a multiplicity of languages, each conceived of as "particular points of view on the world" (DI 293). This multiplicity operates as a force of disunification, while at the same time "other forces" are at work that ensure a certain minimal degree of understanding--i.e. centripetal and centrifugal forces, respectively.

As it is for Mead, the moral self is understood by Bakhtin in terms of communicative intersubjectivity; the moral is that aspect of the self which is symptomatic of dialogism in its "truest" form. Moreover, since the process of becoming human is linguistic and intersubjective to the core, the moral has, for Bakhtin, two components: first, the *selective* assimilation of the words of others, and second, the *novel response* to the world of everyday experience. With respect to the latter, creativity in the pragmatic

deployment of speech acts is one of the key components of ethics and moral action. This involves the acquisition of the capacity to take responsibility, to "sign" one's actions, to *respond* creatively to the different languages, the different points of view that confront the self. A responsive understanding of this sort includes evaluation of claims related to "values," such as "truth, beauty, and so forth" (SG 125). The ability to selectively assimilate and creatively respond to the word of the other--i.e. the process of becoming a moral actor--emerges in and through language when, as the voices of tradition and the already-given are subject to critique, and the intersubjective recognition of the reciprocal uniqueness of each participant occurs, the authoritative (generalized) discourse is supplanted by internally persuasive (reflexive) discourse. Authoritative discourse demands "unconditional allegiance," it "permits no play with the context framing it, no play with its borders" (DI 343). Internally persuasive discourse, on the other hand, is "half-ours and half-someone else's," and involves the acceptance or rejection of others' judgements or claims about the world (DI 349).

This conceptualization of language and experience provides entry into a deficiency in Mead, namely that concerning the generalized other. Indeed, Bakhtin's discussions of heteroglossia and centripetal and centrifugal forces offer a promising corrective to Mead's vexing depiction of the generalized other as relatively monolithic and homogeneous, while still remaining within a communicative framework. Specifically, Mead's notion of a generalized other tends to conceptualize the relation of the individual to the social as if it was a relation with another individual, and in doing so,

homogenizes the interpretations, meanings, utterances and actions of a plurality of others. Or, in Bakhtinian terms, because the society at large to which the individual is relating is forced into the mold of *an* individual, the plural-vocality of relations to the world is monologized. Bakhtin's more adequate theorization of culture and society on the basis of communicative interaction makes central the differentiated, and conflictual, nature of experience both at the societal as well as at the individual levels. He sees the formation of consciousness, identities, and "languages" as occurring at the "borders" where centripetal and centrifugal forces collide, where diverse ways of speaking, diverse social and historical experiences encounter one another. Meaning and order are produced, not static. This should not be taken to imply, however, that Bakhtin argues that there is something inherently wrong with order; rather, he asserts that any order must be recognized for what it is--an imposed order. We can never escape (or would even want to) authoritative discourses, for they provide a degree of unity that is necessary in order for meanings to be shared, and thus for relations to be established and the formation of self and identities to take place. But Bakhtin does insist that there are differences in communicative interrelations that cannot be surmounted. In order that the self may be "actualized" to its fullest potential, care must be taken to recognize, engage and criticize monologizing discourses. When words are placed in different contexts, their meanings are transformed, for words (utterances) never have a status outside "lived" relations. The world is a site of *contested* meanings, where variations in socio-historical and experiential contexts prevent the possibility of a final unity of meaning--the word and the world are

"unfinalized." It is only through struggle that meaning is--but only tentatively, and for a moment--achieved, and this struggle never ceases. In this manner Bakhtin can be used to amend Mead's depiction of the normative as unified and uncontested. Against the Meadian model that proposes a simple dichotomy between conformity and innovation (especially inappropriate in a modern culture that is pluralistic and wrought with contestation), Bakhtin offers a more complex model of social relations, one which is more sensitive to the tensions that exist within and between these experiences. By treating the generalized other as an individual, Mead can neither provide an adequate account of moral action in modern, heterogeneous society, nor specify the conditions under which postconventionality at the social level becomes possible. Bakhtin offers a corrective to a monolithic, homogeneous and relatively unified understanding of the generalized other. And, with respect to moral formation, the tension between solidarity (a centripetal force) and individuation (a centrifugal force) still exists, but postconventionalism can now be looked at in terms of an internally heterogeneous social body, one that is fractured into smaller groups who find different balances between solidarity and individuation. What Bakhtin lacks, however, is any real account of those systematic factors that impede or encourage such formations. What is needed here is the idea of a social body where, at every different level, from individual to collective, there occurs an ever-shifting balance between solidarity and individuation--individuals contest other individuals, groups contest other groups--but also where there are solidaristic ties that stretch down and across all these relations. This permits us to shift the focus from symbolically mediated interactions to the

institutional mechanisms that make societal postconventionality possible. This, of course, is what Habermas attempts to do.

Following from his communicative model of action, Habermas outlines the manner in which the historical processes of social differentiation, pluralization, decentration and desacralization that allow for the increased individualization of the modern self are also those same processes which render the actualization of identities problematic. Proceeding from Mead's insight, Habermas argues that the self that is understood as formulated in intersubjective communication is one that is oriented toward mutual understanding. That is, pragmatically, language use which intersubjectively orients the individual to others also implies that action (speech) oriented to understanding is an inherent aspect of human life. Hence, judgements or knowledge about the world are not conceived of as projected by a "monological consciousness," as under philosophies of consciousness, but by interacting subjects who, in their communicative acts, raise validity claims about the objective, intersubjective and subjective worlds (*PMT ix*). Under these conditions, not only the instrumental, but the normative (and, to a less clearly articulated degree, the expressive) can admit rational reconstruction in the form of providing reasons--i.e. the establishment of warrants for validity claims. However, with respect to the normative in particular, Habermas goes beyond Mead and Bakhtin by clearly specifying the *historical* conditions under which this process of

postconventional moral development occurs.⁵

Habermas argues that when the pregiven normative background of a society is no longer able to supply its normative grounding *in advance*, there then arises a reflective concept of "world." This reflexivity, in turn, allows the interpretive efforts of individuals to come to the fore in interrogating and negotiating problematic claims for which there is no longer any possible justification except through argumentation, and thus freeing the rationality potential inherent in communication. It is only in modernity, claims Habermas, that the hitherto unified world(s) become decentered and the rationalization of the lifeworld can take place. It is also in modernity that a conception of rationality, now dialogically understood, is realized in terms of the pragmatics of language use (illocutionary force of an utterance) and the reasons that

⁵ Bakhtin does briefly allude to the social conditions necessary for dialogism in literature to emerge. "The novel begins by presuming a verbal and semantic decentering of the ideological world, a certain linguistic homelessness of literary consciousness, which no longer possesses a sacrosanct and unitary linguistic medium for containing ideological thought.... What is involved here is a very important, in fact a radical revolution in the destinies of human discourse: the fundamental liberation of cultural-semantic and emotional intentions from the hegemony of a single and unitary language, and consequently the simultaneous loss of a feeling for language as a myth, that is, as an absolute form of thought" (*DI* 367). What is required for the novel to surface is for the verbal-ideological world to become "decentralized," such that a culture becomes aware of "itself and its language" in order to "relativize the primary language system underlying its ideology and literature and deprive it of its naive absence of conflict" (*DI* 368). The hegemony of myth over language is located, states Bakhtin, in prehistorical and necessarily hypothetical past of language consciousness. The verbal-ideological decentering needed to shake loose the monological authority of such mythically unified and unrelativized language only occurs when "a national culture loses its sealed-off and self-sufficient character, when it becomes conscious of itself as only one among other cultures and languages.... [During the process of decay and collapse of the authorial language] the decentered language consciousness of prose art ripens, finding its support in the social heteroglossia of [actually spoken languages]. This is how those germs of novelistic prose appear in the poly- and heteroglot world of the Hellenistic era, in Imperial Rome and during the disintegration and collapse of the church-directed centralization of discourse and ideology in the Middle Ages. Even in modern times, the flowering of the novel is always connected with a disintegration of stable verbal-ideological systems..." (*DI* 370-1). Thus, even though Bakhtin is not interested in analyzing the specifics of modernity, it is clear that his understanding of "decentration," and the conditions necessary for the emergence of the novel are entirely reconcilable with Habermas' own explication.

could be offered for claims of truth, rightness, and sincerity, and where these reasons themselves are, in turn, evaluated intersubjectively. It is this released rationality potential which forms the core of Habermas' moral theory. Within the newly demarcated lifeworld, the previously and relatively unexamined order mandated by traditional worldviews disintegrates, once unquestioned norms are now subject to interrogation, and new conventions must somehow establish their legitimacy. The self, under these conditions, now seeks to reassure itself as the initiator of its own action as a self-realizing and self-determining individual. This individuation, however, occurs only via the process of socialization; the self, always socially constituted, does not detach itself from society to achieve this independence, but rather *projects* itself towards a "larger society" where it can be, at least, stabilized in relationships of *anticipated* reciprocal recognition. This is possible only with the emergence of a futurally orientated consciousness of time. Habermas is thus able to specify the empirical conditions under which a postconventional ego-identity formation can arise, displacing the more conventional role-identity, when he argues that the environment under which discourse on a society wide level can flourish (i.e. the absence of coercion and an openness to critique) forms when the lifeworld becomes rationalized and a futural time consciousness emerges--that is, only in modernity.

But in order to interrogate some of the specific historical *articulations* of selfhood in literature and film, a means by which to systematically conceptualize these configurations was required. The work of Koselleck provided such a methodological

framework by setting forth the manner in which what he calls the space of experience and the horizon of expectation enable an inquiry into the concrete specificities of temporal-experiential matrices of a given era. Koselleck not only provides the conceptual criteria for an interrogation into the concrete shifts in worldviews, but also allows for a clearer specification of the way in which the emergent ego-identity formulates its postconventional moral orientation. Simply stated, the tension between experience and expectation reveals the extent to which the past (experience) informs the understanding of possibilities of action and thought (expectation): to the degree that expectations reach out towards the future and become detached from all that previous experience has to offer, the horizon of expectations is no longer confined by the space of experience; rather, the limits of the two diverge, and the future is expected and understood to be distinct from the past. Thus an inquiry into the ratio between experience and expectation--and the divergence between the two--reveals the particular form of historical consciousness and the types of experience opened up by the emergence of modernity. Habermas' evaluation of the processes of decentration and the development of a futural time consciousness, as constitutive of modernity, can thus be concretely analyzed in terms of the severing of experience and expectation. This dissolution transforms the nature of self formation from the actualization of what has been articulated by tradition, to a *search* for self.⁶

Thus, to sum up the first part of the project, through Bakhtin we are able to see how

⁶ Habermas has also emphasized that the nature of *language* itself renders the formation of the self a "quest." See above, pp. 119-20.

literary texts can serve as an archival resource--a form of social knowledge--in the exploration of the shifting historical understandings of the self insofar as these forms exhibit a dialogic orientation (however weakly realized) towards the language use of others. That self is, according to Mead, Bakhtin and Habermas, intersubjective to the core; and recognition (response) on the part of another is an integral, indeed, indispensable component in its formation, especially in its moral component. The second half of the project takes the metaphor of the road as one way to look at how the historical specificity of knowledge of the self, and particular formulations of the moral, have been articulated in literature and film. Since the self is conceived of as an ongoing search and not given or fixed, the road metaphor seems especially appropriate to an analysis of the various forms the quest for selfhood has taken in modernity. The experience of the search for the self on the modern road is, however, qualitatively different from that in the premodern era. A brief contrast with Joseph Campbell's discussion of the "hero" is illustrative of the significance of this shift.⁷

In *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Campbell defines the standard path of mythological heroes as a "monomyth," "a magnification of the formula represented in the rites of passage: *separation-initiation-return*" (30). This monomyth consists of a hero who ventures forth from the everyday world into a realm or arena of supernatural wonder; fantastic forces are encountered over which the hero wins a decisive victory; the hero then returns from his adventure with the ability to bestow benefits on his

⁷ Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1973).

community. Popular tales represent the heroic adventure as physical, whereas the "higher religions" depict the action as moral. Putting aside certain reservations,⁸ what remains most problematic for an analysis of the modern self in literature and film is the hermetic circularity of Campbell's depiction of the heroic monomyth.

Specifically, as Habermas has shown, the historical processes of social differentiation, pluralization, decentration and desacralization that allow for the increased individualization of the modern self are also those same processes which render the actualization and recognition of such identities problematic. This situation renders Campbell's depiction of the road-adventure motif inadequate on two interrelated levels. First, the increasing pluralization and differentiation transform *relatively* homogeneous traditional lifeworlds (or generalized others) into diverse and divergent spheres of experience, often at odds with one another. In other words, there is no one "home" from which the hero sets out, much less one "home" for her or him to return to. This lack of home derives from the disjunctions of modernity which continually destabilize particular formations and relations between past and future and, thus, undermine any sort of taken for granted unity within the lifeworld.⁹ Indeed, contrary to the monomyth of the separation-initiation-return of the traditional hero described by

⁸ Two examples of these concerns are, first, Campbell's depiction of the hero and his quest somehow following a preordained cosmic scheme forced upon unwitting individuals who unquestioningly follow their "destiny" which, in effect, eradicates any real sense of self-determination; or, second, the presentation of the hero as the champion of "things becoming" who, instead of contributing to social renewal, effects a continuation of its inertia.

⁹ In Meadian terms, under these conditions of modernity, there is no single (if there ever was one) generalized other to which the hero and the members of the community can jointly refer.

Campbell, for the modern "hero" the "separation" from community has occurred long before he or she arrives on the scene; there is no one community into which the hero can unproblematically and singularly be "initiated." Moreover, from this plurality there are many aspects of the self that are not determined by tradition, but which nonetheless require recognition by some sort of other. This pluralization transforms the nature of the quest, the very reasons that the self sets out on the road. Those social changes that provided the opportunity for the exercise of communicative rationality and the formation of a self-determining and self-realizing ego--and thus selfhood creatively and pluralistically (even dialogically) forged rather than (monologically) imposed--transfers the emphasis from *the enactment* to the *production* of identities. Under these conditions, the *recognition* by others necessary both in the formation of selfhood and in the construction of identity becomes ever more difficult to achieve, and this must increasingly be sought in a projected community of others. Thus, lacking possible opportunities for recognition for a differentially constituted self in the arena of origin, the self must now seek it elsewhere.

Additionally, and more significantly, there is no home to which the wandering hero can triumphantly "return" and achieve recognition for the self he or she has become away from the community, nor is there often any point in returning "home," for to return "home" under these conditions is to return as an outsider. The loss or weakening of traditional categories and sites of selfhood in modernity have, in essence, rendered the self homeless and transformed the search for self--with all its finite and

fixed connotations--into a process of a continual, ongoing quest as the individual attempts to integrate and accommodate the increasingly multiplicitous aspects of his or her identity, *and* to achieve recognition for each one. The individual's attempts to achieve self-determination, self-realization, and recognition preclude both the "power of destiny" and the inevitability of a predetermined future in these efforts, as the break with the past is continually renewed, rendering these attempts continually problematic and uncertain. In other words, for Campbell's hero, the space of experience and the horizon of expectation have not yet diverged, and the road outward can still lead home again. but this is decidedly not the case for the modern protagonist. This is not to say, of course, that prior to the modern age the formation of self and the construction of identity was a smooth and uneventful process. Indeed, the ubiquitous presence of the road trope throughout literary and cinematic history is not only an indication of how the structure of language always obliges human kind to search for the self, but it is also suggestive of the uncertainties and ambiguities involved in this project. However, what has decisively altered with modernity is a loss of coherence and the quasi-natural status of those comprehensive frameworks of understanding within which these "quests" had been situated.

As with claims to identity, the necessary requirement for recognition has always been beset with problems and subject to challenge. Definition and evaluation of adequate role performance, for example, has always been infiltrated by strategic, economic and ideological considerations. However, in modernity, not only the sheer proliferation of

possible identity formations, but also the increase in the number of arenas in which identities can and need to be confirmed--family, work, leisure, government, media, etc.--renders the project of genuine recognition especially daunting. From the vast network of multiple and complex identity claims and configurations, the expanding subjectivism of beliefs, values, obligations and needs, and the myriad competing social activities, goals and schemes, the project of both intersubjective and institutional recognition achieves a level of complexity, fragility, and contentiousness and acquires an urgency hitherto unknown. Under these conditions, what then are to be the grounds for acceptability or legitimation of identity claims?

This project looked at three historically specific responses to the experience of fragmentation, decentration and sense of homelessness encountered by the modern self. The passage of the road theme through modernity, marked by the growing divergence between experience and expectation and the emerging prominence of ego-identity formation over simple role-identity, is thematically traced in its progression through an analysis of *Don Quixote*, *Jude the Obscure*, and *Mad Max*.

The first case study was *Don Quixote* where the social tensions generated by the nascent disengagement of experience and expectation is thematically manifest in an anachronism: an aging hero who *attempts* to reclaim an extinct past in the face of the uncertain forces of a new age. With the waning influence of tradition's ability to order social life, and the expanding expectations of the new age, experience is

characterized in the tension between the capacity to transform reality and the resistance to such transformations. The gap between experience and expectation and the powerful tensions between social groups find their expression in *Don Quixote* in the struggles of a "madman" who claims absolute freedom and attempts to transform the world. He is presented to us with almost no past--we are not even sure of his real name until the final pages. Like his peasant neighbor Sancho, this unnamed man is at the outset a most sedentary character, and there is nothing novelistic about him, until his obsessive reading mobilizes him, sending him forth on the road. Don Quixote's adventures bring into contact the deteriorating era of Spanish feudalism with the dawning age of modernity. In Spain during the late 16th century, the cultural and economic transformations brought about by the Renaissance translated into a widespread questioning of traditional values which, in turn, were seen as a threat to the interests of the aristocracy of Spanish society and resulted in a revival of medieval traditionalism in some sectors, a return to absolute monarchism, and a intensification of containment strategies generally known as refeudalization (all of which were to isolate the country from the rest of Europe for centuries). Finding themselves increasingly dislodged from traditional definitions and relations, individuals began to reflexively engage the world, make claims (implicit or explicit) about their identities, and seek out contexts of recognition. Don Quixote's own response to the disruption of taken for granted ways of life is to reach *backwards* into the past, towards an extinct role-identity, instead of looking ahead and acknowledging the growing distance between past and present by forging a fresh alternative out of the newly created space.

As a "living" anachronism, Don Quixote's identity assertions and the reasons given for his actions draw attention to the actual process of the rational transformation of the lifeworld. In order that his actions and beliefs can be evaluated, he is required by others to provide reasons, but the reasons for his actions and beliefs had hitherto obtained their validity from tradition. Don Quixote asserts his "communicatively oriented" right to define his own identity, but is also subject to its criteria of justification and rationality. Since he fails to offer what are now considered acceptable warrants under these new conditions--since there is no appropriate horizon upon which he can project and find acceptance for his claims, and, since this past is dead--he is deemed mad. The road is the arena where these negotiations take place, where the gap between experience and expectation is encountered. This translates into a narrative focus on the old knight's subjective experience of his encounters on the road rather than a more objective representation of these events--the text is becoming dialogized.

Don Quixote is not alone in his attempts to (re)define himself in a rapidly changing world: Sancho first becomes a squire and then a governor; the various lovers masquerade their identities in attempts to marry according to their own (affective) wishes rather than those imposed by tradition; the escaped galley slave transforms himself into a traveling gypsy, etc. The novel can be seen as a struggle waged between competing worldviews. But each of the characters have in common the inability to see their *own* claims as but one among many--each character lacks the reflexive ability to interrogate her or his own worldview. Although each character can

assume a reflexive standpoint viz Don Quixote--recognize that they are each referring to different lifeworlds--they are unable to recognize the relativity of their own lifeworld or to discursively engage the various validity claims. Hence, the respective lifeworlds of each character become the criterion upon which she or he judges all others, each character evaluates the others solely on the basis of her or his own respective terms of acceptability, one convention is merely played off another. Much of the humor of *Don Quixote* arises from the fact that the novel places itself outside any one of these conventions and is therefore able to see simultaneously the particularity of each lifeworld and the blind maneuverings of each character. This view from above, however, is also restricted; it can only reveal the plurality, but it cannot mediate between its components; it can disclose alternatives, but it cannot interrogate, legitimate or establish communication between them. Thus, although in *Don Quixote* we begin to see different languages brought together, they fail to understand each others' discourses (*DI* 402-3); the distinctiveness of each language is emphasized (*DI* 411), but the impossibility of communication between them precludes the characters from dealing critically with the various underlying normative structures.¹⁰ In other words, there is conflict between discourses, but no engagement.

¹⁰ This is one weakness in Bakhtin: although he contrasts languages that "do not acknowledge each other or are capable of ignoring each other" with languages that "mutually reveal each other's presence and begin to function for each other as dialogizing backgrounds," there is no real discussion of what this process of mutual revelation consists, nor the specific consequences for any given language (worldview) so engaged in these revelatory relations (*DI* 414). Habermas, on the other hand, provides a theory of argumentation that supplies the grounds for evaluating the truthness, sincerity or rightness of a claim--for a critique of the lifeworld--in terms of an evaluation of validity claim, and thus is able to specify the nature and terms of these sorts of engagements, where consensus is *one* possible outcome.

In *Jude the Obscure*, the second case study, the decentration of worldviews has escalated, all arenas of modern life have become more complex, and a futural time consciousness has fully developed. These conditions firmly shift the fundamental problematic from one of conflicts between roles to the difficulties surrounding the formation of ego-identity and the obstacles associated with seeking recognition for this type of self formation. When the past no longer has semantic sovereignty, normative understanding is achieved more through the communicative abilities of actors who are able to recognize and subject to critique their now-problematic lifeworld. And, when a modern time consciousness grants the awareness of the relativity of their own historical era, actors become capable of reflexively distinguishing between experience and expectations. Taken together, authority is now secured more and more through the communicative means of argumentation and critique of validity claims which render possible an achieved consensus. Additionally, as the lifeworld become pluralized so too do the norms and conventions particular to any given lifeworld, and any appearance of a relatively homogenous generalized other splinters into discrete, and often antagonistic, normative frameworks. This pluralization of the generalized other not only places additional demands on the communicative abilities of actors, who must somehow evaluate and take a position with respect to these competing frameworks, but it also generates a potentially even more serious situation for the modern self--the problem of achieving recognition.

The fragmentation of the lifeworld and the growing gap between experience and

expectation changes the nature of experience on the road. In *Don Quixote*, much of the narrative centered around the *hidalgo*'s attempt to live *like a knight*; the road thus served as the means by which he could actualize a predefined role (importantly, though, it is a role he chose for himself, so that the quest cannot be neatly resolved a la Campbell's returning hero). In *Jude*, by contrast, the past cannot serve an analogous function. The protagonist, thrown back on his own interpretive abilities, must *seek* out some sort of identity, and the road serves not to bring into contact various tradition-bound enclaves still linked to the past, but instead acts the means by which the possibilities of the unknown future can be accessed. That is, the experience on the modern road is no longer one of the *actualization* of pregiven categories of selfhood, but has become instead a *search* for self: Jude takes to the road because of who he wants to *become* and not because of who he *is*.

However, the processes that allow for these attempts at individuation and autonomy are those same processes that engender alienation, anomie and the sense of homelessness that pervades Jude. Specifically, attempts self-determination and self-realization distinctive of a postconventional orientation imply that the individual is able to place herself *outside* any particular conventionally circumscribed context. These attempts, however, are always oriented toward some community of others--the self cannot confirm its autonomy or individuality in isolation. Theoretically, this problem can be answered by positing a communicative community located in the *future*. However, at the everyday level--as this is what we witness in *Jude*--the problem is not so neatly

resolved. Before this option is invoked, attempts are made to gain recognition in the present, and it is only after these fail that the individual considers the recourse of a futurally projected community of others. The difficulty in seeking such recognition (both in the present or in the future), and the sense of alienation and homelessness experienced by the individual in this process, can be profound. This sense of homelessness definitive of the modern search for self (and overlooked by Campbell) is a constitutive feature of *Jude*: although Jude continually asks "Who am I," continually looks for a home, he never achieves recognition.

Jude's search for self takes place in two arenas: the quasi-public arena of the economic, and in the private arena of the affective or the domestic. The latter is significant in that it is only in modernity that the domestic sphere comes to be considered a crucial arena within which to ground the self. In *Jude*, as it becomes obvious that he will never enter into Christminster, Jude increasingly turns his attention towards pursuing Sue and some sort of domestic stability--that is, failing to win recognition in one arena, he must seek it in another. The affective arena thus serves as a type of compensation for the alienating effects he experiences elsewhere. However, as much as the home comes to be seen by Jude as a haven from the heartlessness of Christminster, the specter of the home is experienced by Sue as a prison. The distinction between the public and private spheres that offers Jude alternative sites to seek recognition also operates to isolate gender roles within the family from postconventional transformation. For example, the tendency for the

resolution of conflicts within the home to be the under the prerogative of male heads of household is manifested in the novel in the struggle between Jude and Philliston for the "right" to decide Sue's fate. Their inability to "understand" her, her seeming "peculiarities." all stem from Sue's resistance to their authority, the conventional moral orientation at work in the domestic arena, and her own struggle for autonomy and identity.

In *Jude* although the project of formulating an ego-identity and achieving recognition was problematic, the sense of optimism, hope and utopia directed towards the future still lay just below the surface, even though it was not available for Jude himself. The third and final case study is one where this hope, this utopian impulse, has been extinguished. In *Mad Max* the pathologies of modernity and the destruction of the myth of progress manifest themselves in a dystopic "fantasy" of life "a few years from now." With the dissolution of a stable space of experience and the looming, even frightening aspect of the horizon of expectation, the question arises of what is to become the source of meaning when both the past and the future become closed off. In *Mad Max*, one source is derived from a *selective* appropriation of a concept definitive of modernity: autonomy. Against this dystopic ratio between past and future, the experience of the road is again transformed. It is projected at the site where the individual can regain, albeit crudely, the autonomy that had been sacrificed to the pathologies of the state, economy and the law. However, although the road is the domain in which the quest for autonomy can be realized, it takes a distorted form:

severed from its communicative grounding, the autonomy that operates on the road is one predicated on speed, force and coercion. These aspects of *Mad Max* will be discussed in more detail below, but the point to be made here, as argued in Chapter Seven, is that the road is no longer the place where one can encounter others or enact a role, as in *Don Quixote*, nor is it any longer a route to new sites of possibility, as in *Jude the Obscure*. Instead, to be on the road in this film is to inhabit a space outside of any remaining and thoroughly compromised normative expectations. The freedom of Max's road is the freedom to do whatever one wants, or whatever "needs" to be done, regardless of societal conventions. Thus, the road is transformed into a *asocial* arena, and the need for meaning is ghettoized into the private sphere (i.e. the family and the gangs). In the face of these disintegrative tendencies, the family and the gangs provide a sense of stability and home, albeit a weak one. In particular, the family offers compensation from the alienating effects of the road, and is that arena to which Max turns in order to gain a feeling of connectedness and to foster a sense of self-fulfillment. This compensatory effect is, however, extremely fragile and can only be maintained by keeping the family separate from the deleterious forces of the outside world, most notably the gangs. And, when Max fails to do so, the family is ultimately destroyed by the violence of the road.

The aim of this project has been two fold. First it has sought to argue, following Bakhtin, that literature (and thus film) is an authentic site of social knowledge--indeed, Bakhtin maintains that it is *the* privileged site owing to its dialogic and active

character. Second, from this position, it has attempted to explore modern conceptions of the self: theoretically, this analysis is situated within the paradigm shift made undertaken by Bakhtin, Mead and Habermas, and empirically explored in three case studies. Specifically, in conceiving of communicative relations with others as constitutive of the self, the shift is from, in Fraser's words, an "epistemological problematic" where the mind is conceived of as mirroring reality, to a "discursive problematic"¹¹ that places in the foreground the cultural and historical contexts within which social actors are located. This move also refocuses attention on the pragmatic nature of relations individuals have with the cognitive, normative, and expressive worlds established intersubjectively through communicative means. Hence, since the shifts towards increasing fragmentation, pluralization and postconventional moral orientation undergone by the self in modernity are tied to those processes of ever-expanding secularization and decentration within the social arena, textual investigation focused on three historically exemplary moments: the advent of modernity, "high" modernity, and the contemporary "pathological" disintegration of the ideals of this age. In other words, the singularity of--and the interanimation established between--the work of Bakhtin, Mead and Habermas results in the capacity to treat texts as a social knowledge by which we are able to *historically* investigate the various roads taken in the development of the modern self.

Both of these points--Bakhtin's assertion that literature occupies *the* privileged position

¹¹ Nancy Fraser, "Pragmatism, Feminism, and the Linguistic Turn," *Feminist Contentions: A Philosophical Exchange* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1995) 157.

as a form of social knowledge and the connection between Bakhtin, Mead and Habermas--derive from the primacy each place on the notion of a linguistically constituted self. (At least on a general level, this premise also places them in the company of many other theorists, including the "postmodernists" who also assert the primacy of language, however differently they construe it.) Nevertheless, of all those considered here, Habermas is the only one for whom notions of linguistically mediated interaction are not exhaustive of his approach to social theory. Through his discussion of systemically integrated domains of action as distinct from--but always intertwined with the lifeworld--Habermas suggests the limits of, for example, notions of the performative (Judith Butler),¹² discursivity (Bakhtin), and even his own discourse ethics. He argues that focus on symbolic forms of domination has, as its price, the disappearance from all but the sociologists' viewpoint of systemic mechanisms of domination. By analytically distinguishing "lifeworld" from "system," he redirects our attention back to the fact that societal integration consists not only of the coordination of action orientations, but of unintended action consequences as well. Habermas is unique in placing significant limits on the analysis of the symbolically constituted arenas of action and integration to the extent that whether one thinks in terms of domination, contestation or consensus, becomes almost secondary, since each presupposes a more or less intact lifeworld. When systemic considerations are reintroduced, however, each of these perspectives begin to appear, at best, rather

¹² Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1990); "Contingent Foundations," and "For a Careful Reading," *Feminist Contentions: A Philosophical Exchange*, ed. Linda Nicholson (New York, NY: Routledge, 1995) 35-57, 127-143.

limited: all three assert the primacy of symbolic processes and presuppose the symbolic as having a certain *integrative efficacy*. Whereas Habermas claims that, in a systemically integrated context, the symbolic becomes divested of its integrative capacity and structures of domination become largely divorced from symbolic categories of self understanding, identity, etc.--this is the colonization thesis.

We have already discussed how the linguistification of the sacred encourages the realization of the rationality potential of communicative action within the lifeworld (81), but to understand Habermas' claim we must, briefly, complete the picture. As the sacred becomes linguistified, giving rise to a generalization of values, communicative action becomes detached from "concrete and traditional normative behavior patterns" (TC2 180). This has the effect of shifting the burden of integrating the plurality of individuals from consensus anchored in religion to processes of consensus formation in language--that is, value generalization contributes to the release of the rationality potential immanent in communicative action. Habermas claims, however, that when communicative action becomes freed from particular value orientations, action oriented towards success and action oriented towards mutual understanding separate. And, once detached, each type of action is free to develop the potential of its own distinctive mode of integration. In other words, insofar as, in the lifeworld, action is oriented towards mutual understanding, and in systemic arenas, towards strategically conceived ends, each requires a distinct mechanism of integration. In the lifeworld the shared orientation towards mutual understanding itself can serve

this function (which Habermas terms "social integration"). With respect to the systemic arena, since action is not oriented communicatively--actors are oriented instead to success--coordination in this sphere must take place on a different level. Thus, according to Habermas, a form of nonlinguistic integration arises via the consequences of action. The implication is that while both types of action can occur in the lifeworld and the systemic arenas, only one has developed the mechanisms to facilitate the integration of large plurality of actors or actions in each. Thus, for Habermas, the forms of integration specific to the lifeworld and system can be conceptualized by

distinguishing mechanisms for coordinating action that harmonize the *action orientations* of participants from the mechanisms that stabilize nonintended interconnection of actions by way of functionally intermeshing *action consequences*. In one case, the integration of an action system is established by a normatively secured or communicatively achieved consensus, in the other case, by a nonnormative regulation of individual decisions that extends beyond the actors' consciousness. (TC2 117)

Social integration or action coordination takes place through the medium of communicative action, whereas systemic integration takes place via nonlinguistic mechanisms. Money and power are two nonlinguistic means, or steering media, by which systemic integration is achieved; they allow for the exercise of generalized, strategic influence on the decision making processes of other individuals that *bypass* processes of consensus-oriented communication. These media do not just simplify linguistic communication, but replace it with a "symbolic generalization of rewards and punishments," and, in doing so, "the lifeworld contexts in which processes of reaching

understanding are always embedded are devalued in favor of media-steered interactions; the lifeworld is no longer needed for the coordination of action" (*TC2* 183). It is important to note here the intersubjective implication of the two forms of integration for responsibility. If "responsibility" is taken to mean, as it does for Habermas, an orientation towards criticizable validity claims, however conceived (i.e. including Bakhtin's own notion of responsibility as "signing one's acts" in an active understanding), then a "deworled" integration of action that is separated from communicatively established consensus (or a dialogic engagement of discursive positions) does not compel responsibility in actors (*TC2* 184).

The disconnection of the two types of action integration occurs as the social world becomes increasingly differentiated, and forms the backbone of Habermas' understanding of the historical process of modernization. That is, Habermas' *analytic* distinction between the social and systemic integration forms the basis of a *historical* thesis. According to this thesis, the historical process of modernization is understood primarily as the *uncoupling* of system and lifeworld, i.e. each is progressively liberated from interference by the other. It entails the differentiation of social life into specific domains, that is, the development of the relatively autonomous realms of the economy, the state, the various public spheres (both political and prepolitical), and the "intimate" or domestic sphere. As processes of social differentiation proceed, each of these arenas begins to find the source of its integration (or lack thereof) in the operation of *one* of these two mechanisms of coordination. Furthermore, as social and systemic

integration each become freed, or "purified," of admixtures of the other, each is able to develop a distinct form of rationalization which is inherent to it.¹³ In the case of social integration, this refers, of course, to the release of the rationality potential inherent in communicative action, a process discussed earlier. With respect to systemic integration, by contrast, a potential for rationality is unleashed which is of a totally different sort. Indeed, Habermas here takes over the notion of capitalistic and bureaucratic rationalization--as per an account taken over from Marx, Weber, and their theoretical descendants--in which rationality is measured by the twin criteria of *functional complexity* and *efficiency*. (Both of these criteria are, of course, to be understood in strictly non-normative terms.) As such, systemic integration is highly distinct from that which takes place in the lifeworld: interaction can be organized according to rational "regularities" that arise outside of or in addition to the various ends which actors pursue via the rational application of means (e.g. Smith's "invisible hand" and the like). However, with the substitution of system integration for social integration, the remaining functions necessary for the maintenance of the lifeworld are interrupted. That is, cultural reproduction and identity formation, processes which can occur only via the medium of symbolically mediated interaction, are pathologically foreclosed. This is what Habermas terms the colonization of the lifeworld--the subjection of consensually integrated domains of social life to the imperatives of

¹³ It must be noted that Habermas does not understand these two historical processes as strictly "parallel," in the sense that they are unrelated. To the contrary, "[t]he institutionalization of a new level of system differentiation requires reconstruction in the core institutional domains of the moral-legal (i.e. consensual) regulation of conflicts" (TC2 173). That is, system differentiation requires or presupposes certain events in the lifeworld. In turn, this does not, of course, imply that the systemically organized domains of social life require a normatively secured consensus in order to *function* (cf. TC2 154).

capitalistic and/or bureaucratic rationality.

The initial instances of this phenomenon occurred, according to Habermas, during the phase of liberal capitalism as economic imperatives began to affect the institutionalization of the political public sphere and, more generally, as economic imperatives began to dismember the traditional lifeworlds of the working classes while simultaneously impeding the development of new ("post-traditional") ones. However, the colonization process, according to Habermas, was intensified exponentially in the early 20th century as capitalistic societies found themselves compelled to pacify increasingly brutal and disruptive class conflicts by welfarist means. With the development of the welfare state, processes of cultural reproduction and identity formation are foreclosed to an ever greater degree. This occurs precisely because the responsibility for responding to the "dysfunctional" consequences of economic rationalization--specifically the tendencies towards and ever greater impoverishment of those whose labor power takes on the status of commodity--is shifted *away from* the lifeworld and on to state bureaucracies. Those who, previously, had found themselves united by a more or less effective working class identity and set of traditions--in the context of which their collective interests could be more or less effectively discerned and pursued--*now* find themselves, to one degree or another, as "*clients*" of the welfare state. As a consequence, the communicative networks through which the lifeworld must be reproduced are increasingly shattered. In other words, member's status as clients of the state bureaucracies is largely ineffectual as the basis for the development

of oppositional traditions and contestatory identities.¹⁴ Thus, as a net result, while the welfare state compromise does manage to provide organized labor with a voice in policy formation and alleviate some of the most drastic tendencies towards "pauperization" generated by the economy, *it simultaneously has the consequence of beginning to dissolve the symbolic reality of class stratification.* To be sure, as Habermas notes, the effects of colonization are differentially distributed across the class spectrum (TC2 349).¹⁵ Nevertheless, the combined consequence of these developments is the emergence of a form of domination which is mediated through collective identities and traditions *to an ever lesser extent.* With his colonization thesis, Habermas claims that individuals can be integrated into certain arenas of society in such a way that they need not share a set of traditions and an identity with others who occupy a similar "position" in the social structure--not only mobilized "class consciousness," but even the symbolic unity of a class-specific life-style which could form its basis, are increasingly evaporated by welfarist capitalism.¹⁶

¹⁴ This process finds parallel within the working classes themselves with the development of unions into large scale administrative organizations.

¹⁵ Habermas further notes that there is also an inherent ambiguity in this process to the extent that the progressive dissolution of class-based identity and tradition *contribute to* the increasing prominence of alternative axes of domination from within the perspective of the symbolically constituted lifeworld (TC2 348-9). This is one of the paradoxes of rationalization: those same processes that allow for the rise of the system as a reified, semi-autonomous sphere out of the lifeworld are the same processes which make possible those communicative practices that are able to thematize, criticize, and act upon received forms of symbolic domination (e.g. race and gender) in a way impossible before. That is, even though in modernity we see a withering of emphasis on--and coalition building around--systemically generated forms of domination, we also see an explosion of the same around symbolically generated forms of domination. In turn, however, these processes can also undermine the very rationality of the lifeworld from which it arose.

¹⁶ This interpretation of Habermas' colonization thesis is developed by Elliot Weininger in "domination Without Distinction," (unpublished paper).

From this analysis of the colonization effects of systemic imperatives Habermas argues that all strictly interpretive theories are, in essence, one sided; that is, the lifeworld is equated with a common cultural tradition which, in turn, is rendered relatively equivalent to society, but this, he claims, is only half of the equation. Such perspectives ignore or fail to take into account the non-symbolically mediated processes of integration that intrude into the lifeworld and the spread of a kind of domination which is not articulated through symbolic categories such as selfhood, identity, etc., but operate via nonlinguistic media (TC2 148). The so-called culturalistic approaches pose the threat of a type of fallacy which, citing Wellmer, Habermas calls "hermeneutic idealism": a reductionism that tends to view the lifeworld solely in culturalist terms, omitting from consideration the structural properties and (external) constraints at work in the lifeworld that do not originate with symbolically mediated interaction, and that presuppose the autonomy of actors and the transparency of communication (TC2 148-9). Moreover, methodologically speaking, insofar as system integration can occur even when there is a discrepancy between the intentions of actors and the consequences of their acts, Habermas argues that an analysis of action systems can only be undertaken from the external perspective of an observer, a perspective distinct from the internal or performative perspective of the participants (TC2 204-5).¹⁷

¹⁷ This is not to say, of course, that methodologically, the only appropriate application of external perspective is to the system, and the internal to the lifeworld. Rather, the point here is that one perspective *alone* is not adequate to analyze the complex interaction and mediation of the system and lifeworld. As Benhabib points out, to claim that the economy, for example, should be examined from the perspective of the modern worker is equally as arbitrary as claiming that the family can only be understood from a functionalistic perspective of its stabilizing or destabilizing consequences on the modern economy (*Critique, Norm and Utopia* 390 fn24).

One problem that follows from treating the entirety of society as a lifeworld or as an aggregation of lifeworlds is it entails the tacit or explicit presupposition that all integration occurs via symbolic processes. *Language* thus receives a quasi-transcendental status: it become the universally necessary presupposition of any social order what so ever--and by extension, of any social disorder. (This, incidentally, is as true for those who deny that linguistically mediated interaction has a rationalistic potential as it is for those who follow Habermas' linguistic theory.)

Therefore, insofar as social integration in certain arenas and, by extension, social domination in contemporary (welfare-capitalistic) societies is no longer predicated on or fought out solely in terms of conflicting traditions, contested identities and discordant lifestyles, a *comprehensive* account of culture and interaction must also look at that which affects the lifeworld from outside. Any theory (or analysis) that focuses solely upon the socially integrative aspect of communicative interaction, as interpretive theories do, cannot lay claim to thoroughness: attention must also be paid to those systemic mechanisms that are "out of reach of a member's intuitive knowledge" (TC2 149). This is not to argue, however, that the thesis that literature is a form of social knowledge is obsolete, but *rather* that any such notion which cannot try to become reflexively aware of its own limitations risks ignorance of forms and structures of domination which have largely dispensed with the medium of language. Interpretive analyses can, for instance, still attempt to illuminate the symbolic *consequences* of colonization by attending to the pathologies of the lifeworld that arise in the domains

of cultural reproduction, social integration and socialization with the encroachment of systemic imperative, specifically in the form of a consequence loss of meaning (legitimation), the emergence of anomie, and the development of "psychopathologies" and alienation, respectively (TC2 140ff).¹⁸

Applying Habermas' assessment of the pathologies generated by the colonization of the lifeworld¹⁹ to the three texts examined in this project we would expect to witness a shift in the degree to which identities are consonant with and reflective of economic and political positions (from a situation of greater to lesser relative homology), and the manner in which these identities are or can be secured. This is precisely what takes place. In a brief comparison of the texts to one another, specifically *Don Quixote* and *Jude to Mad Max*, we see that as the process of capitalistic modernization progresses, as systemic integration takes over social integration and processes of identity formation and cultural reproduction are interfered with, the preservation of a community capable of mutual recognition becomes increasingly problematic.

In the uncolonized worlds of *Don Quixote* and *Jude*, problems concerning identity

¹⁸ Moreover, insofar as each of these reproduction processes are interrelated, any disturbance in one is complicated by the fact that it also affects the other two. In the cultural arena, loss of meaning can lead to legitimation crises in the arena of social integration and orientation crises in arenas of socialization; in the arena of social integration, anomie can imply an increased destabilization of group identities (as measured by a loss of solidarity) in the cultural arena and alienation in the personal; and, finally, disturbances in socialization can rupture traditions and destabilize those practices necessary for the maintenance of intersubjectivity of commonly defined action situations, and, in the social arena, lead to a withdrawal of motivation (see TC2 141-2).

¹⁹ As Benhabib points out, this is in keeping with one of the main insights of early critical theory that, since World War II, crises have assumed an increasingly cultural and psychological character (*Critique, Norm and Utopia* 250).

formation result from processes of lifeworld rationalization--that is, the ability of the self, or lack thereof, to autonomously determine and realize its identity within the community. In these two novels, the humor and the tragedy lies in the respective protagonists' attempts to establish an identity contrary to the expectations of their communities, and their subsequent failure to obtain recognition for these identities, either in the present or in a projected futural community----their searches for self are, however, modern in that they could even attempt to *seek* an identity.

When the lifeworld has been colonized, on the other hand, the crucial task of social integration can no longer proceed autonomously--that is, according to a communicatively oriented rationality--instead, processes of identity formation and cultural reproduction are taken over and steered by media aimed at integrating consequences of the economic and political spheres. This results in an interruption of communicative processes that serve as the precondition for rationally establishing and realizing one's identity and that preserve a community capable of supplying mutual recognition. In other words, the tendency of colonization is to dissipate the individual's relation to a communicative community of others. To Habermas, there are two defensive responses to these colonizing effects: first, subgroups form that are oriented to the conservation of a rationalized lifeworld, and attempt to experiment with new ways of living together and cooperating; or, two, subgroups form that try to respond to the threat of systemic encroachment with a heightened reverence for traditional ways of life, such as family and religion (*TC2* 394). Popular culture often

reflects the desire for the conservation of the lifeworld, and can be illustrative of these alternative strategies. The television and movie series *Star Trek* and *Mad Max* appear as two examples of imaginary depictions of the future in which the colonizing forces have largely disappeared, leaving behind one or the other of these two types of conserved lifeworlds. These examples, however, cannot be taken as simple correlates of a colonized lifeworld because the preservation of a community capable of mutual recognition is literally possible in both cases only by imagining away most systemic forces.

Mad Max pursues the latter alternative as its response to the colonizing forces, taking the form of the apocalyptic disappearance of state and economy, leaving a social vacuum into which the anarchy of the road flows. Because systemic forces disappear, the lifeworld is preserved solely in conventional forms: the patriarchy of the family and the authoritarianism of the gangs. The defensive posture is transferred to an attempt to keep the road and the home apart in the interest of preserving a traditional aspect of the lifeworld. In turn, the road becomes the site where one can attempt to reassert an identity where once there had only been the system, albeit in a distorted form. The modern emphasis on autonomy remains central in the film; however, due to the distortions wrought by colonization in the cultural arena, especially in the form of alienation, this ideal is now severed from its communicative impulse, and "recognition" is achieved through violence on the road. This fantasy response to the encroachment of system, which eradicates the economy and the state and reinstates a reverence for

traditional ways of life, in essence replaces one form of nondiscursively derived means of integration with another, while at the same time retaining the ideal of autonomy derived from a postconventional orientation that now takes on a distorted and violent form. The distortion of the ideal of autonomy that occurs in *Mad Max* can be traced to a form of organization that weakens the individuals' relation and responsibility (i.e. answerability) to a larger community of others and thus lessens the potential development of a postconventional orientation. Specifically, the development of subgroups that Habermas identified as one consequence of colonization in the film is accomplished by the gangs and the family. The effect of the cinematic recourse to these tradition-bound groups as the films' response to colonization is the dissipation of the individual's relation to a communicative community of others. That is, although Max's world has inherited the modern ideal of autonomy, the type of response taken to colonization interrupts the individual's relation to a *larger* and potentially *discursively* oriented community (of generalized others) necessary for the intersubjective actualization of this autonomy and which would then serve as a precondition for *rationally* establishing and realizing one's identity. Consequently, from this lack of "answerability," violence becomes the only means necessary for exercise of an autonomy, and identity, now understood solely in *individualistic* terms.

In the case of a show such as *Star Trek*, on the other hand (which is the utopian flip side of the dystopia represented by *Mad Max*), the preservation of a communicative community is also predicated on the eradication of systemic forces, but it takes as its

strategy a form of salvation through technology, in which the system of production has basically evaporated, and the political system has dwindled to a size that can be more or less communicatively controlled. Here, when the systemic forces disappear, the lifeworld is preserved in the rationalized form of good-will excursions into outer space where problems are discursively handled by "talking it out." In either case, however, there is an obvious escapist element in the depiction of a conserved lifeworld; these different versions of the lifeworld only become plausible by imagining away most of the disruptive systemic forces.

The point here is that Habermas' colonization thesis, as stated above, does not necessarily invalidate the idea of literature as social knowledge or other interpretive theories, it simply place certain limits on them. Habermas cautions that such theories cannot ignore the pressures at work from outside the domain of the lifeworld. He makes the case that, in a systemically integrated environment, once structures of domination become largely divorced from symbolic categories of self understanding, identity, etc., the symbolic formation and capacities of self, regardless of whether they are thought of as capacities of argumentation, critique, or performance, become largely irrelevant to the maintenance or dissolution of certain types of domination. In other words, although rationalization of the lifeworld *does* allow for the formation of new categories of self and the articulation of membership identification which previously had been largely suppressed, this *does not* mean that economic domination no longer counts. Thus, to the degree that nonlinguistic forces interfere with processes of social

integration, cultural reproduction and identity formation, social domination cannot be conceived of solely in terms of conflicts between traditions, struggles over identities, or disputes regarding lifestyles. Simply put, the levelling of symbolically generated domination would not, as Fraser points out, foreclose the existence of class stratification.²⁰ Interpretive analyses can still illuminate the distorted symbolic consequences of colonization, or responses to them--i.e. *Mad Max*, *Star Trek*, and the like--but insofar as symbolic processes of the lifeworld are not the cause of these distortions, a focus solely upon the socially integrative aspect of communicative interaction neglect the systemic mechanisms to which these symbolic processes are responding. Sooner or later, if spun out far enough, a theory of the linguistically constituted subject has to run up against these non-linguistic limitations. Hence, any theory of culture that wishes to lay claim to comprehensiveness must attend to those systemic processes that interfere with and transform symbolic struggles--whether these are thought of in terms of "binaristic" oppositions, dialogic contestations, or even consensus formation.

²⁰ Nancy Fraser, "From Redistribution to Recognition? Dilemmas of Justice in a 'Post-Socialist' Age," in *New Left Review* 212 (July/Aug 1995): 68-93.

Appendix

Abbreviations Used in Text and Notes

<i>AA</i>	Bakhtin, <i>Art and Answerability</i> .
<i>Bakhtin</i>	Clark and Holquist, <i>Mikhail Bakhtin</i> .
<i>CES</i>	Habermas, <i>Communication and the Evolution of Society</i> .
<i>DI</i>	Bakhtin, <i>The Dialogic Imagination</i> .
<i>Dialogism</i>	Holquist, <i>Dialogism: Bakhtin and His World</i> .
<i>Dostoevsky</i>	Bakhtin, <i>Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics</i> .
<i>FP</i>	Koselleck, Reinhart. <i>Futures Past</i> .
<i>MCC</i>	Habermas, <i>Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action</i> .
<i>MSS</i>	Mead, <i>Mind, Self, and Society</i> .
<i>PDM</i>	Habermas, <i>The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity</i> .
<i>PMT</i>	Habermas, <i>Postmetaphysical Thinking</i> .
<i>PP</i>	Mead, <i>The Philosophy of the Present</i> .
<i>Prosaics</i>	Morson and Emerson, <i>Mikhail Bakhtin: Creation of a Prosaics</i> .
<i>TC1</i>	Habermas, <i>The Theory of Communicative Action</i> , Vol. 1.
<i>TC2</i>	Habermas, <i>The Theory of Communicative Action</i> , Vol. 2.

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