My conception of earliest object relations and super-ego development is in keeping with my hypothesis of the operation of the ego at least from birth onwards, as well as of the all-pervading power of the life and death instincts.

12

OUR ADULT WORLD AND ITS ROOTS IN INFANCY

(1959)

In considering from the psycho-analytic point of view the behaviour of people in their social surroundings, it is necessary to investigate how the individual develops from infancy into maturity. A group—whether small or large—consists of individuals in a relationship to one another; and therefore the understanding of personality is the foundation for the understanding of social life. An exploration of the individual's development takes the psycho-analyst back, by gradual stages, to infancy; and I shall first enlarge, therefore, on fundamental trends in the young child.

The various signs of difficulties in the infant—states of rage, lack of interest in his surroundings, incapacity to bear frustration, and fleeting expressions of sadness—did not formerly find any explanation except in terms of physical factors. For until Freud made his great discoveries there was a general tendency to regard childhood as a period of perfect happiness, and the various disturbances displayed by children were not taken seriously. Freud's findings have, in the course of time, helped us to understand the complexity of the child's emotions and have revealed that children go through serious conflicts. This has led to a better insight into the infantile mind and its connection with the mental processes of the adult.

The play technique that I developed in the psycho-analysis of very young children, and other advances in technique resulting from my work, allowed me to draw new conclusions about very early stages of infancy and deeper layers of the unconscious. Such retrospective insight is based on one of the crucial findings of Freud, the transference situation, that is to say the fact that in a psycho-analysis the patient re-enacts in relation to the psycho-analyst earlier—and, I would add, even very early—situations and emotions. Therefore the relationship to the psycho-analyst at times bears, even in adults, very childlike features, such as over-dependence and the need to be guided, together with quite irrational distrust. It is part of the technique of the psycho-analyst to deduce the past from these manifestations. We know that Freud first discovered the Oedipus complex in the adult and was able to trace it back to childhood. Since I

had the good fortune to analyse very young children, I was able to gain an even closer insight into their mental life, which led me back to an understanding of the mental life of the baby. For I was enabled by the meticulous attention I paid to the transference in the play technique to come to a deeper understanding of the ways in which—in the child and later also in the adult—mental life is influenced by earliest emotions and unconscious phantasies. It is from this angle that I shall describe with the use of as few technical terms as possible what I have concluded about the emotional life of the infant.

I have put forward the hypothesis that the newborn baby experiences, both in the process of birth and in the adjustment to the postnatal situation, anxiety of a persecutory nature. This can be explained by the fact that the young infant, without being able to grasp it intellectually, feels unconsciously every discomfort as though it were inflicted on him by hostile forces. If comfort is given to him soon—in particular warmth, the loving way he is held, and the gratification of being fed—this gives rise to happier emotions. Such comfort is felt to come from good forces and, I believe, makes possible the infant's first loving relation to a person or, as the psycho-analyst would put it, to an object. My hypothesis is that the infant has an innate unconscious awareness of the existence of the mother. We know that young animals at once turn to the mother and find their food from her. The human animal is not different in that respect, and this instinctual knowledge is the basis for the infant's primal relation to his mother. We can also observe that at an age of only a few weeks the baby already looks up to his mother's face, recognizes her footsteps, the touch of her hands, the smell and feel of her breast or of the bottle that she gives him, all of which suggest that some relation, however primitive, to the mother has been established.

He not only expects food from her but also desires love and understanding. In the earliest stages, love and understanding are expressed through the mother's handling of her baby, and lead to a certain unconscious oneness that is based on the unconscious of the mother and of the child being in close relation to each other. The infant's resultant feeling of being understood underlies the first and fundamental relation in his life—the relation to the mother. At the same time, frustration, discomfort and pain, which I suggested are experienced as persecution, enter as well into his feelings about his mother, because in the first few months she represents to the child the whole of the external world; therefore both good and bad come in his mind from her, and this leads to a twofold attitude toward the mother even under the best possible conditions.

Both the capacity to love and the sense of persecution have deep

roots in the infant's earliest mental processes. They are focused first of all on the mother. Destructive impulses and their concomitants—such as resentment about frustration, hate stirred up by it, the incapacity to be reconciled, and envy of the all-powerful object, the mother, on whom his life and well-being depend—these various emotions arouse persecutory anxiety in the infant. *Mutatis mutandis* these emotions are still operative in later life. For destructive impulses towards anybody are always bound to give rise to the feeling that that person will also become hostile and retaliatory.

Innate aggressiveness is bound to be increased by unfavourable external circumstances and, conversely, is mitigated by the love and understanding that the young child receives; and these factors continue to operate throughout development. But although the importance of external circumstances is by now increasingly recognized, the importance of internal factors is still underrated. Destructive impulses, varying from individual to individual, are an integral part of mental life, even in favourable circumstances, and therefore we have to consider the development of the child and the attitudes of the adults as resulting from the interaction between internal and external influences. The struggle between love and hate—now that our capacity to understand babies has increased—can to some extent be recognized through careful observation. Some babies experience strong resentment about any frustration and show this by being unable to accept gratification when it follows on deprivation. I would suggest that such children have a stronger innate aggressiveness and greed than those infants whose occasional outbursts of rage are soon over. If a baby shows that he is able to accept food and love, this means that he can overcome resentment about frustration relatively quickly and, when gratification is again provided, regains his feelings of love.

Before continuing my description of the child's development, I feel that I should briefly define from the psycho-analytic point of view the terms *self* and *ego*. The ego, according to Freud, is the organized part of the self, constantly influenced by instinctual impulses but keeping them under control by repression; furthermore it directs all activities and establishes and maintains the relation to the external world. The self is used to cover the whole of the personality, which includes not only the ego but the instinctual life which Freud called the *id*.

My work has led me to assume that the ego exists and operates from birth onwards and that in addition to the functions mentioned above it has the important task of defending itself against anxiety stirred up by the struggle within and by influences from without. Furthermore it initiates a number of processes from which I shall

first of all select *introjection* and *projection*. To the no less important process of *splitting*, that is to say dividing, impulses and objects I shall turn later.

We owe to Freud and Abraham the great discovery that introjection and projection are of major significance both in severe mental disturbances and in normal mental life. I have here to forgo even the attempt to describe how in particular Freud was led from the study of manic-depressive illness to the discovery of introjection which underlies the super-ego. He also expounded the vital relation between super-ego and ego and the id. In the course of time these basic concepts underwent further development. As I came to recognize in the light of my psycho-analytic work with children, introjection and projection function from the beginning of post-natal life as some of the earliest activities of the ego, which in my view operates from birth onwards. Considered from this angle, introjection means that the outer world, its impact, the situations the infant lives through, and the objects he encounters, are not only experienced as external but are taken into the self and become part of his inner life. Inner life cannot be evaluated even in the adult without these additions to the personality that derive from continuous introjection. Projection, which goes on simultaneously, implies that there is a capacity in the child to attribute to other people around him feelings of various kinds, predominantly love and hate.

I have formed the view that love and hate towards the mother are bound up with the very young infant's capacity to project all his emotions on to her, thereby making her into a good as well as dangerous object. However, introjection and projection, though they are rooted in infancy, are not only infantile processes. They are part of the infant's phantasies, which in my view also operate from the beginning and help to mould his impression of his surroundings; and by introjection this changed picture of the external world influences what goes on in his mind. Thus an inner world is built up which is partly a reflection of the external one. That is to say, the double process of introjection and projection contributes to the interaction between external and internal factors. This interaction continues throughout every stage of life. In the same way introjection and projection go on throughout life and become modified in the course of maturation; but they never lose their importance in the individual's relation to the world around him. Even in the adult, therefore, the judgement of reality is never quite free from the influence of his internal world.

I have already suggested that from one angle the processes of projection and introjection that I have been describing have to be considered as unconscious phantasies. As my friend the late Susan

Isaacs put it in her paper (1952) on this subject 'Phantasy is (in the first instance) the mental corollary, the psychic representative of instinct. There is no impulse, no instinctual urge or response which is not experienced as unconscious phantasy. . . . A phantasy represents the particular content of the urges or feelings (for example, wishes, fears, anxieties, triumphs, love or sorrow) dominating the mind at the moment.'

Unconscious phantasies are not the same as day-dreams (though they are linked with them) but an activity of the mind that occurs on deep unconscious levels and accompanies every impulse experienced by the infant. For instance, a hungry baby can temporarily deal with his hunger by hallucinating the satisfaction of being given the breast, with all the pleasures he normally derives from it, such as the taste of the milk, the warm feel of the breast, and being held and loved by the mother. But unconscious phantasy also takes the opposite form of feeling deprived and persecuted by the breast which refuses to give this satisfaction. Phantasies—becoming more elaborate and referring to a wider variety of objects and situations—continue throughout development and accompany all activities; they never stop playing a great part in mental life. The influence of unconscious phantasy on art, on scientific work, and on the activities of every-day life cannot be overrated.

I have already mentioned that the mother is introjected, and that this is a fundamental factor in development. As I see it, object relations start almost at birth. The mother in her good aspects—loving, helping, and feeding the child—is the first good object that the infant makes part of his inner world. His capacity to do so is, I would suggest, up to a point innate. Whether the good object becomes sufficiently part of the self depends to some extent on persecutory anxiety—and accordingly resentment—not being too strong; at the same time a loving attitude on the part of the mother contributes much to the success of his process. If the mother is taken into the child's inner world as a good and dependable object, an element of strength is added to the ego. For I assume that the ego develops largely round this good object, and the identification with the good characteristics of the mother becomes the basis for further helpful identifications. The identification with the good object shows externally in the young child's copying the mother's activities and attitudes; this can be seen in his play and often also in his behaviour towards younger children. A strong identification with the good mother makes it easier for the child to identify also with a good father and later on with other friendly figures. As a result, his inner world comes to contain predominantly good objects and feelings, and these good objects are felt to respond to the infant's love. All this

contributes to a stable personality and makes it possible to extend sympathy and friendly feelings to other people. It is clear that a good relation of the parents to each other and to the child, and a happy home atmosphere, play a vital rôle in the success of this process.

Yet, however good are the child's feelings towards both parents, aggressiveness and hate also remain operative. One expression of this is the rivalry with the father which results from the boy's desires towards the mother and all the phantasies linked with them. Such rivalry finds expression in the Oedipus complex, which can be clearly observed in children of three, four, or five years of age. This complex exists, however, very much earlier and is rooted in the baby's first suspicions of the father taking the mother's love and attention away from him. There are great differences in the Oedipus complex of the girl and of the boy, which I shall characterize only by saying that whereas the boy in his genital development returns to his original object, the mother, and therefore seeks female objects, with consequent jealousy of the father and men in general, the girl to some extent has to turn away from the mother and find the object of her desires in the father and later on in other men. I have, however, stated this in an over-simplified form, because the boy is also attracted towards the father and identifies with him; and therefore an element of homosexuality enters into normal development. The same applies to the girl, for whom the relation to the mother, and to women in general, never loses its importance. The Oedipus complex is thus not a matter only of feelings of hate and rivalry towards one parent and love towards the other, but feelings of love and the sense of guilt also enter in connection with the rival parent. Many conflicting emotions therefore centre upon the Oedipus complex.

We turn now again to projection. By projecting oneself or part of one's impulses and feelings into another person, an identification with that person is achieved, though it will differ from the identification arising from introjection. For if an object is taken into the self (introjected), the emphasis lies on acquiring some of the characteristics of this object and on being influenced by them. On the other hand, in putting part of oneself into the other person (projecting), the identification is based on attributing to the other person some of one's own qualities. Projection has many repercussions. We are inclined to attribute to other people—in a sense, to put into them—some of our own emotions and thoughts; and it is obvious that it will depend on how balanced or persecuted we are whether this projection is of a friendly or a hostile nature. By attributing part of our feelings to the other person, we understand their feelings, needs, and satisfactions; in other words, we are putting ourselves into the other

person's shoes. There are people who go so far in this direction that they lose themselves entirely in others and become incapable of objective judgement. At the same time excessive introjection endangers the strength of the ego because it becomes completely dominated by the introjected object. If projection is predominantly hostile, real empathy and understanding of others is impaired. The character of projection is, therefore, of great importance in our relations to other people. If the interplay between introjection and projection is not dominated by hostility or over-dependence, and is well balanced, the inner world is enriched and the relations with the external world are improved.

I referred earlier to the tendency of the infantile ego to split impulses and objects, and I regard this as another of the primal activities of the ego. This tendency to split results in part from the fact that the early ego largely lacks coherence. But—here again I have to refer to my own concepts—persecutory anxiety reinforces the need to keep separate the loved object from the dangerous one, and therefore to split love from hate. For the young infant's self-preservation depends on his trust in a good mother. By splitting the two aspects and clinging to the good one he preserves his belief in a good object and his capacity to love it; and this is an essential condition for keeping alive. For without at least some of this feeling, he would be exposed to an entirely hostile world which he fears would destroy him. This hostile world would also be built up inside him. There are, as we know, babies in whom vitality is lacking and who cannot be kept alive, probably because they have not been able to develop their trusting relation to a good mother. By contrast, there are other babies who go through great difficulties but retain sufficient vitality to make use of the help and food offered by the mother. I know of an infant who underwent a prolonged and difficult birth and was injured in the process, but when put to the breast, took it avidly. The same has been reported of babies who had serious operations soon after birth. Other infants in such circumstances are not able to survive because they have difficulties in accepting nourishment and love, which implies that they have not been able to establish trust and love towards the mother.

The process of splitting changes in form and content as development goes on, but in some ways it is never entirely given up. In my view omnipotent destructive impulses, persecutory anxiety, and splitting are predominant in the first three to four months of life. I have described this combination of mechanisms and anxieties as the paranoid-schizoid position, which in extreme cases becomes the basis of paranoia and schizophrenic illness. The concomitants of destructive feelings at this early stage are of great importance, and I shall

single out greed and envy as very disturbing factors, first of all in the relation to the mother and later on to other members of the family, in fact throughout life.

Greed varies considerably from one infant to another. There are babies who can never be satisfied because their greed exceeds everything they may receive. With greed goes the urge to empty the mother's breast and to exploit all the sources of satisfaction without consideration for anybody. The very greedy infant may enjoy whatever he receives for the time being; but as soon as the gratification has gone, he becomes dissatisfied and is driven to exploit first of all the mother and soon everybody in the family who can give him attention, food, or any other gratification. There is no doubt that greed is increased by anxiety—the anxiety of being deprived, of being robbed, and of not being good enough to be loved. The infant who is so greedy for love and attention is also insecure about his own capacity to love; and all these anxieties reinforce greed. This situation remains in fundamentals unchanged in the greed of the older child and of the adult.

As regards envy, it is not easy to explain how the mother who feeds the infant and looks after him can also be an object of envy. But whenever he is hungry or feels neglected, the child's frustration leads to the phantasy that the milk and love are deliberately withheld from him, or kept by the mother for her benefit. Such suspicions are the basis of envy. It is inherent in the feeling of envy not only that possession is desired, but that there is also a strong urge to spoil other people's enjoyment of the coveted object—an urge which tends to spoil the object itself. If envy is very strong, its spoiling quality results in a disturbed relation to the mother as well as later to other people; it also means that nothing can be fully enjoyed because the desired thing has already been spoiled by envy. Furthermore, if envy is strong, goodness cannot be assimilated, become part of one's inner life, and so give rise to gratitude. By contrast, the capacity to enjoy fully what has been received, and the experience of gratitude towards the person who gives it, influence strongly both the character and the relations with other people. It is not for nothing that in saying grace before meals, Christians use the words, 'For what we are about to receive may the Lord make us truly thankful.' These words imply that one asks for the one quality—gratitude—which will make one happy and free from resentment and envy. I heard a little girl say that she loved her mother most of all people, because what would she have done if her mother had not given birth to her and had not fed her? This strong feeling of gratitude was linked with her capacity for enjoyment and showed itself in her character and relations to other people, particularly in generosity and consideration.

Throughout life such capacity for enjoyment and gratitude makes a variety of interests and pleasures possible.

In normal development, with growing integration of the ego, splitting processes diminish, and the increased capacity to understand external reality, and to some extent to bring together the infant's contradictory impulses, leads also to a greater synthesis of the good and bad aspects of the object. This means that people can be loved in spite of their faults and that the world is not seen only in terms of black and white.

The super-ego—the part of the ego that criticizes and controls dangerous impulses, and that Freud first placed roughly in the fifth year of childhood—operates, according to my views, much earlier. It is my hypothesis that in the fifth or sixth month of life the baby becomes afraid of the harm his destructive impulses and his greed might do, or might have done, to his loved objects. For he cannot yet distinguish between his desires and impulses and their actual effects. He experiences feelings of guilt and the urge to preserve these objects and to make reparation to them for harm done. The anxiety now experienced is of a predominantly depressive nature; and the emotions accompanying it, as well as the defences evolved against them, I recognized as part of normal development, and termed the 'depressive position'. Feelings of guilt, which occasionally arise in all of us, have very deep roots in infancy, and the tendency to make reparation plays an important rôle in our sublimations and object relations.

When we observe young infants from this angle, we can see that at times, without any particular external cause, they appear depressed. At this stage they try to please the people around them in every way available to them—smiles, playful gestures, even attempts to feed the mother by putting a spoon with food into her mouth. At the same time this is also a period in which inhibitions over food and nightmares often set in, and all these symptoms come to a head at the time of weaning. With older children, the need to deal with guilt feelings expresses itself more clearly; various constructive activities are used for this purpose and in the relation to parents or siblings there is an excessive need to please and to be helpful, all of which expresses not only love but also the need to make reparation.

Freud has postulated the process of *working through* as an essential part of psycho-analytic procedure. To put it in a nutshell, this means enabling the patient to experience his emotions, anxieties, and past situations over and over again both in relation to the analyst and to different people and situations in the patient's present and past life. There is, however, a working through occurring to some extent in normal individual development. Adaptation to external reality

increases and with it the infant achieves a less phantastic picture of the world around him. The recurring experience of the mother going away and coming back to him makes her absence less frightening, and therefore his suspicion of her leaving him diminishes. In this way he gradually works through his early fears and comes to terms with his conflicting impulses and emotions. Depressive anxiety at this stage predominates and persecutory anxiety lessens. I hold that many apparently odd manifestations, inexplicable phobias, and idiosyncrasies that can be observed in young children are indications of, as well as ways of, working through the depressive position. If the feelings of guilt arising in the child are not excessive, the urge to make reparation and other processes that are part of growth bring relief. Yet depressive and persecutory anxieties are never entirely overcome; they may temporarily recur under internal or external pressure, though a relatively normal person can cope with this recurrence and regain his balance. If, however, the strain is too great, the development of a strong and well-balanced personality may be impeded.

Having dealt—though I am afraid in an over-simplified way—with paranoid and depressive anxieties and their implications, I should like to consider the influence of the processes I have described on social relations. I have spoken of introjection of the external world and have hinted that this process continues throughout life. Whenever we can admire and love somebody—or hate and despise somebody—we also take something of them into ourselves and our deepest attitudes are shaped by such experiences. In the one case it enriches us and becomes a foundation for precious memories; in the other case we sometimes feel that the outer world is spoilt for us and the inner world is therefore impoverished.

I can here only touch on the importance of actual favourable and unfavourable experiences to which the infant is from the beginning subjected, first of all by his parents, and later on by other people. External experiences are of paramount importance throughout life. However, much depends, even in the infant, on the ways in which external influences are interpreted and assimilated by the child, and this in turn largerly depends on how strongly destructive impulses and persecutory and depressive anxieties are operative. In the same way our adult experiences are influenced by our basic attitudes, which either help us to cope better with misfortunes or, if we are too much dominated by suspicion and self-pity, turn even minor disappointments into disasters.

Freud's discoveries about childhood have increased the understanding of problems of upbringing, but these findings have often been misinterpreted. Though it is true that a too disciplinarian up-

bringing reinforces the child's tendency to repression, we have to remember that too great indulgence may be almost as harmful for the child as too much restraint. The so-called 'full self-expression' can have great disadvantages both for the parents and for the child. Whereas in former times the child was often the victim of the parents' disciplinarian attitude, the parents may now become the victims of their offspring. It is an old joke that there was a man who never tasted breast of chicken; for when he was a child, his parents ate it, and when he grew up, his children were given it. When dealing with our children, it is essential to keep a balance between too much and too little discipline. To turn a blind eye to some of the smaller misdeeds is a very healthy attitude. But if these grow into persistent lack of consideration, it is necessary to show disapproval and to make demands on the child.

There is another angle from which the parents' excessive indulgence must be considered: while the child may take advantage of his parents' attitude, he also experiences a sense of guilt about exploiting them and feels a need for some restraint which would give him security. This would also make him able to feel respect for his parents, which is essential for a good relation towards them and for developing respect for other people. Moreover, we must also consider that parents who are suffering too much under the unrestrained self-expression of the child—however much they try to submit to it—are bound to feel some resentment which will enter into their attitude towards the child.

I have already described the young child who reacts strongly against every frustration—and there is no upbringing possible without some unavoidable frustration—and who is apt to resent bitterly any failings and shortcomings in his environment and to underrate goodness received. Accordingly he will project his grievances very strongly on to the people around him. Similar attitudes are well known in adults. If we contrast the individuals who are capable of bearing frustration without too great resentment and can soon regain their balance after a disappointment with those who are inclined to put the whole blame on to the outer world, we can see the detrimental effect of hostile projection. For projection of grievance rouses in other people a counter-feeling of hostility. Few of us have the tolerance to put up with the accusation, even if it is not expressed in words, that we are in some ways the guilty party. In fact, it very often makes us dislike such people, and we appear all the more as enemies to them; in consequence they regard us with increased persecutory feelings and suspicions, and relations become more and more disturbed.

One way of dealing with excessive suspicion is to try to pacify the supposed or actual enemies. This is rarely successful. Of course,

some people can be won over by flattery and appeasement, particularly if their own feelings of persecution make for the need to be appeased. But such a relation easily breaks down and changes into mutual hostility. In passing, I would mention the difficulties that such fluctuations in the attitudes of leading statesmen may produce in international affairs.

Where persecutory anxiety is less strong, and projection, mainly attributing to others good feelings, thereby becomes the basis of empathy, the response from the outer world is very different. We all know people who have the capacity to be liked; for we have the impression that they have some trust in us, which evokes on our part a feeling of friendliness. I am not speaking of people who are trying to make themselves popular in an insincere way. On the contrary, I believe it is the people who are genuine and have the courage of their convictions who are in the long run respected and even liked.

An interesting instance of the influence of early attitudes throughout life is the fact that the relation to early figures keeps reappearing and problems that remain unresolved in infancy or early childhood are revived though in modified form. For example, the attitude towards a subordinate or a superior repeats up to a point the relation to a younger sibling or to a parent. If we meet a friendly and helpful older person, unconsciously the relation to a loved parent or grandparent is revived; while a condescending and unpleasant older individual stirs up anew the rebellious attitudes of the child towards his parents. It is not necessary that such people should be physically, mentally, or even in actual age similar to the original figures; something in common in their attitude is enough. When somebody is entirely under the sway of his early situation and relations, his judgement of people and events is bound to be disturbed. Normally such revival of early situations is limited and rectified by objective judgement. That is to say, we are all capable of being influenced by irrational factors, but in normal life we are not dominated by them.

The capacity for love and devotion, first of all to the mother, in many ways develops into devotion to various causes that are felt to be good and valuable. This means that the enjoyment which in the past the baby was able to experience because he felt loved and loving, in later life becomes transferred not only to his relations to people, which is very important, but also to his work and to all that he feels worth striving for. This means also an enrichment of the personality and capacity to enjoy his work, and opens up a variety of sources of satisfaction.

In this striving to further our aims, as well as in our relation to other people, the early wish to make reparation is added to the capacity for love. I have already said that in our sublimations, which

grow out of the earliest interests of the child, constructive activities gain more impetus because the child unconsciously feels that in this way he is restoring loved people whom he had damaged. This impetus never loses its strength, though very often it is not recognized in ordinary life. The irrevocable fact that none of us is ever entirely free from guilt has very valuable aspects because it implies the never fully exhausted wish to make reparation and to create in whatever way we can.

All forms of social service benefit by this urge. In extreme cases, feelings of guilt drive people towards sacrificing themselves completely to a cause or to their fellow beings, and may lead to fanaticism. We know, however, that some people risk their own lives in order to save others, and this is not necessarily of the same order. It is not so much guilt which might be operative in such cases as the capacity for love, generosity, and an identification with the endangered fellow being.

I have emphasized the importance of the identification with the parents, and subsequently with other people, for the young child's development and I now wish to stress one particular aspect of successful identification which reaches into adulthood. When envy and rivalry are not too great, it becomes possible to enjoy vicariously the pleasures of others. In childhood the hostility and rivalry of the Oedipus complex are counteracted by the capacity to enjoy vicariously the happiness of the parents. In adult life, parents can share the pleasures of childhood and avoid interfering with them because they are capable of identifying with their children. They become able to watch without envy their children growing up.

This attitude becomes particularly important when people grow older and the pleasures of youth become less and less available. If gratitude for past satisfactions has not vanished, old people can enjoy whatever is still within their reach. Furthermore, with such an attitude, which gives rise to serenity, they can identify themselves with young people. For instance, anyone who is looking out for young talents and who helps to develop them—be it in his function as teacher or critic, or in former times as patron of the arts and of culture—is only able to do so because he can identify with others; in a sense he is repeating his own life, sometimes even achieving vicariously the fulfilment of aims unfulfilled in his own life.

At every stage the ability to identify makes possible the happiness of being able to admire the character or achievements of others. If we cannot allow ourselves to appreciate the achievements and qualities of other people—and that means that we are not able to bear the thought that we can never emulate them—we are deprived of sources of great happiness and enrichment. The world would be

in our eyes a much poorer place if we had no opportunities of realizing that greatness exists and will go on existing in the future. Such admiration also stirs up something in us and increases indirectly our belief in ourselves. This is one of the many ways in which identifications derived from infancy become an important part of our personality.

The ability to admire another person's achievements is one of the factors making successful team work possible. If envy is not too great, we can take pleasure and pride in working with people who sometimes outstrip our capacities, for we identify with these outstanding members of the team.

The problem of identification is, however, very complex. When Freud discovered the super-ego, he saw it as part of the mental structure derived from the influence of the parents on the child—an influence that becomes part of the child's fundamental attitudes. My work with young children has shown me that even from babyhood onwards the mother, and soon other people in the child's surroundings, are taken into the self, and this is the basis of a variety of identifications, favourable and unfavourable. I have above given instances of identifications that are helpful both to the child and to the adult. But the vital influence of early environment has also the effect that unfavourable aspects of the attitudes of the adult towards the child are detrimental to his development because they stir up in him hatred and rebellion or too great submissiveness. At the same time he internalizes this hostile and angry adult attitude. Out of such experiences, an excessively disciplinarian parent, or a parent lacking in understanding and love, by identification influences the character formation of the child and may lead him to repeat in later life what he himself has undergone. Therefore a father sometimes uses the same wrong methods towards his children that his father used towards him. On the other hand, the rebellion against the wrongs experienced in childhood can lead to the opposite reaction of doing everything differently from the way the parents did it. This would lead to the other extreme, for instance to over-indulgence of the child, to which I have referred earlier. To have learnt from our experiences in childhood and therefore to be more understanding and tolerant towards our own children, as well as towards people outside the family circle, is a sign of maturity and successful development. But tolerance does not mean being blind to the faults of others. It means recognizing those faults and nevertheless not losing one's ability to co-operate with people or even to experience love towards some of them.

In describing the child's development I have emphasized particularly the importance of greed. Let us consider now what part greed

plays in character formation and how it influences the attitudes of the adult. The rôle of greed can be easily observed as a very destructive element in social life. The greedy person wants more and more, even at the expense of everybody else. He is not really capable of consideration and generosity towards others. I am not speaking here only of material possessions but also of status and prestige.

The very greedy individual is liable to be ambitious. The rôle of ambition, both in its helpful and in its disturbing aspects, shows itself wherever we observe human behaviour. There is no doubt that ambition gives impetus to achievement, but, if it becomes the main driving force, co-operation with others is endangered. The highly ambitious person, in spite of all his successes, always remains dissatisfied, in the same way as a greedy baby is never satisfied. We know well the type of public figure who, hungry for more and more success, appears never to be content with what he had achieved. One feature in this attitude—in which envy also plays an important rôle—is the inability to allow others to come sufficiently to the fore. They may be allowed to play a subsidiary part as long as they do not challenge the supremacy of the ambitious person. We find also that such people are unable and unwilling to stimulate and encourage younger people, because some of them might become their successors. One reason for the lack of satisfaction they derive from apparently great success results from the fact that their interest is not so much devoted to the field in which they are working as to their personal prestige. This description implies the connection between greed and envy. The rival is seen not only as someone who has robbed and deprived one of one's own position or goods, but also as the owner of valuable qualities which stir up envy and the wish to spoil them.

Where greed and envy are not excessive, even an ambitious person finds satisfaction in helping others to make their contribution. Here we have one of the attitudes underlying successful leadership. Again, to some extent, this is already observable in the nursery. An older child may take pride in the achievements of a younger brother or sister and do everything to help them. Some children even have an integrating effect on the whole family life; by being predominantly friendly and helpful they improve the family atmosphere. I have seen that mothers who were very impatient and intolerant of difficulties have improved through the influence of such a child. The same applies to school life where sometimes only as few as one or two children have a beneficial effect on the attitude of all the others by a kind of moral leadership which is based on a friendly and co-operative relation to the other children without any attempt to make them feel inferior.

To return to leadership: if the leader—and that may also apply

to any member of a group—suspects that he is the object of hate, all his antisocial attitudes are increased by this feeling. We find that the person who is unable to bear criticism because it touches at once on his persecutory anxiety is not only a prey to suffering but also has difficulties in relation to other people and may even endanger the cause for which he is working, in whatever walk of life it may be; he will show an incapacity to correct mistakes and to learn from others.

If we look at our adult world from the viewpoint of its roots in infancy, we gain an insight into the way our mind, our habits, and our views have been built up from the earliest infantile phantasies and emotions to the most complex and sophisticated adult manifestations. There is one more conclusion to be drawn, which is that nothing that ever existed in the unconscious completely loses its influence on the personality.

A further aspect of the child's development to be discussed is his character formation. I have given some instances of how destructive impulses, envy and greed, and the resulting persecutory anxieties disturb the child's emotional balance and his social relations. I have also referred to the beneficial aspects of an opposite development and attempted to show how they arise. I have tried to convey the importance of the interaction between innate factors and the influence of the environment. In giving full weight to this interplay we get a deeper understanding of how the child's character develops. It has always been a most important aspect of psycho-analytic work that, in the course of a successful analysis, the patient's character undergoes favourable changes.

One consequence of a balanced development is integrity and strength of character. Such qualities have a far-reaching effect both on the individual's self-reliance and on his relations to the outside world. The influence of a really sincere and genuine character on other people is easily observed. Even people who do not possess the same qualities are impressed and cannot help feeling some respect for integrity and sincerity. For these qualities arouse in them a picture of what they might themselves have become or perhaps even still might become. Such personalities give them some hopefulness about the world in general and greater trust in goodness.

I have concluded this paper by discussing the importance of character, because in my view character is the foundation for all human achievement. The effect of a good character on others lies at the root of healthy social development.

POSTSCRIPT

When I discussed my views on character development with an anthropologist, he objected to the assumption of a general foundation

for character development. He quoted his experience that in his fieldwork he had come across an entirely different evaluation of character. For instance, he had worked in a community where it was regarded as admirable to cheat other people. He also described, in answer to some of my questions, that in that community it was considered as a weakness to show mercy to an adversary. I inquired whether there were no circumstances in which mercy would be shown. He replied that if a person could place himself behind a woman in such a way that he would be up to a point covered by her skirt, his life would be spared. In answer to further questions he told me that if the enemy managed to get into a man's tent, he would not be killed; and that there was also safety within a sanctuary.

The anthropologist agreed when I suggested that the tent, the woman's skirt, and the sanctuary were symbols of the good and protective mother. He also accepted my interpretation that the mother's protection was extended to a hated sibling—the man hiding behind the woman's skirt—and that the ban on killing within one's own tent linked with the rules of hospitality. My conclusion about the last point is that fundamentally hospitality links with family life, with the relation of children to one another, and in particular to the mother. For, as I suggested earlier, the tent represents the mother who protects the family.

I am quoting this instance to suggest possible links between cultures that appear to be entirely different, and to indicate that these links are found in the relation to the primal good object, the mother, whatever may be the forms in which distortions of character are accepted and even admired.