Conceptualizing our Interpersonal Impressions

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Mental Representations and Internal Objects

By

Gillian Steggles

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Dedicated, belatedly, to
Melanie Klein and Anna Freud

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FOREWORD

BOB HINSHELWOOD

Dr Steggles has accomplished an unusual work. The field of psychoanalysis has forever spawned new ideas, ever since Sigmund Freud, Sandor Ferenczi, and Carl Jung went on their trip together to the New World, and came back less friendly than when they started out. It seems the fate of new ideas is to jostle each other, without making contact; it is the people in possession of the ideas who compete and challenge and in the end part company without much recognition of each other.

In this book, ideas clash, not people! The author is to be greatly commended for keeping her research to a strict and relevant format, and she refrains from over-flowing into more personal evaluations. The world of psychoanalysis is pervaded by some Zeitgeist which ensures that those who disagree don't speak. They go their own way cherry-picking their evidence for their own satisfactions. Gill Steggles takes a different line. She has started to show the way by which we might get different ideas to speak to each other.

I am in danger of making a rather severe criticism. The world of psychoanalysis may be rather sensitive to criticism, especially from each other, but the work requires people who are maximally sensitive to others – their patients. We should not be too strict if we fail to respond usefully to criticisms of each other. Like no other academic form of psychology, psychoanalysis is a study of the field of subjectivity. As Robert Wallerstein (a recent President of the International Psychoanalytical Association) remarked in 2000:

> ...the data we deal with are not of the mechanisms of inanimate nature (the natural sciences) or of the operative mechanisms of the living world of flora and fauna where the phenomena of mind are not under study (the biological sciences), but are quintessentially mental concerns of desire and will and intention in all their subjectivity and elusiveness (p. 29).

And whilst this kind of data, in most psychologies, is transformed into an objective discipline, using measurable facts, paralleling where possible the character of the natural sciences, psychoanalysis refrains from that by

its focus on human experience, as such. Consequently psychoanalysis must stoically stick with the world of the subjective, and stick with its unmeasurable facts. In turn we must tolerate being dismissed in ignorance by criticism that our thoughts and theories are all distorted, a world of fairy-tales as Krafft-Ebing told Freud a century ago. We are told no reliance can be placed on psychoanalytic knowledge.

History could be read as confirming this harsh judgement, by pointing to the plethora of clamouring and incompatible theories that different psychoanalysts have developed. Even psychoanalysts themselves have referred to it in despair as a Tower of Babel. Referring to this, one psychoanalyst aiming to shock his colleagues, wrote,

> We find ourselves in a psychoanalytic Babel where: (1) the same words name different concepts; (2) the same concepts are named by different words; (3) there are a number of words only validated within the context of a given frame of reference (Aslan 1989, p. 13).

So much for the problem. Gill Steggles' period with the Centre of Psychoanalytic Studies at the University of Essex (in the UK), seems to have convinced her that all is not lost, and if we focus on absolutely central issues we can in fact try to bring daylight to bear on them. This book is the evidence that we may indeed do more than just try to tackle the problem; we can achieve new light, bit by bit. It is a light that can illuminate the areas of disagreement, without having to dismiss one or other. We can bring to bear our specific microscope to observe small distinctions which point to big significances. In other words, she has taken two key concepts, one each from two major schools of psychoanalytic thought, and compared them as if under that conceptual microscope.

If psychoanalysis is the study of how an individual person forms his own experiences, then we need to know how perceptions of the real world of other people get formed and incorporated, and as it were come alive inside the individual, as the source of the experiences he contains. Steggles' research therefore took this fundamental question of how the external world impinges on the semi-autonomous inner life of the individual. From early on Freud described how other persons are 'mentally represented'. But this notion evolved under the pressures of the discoveries of psychoanalysis itself. Subsequently, psychoanalysts realised that others can be seen to live on in a different way in the mind of the perceiving and experiencing individual – the once external person becomes as it were an internal one – usually termed an 'internal object'. In consequence of this dichotomy, the traditionalists tend to stick with the initial view, and others embrace the later evolved conceptualisation, with the unhappy result that

firstly the two groups do not discuss this difference clearly between them; and then secondly the difference in terminology makes it increasingly difficult for the two groups to find a language they can use in discussions with each other. There is therefore a sore need to know if the two terms are really about the same thing, or if there is really a significant difference, and if so what that difference is.

It is this fundamental research that this book introduces us to. It is not on its own of course, as conceptual research has already been put on the map by various workers, in Germany (notably Anna-Ursula Dreher), and the United States (Robert Wallerstein, Joseph Weiss, and Harold Sampson, and many others), . But the key feature to look for is the way they sustain the focus on subjective experiencing as opposed to objective measurable fact. Gill Steggles has given thoughtful attention to just this problem of making careful comparisons from the experiential material. She has constructed her own conceptual microscope for this purpose. It is not based on a clinical method and she therefore examined quite ordinary people, their perceptions and their continuing representations of other people. It is important that we do recognise, not just the clinical 'laboratory', but that rigorous methods *outside* the clinical setting do not necessarily destroy the quintessentially subjective character of the psychoanalytic field of study.

This book tells us a lot about the comparisons between two chosen schools of thought, but it is also a pioneering venture in the conceptual research which needs developing widely in the psychoanalytic field. It should therefore be an inspiration for further work that forges a path into this area, both difficult as research, and complex because of the deeply felt commitments that psychoanalysts have to their preferred ideas.

<div align="right">Bob Hinshelwood
September 2014</div>

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PREFACE

My attempt at identifying the relationship between what are held to be the two main ways of conceptualizing other people stemmed from a desire to clarify some issues which in their day gave rise to extreme academic distress and pain. Retrospectively, nothing can be done about this very real actual problem as it then was. However, I saw an opportunity when my Supervisor, R D Hinshelwood, suggested this topic, of resolving an issue which because of its central position in the two systems of thought, those of the Classical Freudians and of the Kleinians, still arouses controversy today. The heat of this controversy has somewhat abated and thinking has largely moved on, but the opposing arguments can still arouse animosity, academically if not personally or physically.

This book of my Thesis evaluates the two prevailing forms by which real features of the external world may be conceptualized. It sets out, as clearly as I have been able, some of the issues faced by psychoanalysts during the controversial storms of the early 1940s, when the world was at war. Mental representations, originally conceived of by Sigmund Freud as 'memory-traces', or images, may be compared with, or may be the same thing as, 'internal objects', which Karl Abraham and then notably Melanie Klein developed as a way of relating to other people, particularly in their absence.

Many people have contributed to the development of each of the two conceptualization types. Historically, schism within the psychoanalytic community resulted from major differences of opinion at a time of political and social unrest, epitomized in the Controversial Discussions during the years of the Second World War. The two conceptualization types have been described, examined and re-defined contemporaneously, in discussion and in the literature since that time. Are these literary distinctions or are they really substantive differences in the way the mind works?

This book of my research Study approaches this question psychoanalytically, and tests experimentally its Research Question 'Can mental representations and internal objects be identified in ordinary, everyday life as they are described in the historical literature?'. The research is not based "on the couch", but rather is centred in the everyday life of its subjects. Interviews with ten participants, young university

students, produced evidence of conceptualizations of two contrasting contacts, each participant's mother and their chosen film star. These free association conceptualizations were deemed to fill the 'meaning-spaces' of potentially both mental representations and internal objects as these are defined historically in the literature. Within these practical meaning-spaces the identities of each of the two conceptualization types were, indeed, established experimentally. A number of clearly recognisable characteristics identified *both* conceptualization types as existing in ordinary, everyday life, and suggests a spectrum between these that may facilitate, as conceptualizations of them that permit ongoing change and progress with the passage of time, the range of relationships ordinarily maintained during healthy human growth and development.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

In the Renaissance, John Locke studied the "impressions made on our senses" by features of the external world, and opened our awareness of how we perceive. Subsequently, in 1895, Sigmund Freud theorized about remembering these same impressions reaching the cerebral cortex as cognitive "memory-traces", that form our recollections of past experiences which we can revisit as more-or-less permanent mental representations. Melanie Klein then independently observed emotional involvement in the way we recollect people, as internal objects, at a time when Freud's work was still breaking new ground.

Many people, from Heinz Hartmann and Edith Jacobson to Edward Greene and Laurette Larocque, developed Freud's theme, in each case elaborating the prevailing understanding of how external realities, including other people, are held in mind by subjects who have a relationship with them. We perceive other people, and retain our impressions as our conceptualizations of them. This may help us to maintain our relationships, and to adjust to external reality. These authors described many instances where our conceptualizations fill specific roles during particular experiences that the individual has to face in life, such as learning to adjust to the passage of time as an infant, or aiding recovery of threatening ideas and feelings.

Melanie Klein observed in children that they hold, internally, a representative of their carers. This representative, which she termed their "'internalized' or 'inner' object", was emotionally imbued with the child's feelings in relation to the adult, and was autonomous and independent, seemingly with a life of its own. "Internal objects", as they became known, thus may be quite distinguishable from Freud's "memory-traces". The internal objects were emotionally experienced by the children, sometimes very frighteningly, as in the case of internalized parents who took form as the child's tyrannical superego. Klein's colleagues, especially Susan Isaacs, Paula Heimann and Joan Riviere, supported her and helped to develop her ideas. Freud considered that memory-traces were cathected with "a quota of affect", but Klein's idea held a qualitatively different order of implicit emotion.

Over time, since distant roots in the past, other ideas about conceptualization have become attached to the two frameworks, mental

representations and internal objects. The two types have become increasingly distinguishable from each other, and their devotees in the psychoanalytic profession increasingly defensive, animated and even aggressive in their support for the one or for the other. Each type seems to preclude the other, so controversy raged, especially between 1941 and 1945.

But what is the evidence for either? Do they both exist, or are they really different names for the same thing? How are they to be distinguished in reality? And would it not be a good idea, if they do both exist, to discover the relationship between them?

I have had a desire to relate mental representations and internal objects, as products of conceptualization, to each other faithfully regarding the literature. Initially I knew little of internal objects, and had only studied mental representations in relation to "the shadow of the object [that] fell upon the ego" in depression, according to Freud (see the beginning of Part II), and to the extent that, together, mental representations form a person's representational world. But I am very interested in the representational world, and wonder how an internal object might fit into it (see Eliezer Ilan's Integrated Model of internal objects in Part II), even, for example, an analysand's psychoanalyst. So to distinguish clearly between mental representations and internal objects becomes my objective, or else to discover that they are really different names for the same outcome from the psychoanalytic phenomenon of conceptualizing.

Upon researching the literature that has, over the years, accumulated about each, two bodies of fairly internally-consistent thinking become readily available. The question I ask of these is, in summary, 'What is the essence of each trend, and can I find evidence for either, or both?' Once I have found answers to these questions, I hope to be able to demonstrate how the characteristics of each type relate to those of the other, unless there is just one type. Then my aim is to show, if there are two types, whether the difficulty within the profession in accepting them alongside each other in everyday life's reality need no longer obtain, or is justified.

In my researches I find that Joseph Sandler, especially, and also Edith Jacobson and Eliezer Ilan, have made stalwart efforts to integrate psychoanalytic thinking regarding our conceptualization of people we meet and develop relationships with. Edith Jacobson (Jacobson, 1954) develops the meaning of self representations and object representations, that is, their essential qualities, to become very nearly those of Melanie Klein's internalized objects. In her work, Jacobson tries to integrate object-relational concepts into ego psychology. And Eliezer Ilan (Ilan, 1977) proposes including "archaic primary process presences" as internal

objects experienced concretely in Joseph Sandler's concept of the representational world without a fixed location (p. 187).

But Jacobson leaves many of Klein's questions unanswered, such as How could the representations exert autonomy? She does not resolve her differences with Klein relating to her ego psychology-based views on the formation of the superego; she believes primitive self and object images do not, themselves, constitute the superego, whereas Klein considers these primitive object images to be equivalent to the superego (Perlow, 1995) (p. 83). Neither does Ilan elaborate on the mechanisms of the presence of both mental representations and internal objects together in his Integrated Model. And Joseph Sandler, whose representational world concept is utilized by Ilan, develops his own "basic psychoanalytical model" which does also incorporate internal objects, but only by deciding that they are structural components of the mind. Melanie Klein most certainly did not consider that her internalized objects are structural; rather, they are highly mobile, changeable, active psychological elements which rapidly respond to changes in the subject's perceptions and experiences.

Jacobson, Ilan and Sandler write theoretically about features of the unconscious mind as they have encountered it. They build fresh approaches to established concepts, trying to understand these by suggesting new qualities and relationships attributable to them. Jacobson tries to integrate the new sense of autonomy and vitality that endows Klein's internal objects with her own understanding of structural self and object representations. Ilan understands the autonomy of "archaic primary process presences" and tries to place these, moving concretely and freely, somehow within the structural representational world. Sandler holds that the enduring nature of internal objects could mean they are equivalent to enduring structural, non-experiential features of the mind.

All three of these creative authors are working at integrating contemporary psychoanalytic approaches towards understanding the phenomenon of conceptualization. They generally make interesting reading, but in practice are difficult to verify.

My approach to identifying how conceptualization develops in response to life's experience takes a different direction. Firstly, I start not with developing psychoanalytic theory but by accumulating historical consensus of existing theory so that I know what is broadly agreed upon as a definition of the psychoanalytic phenomenon I am studying. I discover through observation of the literature , not by creative elaboration, what is generally held to be true of the two recognised conceptual types, together with individual authors' diverse specific views of them. Then, secondly, I obtain clear samples of these varieties of the study phenomenon, as good

examples of them as I can. And thirdly, I analyse transcriptions of these phenomena, which also hold concurrent, nonverbal unconscious elements that are open to analysis, such as fiddling with hair strands (see the end of Part V). This data analysis, through Thematic Analysis and also nonverbal communications, reveals the relative presence of important factors implicating either of the two conceptual types. I am observing the phenomenon of a conceptualization and then comparing what I see with the complex, lengthy historical narrative.

So I am conducting an observational study of what is described in the literature, to determine how much of what is described can be identified in fact. Subsequently, I suggest an explanation for my findings in terms of their usefulness as an outcome, ie. for the usefulness of what I discover. Thus if Jacobson's, Ilan's and Sandler's answers are not satisfactory, can I find my own solution which would satisfyingly and faithfully relate mental representations and internal objects as they are historically described?

My task is therefore to produce a piece of conceptual research (see Part IV for a discussion of conceptual research). I therefore draw up literature reviews of each conceptual type (Parts I and II), and investigate the fierce Freud-Klein controversies (Part III). These literature reviews illustrate how broadly the conceptualization types have been developed, and at the same time lead to a crystallization of the key theoretical characteristics of each conceptualization type. Mental representations are principally cognitive phenomena relating to images; Freud opined that they are "cathected with a quota of affect", but Heinz Hartmann implied that object representations "could be libidinally cathected" like self representations, and therefore were not necessarily so. Thenceforward, mental representations were deemed to be almost exclusively cognitive phenomena, accompanied according to Joseph Sandler by a 'background of feeling'. Internal objects are essentially emotionally based. My challenge is then to identify exactly these features within the observable reality of each type in ordinary, everyday life, and to compare the results of my findings for each type with the results of the other type. Are clear differences going to be found between the realities of the two types?

My methodology (in Part IV) needs to be precisely orientated towards my literature findings, to produce a good result. My data analysis (Part V) also has to be carefully directed towards the goals I am aiming for in answering my Research Question, "Can Mental Representations and Internal Objects be identified in ordinary, everyday life as they are described in the historical literature?". I am fortunate that suitable methodologies exist to enable me to examine productively the phenomena

I am studying. Hinshelwood's emphasis on the importance of a binary question helped me to define my objective. Anna Ursula Dreher's and Joseph Sandler's "meaning-space" concept ideally provides scope for positioning my experimental foci, ie. the two conceptualization types, in a frame where they could be studied. Thematic Analysis then permits close objective scrutiny of my experimental material, my participants' free association narratives, so that I can expose details of my experimental foci and define these. Consequently, I am able to refer my findings to the historical literature and answer my Research Question.

Ten participants assist in my data collection, providing two interviews each, and the practical work generally goes smoothly. Interesting results are obtained from the data analysis, and my Research Question is provided with meaningful and potentially useful answers, as discussed in Parts V and VI. If this Study had been produced in earlier times, it is a moot point that it could have shed some light on the painful Freud-Klein controversies. At that time, feelings were running high because of the country being at war; one meeting was actually held during an air raid. Some of the ideas being introduced were so novel that war-linked anxiety seems to have accompanied them in the audience's minds rather than curiosity or interest. A broad view, such as the inclusive conclusions reached by this Study (as discussed in Part VI) seems not to have been possible at that time; and, sadly, the personal investments of both sides consequently appear to have been bruised and injured rather than celebrated, as we enjoy today regarding both groups' achievements. It is also very interesting that a contemporary of those times, Marjorie Brierley, recognised and articulated clearly and literally, in 1943 (as shown in Part III), the significance of precisely my own Research Question.

PART I:

MENTAL REPRESENTATIONS: A HISTORICAL REVIEW

CHAPTER ONE

THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE CONCEPT OF "MENTAL REPRESENTATIONS"

The history of mental representations, as an important component of psychoanalysis, has not been straightforward since they were first conceived of by Freud. This is partly because of the difficulty of identifying these unconscious features of mental life, and partly because of the differing views of fellow analysts who followed the Kleinian School. One of the reasons why psychoanalysis cannot yet be considered a science (despite the best efforts of Heinz Hartmann (1959, 1964) and David Tuckett et al. (2008) and others) is because of this internal dissent about important aspects of its basic tenets: do internal objects exist as described in theory, and, if so, are they different from mental representations? Until questions such as these are resolved psychoanalysis cannot be said to be internally consistent and thus solid as a body of knowledge.

Freud's conceptualization of representations in mental life can be traced back to his very early, pre-psychoanalytic, neurological text "On Aphasia" (Freud, 1891). In this monograph he considers in his study the work of the neurologist Meynert and his "doctrine of the organization and the functions of the brain". Within this complex subject, Freud considers that "If the way in which the periphery is reflected in the spinal cord is called a 'projection', its counterpart in the cerebral cortex might suitably be called a representation, which implies that the periphery of the body is contained in the cerebral cortex not point by point [as Meynert believed] but through selected fibres, in a less detailed differentiation" (Freud, 1891) (p.51). Freud thus conjectures that nerves extend from the spinal cord outwards towards the periphery, the skin, in a "projection" which can receive information from all over the body, drawing it towards the spinal cord and brain; and that a radiation of nerve fibres extends from the spinal cord and deep in the brain towards the outer cerebral cortex. This is surely the beginning of his psychological concepts of "projection" of the mind, beyond the skin, into other people; and of registration of sensations from the external world, via the skin, through the spinal cord and brainstem out

towards the outer cerebral cortex, in "representations". He asks (op.cit.) (p.56) "What then is the physiological correlate of the simple idea emerging or re-emerging?".He points out that "It starts at a specific point in the cortex and from there spreads over the whole cortex and along certain pathways. When this event has taken place it leaves behind a modification, with the possibility of a memory in the part of the cortex affected...... whenever the same cortical state is elicited again, the previous psychic event re-emerges as a memory". He considers the relationship of physiological processes to psychological phenomena and ideas, and concludes that "The psychic is, therefore, a process parallel to the physiological, 'a dependent concomitant' " (p.55). His view is that "The relationship between the chain of physiological events in the nervous system and the mental processes is probably not one of cause and effect. The former do not cease when the latter set in; they tend to continue, but, from a certain moment, a mental phenomenon corresponds to each part of the chain or to several parts" (p.55). Herein lies the origin of Freud's thinking about how sensations become "representations", ie. via memories laid down in the cortex of how the sensations appeared to the cortical tissue. When the physiological conditions of the cortical state are elicited again, the previous experience is recalled.

Freud first specified "memory-traces" in a letter he wrote on May 30, 1896 to Wilhelm Fliess, as recorded in the Standard Edition of his work (Freud, 1896), in connection with the release of libido. But, after some 80 years of subsequent professional attention, and despite the introduction of an integrating, broad-brush concept that many have found very helpful, ie. the representation world, by Joseph Sandler and Bernard Rosenblatt in 1962 (Sandler and Rosenblatt, 1962), the identity of mental representations had become so obscure that a number of authors (Friedman, 1980; Kernberg, 1982; Boesky, 1983) wrote somewhat despairing papers about the current state of general consensus, or lack of it, about this topic. David Beres and Edward Joseph in 1970 had, however, been able to write in a positive vein a summary paper about the different uses of the concept of mental representations by different authors (see below). And in 1985 Leo Rangell wrote a constructive analytical history of "The Object in Psychoanalytic Theory" (Rangell, 1985).The next year, Allan Compton reviewed comprehensively Freud's approach to objects in relation to his structural theory (Compton, 1986) and, from 1990 onwards, there followed a stream of specialist papers relating mental representations to many different aspects of psychic functioning, from mental processes in therapeutic action (Fonagy et al, 1993), aspects of the representational world during adolescence (Dahl, 1995) and self-representational fantasies

(Greene, 1997) to interactional parapraxes (Larocque, 2000), symbolic and subsymbolic representations (Arnetoli, 2002) and affect's relation to the representational world (Cooper, 2005), and others.

So the concept of mental representations emerged richly from its origins as "memory-traces" in Freud's letter to Fliess, but not without a phase of obscurity and a subsequent substantial effort by a number of individuals to preserve its original sense; and, by others, then to apply, adapt and develop aspects of this concept as it became duly regarded by their professional readers.

As early as 1891, in "On Aphasia", Freud outlined that the word "is the functional unit of speech; it is a complex concept constituted of auditory, visual and kinaesthetic elements" (op.cit.) (p.73), in a very early psychological description of a concept. In this monograph it is hypothesized that the word "is a complicated concept built up from various impressions" (p.77), the "sound impression", the "visual letter image", the "glosso-kinaesthetic impression" and the "cheiro-kinaesthetic image" (p.73). These ideas stem in a clear line of thinking from John Locke's "Essay Concerning Humane Understanding" of 1690, where he wrote:

> "The Impressions, then, that are made on our Senses by outward Objects, that are extrinsical to the Mind, and its own Operations, about these Impressions reflected on by its self, as proper Objects to be contemplated by it, are, I conceive, the Originals of all Knowledge; and the first Capacity of Human Intellect, is, that the Mind is fitted to receive the Impressions made on it; either, through the Senses, by outward Objects; or by its own Operations, when it reflects on them." (Book II, page 44, para 24)

This illustrates Locke's corpuscular, empirical theory of the mind which he developed as being analogous to Newton's corpuscular theory of physics, where all material matter comprised tiny units or "corpuscles". Locke believed all thinking was based upon very small, "corpuscular" impressions on our senses, or sensations, which evolved in our minds into ever-larger ideas and mental constructions. He argued there were "No innate practical Principles" within our minds, but that the whole of our mental life began in relation to external reality, as the first empiricist opponent of Descartes. Freud clearly related our evolution of words to the auditory, visual and kinaesthetic impressions we derive from external reality, or from "outward objects" as Locke described them. In psychological terminology the notion of "external objects" still persists within contemporary understanding of our relations with the outside world. Freud held that the word acquired its significance through its association with the "idea (concept) of the object" (Freud, 1891) (p. 77),

or, in Locke's words, by the mind's being "fitted to receive the Impressions made on it; either, through the Senses, by outward Objects; or by its own Operations, when it reflects on them".

Freud's first mention of memory-traces in his letter to Fliess of 1896, as being insufficient to take up a surplus of released energy, juxtaposes them as cognitive elements in contrast to the dynamic and affective components of mental life long before Melanie Klein's fundamentally different approach. In "The Interpretation of Dreams" (p.539) he declares that "what we describe as our 'character' is based on the memory-traces of our impressions". Here he has already begun to extend in his own estimation the influence of concepts residing within the psyche throughout its own activities. One's character includes a broad span of one's mental life, and he refers its nature to our impressions thus far received in our life about the world outside ourselves, as well as from within. In "The Unconscious" (Freud, 1915b) (p. 167) Freud describes how latent recollections or memories "can no longer be described as psychical but that they correspond to residues of somatic processes from which what is psychical can once more arise". He acknowledges the physical elements of receiving impressions or perceptions; there is here an early link to later investigations of mental representations as being cognitive memories of perceptual processes, and also to the Kleinian emphasis on the physical component of internal objects. Two of the schools of psychoanalysis which later developed separately from Freud's original work, the Ego Psychologists and the Kleinian School, relied upon the individual's perception of external entities to provide themselves with psychological material, experiences and information which they could then use to build up their internal worlds; while the Kleinian School also maintained an equally emphatic role for innate physical characteristics and potential in the individual's psychic life.

Also in "The Unconscious" (p. 176), Freud mentions "the unconscious memory" of the patient's experience and "the unconscious memory-trace", the first time he refers to the potential unconscious nature of memories which might have a role in future psychic activity. In "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" (Freud, 1920) (p.24), he goes on to write: "On the basis of impressions derived from our psycho-analytic experience, we assume that all excitatory processes that occur in the other systems leave permanent traces behind in them which form the foundation of memory. Such memory-traces, then, have nothing to do with the fact of becoming conscious; indeed they are often most powerful and most enduring when the process which left them behind was one which never entered

consciousness." Thus, here he confirms the importance of the unconscious as a potential source of memory-traces.

In "Moses and Monotheism" (Freud, 1939), Freud describes the very real nature of memory-traces that may never enter consciousness and enable us to form a conception of them, but which may interrupt our mental life all the same: "And if, for instance, we say 'At this point an unconscious memory intervened', what that means is: 'At this point something occurred of which we are totally unable to form a conception, but which, if it had entered our consciousness, could only have been described in such and such a way' " (Freud, 1940b) (p.197). In this context, he also describes the process during treatment where "the 'upward drive' of the repressed, stirred into activity by the putting forward of the [analyst's] construction, has striven to carry the important memory-traces into consciousness" (Freud, 1937) (p.266). He summarizes how the analyst puts forward a word-presentation (representation) similar to the thing located in the patient's unconscious , and when it becomes cathected allows the patient to identify the idea that had been causing them difficulties, ie. putting a word to the experience enables it to become conscious (if it is not repressed). In Freud's view the idea of memory-traces helps in the understanding of how the psychoanalytic process achieves its therapeutic aims, through their accessibility (if not repressed) to words.

Freud then recounts how childhood memories in the individual are analogous to traditions in the life of a group of people. In fact, he makes this an example of the once widely-held idea of Ernst Haeckel (1834-1919) that 'ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny', that is, how the life history of an individual can imitate the evolutionary history of their group (as a culture or species). He writes, about childrens' memories: ".....the experience of a person's first 5 years exercise a determining effect on his life, which nothing later can withstand. .... there is the remoteness of the period concerned, which is recognised here as the truly determining factor – in the special state of the memory, for instance, which in the case of these childhood experiences we classify as 'unconscious'" (Freud, 1939) (pp. 125, 126). He refers to traumatic memories remaining in childhood memory as "a few separate mnemic residues", or "screen memories" (Freud, 1939) (p. 74). These, he believes, play a major role in how we perceive the world, and in how our personalities build up as we age and mature. They form representations in our minds of the external world upon which we later rely to compare with current experiences as time passes.

The term "representation" was widely used by Freud to refer to the content of dreams (Freud, 1900). He also used the term to refer to the