CHAPTER THIRTY-SEVEN

The family is the first social group, followed by the clan, tribe, and nation

Ron B. Aviram

The promise of psychoanalysis to improve the lives of individuals is paralleled by its broader aspirations to contribute to a better world. Fairbairn (1939c) was a strong advocate of utilising psychoanalytic theory to this end. He wrote, "If modern psychoanalytical theory is capable of ameliorative clinical application in the case of psychological disorder, it is also capable of ameliorative clinical application in the case of sociological disorders" (1952, p. 255). Nevertheless, the field of psychoanalysis evolved as a clinical approach to treat individuals. More than a half century ago Fairbairn (1957) understood that the most significant contribution that psychoanalysis can offer in promoting mental health would be to aid in prevention. Psychoanalytic work with adult patients taught us about the lasting repercussions of early life experience. Fairbairn felt that the best education we can provide to a wider audience has to do with child rearing. He was keenly aware of the importance of the family context, especially with how it can provide emotional security to children, and protect them from the trauma of emotional deprivations. Psychoanalysis deserves credit for its part in contributing to the evolution of society by offering tangible information that assists many people in contributing to the better lives of the next generation. This is one example of how psychoanalysis does go beyond the usual one person at a time method of clinical psychoanalysis.

Unfortunately, the potential application of psychoanalytic ideas to problems in society has not been widely appreciated by psychoanalysts. Although Freud applied psychoanalytic concepts to a broad spectrum of topics, he was reluctant to comment about the use of psychoanalysis to resolve intergroup problems in society (1935b). This reluctance has persisted with the consequence of little understanding about the psychodynamic implications of large group representations in the mind. As a result, when psychoanalytic ideas are applied to large group phenomena too often the interpersonal dynamics that psychoanalysts know well are superimposed onto the conditions that manifest between nations, religious groups, ethnic

groups, etc., which they are trying to explain. There may be some similarities between the dynamics that are enacted between two people and those that occur between two large groups, but they are not identical. For example, we have evidence that when people perceive themselves as members of a large group (e.g., national identity), they tend to perceive other people as large group members as well, rather than as individuals (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). People are then perceived as either members of the same group (ingroup), or members of a different group (outgroup). This helps explain why psychoanalytic theories that use projection or displacement of aggression to account for intergroup hostility have had little reliability when it comes to behaviour that is widespread in a society. Overall those kinds of formulations do not account for the ubiquitous effects of large group membership. Psychoanalytic theories have not proved to be helpful in understanding, explaining, or changing problems on a societal level. As a consequence very few significant ideas have emerged to inspire renewed efforts by psychoanalysts to tackle the large group dimension of human relations and contribute to prevention beyond one person at a time. This has limited the scope of psychoanalysis. Problems in society such as prejudice, intergroup conflict, and war have received little attention from psychoanalysts and psychoanalysis is often dismissed as unhelpful by other fields concerned with these problems.

The unconscious group

The title of this chapter comes from W. R. D. Fairbairn's paper, "The Sociological Significance of Communism Considered in the Light of Psychoanalysis" (1935b). In this paper he describes an historical evolution of national group formation which is intertwined with basic psychological functions that occur early in relationships within the family. He had an intuitive understanding about the relevance of large groups in people's lives. For example, in his paper on war neuroses he describes the psychological need that some soldiers have for their association with the Army (Fairbairn, 1943a). These individuals seem to have had a history of dependence with the family group (or mother figure in particular), which he called infantile dependence. This is a kind of dependence upon the significant people in early life which is internalised and does not mature into a more stable, well-differentiated relationship. For Fairbairn a persistence of infantile dependence into adulthood is associated with psychopathology. The Army became an important large group identification for soldiers in general, but some soldiers depended upon this affiliation for their personal well-being. The soldiers Fairbairn discussed in this paper had a psychological breakdown when the Army did not reward their enthusiasm for being soldiers. Instead, it probably gave the military authorities pause to see such eagerness to go to war, and as a soldier's over-determined zeal was thwarted the latent pathology emerged. For these soldiers the identification with the military was vital in sustaining their identity and ability to function adequately. In other words, they internalised the military as an object relationship upon which they had an infantile dependence. Fairbairn understood the quality of their dependence to be associated with a defensive process called primary identification in which there is no differentiation between self and other.

In the course of his theorising, however, Fairbairn did not pursue the implications of the role of large groups in the internal object world. This was a logical blind spot in the development of his ideas given that he considered all sociological problems to stem from individual psychology.

This suggested to him that by understanding interpersonal processes we would understand intergroup processes. He concluded that in order to learn about large group phenomena we need to study the psychology of the individual in the group. In my opinion this is an error that leads to a failure to recognise that the individual's participation in the world is at times not as an autonomous person, but as a member of a large group. We know that people experience themselves differently in an interpersonal context, as opposed to an intergroup context in which their ingroup or outgroup status is relevant. This suggests that a psychological shift has occurred in the mind. We can extrapolate from Fairbairn's ideas to recognise that large groups which end up becoming part of our self-concept are identified with in such a way that they become new and unique object relationships. This allows us to conceptualise the role of the *large group in the mind*, rather than the individual in the group.

The trajectory of psychoanalytic theory points in this direction. Historically, the emphasis was on the tension relief from internal instinctual needs and pathological adaptations of the patient in reaction to the limits of the object world in providing outlets for need gratification. Then in Fairbairn's time the importance of a satisfying interpersonal world, in and of itself, emerged as the fundamental determinant of motivation and mental health. The person in a social network was recognised but not to the extent that we were able to acknowledge the large groups in which the network gets established as an influencing entity as well. Fairbairn's paper on communism refers to the potential impact of the large group upon individuals. His focus was specifically on how the large group (in this case the nation) evolved from unconscious needs of individual psyches. By following this trajectory of ideas today we recognise the dialectical quality in interactions between individuals. Fairbairn's paper is suggestive of a dialectical influence between a person and the large groups in his or her environment which we can develop further.

Large group formation

In this early paper Fairbairn (1935b) relies on Freudian classical theory to make sense of the unavoidable attachments that begin in the family. This first group experience is then recreated with successive large groups that try to substitute for the family. He explains that libido binds members of a group together, and that the aggression of individuals is the source of disruptions in all societies. This is essentially Freud's (1921c) formulation in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*. It is important to keep in mind that this paper was written before Fairbairn firmly developed his ideas about the natural desire for affiliation with other people. At the time he wrote this paper Fairbairn accepted aspects of the Freudian classical perspective, including natural aggression within individuals needing external sources for gratification and transformation. There are significant implications for our understanding of large group dynamics if we accept this view, or the subsequent relational perspective about aggression as a secondary reaction to threats, frustrations, and deprivations. In the following sections we will evaluate Fairbairn's contribution to our understanding of large group affiliations and offer a contemporary object relations perspective on large groups in the mind.

Fairbairn approaches the subject from a developmental perspective. He identifies the *family* as the original social group and proceeds to elaborate his view of the interplay between

individual psychology and sociological conditions associated with large groups. He surmises that in the context of the family group it is necessary to retain the positive energy of libido (love), while aggression gets directed outside the family. Fairbairn relies upon the Oedipal dynamic to account for the initial experiences of rivalry that introduces aggression into the group. Out of this family drama the need to protect the cohesion and integrity of the family established the two great crimes that have allowed families, and in Fairbairn's view large groups, to persist throughout the ages. Patricide and incest continue to influence "civilised" individuals and are the taboos that protect the family from its own member's aggression. Fairbairn (1935b) writes, "The taboos of incest and patricide are undoubtedly the cultural mainstay of the family group and consequently the foundation upon which all higher forms of social organization and culture rest" (1952, p. 236).

As a result of these protective processes within a family the members are directed outside the family for marriage. The custom of exogamy led to the next evolution in social groupings. Rather than dissolving the family as a unit, this practice was a way of preserving the libidinal tie to the original family by forming bonds with other acceptable families. The *clan*, Fairbairn writes, consists of a number of families and is organised as a family itself. It is headed by a chief who is the father of the clan. However, the same practice of exogamy is necessary for the clan as it is within the family. Technically marriage within the clan constitutes incest. Therefore, just as exogamy led to the clan as a means of avoiding incest, while still trying to retain libido within the group, so too there was a need for a further evolution of social groupings. The *tribe* overshadowed the autonomous clans by organising itself as a union of clans. It too is modelled upon the family with a father-like chief, or king. At this level of social grouping, however, the threat of libido being directed outside the group was able to be avoided by the possibility of marriage between the different clans. This promoted a stable and strong social organisation. Finally, in the evolution of social grouping to date, the *nation* evolved, according to Fairbairn, out of the weakening of the clan system and its inability to influence tribal policies. Importantly, he states that this is a result of the success of the tribe to bind the libido of the individual to the tribe. Hence the clan allegiance became less relevant. Fairbairn states that when the clan system disappears the tribe becomes a nation. This is the contemporary form of social grouping that is based on the original family. Still, the demand for allegiance which the nation asks for has not been able to weaken the basic loyalty of individuals to their own families. As a result all nations have had to make concessions to the family units within the nation in order to survive as a viable social organisation. Throughout this formulation of the evolution of social groupings Fairbairn emphasises the family as the core unit at the heart of the expanding ties. Reading his account of this process we can imagine that Fairbairn's Scottish heritage with its long history of clan and tribal affiliations gave him a unique perspective on the subject.

The social structure of modern society has not diminished the relevance of the family. It seems that in Fairbairn's depiction each successive stage of social grouping has the interest and potential of eliminating the previous level's relevance. The clan and tribe erected a patriarchal order and attempted to claim the allegiance of its members to the chief as the embodiment of the clan and tribe. Similar to the original feelings of filial attachment in the basic group (the family), all subsequent group formations promote a powerful need for a strong allegiance to the social

structure. Yet the family has not been able to be superseded by larger social organisations wanting the devotion of its members. This must indicate something vital about human nature. In fact, it is only pathological large group organisations like dictatorships which seek to stamp out the family as a rival for devotion of its members. That kind of large group structure instils fear that the state as a father figure will punish those who do not put the state above all other loyalties. Fairbairn is identifying the basic attachment need that individuals seem to extend to objects of identification. Fundamentally, we can say that the family and the nation wish to have the love and loyalty of its individual members. We can update this view even further. It would be more in line with Fairbairn's ideas to say that the family/nation and its individual members are interdependent.

It is possible to extrapolate further to say that the balance that emerges from a mature dependence between the nation and family promotes a healthy society. This is in parallel to Fairbairn's (1941) notion of mature dependence in personal development, which allows for a balance of attachment and separation between differentiated people. However, he did not recognise that large groups are in and of themselves necessary objects of identification. For Fairbairn, the nation is essentially a parental substitution. This is the fundamental limitation of the view he was able to articulate. If he would have recognised that the nation, or any large group identification, can become an important object representation, than he would have been in a position to describe large group phenomena as similar to, but independent of object relations that are associated with individuals of historical significance. Perhaps this was not pursued because of his view that only bad relationships are internalised. Therefore there is no accommodation for the internalisation of the large group as a positive identification that enhances one's self-concept and identity.

Fairbairn's analysis of the communist movement was that its motive was not strictly an economic one, rather it was an effort to establish a social system that would supersede the nation. In fact, he stated that it was a system that had ambitions to be supra-national by transcending national boundaries. He speculated that communism was a movement that potentially represented the next stage in the evolutionary process he described. He reasoned that the trajectory of family, clan, tribe, nation, could lead to a *world state* that would require the same loyalty that the other levels of social organisation demanded from individuals. If successful, Fairbairn states, it would wean loyalty from individual nations toward the world state that encompasses all of humanity. However, Fairbairn does not stop there. He suggests that the true aim of communism is the elimination of the family group as a competitor for loyalty, which the individual nations were unable to do. As in other nationalist systems (e.g., Nazi Germany), the communist state declares that the children belong to it rather than the family. For the communist state the only relevant loyalty is to the world state and therefore family loyalties are unconsciously regarded as obsolete. Fairbairn reminds us that he is interested in the unconscious motivation of the communist movement, rather than the stated aims of the leaders. In contrast to the aspirations of the communist world state, nations have always recognised the existence of other nations. This was a way for nations to secure internal loyalty by providing a secure space for families in a hostile world. In essence he is saying that the individual's natural affiliation to the family and nation is a basic foundation for our perceptions of ingroups and outgroups. This is an important point

which will allow us to elaborate the relational motivation that underlies intergroup conditions in society (Aviram, 2009).

As an analysis of a contemporary event in his time Fairbairn was remarkably astute in his evaluation. However, the psychoanalytic explanation for his conclusions was based on the knowledge of his era. He had not developed his views on the libidinal tie to the object and therefore did not see the group as a valid object with which to establish a valid attachment. He relied on Freud's conclusions in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* (1921c) to explain the group's existence as a by-product of the individual's need to use the group for his or her own libidinal needs. In this paper Fairbairn also relies on the Oedipal context to explain the need for a leader who represents the ego-ideal. The Oedipal situation is important in his analysis because it provides the underlying reason for the incest and patricide taboos that lead to the rules of the clan, which lead to the tribe, and then ultimately the nation. In evaluating his own conclusions Fairbairn predicts that the current system of nations is likely to change over time. He offers a possibility of a *family of nations* as part of an evolutionary process. In his time, Fairbairn could see the League of Nations as a part of that process, and the subsequent United Nations effort. We can see aspects of that in the European Union alliances and the economic alliances between nations in other parts of the world. Although Fairbairn died before the collapse of the communist experiment he would not have been surprised given the brutal assault on the family by the communist regimes. These were systems in which the state determined the possible direction individual lives would go. This must have been a fundamental threat to the basic family unit in its pursuit of its own aspirations and personally valued loyalty to important people.

The attack on the family may have contributed to the ultimate downfall of the communist system, but another factor was that the communist state was not able to eliminate the national loyalties that it would have needed to eliminate in order to survive as a world state. Erikson (1985) writes about a similar utopian ideal in which he suggests that categories like nations, religions, ethnicities, race, etc., were really pseudocategories. Erikson referred to these categories of differentiation as "pseudospeciation" to signify that these are false differences between human beings. However, like the failure of communism to abolish the personal ties to families and nations, so too are there limits for a supraordinate identification with humanity. The problem with this kind of utopian ideal is that it ignores a vital human need for identity and uniqueness. Consider recent history in the former Yugoslavian state, or in some African countries. It turned out that these nations, that supposedly made the affiliations with clans and tribes superfluous, did not eliminate the powerful historical bonds with those social groupings. During times of tension in the nation the lower level affiliations emerged to the surprise of many observers and influenced the violent behaviour of many individual members. Rather than maintain the perception of belonging to the same nation, people defined themselves according to more unique affiliations. The intergroup context had changed dramatically and individuals were willing to kill people from the re-perceived outgroup. Why did this occur after a superseding national identity had been long established? Part of the explanation is offered by Brewer (1991), who writes about the need for balancing uniqueness and belonging. In her optimal distinctiveness theory she found evidence that as assimilation increases there is a countervailing need for differentiation. Importantly, she states that too much assimilation can lead to violence in an effort to re-establish the differentiated qualities that are personally meaningful to an individual.

Can the lower level identifications ever be eliminated? If not, in what ways are large group affiliations beyond the family necessary for healthy functioning in a social world?

Mitchell (1988) writes, "The most useful way to view psychological reality is as operating within a relational matrix which encompasses both intrapsychic and interpersonal realms" (p. 9). We are in a period of knowledge in which we can include the realm of large groups as also influencing psychological reality. Let us continue to build on Fairbairn's insights. He believed that our sense of ourselves is influenced by our identifications with other people (1941). He wrote, "Identification may thus be regarded as representing the persistence into extra-uterine life of a relationship existing before birth. In so far as identification persists after birth, the individual's object constitutes not only his world, but also himself" (1952, p. 47). In other words, the degree of dependence upon the other influences more or less, but always to some extent, one's experience of self. Object relations theory tends to associate this with interpersonal relationships. As the child reaches early adulthood, however, his or her identifications have been extending beyond the family. The child and teenager have become aware of also belonging to large group categories that define who he or she is, in addition to the identifications that began to shape the sense of self much earlier in life. We can consider what happens to one's sense of self as these large group identifications become more and more important.

By bringing the large group into our consideration of object relations and self experience we are extending Fairbairn's belief that identifications with individuals contribute to our experience of ourselves. We are in a position to say that in addition to the experience of ourselves that our identifications with individuals offer, our identifications with important large groups offer an additional layer of self experience that depending on the context will have more or less influence on our self experience and behaviour. We can go one step further and suggest that the degree of emotional identification with early objects will influence the degree of identification possible with large groups. In other words, it will influence more or less differentiation as an individual within a large group. A mature dependence with our large group affiliations will feel seamless and allow us to participate in society without too much emphasis on the large group affiliation in most situations. We must remember that the context can change this dramatically, as in the examples of the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

Gordon Allport (1954) writes that the ingroup is primary because we establish a preference for the ingroup before we develop attitudes toward an outgroup. We can think of this as having a parallel in attachment theory which emphasises the early establishment of a secure base before the infant begins to explore. It is similar to the reality that we develop object relations with individuals before we develop psychological attachments with large groups. If we accept that society and cultural groups influence one's experience of self in new and different ways than early relationships with important individuals of historical significance, then we need to augment traditional conceptions of object representations to adequately account for identifications with large groups. This would involve recognising that large groups are incorporated and identified with as new representations in the mind. It is important to distinguish the large group in the mind from traditional object representations of relationships with individuals. I have written about the relevance of the large group in the mind in a series of articles and culminating in a book in which large groups have their unique contribution to object relations (Aviram, 2002, 2005, 2007, 2009). Large groups are consciously relevant when they

become part of our self-concept and identity (collective identity). At that point they also have an unconscious role that silently contributes to the way we feel about ourselves. When we begin to discuss the large group in the mind we move beyond Fairbairn's writing. I have previously referred to the internalisation of the large group as a *social object representation* (social object: Aviram, 2009).

The large group in the mind

The social object is an internalisation of the identity group with which one is affiliated. These identity groups may be chosen, but often they are a circumstance of birth. We consciously know our large group identifications in terms of collective identity, and we can refer to the unconscious component of the large group as the social object representation. Awareness and experience of both collective identity and the social object are influenced by pre-existing object relations associated with important individuals from early life. This is simply because the infant develops relations with individuals prior to incorporating an awareness of group belonging.

If we accept that identifications with important individuals contribute to our experience of self (Fairbairn, 1941), then it is just as likely that when we establish identifications with large social groups in early adulthood that they too contribute to our experience of self. It is possible to discuss these large group identifications in the same way that we describe identifications with individuals. Our affiliation with a large group exists on a continuum from minimal identification to overidentification. In other words, the continuum of affiliation with large groups can represent the same struggle that individuals have with interpersonal relationships. They can range from difficulty in establishing any bond to being merged with the large group. Either extreme represents a pathology of affiliation and indicates a problem of self just as it would if the focus was on interpersonal relationships. The behavioural consequences, however, may be different, in that the implications of belonging to a large group involves the entire interpersonal world perceived as either ingroup or outgroup members. The range of identification between a person and a large group can be influenced by the already established psychological growth in terms of the degree of dependence with individuals of historical importance. In other words, the continuum between infantile dependence and mature dependence will influence the degree of identification with the large groups that become important for any individual at the developmentally appropriate time. However, this process can be environmentally influenced by the intergroup context so that even a person with a mature dependence can begin to overidentify with a particular large group under stressful or threatening conditions. At those times the large group can function as a source of both physical and psychological safety. That kind of overidentification is likely to be temporary and will revert back to a mature dependence as societal conditions calm down. By clarifying that a large group phenomenon has its unique intrapsychic implications we can acknowledge that intergroup behaviour is associated with different dynamics than those behaviours that reflect interpersonal dynamics. Fairbairn could see that the original identifications in the family influence group belonging. He did not recognise that these subsequent large group identifications have unique intrapsychic influence and consequences for self experience. The notion of a social object representation integrates the large group dimension into object relations theory.

The social object in action

In most of the animal world, individuals who are separated from the group face more dangers and risk their own survival (Bowlby, 1969). The same holds true for people. Almost no person can function without belonging to a number of large groups. These affiliations are not only tangible for physical survival, but they serve a psychological function as well. Large groups become part of the very core of selfhood. A psychologically whole person involves interpersonal functioning, but also includes large group affiliations. When we perceive another person as a *whole object* we are also including our perceptions of his or her large group affiliations. For example, when we see our own mother we do not automatically think, for example, "my white, Jewish mother." But that is implicit (and unconscious) in our knowledge and perception. When we see a different mother we may automatically, and to varying degrees of consciousness, note, for example, "his Asian, Buddhist mother." The implications of our awareness and use of these categories of identity depends upon the context. For example, during the Second World War these perceptions would have had potential implications and consequences depending on where these people were in the world. The challenge for psychoanalytic theory of our time is to better understand the object relational implications of large groups in the mind.

Object relations, prejudice, and war

I have alluded to the fact that events in society and large group phenomena can overwhelm individuals and influence their behaviour. The potential of psychoanalytic efforts to contribute to the positive evolution of society requires that we understand how the large group functions in the person. There is a gap in our understanding about what happens intrapsychically when we transition from interpersonal relationships to intergroup behaviour (Atkin, 1971). In fact, psychoanalytic theory discusses very little about identity groups in the mind, and therefore it is not surprising that the concept of an ingroup is missing from psychoanalysis. I will describe the effect of the social object as it may be understood in relation to the societal conditions of prejudice and war. For example, in times of war or prior to war, the individual is influenced by unconscious aspects of large group membership which can override personal values about how to treat other people. The social object concept helps us recognise that the large group in the mind influences perception, belief, and behaviour based on large group membership.

Interpersonal relationships function in a context that is encompassed by concentric social groups. This relates to Fairbairn's ideas about the family as a core group within larger social groups. By incorporating Fairbairn's premise that libido is object seeking, we are now in a better position to understand why ingroup affiliations are so important. A vital part of the process of attachment in the family involves a preference for one's own family. As associations with more identity groups develop the same need for preference ensues. This helps explain the well-established finding in social psychology known as ingroup favouritism. Brewer (2007) reports that in general ingroup favouritism is not associated with outgroup hatred. If we accept that our nature is oriented towards affiliation with a caregiver, and that it is also part of our nature to affiliate with groups, than we can understand that we develop preferences for our ingroups, without necessarily being hostile towards outgroups. We function in an interpersonal and an intergroup context simultaneously.

As a nation moves closer to war the boundary between the individual and the large group seems to dissolve. The person and the nation become one and the same. This is like Fairbairn's infantile dependence, which is based on primary identification. It implies that there is no differentiation between self and other, and in this case, self and nation. On the continuum of attachment between the person and the group this is an overidentification (Aviram, 2009). As the boundary between the individual and nation diminishes, survival of the person depends on the survival of the nation. This stems from an existential threat to physical survival of the self and nation, but it has a psychological effect as well. The existential threat is also unconsciously experienced in terms of annihilation anxiety. The extreme threat to survival, either physical or psychological, can explain the extreme behaviour of individuals in war. This same process operates within a society between ingroups and outgroups. We could say that prejudices within a society are like low level wars. It is important to acknowledge political, economic, and historical contributions to war and prejudice. The social object concept helps explain a familiar experience in which it is possible to behave far better or far worse when group membership is highlighted than we might as individuals. We are the same person, and yet we act in ways that would not have been anticipated or predicted by understanding traditional object representations associated with interpersonal relationships. The extreme behaviour of prejudice and war suggest that there is an unconscious process influencing behaviour. As anxiety increases we know that unconscious processes have a greater influence on perception and behaviour. The social object can override personal values about how to treat other people. The fact that conditions in society can influence mass behaviour suggests that there must be a common thread between unrelated individuals. At the conscious level that common influence is a national identity. Across individuals there is the common need to affiliate with other people that we can recognise as an ingroup. The unconscious part of that affiliation resides in everyone. Out of awareness the social object is more or less active assessing the risk to survival. If that risk increases in the environment or the person is developmentally vulnerable then perception of the world as friend or foe (ingroup or outgroup) will dominate.

Conclusions

The objective of this chapter is to extend our conception of object relations from the traditional understanding of internalised interpersonal relationships, to include our psychological need for belonging to a large group. People feel differently in an intergroup context than they might otherwise. Our effort to understand that shift more completely requires that we attend to the large group dimension in the mind. The important emphasis in psychoanalysis on society and culture requires that we evaluate whether current conceptions of object representations adequately account for a person's large group affiliations and intergroup relations. It seems to me that traditional conceptions of object representations may need to be augmented to account for cultural and social group affiliations. This would emphasise that large social groups become internalised as social object representations and could independently influence perception of the social world. It would clarify that affiliations with large groups, consciously experienced in terms of collective identity, can also have an intrapsychic role in addition to traditional object representations that reflect interpersonal relations. Consider a situation in which two people

from different ethnic groups are talking and one says, "I like you, but why are the others so ...." This is an example of two levels of object relations in operation, one interpersonal and the other intergroup. Recognition that the large group has a place in the mind can extend psychoanalytic theorising beyond the two-person psychology to acknowledge that those two people function within a framework of large groups. The social object is a construct that helps us address sociological conditions from a psychological perspective. By acknowledging the role of large groups in the mind, and the social object, we achieve the ability to formulate a parallel to Winnicott's (1960) well-known observation that there is no baby without a mother, and say that there is no person without a large group.

References

Allport, G. W. (1954). *The Nature of Prejudice*. Cambridge, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Atkin, S. (1971). Notes on motivations for war: Toward a psychoanalytic social psychology. *Psychoanalytic Quarterly, 40*: 549–583.

Aviram, R. B. (2002). An object relations theory of prejudice: Defining pathological prejudice. *Journal for the Psychoanalysis of Culture and Society, 7*: 305–312.

Aviram, R. B. (2005). The social object and the pathology of prejudice. In: J. S. Scharff & D. E. Scharff (Eds.), *The Legacy of Fairbairn and Sutherland* (pp. 227–236). New York: Routledge.

Aviram, R. B. (2007). Object relations and prejudice: From ingroup favoritism to outgroup hatred. *International Journal of Applied Psychoanalytic Studies, 4*: 4–14.

Aviram, R. B. (2009). *The Relational Origins of Prejudice: A Convergence of Psychoanalytic and Social Cognitive Perspectives*. Latham, MD: Jason Aronson.

Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and Loss*. New York: Basic.

Brewer, M. B. (1991). The social self: On being the same and different at the same time. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 17*: 475–482.

Brewer, M. B. (2007). The importance of being we: Human nature and intergroup relations. *American Psychologist, 62*: 728–738.

Erikson, E. H. (1985). Pseudospeciation in the nuclear age. *Political Psychology, 6*: 213–217.

Fairbairn, W. R. D. (1935b). The sociological significance of communism considered in the light of psychoanalysis. In: *Psychoanalytic Studies of the Personality* (pp. 233–246). London: Tavistock, 1952.

Fairbairn, W. R. D. (1939c). Psychology as a prescribed and as a proscribed subject. In: *Psychoanalytic Studies of the Personality* (pp. 247–255). London: Tavistock, 1952.

Fairbairn, W. R. D. (1941). A revised psychopathology of the psychoses and psychoneuroses. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis, 22*(3, 4): 250–279. In: *Psychoanalytic Studies of the Personality* (pp. 28–58). London: Tavistock, 1952.

Fairbairn, W. R. D. (1943a). The war neuroses: Their nature and significance. *British Journal of Medical Psychology, 19*: 327–341. In: *Psychoanalytic Studies of the Personality* (pp. 59–81). London: Tavistock, 1952.

Fairbairn, W. R. D. (1957). Freud, the psycho-analytical method and mental health. *British Journal of Medical Psychology, 30*(2): 53–61. In: D. E. Scharff & E. F. Birtles (Eds.), *From Instinct to Self: Selected Papers of W. R. D. Fairbairn, Volume I: Clinical and Theoretical Papers* (pp. 61–73). Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1994.

Freud, S. (1921c). *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego. S. E., 18*. London: Hogarth.

Freud, S. (1933b). Why war? *S. E., 22*: 197–215. London: Hogarth.

Hogg, M. A., & Abrams, D. (1988). *Social Identifications: A Psychology of Intergroup Relations and Group Processes*. London: Routledge.

Mitchell, S. A. (1988). *Relational Concepts in Psychoanalysis*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Winnicott, D. W. (1960). The theory of the parent–infant relationship. In: *The Maturational Processes and the Facilitating Environment* (pp. 37–55). Madison, CT: International Universities Press, 1965.