



The Columbus

Picture Analysis of Growth towards Maturity

3rd, unchanged edition

M.J. LANGEVELD, Utrecht

Translated by G. UILDRIKS, Utrecht

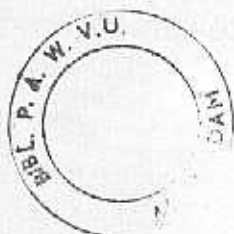
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Preface and Introduction

1. The indispensability of projective techniques and their psychometric limitations

1. There is no doubt about it that the so-called "projective tests"¹ combine two characteristics which one would prefer not to find together: they are needed, and they are difficult to develop and interpret in a psychometrically adequate methodological form. The statisticians we consulted foresaw difficulties, the solution of which would require more than a human lifetime; nor do recent publications such as those of KAGAN and LESSER, MURSTEIN [1963] or TOMKINS [1947] make us optimistic about the psychometric perspectives in this field.

Had not FRANK [1939, 1948] already expressed his reservations in the forties, and had MURSTEIN really made much progress twenty years later? "In projective methods the examiner is not primarily concerned with the subject's deviations from a statistically established norm, which may or may not be significant. Especially in the study of personality development and of the personality process, such norms are of little significance and, indeed, may only obstruct investigation of such dynamic problems." With these words FRANK² formulated an understandable but fiercely contested theory. The objective pursued by MURSTEIN's book, on the other hand, is quite the opposite: it is devoted to an attempt to furnish an interpretative foundation for the T.A.T. in quantitative terms³. Towards the close of his book, however, MURSTEIN laments: "Our theoretical and quantitative foundation is still in its infancy. Such quantitative systems as exist have provided minimal evidence of validity, but they are time-consuming and laborious, and usually measure only one or a few aspects of the individual rather than providing a fairly complete personality picture . . . In the final analysis the clinician may continue to use his own judgement as to how to weight the various clues which the test data offer, but a thorough grasp of the research literature may aid him in weighting the variables, as well as suggesting new avenues for analysis" [pp. 359-360].

The sad disclosure that the research has appeared to have had more impact upon those not using the T.A.T. for a practical purpose affords little encouragement to study the literature, and our optimism is not increased by his subsequent comment "that little in the way of directly quantitative scoring systems has been shown to be superior to clinical judgement" [p. 361].

TOMKINS opens his preface to *The Thematic Apperception Test* [New York 1947] with the words: "This is a book about a test which is barely fifteen years old . . ." As is well known, his book has extended beyond one volume and is a valuable work, although it has not attained mathematical exactitude.

We have exercised the greatest possible restraint with regard to a "test" of which it is impossible to say just how old it is. At what point did our collection of pictures strictly speaking become a "test"? By some standards, no "projective" technique whatsoever has yet reached that stage—which tempts some people to believe that "tests" of this kind are "obsolete", "have had their day"⁴. In our view, quite the reverse is true. That does not mean that the outlook for the psychometrical future of these methods is particularly bright. However, despite the observations of MURSTEIN cited above, we should not at all wish to disparage the task awaiting future psychometrical development; but we do consider it a mistake to confine oneself to the presuppositions of psychometry now in existence, and believe that the analysis of projective protocols will have to undergo an important formalising development from the point of view of semantic analysis before much of value can be expected from psychometrical formalisation. We shall be returning to this point later [cf. p. 38 *sqq.*].

Much thought, research and theorising will have to be devoted to this field over a long period of time, by "amphibians" well-trained and efficient in both the field of mathematics and of clinical psychology. The number of such people is, of course, limited.

2. In the meantime, the alternatives to projective techniques did not supply us with the results we needed, and our conviction strengthened that we could not dispense with the Columbus.

In the first place, there was the question as to whether we could in fact fulfil our advisory and, above all, remedial function in developmental and educational problems satisfactorily without making use of such an apparatus. To answer this we adopted three main procedures.

We confined ourselves to those tests which satisfied the highest psychometrical requirements. The results obtained in this way by various co-workers, both at home and abroad, did not, however, provide the information we required. Moreover, we reached an impasse in such practical points as use of time, extreme youth and environmental differences of the children. It was time-consuming and the results were inadequate.

We worked with two groups: the one with and the other without the use of the repudiated methods. We endeavoured to base our prognoses or advice upon an examination which did, and one which did not include projective data. Restriction to the exact tests and their results appeared to be decidedly inadequate.

We worked with a test battery in which standardised methods functioned alongside projective techniques, and checked our findings by drawing up and submitting indications to other investigators, chiefly members of the medical profession. The results were very satisfactory. In a similar procedure utilising exact methods only, the investigators were divided into two separate groups: those familiar with the use of projective methods and those little acquainted with them. Whilst the latter confined themselves to the strictly psychometrical data, the former adopted a more qualitative approach to their intelligence tests, seeking and utilising other indications beyond the psychometrically admissible. Neither group, however, obtained results which were adequate for the object in view.

We shall not here go further into the reasons why the use of questionnaires of various types proved impossible—e.g. on account of the subject's age, or the level of the parent's education or language, etc.—or only led to very limited results. Our verification was chiefly of a clinical nature—an extensive diagnosis and specification of indications being further checked by referring of the subjects to doctors, by follow-up with parents and school, and by discussion with teams of judges working independently. Quantitative verifications in the stricter sense were also carried out to a limited extent, principally where the formation of comparable groups seemed possible. Finally, the results obtained by means of the Columbus by some twenty other individual investigators attached to institutions, consultation bureaux or schools also enabled us to come to a reasonable basis for the conclusion of the series.

Presentation of pictures-which-represent-something is certainly not the sole projective technique in existence. There is, moreover, great diversity within the domain of these picture methods, from the type T.A.T.

to that of the 4-Picture-Test [VAN LENNEP] and the Make-a-Picture-Story-Test [SHNEIDMAN]. Much has been written about the aim and interpretation of such tests. It is not necessary to repeat that here.

3. This is not the place for expressing criticism or praise of what has been achieved in other series; the reasons for both would take us far beyond the limits of this booklet. The very fact that, despite the serious limitations of a psychometrical nature, we share the opinion of numerous others that projective techniques by means of pictures are indispensable, is one token of appreciation. The possibility we leave open of combining our cards with those of another series is another. We are leaving this decision to the clinician: this demonstrates on the one hand our faith in his proficiency for his task in general, and on the other our reservations regarding the psychometrical formalisation of some series—in themselves considered important. We hold the M.P.T. in high esteem, but attach little value to its bids for psychometrical formalisation. Whilst this in no way diminishes our regard for the series, it must certainly be seen as an indication of the high standards required of the preparation and execution of psychometrical validation. Considerable research and far-reaching amendments in the preparatory analysis of the pictures, the series and the protocols, will be necessary before psychometrics can make its potential contribution. The latter does not seem to us unlimited, but it is valuable within the confines of its limitations. We certainly perceive the value of research into, for instance, “tension index”, or “direction of forces”, although prolonged analysis of research protocols, together with a more thorough knowledge of the subject himself, leads us to revise the original indication-interpretation radically on these and similar points too often for attainment of a simple quantitative scale to seem feasible⁵. The initial material can, however, very well be utilised in clinical practice without there being question of a decisive judgement.

The concept of “tension”—as, for example, employed in the M.P.T.—presupposes a theory of personality, and its development and formation, no less than other concepts of this type in projective techniques and their aids. In gauging the presence of “tension”, certain conceptions regarding age patterns and norms, grades of synthesis and unity, of co-ordination, concentration and complexity, etc. are presupposed, and until they have been formulated in exact terms, exactitude in the form of a scale of measurement is inconceivable⁶. This will, as far as we can see, still require much research. For the time being, therefore, such conceptions

will inevitably be employed within the frame of reference of certain theories and their fairly general acceptance in theory (explicitly) and practice (implicitly). Our objections to over-estimating the psychometrical usefulness of counting the tenses of a verb employed (or the person, manner etc.) are of quite a different order. These factors depend on the one hand upon the language spoken as such, and on the other upon the linguistic level of the environment, age group, etc. Only under very special conditions is there any point in research of this kind.

In all this, attempts at exactness are only in their early stages, and notwithstanding all recognition of what has been attempted here, we cannot do otherwise than "go on despite obstacles". We shall return to this in chapter II, 5.

II. *Aim and structure of the series*

The aim of the series is to facilitate projective examination of children from a very early age up to maturity. It may be used from five years onwards, an age selected on empirical grounds, and consistent with professional literature. HAVIGHURST's view that: "Finally, after five years, the child is a person, and his own self will take hand in defining the future developmental tasks"⁷ has been shared by such diverse and arbitrarily chosen authors as BIZE, BÜHLER, BUSEMANN, FREUD, STERN, TUMLIRZ, ZAZZO and many others, despite the limited agreement of their work on other points. A division was also made at the fifth year by GESELL *et al.* (later at the tenth and the sixteenth)⁸, and cultural-anthropological and socially conditioned variation apart⁹, opinion is fairly unanimous on this point. The Columbus, therefore, makes it possible in cards 1-8 to become acquainted with the degree of emancipation from the developmental and educational tasks of the immediately preceding period, as well as the adjustment to current ones from five years onwards.

The value attached by professional literature to the decisive significance of early childhood on essential points is, if anything, on the increase; the child's *active* participation in the formation of meanings takes place only after he has already *undergone* a number of formative influences. The way in which he does this can become clear in the more differentiated expressive media (more differentiated than for instance, finger painting). This still takes place at a time during which identification with the guardians of his security and those in authority predominates over the

relationship to peers and to the self as a developing identity and responsible agent.

There are a number of descriptions and interpretations of this phase of life already in existence, so that there is no need to construct a theory of child development especially for the Columbus. Consensus of opinion upon essential points relating to the degree of independence is too great for this. Nevertheless, HARTUP rightly observes that relatively little research has been carried out in the field of "dependence" and "independence"¹⁰. Although he has only the publications of the United States in mind, this also applies to other parts of the world¹¹ where the psychology of the developing child claims attention.

Returning now to the aim of this series, the child's "future mindedness", his attitude to the future, deserves our special attention, for willingness to envisage the future in terms of giving to one's own life, "*prospective directedness*", is fundamental for an educationally laudable course of development. The Columbus series affords ample opportunity for becoming acquainted with the child's relationship to the future. It reveals the "future mindedness" as such, the way in which the future is approached, the increasing *independence* which is presupposed, acceptance of solitude, initiative, and many other aspects.

Of great importance too is *the relationship to the childhood basis of life* in family and friendship; this is approached in a variety of ways—with apparent success.

We have only mentioned two determinants of the Columbus. Systematic inspection of the cards will undoubtedly disclose gaps. These—in so far as we are aware of them—have been left intentionally wherever other, usually widely circulated, series contain a picture we consider satisfactory, for example in the T.A.T. 1, 5, 7GF, 13G, and M.P.T. the numbers 4B, 10G. The Columbus series can easily be completed by the user. The gaps are not numerous. Creation of duplicates, however, seemed to us undesirable. Moreover, in spite of the gaps, the cards as a whole give good access to a view of the line of development of both boys and girls from early childhood to maturity. Experience has also taught us that girls have no difficulty in projecting on boy's figures, so that in some cases the number of cards could be limited in this respect too.

It will be noticed that a number of cards may be employed for a great diversity of ages. This is sometimes because they bear little relation to age, and sometimes because different aspects of a picture may be used at different ages, the one early, the other much later, while the picture as a

whole is suitable for both. The numeration of the series is not, therefore, of decisive importance, the sequence actually employed in practice being determined by the point of view from which the investigation is carried out. Provision of a numeration still remains desirable for administrative purposes, but it should be realised that this is its chief purpose and significance. Each picture is also provided with a distinguishing name in order to facilitate references to it without the constant consultation of a list of numbered pictures which the provision of a number alone would entail.

A further purpose was served by a number of psychologists of limited training and experience, selected exclusively on the basis of their availability and formal qualification. This may be illustrated by the following historical event. In a footnote to his well-known *Theory and research in projective techniques (emphasising the T.A.T.)*, MURSTEIN recounts¹² that he once gave a lecture on "global validity", at which, he writes, "One well-known psychologist disdainfully asked: 'Who gave the T.A.T.?' " According to MURSTEIN a remark of this kind implies that a test such as the T.A.T. cannot be used by ordinary psychologists in possession of a Ph. D. in the subject, but only by "the few acknowledged T.A.T. experts extant", whilst "The justification of continued use of the T.A.T. resides in its utility to the average clinician, not to the expert." This line of reasoning certainly contains an element of truth: a reasonably well trained practising psychologist in possession of a Ph. D. must be able to make use of a test such as the T.A.T. Whether the "well-known psychologist" spoke disdainfully and whether he in fact intended the sentiments ascribed to him by MURSTEIN must be left on one side. He may or may not have been one of those last remaining experts, but he *might* also have had in mind the "interviewer effect" touched upon by MURSTEIN himself, "the effect of the examiner's personality"¹³ on the examination. His remark could then very understandably have irritated MURSTEIN. Even so, it was precisely in order to become acquainted with *this* effect, and to see "ordinary" psychologists and educationalists at work that we employed them. We shall be returning to this question again later: such an effect is certainly present but does not represent a specific short-coming of the inexperienced psychologist arising out of his inexperience as such. It is even possible to be scientifically weak and yet collect excellent material. The difficulty then appears to lie in its interpretation. A personal factor does exist, but a) is only of essential importance in extreme cases, b) varies according to the age and level of development of the subjects, and c) can

be augmented by an error in training (e.g. excessive distantiation), whilst d) an incorrect training can also spoil much in the case of suitably endowed psychologists.

As already pointed out, we set out to develop a series of pictures connected with the problems of mental development in so far as this must be envisaged as a process of increasing emancipation: a process of "wishing to be or become someone oneself", and, therefore, at the same time a process of distantiation, liberation, of overcoming obstacles. In sum, it relates to future prospects, growing roots (basic security etc.), emancipation, and the obstacles lying in this sphere. In our investigation we were led back to early childhood, and chose as our other limit late adolescence with its images of the future and the adult state.

Although extensive use is, of course, made of normal verbal communication, the cards also elicit responses in non-verbal forms¹⁴ such as drawings, modelling and play—the latter especially in the case of young children. The difficulties of quantitative analysis are, of course, hereby augmented.

Three of the cards (Nos. 5, 14, 24) have been reproduced in colour. In the first place because projective processes which have come to a standstill and become unproductive often seemed to be renewed by the aid of these cards¹⁵. Furthermore, it is by means of them that the Columbus can, under favourable conditions, accomplish the transition to projective communication as a dialogue—traditionally referred to as therapy.

The choice of the cards as a complete series has thus (see above) accepted the restriction entailed by the existence of a number of very useful pictures in other tests already of wide application. For many years we have made use of odd cards from several different series, combined into one test sequence within a particular examination. Directions for the construction of such an individually orientated sequence varying from case to case would constitute a handbook in clinical-psychological examination—which is not our purpose here.

III. Origin and previous history of the test

1. The "test" originated at the Institute of Education. University of Utrecht. Our thanks are due to the Foundation for Educational Research for the important financial support received over a period of years. We have given our "test" the name "Columbus" for several reasons. There

was "nothing new" in the whole business, except for a few obvious and in our opinion indispensable features of which we shall still speak. This formed the starting point. Furthermore, we were interested in the child's voyage of discovery. In any case the appearance in the title of the name of the initiator or of one of the many who had collaborated in the completion of the work was felt to be undesirable. So Columbus became, half in jest, half seriously, our fixed term.

It is impossible to make separate mention of all those who have in one way or another helped in the completion of the Columbus. Apart from the subjects of examination themselves, I should chiefly like to mention three categories: the designers, the mathematicians and the psychologists or educationalists.

As the series went through three preliminary stages, designers were already involved in the project during its first, experimental-exploratory stage. I did not select them myself. The co-operation of six different designers was enlisted in the transitional stage and in the third stage. The tasks with which they were confronted were such that even extremely talented artists sometimes responded with creations which were not suitable for our purpose—due, for instance, to the projective character assumed by their own activity. Revision was sometimes possible by the introduction of other designers. The pictures were drawn by both men and women, adults 20 to 40 years of age. During a certain period of time we also elicited the co-operation of the subjects themselves in changing the pictures or extending the series. Three pictures (Nos. 2, 3 and 4) were taken in their original form from the practice of Dr. E. A. A. VERMEER. During the first stage much trouble was also taken by Dr. R. LUBBERS to give a initial shape to the series. He soon went his own way, as his publications amply testify.

2. The psychologists and educationalists carried out a three-fold function: they were the little or in-experienced examiners sought out in order to prevent the introduction of intuitive corrections in method and relationship during the trial investigation. In addition there were those of more or extensive experience who functioned as interlocutors in the interpretation of the findings. Interpretation of the material and the construction of a *provisional* picture constituted the third function, carried out independent of myself and subsequent interpreters of the same material.

More than sixty persons in all contributed to the completion of the Columbus, the majority of whom were psychologists and clinical

educationalists of various degrees of training, and not chosen by myself. The research extended over a period of twenty years. The data yielded by the Columbus were compared with those attained by means of other picture series for purposes of verification on the one hand and elimination or at least restriction of duplicates on the other.

The problem of agreement on matters of interpretation—often considered an insuperable obstacle—was greatly minimised by experience with interpretations given by investigators or groups of interpreters working quite independently of one another. Its limitation related chiefly to the degree of differentiation within the indications perceived rather than the interpretation as such.

Ultimate differences of interpretation led to few *relevant* differences in the educational or therapeutic measures advised. Finally, the rapidly increasing demand for photocopies of the temporary, experimental forms of the Columbus cards and the resulting exchange of experiences spurred us on to revise and publish the series despite the time involved—and the very much greater length of time which must elapse before exact validation of such methods in general becomes feasible. The absence of psychometrically irrefutable interpretations calls for a quality in the user of such “tests” which is regarded by some as unscientific and consequently inadmissible for practice¹⁶.

The difficulty at present involved in transcribing an object of research into operational terms in order to facilitate adaptation in a standardised test form does not discharge us of the task of helping the child, his educators and society to the best of our ability. Educational and psychotherapeutic work does not differ in this respect from, for example, medical work. There too vast quantities of research and numerous diagnostic studies as yet fail to lead to results which can be transcribed into operational terms and tested¹⁷.

Projective techniques are not difficult to learn. There are, however, people who make it difficult for themselves to learn, just as there are children and adults who do not allow themselves to be able to learn mathematics. Ability to learn in both cases is more a question of personal availability than of native endowment, even though there are persons who “never learn” in both fields.

During the period 1947–1967, discussions of cases in whose examination the Columbus had been used were held almost weekly. The composition of the discussion groups changed regularly. The examination during which the Columbus cards were employed, together with a pre-

liminary interpretation of findings, was always carried out quite independently of myself and the other participants in the discussion by regularly varying examiners. In 590 of the cases out of those whose protocols were discussed in this way, a follow-up extending over at least 5 and at most 18 years was possible. In more than 500 other cases, examination combined with a medical check or check by the school or parents was carried out over a shorter period of time. The Columbus was also given individually in more than 4000 other cases, independent of the above-mentioned interpretation groups.

$\frac{3}{8}$ of the research concerned girls and $\frac{5}{8}$ boys, and was carried out with gradually changing pictures. Out of a total of 56 experimental cards, 24 finally remained and were incorporated into the series in a final form, after having undergone diverse changes.

A picture was considered suitable when by its means a psychologist of limited experience was enabled to harvest a reasonable quantity and diversity of apparently useful responses from children of different sex, milieu and problems, and of the age envisaged. The usefulness must, of course, also be tested with reference to the projective themes. It was only possible to speak of suitability in *this* respect when the projections threw light *inter alia* on the field in question; restriction of the number of duplicates with existing pictures in and outside the Columbus was also taken into account.

The ability of children from various cultural environments to recognise the situations portrayed in the pictures had surprising consequences for us. A situation *sometimes* recognised with difficulty in a city environment of neglect appeared to create no difficulty whatsoever in children from an identical milieu when subjected to pressure—e.g. during residence in an educational institution. The “farm-like” interior of card 6 sometimes created difficulties for city children in Western Europe, but immediately appeared to be understood by Yemenite refugee children in Israel. It was anticipated that the child sitting under the table in card 1 might create difficulties in environments where the people lived on the ground. However, no difficulty was experienced by our Egyptian subjects, and other children retained the theme of the picture with only this difference that the situation was seen as, for instance, a small tent within the tent. Finally, a quantifying comparative investigation showed that the difficulties lying in this sphere in the Netherlands were of the same magnitude as those encountered amongst children outside Europe, and even outside the Western world. There was, however, the reservation that the

socially isolated, deeply neglected groups to be found, for example, in a few American cities, in "bidonvilles" in France, or as vagrant children etc., were less able to recognise the situations than children from primitive societies or from poor neighbourhoods which were not socially isolated, etc. However, the amount of time elapsing per card before a response is given, before the projective relationship is accepted, varied widely, not only from case to case within a single social environment, but also between children of different environments.

The significance of culturally and socially conditioned variations may be clarified with the aid of a single example.

When MARGRIT ERNI¹⁸ finds that the picture of the ideal father is inundated by that of the ideal husband in 2% of 13-year-old girls, and in 28% of the 19 to 20-year-old girls examined, a cultural background and social life is presupposed in which the father plays an active role, and where certain tasks, functions and even safeguards are expected of him. A "test" like the Columbus cannot be employed without sound knowledge of these backgrounds, for they determine to a great extent a) the possibility, and b) the meaning of certain relationships and the pictures relating to them. Any particular classification of development into phases is affected in the same way, and the question as to what exactly is appropriate to a certain age is very dependent upon such influences.

The specific nature of the social and cultural elements and aspects of the cards for higher age groups (e.g. 17, 18, 19) sometimes called for an introductory talk, usually linking up with preceding communication by means of more immediately "comprehensible" pictures such as, for example, card 14; this appeared to be a very useful starting point in such cases.

Notes

- 1 For the word "so-called" in this sense see Chapter III.
- 2 LAWRENCE K. FRANK: Projective methods, p. 60 *sqq.* (Thomas, Springfield 1948).
- 3 BERNARD I. MURSTEIN: Theory and research in projective techniques. (Emphasizing the T.A.T.) (Wiley, New York 1963).
- 4 J. VAN RIEMSDIJK: Geschiedenis en perspectieven van de Rorschach. (The Rorschach: history and perspectives) (Utrecht 1966).
- 5 In this we are of a different opinion from WALTON, HUTT, ANDREW and HARTWELL: A tension index of adjustment etc. *J. abnorm. soc. Psychol.* 46: 438-441 (1951).

- 6 As is quite apparent from BÖRN SJÖVALL: Psychology of tension. An analysis of Pierre Janet's concept of "tension psychologique" together with a historical perspective. *Studia Scientiae Paedagogicae Upsaliensia IX* (Svenska Bokförlaget, Norstedts, Stockholm 1967).
- 7 In his well-known Human development and education, p. 22 (Longmans, Green, New York 1953).
- 8 Cf. GESELL and ILG: The first five years of life (1940). The child from five to ten (1946).
- 9 Cf. e.g. E. E. BOESCH: The Bangkok Project; step one. *Vita humana 3: 123* (1960). "Personality development in children in different cultures is not simply parallel but shows areas of retardation and acceleration according to cultural mould." Such contentions may be found made by numerous authors.
- 10 WILLARD W. HARTUP: Dependence and independence, chapter VIII, pp. 333-363. In HAROLD W. STEVENSON; JER. KAGAN and CH. SPIKER: Child psychology. The 62nd Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, part I (Chicago 1963).
- 11 This can easily be seen by consulting the relevant parts in Entwicklungspsychologie (In H. THOMAE: Hb. der Psychologie III [Hogrefe, Göttingen 1959]) which also pays attention to French works, especially RUDOLF BERGIUS: Entwicklung als Stufenfolge (loc. cit. pp. 104-195).
- 12 p. 260 (Wiley, New York/London 1963).
- 13 Op. cit. p. 249. For this effect see *inter alia* the Manual accompanying the Michigan Picture Test, p. 9, and bibliography. Also the bibliography in VAN DE LOO: De proefleider als variabele in het klinisch psychologisch onderzoek (The examiner as a variable in clinical psychological examination) (Dekker en Van de Vegt, Nijmegen/Utrecht 1962).
- 14 Cf. MOYRA WILLIAMS: Mental testing in clinical practice, p. 60 (Pergamon Press, Oxford 1965). "Such tests are particularly valuable with children, and those who do not express themselves easily. Ability to verbalise or to understand complex instructions will have little effect on the test results."
- 15 "The role of color seems scarcely to have been touched upon; yet it appears that the use of lifelike tints enhances projection." MURSTEIN, loc. cit. p. 363. Our own findings since 1947 confirm this in part: it makes no relevant difference to have the majority of cards in black and white. A few coloured cards are needed and these have been chosen on empirical grounds (distantiation, relaxation, fresh start, new possibilities: cards 5, 14, 24). Cf. on this question further: BRACKBILL: *J. cons. Psychol.* 15 (1951); THOMPSON and BACHRACH: *J. project Techn.* 15 (1951); LUBIN: *Amer. J. ment. Defic.* 60 (1955); LUBIN and WILSON: *J. genet. Psychol.* 54 (1956); RABIN and HAWORTH: Projective techniques with children (Grune and Stratton, New York 1960); BERG and POLYOT: *J. project Techn.* 20 (1953); WRITE and GARDNER: *Percept. mot. Skills* 11 (1960).
- 16 Within the limits of this booklet, we are confining ourselves to a few examples of publications which dispute the usefulness of projective methods in psychodiagnostik work. It is very worthwhile to analyse the theoretical presuppositions underlying these criticisms before uncritically rejecting or underestimating them.
- R. M. ALLEN: Personality assessment procedures (New York 1958).
 H. J. EYSENCK: The structure of human personality (London 1953).
 J. P. GUILFORD: Personality (New York 1959).

14 **The Columbus**

P. THORPE and A. M. SCHMULLER: *Personality, an interdisciplinary approach* (Princeton 1958).

17 To mention just one field as an example: that of the study of aphasia. Investigators start out with aim of developing a test of aphasia, which would lead to reliable diagnostic indications for aphasia-revalidation and exact measurement of therapeutic effects, but are for various reasons compelled to relinquish this objective. Cf. for the Netherlands: R.J.TH. SCHREUDER and Dr. A. GRAVESTEIN. *Jaarverslag* (T.N.O. 1966, chapter 5: Gezondheidsorganisatie, pp. 82-83.

18 MARGRIT ERNI: *Das Vaterbild der Tochter*, pp. 287-288 (Einsiedeln 1965).

Chapter I

The Cards

1. *Origin of the cards*

A brief indication of how we arrived at our series can best be given as follows:

Extensive and varied material was on the one hand obtained by means of talks with children and young people, conducted in such a way as to avoid curtailing their production of images by premature interpretations on our part, and on the other through repeated attempts at expression of images in painting, drawing or modelling. This was further elaborated in three ways:

1. by recourse to a subject's most recent products, requesting him to reinterpret them, and allowing him to record the new interpretations or new forms in new images;
2. by confronting other children with such products and asking them what they thought of them; this was followed by further portrayals on the basis of their interpretations;
3. by getting children to choose from a number of sources pictures which they liked or found interesting for one reason or another; these were then photographed and put before other children.

In addition we were, of course, familiar with image formation on the basis of experience with existing methods such as T.A.T., M.P.T., C.A.T., Jackson, F.P.T. etc., or on the basis of play therapy, puppet shows, etc. A number of Dutch publications were of great help here [VAN LENNEP, STEKETEE, VERMEER, VUYK, etc.].

The collection mentioned under 3 was compiled from magic lantern pictures, children's books, magazines from a great diversity of countries and types, children and young people choosing from them those pictures which most riveted their attention, together with odd photographs from documentary films.

A fourth category of pictures was ultimately formed which served as a source for the choice of the series: those designed for and found pro-

ductive in certain categories of cases in the clinical practice of co-workers and former co-workers of the Institute of Education at the University of Utrecht. These too were included in our research.

From the total number of pictures we eliminated those which produced the same or more or less the same results (leaving one type for further investigation) and those which elicited little or no projection and also a number of those which only yielded results with very limited groups or under very specific circumstances. The remaining 56 pictures still presented enough problems.

One group of problems emerged from quite a different source: starting out from generally accepted theories on development, the question arose as to the points upon which it must be made possible to find indications of a projective nature. If these points were formulated, which pictures could then serve the greatest possible number of children? Study of those already existing in other publications led once more to further restrictions upon our own series, but at the same time to clearer insight into the nuances of the existing series, their disclosures and freedom from adverse effects upon the child. This called for extensive research and follow-up research. Since projection is really possible upon everything, those configurations are sought which elicit it most effectively. That is to say, they give access to an abundance of material on decisive points with as many different children as possible—children varying in age, sex, environment, life history, conflict-problems, etc. Despite years of research, the ideal cannot be said to have been attained. An investigation is concluded and the theoretical and practical conclusions drawn, when no further improvements seem to be making their appearance in the material, and the necessary supplementation of existing methods is thought to have been achieved.

Still one more factor plays a role in the construction of the series: it must not become any larger than really necessary. Avoidable duplicates have not, as far as we can see, been included.

Generally speaking, it seldom appeared possible to work profitably enough with direct photographs of enacted or natural scenes. Accordingly, these were not included in our series, but a well-known American series, The Michigan Picture Test, certainly contains a few which satisfy reasonable requirements.

The cards do not—any more than a number of other projection series—in principle depict “realistic” scenes. Recognition of an area as, for example, a landing, house, bedroom, etc., is not in itself absolutely

essential, but they *do* call for ability to enter into the situation. Children who are not acquainted with one or more storeys in their own home are confronted with an open question in number 2. There is no objection to telling them about the construction of houses with more than one storey, and explaining that here the child is standing on the landing. More time will, however, then have to be devoted to the card, the explanation being followed by another card if necessary and returning to the first one later. No single card is intended to be a reproduction of reality, projective examination calling for the depiction of quasi-naturalistic situations which lend themselves to a variety of interpretations. The house-like building in the background of card 14 (reclining boy) was introduced on account of the empirical finding that a number of children were evidently unable to relax in the absence of all signs of human habitation; the addition of the house was not found to work as a hidden obstacle to projection by activating projections of non-existent parental ties. After having experimented extensively with the picture of a boy resting without a visible road, we found ourselves compelled to depict such a road in the foreground—a road which signified for a number of children continuation, fresh start, the beginning and ending of a *period* or repose.

II. *The cards. General*

There are 24 cards in all. Three of them have been reproduced in colour, 21 in black and white. Only two cards (Nos. 17, 19) relate to girls in such a way as to make it impossible for boys to do much with them, whilst card 21 is more meaningful for girls than for boys.

The numeration does not denote a necessary sequence. Some of the cards intended for young children (e.g. No. 1 and 3) can be used for girls from 16 years onwards with profit, *inter alia* in order to depict perspectives of motherhood. Despite this liberty for regrouping, however, the series is articulated in accordance with phases of development. The small child up to eight years of age will find possibilities in the first five cards, and perhaps in 6, 7, and 8 too. The cards 4 and 5, and especially 6–11 inclusive, contain the most for the primary school child. Preadolescent children can work with 7 to 15 inclusive, adolescents with 9–16 inclusive and older adolescents (middle adolescence) with 18, 20 and 21 too. Girls in the latter group can work with the same cards as the boys, and with 17

and 19 too. They are often unable to do much with 16. But 20, 21, 22 work well. In late adolescence, young people can make use of 12–16 inclusive (or 17, 18, 19) and 20–23 inclusive.

III. The coloured cards

Cards 5, 14 and 24 have been reproduced in colour. Nos. 5 and 14 may be widely used during the later years, 14 from twelve years onwards and 24 from about eight years. No. 24 can also be used quite independently. This card fulfils a function of its own. It facilitates transition to communication in imagery, the “projective talk”, therapy, travesty-projection. It can appear in groupings constructed on the basis of previous conjectures or findings, especially as a closing card to usher in freer talk. Card No. 5 can, of course, also serve to ascertain the subject’s attitude towards the test situation or communication in images. No. 14 can serve this purpose too, but a simple desire for “repose” is now facilitated. The subject may, therefore, be given the choice between 5 and 14. Should this card give difficulties in the case of late adolescent girls—which seldom occurred in our experience—the same function can be fulfilled by both 21 and 22.

Subjects showing signs of “projection fatigue” often liven up and become productive again after 5, 14, 24. The choice of these particular three coloured cards is based upon two quite heterogeneous factors: 1. the series as a whole would become unduly expensive if many or all the cards were reproduced in colour; a limited selection had, therefore, to be made, and 2. the choice was determined by the following points of view, themselves of empirical origin:

Card 5 affords—except in the case of the small child—opportunity for distantiation, for escape and return, for a change of partner or situation (including the test situation!), for bringing something to a close and making a fresh start, etc.

Card 14 provides opportunity for relaxation; it is also possible to fall asleep, or else arise refreshed and start anew; further, the card makes it possible to evince adolescent distantiation, loneliness and such like.

Card 24 affords the opportunities already indicated, but at the same time makes a completely new entry possible by disengagement (as in 5 and 14) followed by initiation of radical changes where desired. Many children make use of the opportunities provided by a “magic”

shop to change themselves or their world, or both, in very characteristic and specific ways, or to enter the world with an élan which is quite revealing and usually gives a sense of liberation.

IV. *The individual cards*

1. *Sequence, combination.* As already indicated, the sequence of the cards is not binding, although they do, for instance, bear a certain relation to age. We shall consider them in their numerical sequence, but this does not detract from the liberty of combination *in concreto*. It can, however, make a difference whether a card is one of the first two of the series to be offered, if there has been no preceding contact with the investigator which has awakened or developed the willingness to take part in the task with which they confront him.

The cards have been chosen in such a way that they can be used individually, in an age sequence, or in combinations; in the latter a group of pictures is put before the subject, accompanied by instructions to make a coherent story (compare VAN LENNEP's Four Picture Test). Instances of combinations—the nature of which is determined by the problem *in casu*—are: 3-4-6 (with young children), 3-8-9 and/or 10 (with older ones), 5-12, 5-23, 5-24, 11-14, 14-11-12, 16-14-11-12, 19-21, 19-20-21. A number of other combinations are also possible.

According to HUTT¹ an attempt should be made to set up specific norms for every card or combination of cards, for every age and for both sexes separately. In our opinion, very little has been or can be contributed to this—even by the respectable research underlying his own series. In verification studies of this nature the possible combinations of cards appeared to be numerous, and the social and environmental variations too great and too multifarious, whilst thirdly the age scatter per card was too great—even in the M.P.T. itself.

It is an undeniable fact that variations in interpretation and choice of stimulus are primarily connected with underlying theories and pre-suppositions concerning mental development, personality development, the influence of education and environmental conditions. We have aimed at a selection and elaboration of pictures which is compatible with as wide a category of such theories as possible without detracting from any specific stimulus-value ("picture pull"), a problem which was not, of course, always completely soluble. In that case, as pointed out earlier, the series is

open to combination with cards from other series. This same openness exists where certain themes were found to be superfluous or unsuitable for projective examination by means of pictures. Specific school research, for example, was considered unnecessary; all the data relevant to this relationship can be obtained by means of direct information or by means of questionnaires². However, if the use of particular pictures is required, they can, for example, be taken from the M.P.T. (No. 3).

Every good diagnostic examination affects a certain order in the subject's mind, has a cathartic or therapeutic effect, and in many cases the lines of demarcation between diagnostic and therapeutic or educational activity cannot be sharply drawn. This is one of the chief causes of rational difference of opinion concerning what is or is not suitable for examination by means of pictures. Apart from causing traumas (which repeatedly appeared to be the case with, for example, Jackson, card 4, C.A.T. 7 and 8), the stimulus may be so suggestive and misleading (e.g. C.A.T. 2, 4, 10) that the therapy is saddled with the task of clearing up the damage or pseudo-problems which have been wholly or partially caused by the diagnostic procedure. The aggressive attitude of some psychologists, who are determined to obtain information on some points at all costs and try to compel the child to project, gets a chance in several series. The Columbus cards always leave a way out; this must not, however, be at the cost of the stimulus-value ("picture-pull") of the cards.

2. *Basic determinants.* The individual cards may be regarded from different points of view, corresponding to the basic determinants in the series: e.g. relationships to the parents, to peers, to later marital partners; attachment as basic security, attachment as lack of freedom, lack of freedom through over-protection or over-domination, security as the basis of safety in the process of effecting emancipation; the desire to be or become oneself over and against conventional adjustment, etc. In the following paragraphs we shall go through the series, directing our attention predominantly—though not exclusively—to one of the above-mentioned basic determinants, that of the relationships to parents, peers, marital partners. Other basic determinants, of course—both of the child's growth and of the series itself—find expression too.

Although there is no single card which is simply intended to disclose signs of independence or dependence, the Columbus does aim to give insight into the obstacles confronting the process of emancipation. Any card which failed to afford opportunity for this is of no use in the series.

A card designed to create at least some opportunity for bringing to light specific forms of impediment is *ipso facto* marginal with regard to everyday situations and results in either exceptional positions (e.g. M.P.T. 6 or 11B) or semi-unrealistic situations (e.g. T.A.T. 11, 12F, 18 BM, 19).

3. *The child's relationships to others.* The series opens with the child situated within his own world, in the security of the family and its relationships (father, mother, other child), whilst the whole is located in the house. Card 2 shows a stage further in emancipation: the child is out of bed, the guardians of his security are not portrayed, he must decide for himself (whether to go back to bed or set out on an enterprise of his own, whether to go to the parents or move away from them, calling, being called, waiting). In the cards which follow, 3 and 4 depict the relationship "inside-outside" and "outside-inside", "distantiation from the group", and—in 4—"belonging to the group", or liberating oneself from it. The subject can take the initiative (go outside, come inside, go on together); the relationship of the outsider may be apparent (is this solved?), is the house in 3 and 4 inhabited, and by whom, and who is doing what?

Card 5 (Bird) cannot be placed in a particular sequence, since it can be employed at any point during the first and second age groups (and often later too, cf. table I, and chapter II, 1). It can also be put at the beginning or the end of specific combinations (see p. 19); the decision on this point may be made both by the examiner and the child himself.

In card 6 the relationship is specified once more, but this time it is not the child or children who come to the fore, but the parents. Nevertheless, further determination of the situation involves giving actual content to this relationship. The boy on card 7 is standing in the foreground: what is he going to do? Go into the house or walk past it? Will he notice the man? If so, will he go to him or avoid him? Will he be given a relationship to peers (not depicted) or to tasks in life ("he is coming home from school", etc.)? Here determination of the relationship to the world is left to the boy himself, whereas in the preceding cards emphasis was upon basic security. Peer relationships often introduced on the child's own initiative in 7 are explicitly present in 8. But what is the matter with the boy on the right-hand side, with the children in the background? "Suddenly one of the boys (girls) walks away. Where to? Why?" "Where are *they* going to presently?" Card 9 makes it possible to create a personal world all of one's own. Relationships to the household below? To the outside world? Do others

come too? In the half-realistic landing of card 10, the question arises as to who takes the initiative: someone coming from inside? The boy? And what is going to happen? Inside—or elsewhere?

Card 11 clearly discloses the emancipation of pre-adolescence, or the absence of it. A journey of one's own can be undertaken, notwithstanding the unrealistic fact that the oars are missing from the boat. What else happens? The issue at stake in card 12 is that of liberation from an indeterminate past and giving form to future vistas. No. 13 shows a child at night, standing in front of the window, with an extremely limited "backing", looking out into an inaccessible outside world: the night. What has happened? What has wakened him? What is happening before his eyes? What threats does the evidently uninviting outside world hold for him? And does he go back to bed? Or does he go and ring someone up? What does he recount the following day? etc. Then on card 14 a boy settles down for a rest. Alternatively there is an atmosphere of repose in 14; security too. There is also a forward movement. What sort of road is that? Card 15 shows someone on his way somewhere: where to? What is he going to do? Why is he walking there? Holidays? Work? Going to visit someone? The child-parent relationship of 6, 7, 8 has gradually slid away. It *can* be drawn upon once more in 16 and 17, but the subject's own autonomy and self-directedness may become apparent. The problems of 3 and 4, of 7 and 8 reappear at a higher level in 18, 19 and 20. An abode of one's own (or: a return to the former security of home) may appear in 19, 20, 21, and the fact of looking after oneself (or being looked after) in 22. A problem from 7 and 10 is taken up again in 20 and 23 in the autonomous movement towards the unknown.

Card 24, like 5 (Bird) and 14 (Boy resting) can function at a number of points, but the Magic Shop is particularly effective firstly for renewing an exhausted talk—just as the boy in 14 rises and goes further (where to?), and secondly forming the transition to a projective talk or therapy: the changes, which can be wrought by means of a magic charm, in the world and in oneself in travesty and by changing the subject's identification with a particular role or person.

In practice, eclecticism with regard to one's analytic categories is more or less unavoidable. As a particular aspect of growing up becomes clearer in a protocol, there is a tendency to move from one category (e.g. independence in the parent-relationship) to another (e.g. frustration-tolerance). As a second example, we shall now consider the cards from this latter point of view.

4. *Frustration.* The presence of "frustration" can become apparent in the constrained character of the stay under the table ("as a punishment", "has been naughty", "no, is not allowed to come out", etc.), on card 1. Card 2 can seem to express the situation of not being permitted to do something or not daring, whilst the detachment from the group and the restraint experienced at home can be apparent in 3. Card 4 can reveal a situation of being left behind, or leaving the group; the house can fail to provide security. Card 6 shifts the problems to what is troubling the parents. Card 7 leaves it open whether one can enter the house and if one does not, for what reason. The children are at the periphery of card 8 and there is a mother figure which *can* give protection from the window, but can also intervene in a frustrating manner. The attic can signify withdrawal due to failure of fear. The boy on the landing on card 10 may be afraid to go inside, or may be on the point of going away in anger, out of fear, etc. Cards 11 and 12 disclose lack of enterprise, fear of emancipation, card 13 fear of threats or outside events, or else the way in which past traumas continue to exert restrictive effect upon the process of becoming independent. The boy resting can be afraid of going home. The hiker may be walking away from a difficult situation, whilst card 16 can represent the "father", the "never-do-well", the "exploiter", card 17 then disclosing limitation of freedom of movement, friction, masterfulness, avoidance of contact. In 18 there can be frustrations in the boy-girl relationship, in relationships with peers, in sport where the subject must pit his strength against that of others, etc. The girl at work in 19 can be left in the lurch by her friend, distinguish others from herself as "beautiful", be afraid of not finding a partner. The corner house on card 20 can place the unsureness in making contact in the boy, or can presuppose vain hope and anticipation on the part of the girl, etc. Card 21 can depict a return to the older generation on account of loneliness, the available house may be overlooked, etc. The inhabitant of the bedroom may be lonely and compelled to take care of himself ("no one takes any notice of him (her)"). A lonely or anxious traveller into the unknown does not venture nearer to the lighted window on card 23. The magic shop must bring release or open up possibilities for revenge, etc.

V. *Grouping of the series according to age*

The series as a whole can be divided up according to two principles:

1. that of age, and
 2. that of the problems with which it confronts the child.
- With regard to the first, two facts must be borne in mind:

1. some of the cards can be used at more than one age, and 2. one cannot be guided too much by a precise classification according to age, since the amount of progress made in development of the personality over the years varies.

If these reservations are borne in mind, the series may be divided up—as far as age is concerned—as follows:

1. Cards 1 (Under the table), 2 (At the top of the stairs), 3 (In front of the window), 4 (In front of the farm) and 5 (Bird) are suitable for *age group I (up to seven or eight years)*; with the understanding that card 1 may be employed again with girls of 15–16 up to 18–20 years, whilst 4 and 5 may also be used at the beginning of age group II (up to 10–12 years); 5 can sometimes be used with groups III and IV too.
2. Cards 6 (Interior), 7 (Boy near house), 8 (Playing in the street), 9 (Attic), 10 (On the landing), 11 (Boat), 12 (Archway), 13 (In front of the window at night) and 14 (Boy resting) can be used for *age group II (seven–eight up to 10–12 years)*; with the understanding that card 9 may also be used with the third age group, whilst 11, 12 and 13 may be used with both the third and fourth groups too. This also applies to card 14, which—like 5 and 24—makes it possible to make a fresh start. Card 10 generally ceases to be useful around the 14th year (i.e. the first half of age group III).
3. *Age group III begins with 10–12 and ends round about 16 years.* As noted under 2, Nos. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 can also be used here, 5 and 24 likewise, although 5 often yields little except with children living in closed institutions or those wishing to give expression to their desire to terminate the examination. Card 6 is restricted to the younger members of this age group. Card 15 (Hiker), 16–17 (Older generation, son, daughter), 18 (Playing fields) are also suitable for this period.

4. *Age group IV begins with 15–16 years and ends with 18–20 years. Of the cards which have not yet received mention, those of especial use here are 19 (Girls), 20 (Corner house), 21 (Houses), 22 (Bedroom), 23 (Lighted window). Of those already mentioned, 24 (Magic shop), sometimes still 14 (Boy resting) and even 5 (Bird), 10 (Landing), 11 and 12, 13 (In front of the window at night), 15 (Hiker), 18 (Playing fields), 16–17 (Father—son—daughter, etc.).*

Table I. Optimal usefulness of the cards in the various age-groups

Pl.	I	II	III	IV	
1	+			+♀	Under the table
2	+				At the top of the stairs
3	+				In front of the window
4	+	+			In front of the farm
5	+	+	(+)	(+)	Bird
6		+	+		Interior
7		+			Boy near house
8		+			Playing in the street
9		+	+		Attic
10		+	+		On the landing
11		+	+	(+)	Boat
12		+	+	(+)	Archway
13		+	+	(+)	In front of the window at night
14		+	+	(±)	Boy resting
15			+	+	Hiker
16			+	+	At work
17			+	+	In the garden
18			+	+	Playingfields
19				+	Girl's room
20				+	Corner House
21				+	Houses
22				+	Bedroom
23				+	Lighted window
24		+	+	+	Magic shop

The *sequence of the cards* arose as follows:

- A. The protocols of children in four age groups were analysed: 8, 10, 14 and 16 years. There were 80 children in each group. This analysis was carried out by different psychologists from those who knew the children from the general psychological examination. Subsequent classification was carried out on the basis of two comprehensive criteria:
1. fits in with the picture of the age group (age-norm)—is either too young, or else seeks undue autonomy,
 2. full of conflict—relatively stabilized.

The investigation was again carried out in two parallel forms:

1. intuitive classification
 - a) of what is appropriate to a particular age and what is not,
 - b) of when the pursuit of independence must be considered inappropriate,
 - c) of when it is possible to speak of "full of conflict" and "stabilized", as against
2. comparison with criteria based on existing technical literature and analysis of a number of test cases (approx. 500).

Although the results of the second procedure were somewhat better than the first, both investigations led to two conclusions of immediate practical importance:

1. further analysis remains possible in each individual case, with a view to further clinical-educational and routine educational treatment;
2. although satisfactory results for preliminary indications were obtained in both cases, variations arose in the clinical and educational approach which could be traced to intuitive or more deliberative specification of the primary classification.

B. The same cards were then put before groups of children of 6 and 7, 11 and 12, 17 and 18 years of age. In this way an age sequence was constructed and continually tested with changing groups over the course of years. This led to the present construction of the series as summarised in table I. Despite the problems associated with the application of statistical methods discussed at the outset of this handbook, we do not believe that insuperable difficulties have been encountered here or

in a number of other cases. Some overlapping of age groups appeared to be unavoidable, but is certainly not undesirable, let alone open to objection.

Further research followed. The cards were put before the subjects in three ways:

1. for written response
2. for oral response given to individual examiners
 - a) as an isolated examination,
 - b) as part of a more comprehensive examination, preceded at least by an intelligence test and one test which called for personal activity (Wartegg, Tree drawing, H.T.P. (House, tree, person etc.),
 - c) an individual examination averaging three hours in all, with the Columbus at the end.

The written response—in contrast to the findings of, for example, VAN LENNEP in his F.P.T.—yielded the poorest, (i.e. most gratuitous, unprojective) results, especially when carried out in a school context (cf. later, chapter III, I, 4 and 5). Only seriously disturbed cases were then revealed. This type of examination did not appear to yield any better results with the use of T.A.T., M.P.T. and other pictures either. The type of school made a little difference, but was of no great significance. Verbal output was by far the greatest in these school stories. Written responses given outside the school context varied greatly according to the nature of the individual problems and the environment. The projective character of the response was frequently quite lost in circumstantial or well-directed stories, imaginative creations which could scarcely be termed projective. There was a greater amount of stereotype book-fantasy and stories than in well-conducted direct contact.

Significantly better results were obtained in the independent examination, although much depended upon the person of the investigator. Narratives of projective value were much more easily given to someone whom the subject knew and liked.

It became apparent that children may also think up imaginative stories containing no more than superficial traces of projective indications. This was clearly visible in the school situation, but a similar attitude was often to be found in the individual test situation too. Oral contact yielded verbally shorter, but projectively more productive stories. In cases 2b and

c, the results were of much greater value from a projective point of view than in case 2a. The distinction between 2b and 2c was not relevant, and there was no question of influences of fatigue with children of eight years of age and older. Examination including observed periods of play in the playroom also yielded good results with a younger group. The latter (80 subjects, six to eight-year-olds) could not, of course, be compared with the written responses: the results obtained with the same group when the test was given by the teacher in the classroom, however, appeared to tend towards gratuitous stories of little projective value, just as in the case of the 10-year-olds (80 subjects). Groups 2a, b and c also contained 80 subjects, 12 and 13-year-olds.

Notes

- 1 Manual accompanying the M. P. T. p. 11.
- 2 Cf. for instance MICHAEL RUTTER: A children's behaviour questionnaire for completion by teachers: preliminary findings. *J. Child. Psychol.* VIII: 1-11 (1967).

Chapter II

Subdivision and Use of the Series

Problems and analysis of the examination and the protocols

1. *Examination, incentives.* A number of the stimuli to projection with which the cards confront the child have already been dealt with in the previous chapter. We shall not return to this point here, for, in a sense, the whole series can be said to relate to the problems associated with the development of self-reliance and with emancipation. Accordingly, the aspects of security, of "backing", of overt relationship to guardians of security progressively diminish, whilst that of independent behaviour of all kinds increases. If—as for instance in 7, 16, 17—the relationship to the parents is still made explicit, this is done in order to make the emancipation easier to observe.

As soon as we try to go beyond these general descriptions, it must be borne in mind that it is not possible to predict with certainty just what a subject will do with any single card. One can only create, test and correct pictures by means of empirical enquiry and parallel theoretical specification, finally retaining some of them as "temporarily the most revealing with regard to certain relationships"; no more. Thus the possibility that a subject will project an entirely different relationship is never excluded. Moreover, a relationship may fail to be projected—being at most named or indicated—for the very reason that it is for the subject self-evident.

Furthermore, a picture or a combination of pictures (cf. chapter I, sub. IV) may become the starting point for a projective talk (a form of communication in images between examiner and subject). In that case, it is not possible to predict where one will end up. As already observed, three cards provide an opportunity for terminating something and making a fresh start, for liberation from an existing state of affairs and for projecting what is new and has still to be realised: Nos. 5, 14, 24. All three provide opportunity for leaving the diagnostic sphere and moving over to the educational or therapeutic sphere, or else for flight from the situation. The background of human habitation has completely disappeared in card 24, but it appeared to be indispensable in 5 and 14.

Presentation of the cards may be accompanied by carefully formulated inducements to response¹ as the situation requires. This may also facilitate projections which do not fall within a frame of reference determined *a priori*.

First some illustrations of what is meant by "carefully formulated inducements . . ."

Examples of inducements

- Card 1* "Where is the little boy (girl)?" "Under the table." "What happens then?"
 "What are those?", pointing to the legs, etc.
 "Is he (she) at home with mummy and daddy?"
 "Does the little boy (girl) stay under the table?"
 "When the father gets up, what happens then?"
- Card 2* "Where is the little boy (girl) standing?"
 "What is he (she) thinking about?" "What would he (she) like?"
 "Does he (she) hear anything?" "Does he (she) see anything?"
 "What is underneath?" "What is above?"
 "Who are the people in the house?"
- Card 3* "Where is the little boy (girl) standing?" "What can he (she) see?"
 "What would he (she) like?"
 "Is he (she) at home alone? What do you think?"
 "Does one of those children come to play with him (her)? . . . or is that not allowed? . . . or doesn't he (she) want to? . . . Who stops them from playing together?"
 "Is he (she) going out to play presently? . . . Or doesn't he (she) want to? . . . Or isn't he allowed to? . . . Who says he may not?"
 "Why won't (can't) he (she)?"
 "But if his (her) mother now says: all right, you may,—will he (she) want to or will he (she) rather stay inside?"
- Card 5* "Once upon a time there was a bird; or: Once upon a time there was a child. Which do you think is better to begin a story with?"
- Card 6* "If this man (father) gets up now . . .?"
 "If this woman (mother) gets up now . . .?"
 "And if they wake up, get up, what then?"
- Card 7* "And where is he (she) going to presently?"
 "Or does he (she) stay at home?"
 "Who lives there?"
 "Why is that door open?"

Card 17 "She puts down the paper and says: . . . She gets up and . . . He turns round and . . ."

Card 21 Above all treat this one quietly with female subjects.

"She comes there to live . . . And then . . .?"

"Is she alone? With her husband or family?"

In our experience, such questions do not seem to diminish the reliability of the responses, as long as they are put in a serious manner and without undue emphasis. Nor does subsequent play in the case of young subjects show any trace of suggestive influence.

A *projective examination* is only possible against the background of certain information: data covering, for instance, age, sex, family constellation and status, family relationships, school and school achievements, place of residence, housing accommodation, country of birth or former residence, etc. It is not, of course, advisable to have recourse to projections for data which are directly available, but the child often furnishes additional information, together with his own illuminating commentary, during the examination too.

In our opinion, a projective examination should always form part of a total examination of a person, and projective techniques form part of the whole of a test battery.

In *presentation* the child should always be given an opportunity to "graze" before "inducements" of the kind indicated above are resorted to. The presentation can be introduced in all kinds of ways. Age makes a great difference in this, but so does resistance to the investigation. With a small child one can look at pictures and think up stories, and for older schoolchildren it can be a matter of imagining what a book from which *this* picture comes might be about, whilst still older ones can be more directly asked to use their "imagination". The approach chosen will vary from case to case.

In the *registration of what takes place*, the examiner should not forget himself and not neglect apparently irrelevant remarks on the part of the subject. The tape-recorder can be useful for registering intonation, pitch, speed of talking, etc. In any case, even where an aid of this kind is lacking much of the value of the examination depends upon what the examiner is able to record of such aspects.

As already observed, a *projective interview* can be linked up with the examination—especially by means of cards 5, 14 and 24. MURRAY recommended postponement of an interview until a few days after the

testing, but we have never had convincing reason for insisting upon this point. Where communication between subject and examiner is good, it can often be preferable to follow up directly with a projective interview. This continuation may also be dictated by the child's own need. The main question is what one wishes to obtain from such a talk. Does one want "more material", or "better" material—"better" in the sense of more representative for the child and his life, or in the sense of "more readable for me"—; or does one wish to help the child to work through the images he has produced to the deeper layers of his problems, or to cope with his difficulties better, or to overcome them?²

FISCHER, CARR and other investigators have pointed out the varying "levels" (cf. later p. 40) from which projections and other forms of communication derive³. Such distinctions should certainly be recognised, and where possible made use of. However, since they vary widely with the point of view underlying the interpretation of the human person and its genesis, this question must be dealt with elsewhere⁴.

There is no doubt that children occasionally only project under great inner stress (under less favourable circumstances, such as written projective examination as part of a school entrance examination; when the test is given by an authoritative, aggressive or otherwise frustrating figure). JOEL⁵ has pointed out that "the subject reacts not only to the examiner's real attitude, but also to what he thinks the examiner's attitude is." This is often true, and refers not only to suitability and training of the examiner but also to the impossibility of conducting a good projective examination without first building up a workable relationship between examiner and child. An "interviewer effect" certainly exists, both to the advantage and the disadvantage of the projective situation. Some psychologists are quite unsuitable for carrying out such an examination, and no psychometric means of purifying the test and interpretation of findings are known which eliminate them. VEROFF, ATKINSON, FELD, GURIN, VAN DE LOO⁶, to mention just a few, have clearly shown such an effect; they have not, however, indicated any adequate ways of discovering criteria for the selection of clinical-educational or therapeutic examiners. Careful selection, as well as special training for the practical tasks involved, seems to be unavoidable. One of the essential qualifications of an examiner consists in an ability to adapt himself to each individual case without relinquishing a personal element in the contact⁷. Research on this point has been largely confined to very rough distinctions such as examiner's colour of skin, and the subjects were usually adult. More research is certainly required here.

2. *Analysis of the problems and structural framework.* Simplifying, we might say that the cards have been designed and, after extensive research and many changes, given their final form in order to help to reveal certain of the child's relationships to security and its guarantors; the basic security of the small child on the one hand, and the new tasks of growing up on the other; for example: the relationship to parents, to peers, to people generally, to the child's own future, etc. The term "problems" is employed in a double sense: as a question of developmental psychology as such and to refer to the problems confronting *this* particular child during the process of growing up: the problems of development with which a child must come to terms (e.g. baby—mother or child—mother relationship) as against a particular child's own problems *in concreto* ("My mother is never at home"). One might say: the problems of mental development as opposed to the problems of this particular child. Terminologically we distinguish between them as *psychological problems* and *personal problems*.

If we take a closer look at the personal problems as these receive expression in the protocols, it must be noted once more that their *content* (what is a problem for the child and in what way) can also lie within the psychological problems upon which it was hoped that the card would draw. The material is then "thematic". But the material *can* also appear to lie outside the intended sphere, and then we term it "*allothematic*". In practice, the verification of the thematic character of the material is not infrequently derived from or supported by quite different sources (e.g. direct information, allothematic projection on a *different* card, etc.).

Thirdly, attention should be paid to the subject's relationship to his projective activity. We shall confine ourselves here to those distinctions which have been of most significance for us, first bringing them together in a summary. This does not, however, represent a scale of evaluation with regard to use.

- a) Involvement—distantiation
(seen, for instance, in identification, use of present tense, dramatic character of what is projected, emotional temperature of the relationships projected, etc.)
- b) Ventures a personal interpretation—gives mere description
Alongside the ability to "venture" or "risk" a personal interpretation appropriate to a process of liberating oneself from infantile ties⁸, there is also "liberation" of a neurotic nature. It is, therefore, doubtful whether one should speak of "venture" in both cases. The child may also be completely in the grip of his personal

