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CULTURES OF THE DEATH DRIVE

Melanie Klein and Modernist Melancholia

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Klein posits the existence of an imaginary object, the "imaginary penis," on the basis of which the illusion of resemblance is constructed. The feminine superego is built upon a double identification, and here Klein seems to be taking things to an even higher level of complexity, since from the above quotation we can infer that the girl's relationship with the internalized father's penis is based on a masculine as well as a feminine position. For Klein, in the course of the Oedipal phase the girl and the boy constantly vacillate between homosexual and heterosexual positions.

Interestingly, the depressive position at the onset of the Oedipus conflict, which is characterized by identifications with whole good objects, encapsulates within itself masculine and feminine identifications that add layers of complexity to the questions of desire, identification, and sexuality along the lines of the Kleinian destabilization of the binary gender system. In this essay, written after the period of the Controversial Discussions, Klein marks her main differences with Freud in an attempt to demarcate and draw a sharp line between the Kleinian and Freudian groups.

We cannot separate Klein's theory of early development from that of the origin of manic-depressive illness and psychosis in general. Mourning and melancholia are at the heart of the Kleinian project, so there is no subject without an object that is already lost. Kleinian theory is an intrinsically melancholic theory that seeks to restore, by way of every subsequent loss, a world of good internal objects in an incorporative and a reparative manner.

This is the reason why it is most suitable for the central argument of this project. In her 1946 elaboration of the concept of projective identification ([1946] 1975), this proves to be both an answer to and a refusal of the situation of object loss. It is the solution to object loss, and melancholia—paranoid in its origin for Klein—partakes of the nostalgia of an external object that was lost and an internal object that can always be lost. The ego's ability to safeguard its good objects is always uncertain—much as the perception of good and bad is uncertain. Klein will not follow Freud in his formulation of the unconscious hallucination in dreams but rather will render the hallucination conscious—as in (psychotic) delirium, understood as a movement toward the cure—by opening up another scenario of desire. For Klein, there is an Other of desire, the hallucination of the dream sparks nostalgia for the return to the breast, which is ultimately and most poignantly the return to our private phantasmatic scenarios of unrestrained infantile bliss.

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The Death Drive and Aggression

It is the death instinct, through projection, in a sense, that creates objects and the relation to them. The organism then creates powerful, destructive, and persecutory objects.—W. W. Meissner

The importance of aggression was implicit in Freud's earlier work, but his later theories seem to have taken shape during the years of World War I, paving the way for what would eventually be his *Beyond the pleasure principle* ([1920a] 1953). Upon its publication, Freud totally revised his classification of the drives and gave equal status to aggression and libido. As a result of these ideas, an important transformation affected psychoanalysis. During the 1930s, the major emphasis was on aggression and the analysis of negative transference. As is well known, the highly speculative character of Freud's new theory and the difficulties of its clinical application were matters of much controversy. Ernest Jones in his biography of Freud acknowledges that the death drive theory has "little objective support." Nevertheless, he writes, "So far as I know, the only analysts, e.g. Melanie Klein, Karl Menninger and Herman Nunberg, who still employ the term 'death instinct' do so in a purely clinical sense which is remote from Freud's original theory. Any clinical applications he made of it were postulated after deriving the theory, not before" (1953–57, 3:277).

The real beginning of the new development in Freud's thinking should be traced back to his introduction of the concept of narcissism between 1910 and 1914 and especially to "On narcissism: An introduction" ([1914] 1953). His positing that the ego is cathected with libido—the ego is

taken as or instead of an object of love—evidently came to alter his previous classification of the drives between self-preservation and sexual instincts. It seems that his concern about the need for a modification of his theory of the drives was much influenced by the pressure exerted on him by Jung, who was in favor of a concept of an all-embracing libido as a representative of mental energy in general. At the same time, Freud had to make clear that he disagreed with Adler's ego-oriented views, which were based more on a theory of social motivation than on narcissism.

Early on, Freud was convinced of an essential bipolarity in psychic life, which he felt must be reflected in the nature of the drives, so that these must belong to two great classes in permanent conflict and opposition. He justified his view clinically by stressing the universality of conflict in the psyche. There are two main hypotheses contained in Freud's last theory of the drives: first, that aggression is a drive equal and opposite to the sexual drive; and, second, that aggression originally takes the form of a self-directed death drive derived ultimately, on the homeostatic principle, from the fact that living organisms developed out of inorganic matter and there is a need to return to this primitive state. In this case, the whole body could be understood as the source of the death drive, which finally should give rise to some kind of "demand made upon the mind for work."[1] The homeostatic character of the drive was implicit in Freud's original formulation that a drive (*Trieb*) has a source, an aim, and an object.[2] An imbalance in the system is the source of the drive; the aim is to redress the imbalance and achieve homeostasis, and the object is that through which this aim may be achieved. From this point of view, unless we reject this particular formulation of *drive*, we must accept that all drives are homeostatic. Moreover, Freud suggested the notion of an externalization of the aggression to account for the effort to reconcile the demand for death coming from the soma with the conflicting demand to avoid death until the appropriate time.

Most analysts compromised with the death drive by accepting the theory of a primary instinct of aggression but rejected or ignored the self-directed aspect of the death drive theory. This was certainly not the case with Melanie Klein. She took the death drive as crucial in the psychosexual development of the individual, and it acquired a central and even founding role in her theory. She followed Freud in conceiving of aggression as a turning outward of the immediately life threatening death drive and argued that the infant felt persecuted as a consequence of the internal threat, and

then, in turn, was persecuted from outside, following the externalization of the death drive. In her theory of internal objects, they were first divided into "good" and "bad" according to whether they granted satisfaction or frustration to the infant. The bad object was a frustrating object, which aroused an aggressive response and onto which aggression was projected. The aggressive element in the infant is fundamental in the development of the Kleinian theory of the paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions.

The Kleinian Death Drive and Projective Identification

"Notes on some schizoid mechanisms" ([1946] 1975) is one of Klein's most important essays. In it, she gives a detailed account of the psychic processes that occur in the first three months of life. In her previous work, she had elaborated on the depressive and paranoid positions. From now on she will call the latter the paranoid-schizoid position and will occupy herself with describing the complex fluctuations between both of them throughout life.[3] The emphasis placed on the operations of the death drive, the introduction of the mechanism of projective identification, and her research and reflections on the relations between manic-depressive states and schizophrenia position this essay at the center of many of the arguments with which I am dealing in this volume.

Klein understands the early ego's lack of cohesion as a constant fluctuation between tendencies toward integration and tendencies toward disintegration. Its most important function is that of dealing with anxiety, which "arises from the operation of the death instinct within the organism, is felt as fear of annihilation (death) and takes the form of fear of persecution" (SM, 4). Deflection of the death drive, that is, its projection outward, marks the first movement of externalization effected by the ego, and as a consequence the death drive is attached to the first external object, the mother's breast.[4]

Klein suggests that at this very early stage processes of splitting are already active; the early ego splits the object, and this may also imply some active splitting of the ego itself. These processes of splitting result in a dispersal of the destructive impulse. The vital need to deal with anxiety forces the ego to develop defense mechanisms. Splitting the object gives the infant a distinct and radically opposite image of a bad (frustrating) and good (gratifying) breast; the latter would be incorporated as the first internal good object and will act "as a focal point in the ego" (SM, 6). For Klein,

there is no possibility of splitting the object without a corresponding splitting taking place within the ego.

Apart from splitting, closely connected with introjection and projection are the mechanisms of idealization and denial. Idealization is bound up with the splitting of the object, for the good aspects of the breast are exaggerated as a safeguard against the fear of the persecuting breast, and "it also springs from the power of the instinctual desires which aim at unlimited gratification and therefore create the picture of an inexhaustible and always bountiful breast—an ideal breast" (SM, 7). In infantile hallucinatory satisfaction, idealization is closely associated with denial; not only is the bad object kept apart from the good but its very existence is denied. In this early splitting, denial and omnipotence play a role similar to that of repression at a later stage of ego development.

In dealing with persecutory fear, oral, urethral, and anal desires, both libidinal and aggressive, act together. There is a predominantly oral impulse "to suck dry, bite up, scoop out and rob the mother's body of its good contents" and an urethral impulse that "expell[s] dangerous substances (excrements) out of the self and into the mother" (SM, 8). Together with these harmful excrements, split-off parts of the ego are projected *into* the mother.[5] Klein is about to describe the mechanism of projective identification. She writes: "These excrements and bad parts of the self are meant not only to injure but also to control and to take possession of the object. In so far as the mother comes to contain the bad parts of the self, she is not felt to be a separate individual but is felt to be *the* bad self. Much of the hatred against parts of the self is now directed towards the mother. This leads to a particular form of identification which establishes the prototype of an aggressive object-relation. I suggest for these processes the term 'projective identification' " (8). It is important to point out that projective identification becomes the leading defense mechanism against anxiety in the paranoid-schizoid position and that it comprises processes that build up the specific forms of narcissistic object relations characteristic of this period by equating objects with split-off and projected parts of the self.[6] If projective identification is excessive, good parts of the personality are felt to be lost and the process results in an impoverishment of the ego. It is important to note that Klein identifies the loss of the capacity to love as a further consequence of an excess in these processes: "Another consequence is a fear that the capacity to love has been lost because the loved object is felt to be loved predominantly as a representative of the self" (SM, 9).

In schizoid modes of object relations—which for Klein are narcissistic in nature—violent splitting of the self and excessive projection are combined. Since the destructive parts of the self are split off and projected, they are felt as dangerous to the loved object, and this gives rise to guilt. This movement, which to some extent implies a deflection of guilt onto others, returns and is felt as an unconscious responsibility for those who have become representatives of the aggressive part of the self. In the Kleinian system, guilt operates along the lines of the death drive.

In her attempt to relate the depressive position to the paranoid-schizoid position as the next step in development, Klein uses the trope of the "vicious circle" to describe the anomalies that may disrupt the normal course of events: "If development during the paranoid-schizoid position has not proceeded normally and the infant cannot—for internal or external reasons—cope with the impact of depressive anxieties a vicious circle arises. For if persecutory fear, and correspondingly schizoid mechanisms, are too strong, the ego is not capable of working through the depressive position. This forces the ego to regress to the paranoid-schizoid position and reinforces the earlier persecutory fears and schizoid phenomena" (SM, 15). In *Envy and gratitude* ([1957] 1975), she refers to this vicious circle again in her discussion of how the "envious super-ego" is felt to disturb or eliminate all attempts at reparation and creativeness. Guilt feelings are added to persecution as a result of the individual's own envious and destructive impulses, and "The need for punishment, which finds satisfaction by the increased devaluation of the self, leads to a vicious circle" (E&G, 231). Here there is obviously a connection among the envious superego, guilt, and melancholia, whose condition seems to be constantly fluctuating between the paranoid-schizoid and the depressive position.

In "Notes on some schizoid mechanisms" ([1946] 1975), Klein establishes in a definitive way the constant fluctuation between the paranoid-schizoid and the depressive position as part of normal development and argues that in abnormal development this interaction influences the clinical picture of schizophrenia and manic depressive disorders. She tentatively advances the idea that schizophrenia and manic depression are closely connected in development and that this is the reason why the differential diagnosis between melancholia and schizophrenia is exceedingly difficult.

In the appendix to this paper, Klein discusses some aspects of Freud's analysis of the Schreber case, specifically his reference to the patient's

"abnormal changes in the ego" and his argument that "it is probable that processes of this kind constitute the distinctive characteristic of psychoses" (Freud 75).[7] Regarding these processes, which are at the bottom of Schreber's paranoic "world catastrophe," she suggests that it is the mechanism of the ego annihilating other parts that underlies this phantasy and that it implies a preponderance of the destructive impulse over the libido. Klein argues that if the ego and its internalized objects are felt to be in bits, anxiety states relating to an internal catastrophe do arise and excessive projection follows. Such anxiety states take the lead during the paranoid-schizoid position and form the basis of later schizophrenia.

Anxiety and Guilt at the Origin of the Subject

Guilt is at bottom nothing else but a topographical variety of anxiety.—Sigmund Freud

In one of her footnotes to "On the theory of anxiety and guilt" ([1948] 1975), Klein expands on her differences with Freud as regards the relationship between anxiety and guilt. She points out that whereas Freud aims to connect anxiety and guilt he also distinguishes between them. He refers to guilt with regard to early manifestations of "bad conscience" and writes: "This state of mind is called a 'bad conscience'; but actually it does not deserve this name, for at this stage the sense of guilt is clearly only a fear of loss of love, 'social' anxiety. In small children it can never be anything else, but in many adults, too, it has only changed to the extent that the place of the father or the two parents is taken by the larger human community. . . . A great change takes place when the authority is internalized through the establishment of a super-ego. The phenomena of conscience then reach a bigger stage. Actually, it is not until now that we should speak of conscience or a sense of guilt" ([1929, 1930] 1953, 124–25). In Freud's view the superego emerges as a sequel to the Oedipus complex; therefore, as Klein points out, the terms *conscience* and *guilt* do not apply before, in the first few years of life, anxiety is distinct from guilt.

In "Early stages of the Oedipus conflict" ([1928] 1975), Klein put forward her idea that, in both the normal and the pathological development of the child, anxiety and guilt arising during the first year of life are closely connected with processes of introjection and projection, with the first stages of the superego development and of the Oedipus complex, and that in these anxieties aggression and defenses against it are of paramount importance.

"On the theory of anxiety and guilt" ([1948] 1975) is Klein's most comprehensive essay covering her ideas on anxiety and guilt, including her agreement and differences with Freud. She points out that so far psychoanalysis had remained predominantly concerned with libido and had underrated the importance of aggression. Her own research had pivoted on understanding the relationship between aggression and anxiety. The death drive is for Klein the primary factor in the causation of anxiety, and in her conclusions to this essay she states that "it is . . . the *interaction* between aggression and libido—ultimately the fusion as well as the polarity of the two instincts—which causes anxiety and guilt" (A&G, 42). Anxiety can never be eliminated, but it may be "counteracted and kept at bay by the power of the life instinct" (42).[8]

Whereas, as we have just seen, for Freud guilt has its origin in the Oedipus complex and arises as a sequel to it ([1929, 1930] 1953), Abraham pointed out the connection among anxiety, guilt, and cannibalistic desires ([1924] 1949). Along these lines, Klein argues that anxiety has its origin in the "danger arising from the inner working of the death instinct" (A&G, 29). In her elaboration, the early superego is built up from the devouring breast (mother), to which is added the devouring penis (father). These internal figures become the representatives of the death drive. Yet the superego has another, opposite aspect, a helpful one, and it is formed by means of the internalization of the good breast and the good penis. According to Klein, "the fear of death enters from the beginning into the fear of the superego and is not, as Freud remarked, a 'final transformation' of the fear of the superego" ([1925, 1926] 1953, 140). For Klein, the primary danger situation arising from the activity of the death drive within is felt by the infant as attack and persecution. The frustrating (bad) external breast becomes, owing to projection, the external representative of the death drive; through introjection, it reinforces the primary internal danger situation, and the ego feels urged to deflect this inner activity of the death drive into the external world. Nevertheless, the activity of the death drive cannot be considered apart from the simultaneous activity of the life drives. When the libido attaches itself to the external object and the gratifying (good) breast is felt to be the representative of the life drive, the latter is introjected. The ego is the site of a constant struggle between the life and death drives.

Klein discusses at length the relationship between guilt and anxiety. She distinguishes between persecutory and depressive anxiety. Both forms of anxiety were described in her "A contribution to the psychogenesis of

manic-depressive states" ([1935] 1975), and now Klein moves on to add that "anxiety and guilt already play some part in the infant's earliest object-relation, i.e. in his relation to his mother's breast" (A&G, 34). She is thus also positing a theory of early anxiety and guilt consonant with her previous work on the early superego and the Oedipus conflict. She problematizes even more her already complex view of the positions by claiming that during the paranoid-schizoid position, when the ego is overwhelmed with persecutory anxiety, "splitting processes are never fully effective" and there appear to be "transitory states of integration . . . in which the cleavage between the good and bad breast is less marked" (34). In such states of integration, some measure of synthesis between love and hatred in relation to part objects comes about.

This obviously affects and modifies the depressive position to a certain extent. Klein argues that persecutory anxiety still plays a part in the depressive position, but it lessens in quantity as depressive anxiety takes the lead. Depressive anxiety, guilt, and the urge to make reparation are experienced simultaneously. Klein defines *guilt* as being intertwined with the other two elements: "The feeling that the harm done to the loved object is caused by the subject's aggressive impulses I take to be the essence of guilt. . . . The urge to undo or repair this harm results from the feeling that the subject has caused it, i.e. from guilt. The reparative tendency can, therefore, be considered as a consequence of the sense of guilt" (A&G, 36). She notes that it seems probable that depressive anxiety, guilt, and the reparative tendency are only experienced when feelings of love for the object predominate over destructive impulses. In her own words, "Guilt inextricably is bound up with anxiety (more exactly, with a specific form of it, depressive anxiety); it leads to the reparative tendency and arises during the first few months of life, in connection with the earliest stages of the super-ego" (38).

Klein agrees with Freud on the impossibility of drawing a sharp distinction between objective and neurotic anxiety.[9] In her view, objective anxiety would correspond to the infant's fear of loss of the mother out of its sense of dependence on her for survival. Neurotic anxiety would have to do with the infant's perception that the loved mother—indispensable as an external and internal good object—has been destroyed (or is in danger of being destroyed) by its sadistic impulses and she will never return. For Klein, the interaction between external and internal danger situations persists throughout life.

"On the theory of anxiety and guilt" constitutes one of the clearest instances in Klein's work in which the death drive appears throughout the text as the ever present and primary factor in the causation of anxiety. In the Kleinian narrative, guilt arises out of the subject's own aggression; it first appears in the paranoid-schizoid position and, most importantly, triggers the urge to repair in the depressive position. There is a very early sense of guilt, a precocious sense of guilt in Klein, which, consonant with her notion of the death drive, colors the infant's psychic development. Whereas anxiety poses a threat, this is just the threshold of guilt. There is no psychic subject without its quota of guilt. The prospects for acquitting oneself of such a guilt rest on one's complex negotiations in working through the depressive position.

I want to argue that in melancholia the introjection of the lost object of love comes as a result of the Oedipus conflict in its focal position as psychic catalyst and social device—as melancholic apparatus. How can we account for the fact that melancholia (depression in its present form) affects some individuals—especially women and deviant subjects—and not others? We need to find the answers to these questions in a space between the psychic and the social, where both the psychic and the social find their Others wanting. Klein gives us an important vantage point from which to reflect on these issues in her theory of the positions and her reluctance to adopt a structural view of the psyche inscribed in a teleological developmental model. Kleinian theory is a melancholic narrative of the constitution of the sexual subject and, by extension, of the social subject. There is an introjection of the lost object of love (which is nothing but a reedition of the introjection of the first loved and lost object—the breast, the mother) and a harboring of the object inside the ego. At best, melancholia can be worked through into mourning with the relinquishment of the object. But is this possible at all in the Kleinian scenario? At the base of Klein's notion of the depressive position there is the fact that any subsequent losses will shake the already fragile constitution of the ego by making it reinstate its good internal objects, which are felt to be under threat. The depressive position is a *remembrance of things past*. Is there a way in which the subject can free itself from the burden of the past? Is there a way in which the subject as the victim of its own aggression can be set free—radically and essentially free of guilt—in the Kleinian account?

Following her arguments in "On the theory of anxiety and guilt" ([1948] 1975), in *Envy and gratitude* ([1957] 1975), Klein argues that one of

the consequences of excessive envy is the early onset of guilt. She writes that "one of the deepest sources of guilt is always linked with the envy of the feeding breast, and with the feeling of having spoilt its goodness by envious attacks" (E&G, 195). In this work, Klein identifies the devaluation of the self—characteristic of the melancholic—as a defense particular to depressive types, and she establishes that one of the deepest roots of this defense is guilt and unhappiness over not having been able to preserve the good object because of envy (218).

Klein adds some further remarks on the superego in her "On the development of mental functioning" ([1958] 1975). She introduces one more aspect to her already rich and complex account of splitting processes. In this essay, she suggests that the superego develops in a state of fusion together with the life and death drives. Thus, "the splitting of the ego, by which the super-ego is formed, comes about as a consequence of conflict in the ego, engendered by the polarity of the two instincts" (DMF, 240). She reports that in her analysis of very young children since the 1920s she had come across "a very early and savage super-ego," (241) and discovered the ways in which children introjected their parents in a phantastic way as terrifying or idealized objects. In her view, these terrifying objects, "are split off in a manner different from that by which the super-ego is formed, and are relegated to the deeper layers of the unconscious" (241). Klein differentiates between two kinds of splitting, one in which the fusion of the life and death drives is in ascendance and another that is carried out predominantly through fusion of the two drives. In her view, during the depressive position, together with the increase in the feelings of guilt toward the damaged love object and the ego's urge to make reparation, "This relation to the loved injured object goes on to form an important element in the super-ego" (242). During the latency period, an important gap emerges between the "organized" part of the superego and its "unconscious part," which is felt to be separated.[10]

Klein goes on to draw a topography of the psyche that is mobile and resists any fixed structure. In addition to the life and death drives, she describes an unconscious that "consists of the unconscious ego and soon of the unconscious super-ego. It is part of this concept that I regard the id as identical with the two instincts" (DMF, 243). It is an unconscious in which, contrary to the Freudian view, splitting mechanisms are prior to repression. In fact, "The nature of splitting determines the nature of repression" (244). Klein concludes that the ego, from the beginning of life,

has a capacity not only to split but to integrate itself. Integration depends on the preponderance of the life drive and implies in some measure the acceptance by the ego of the working of the death drive. The ego may achieve this integration through its earliest object relations, and it is on the basis of the breast—on which the life and death drives are projected—as first object, internalized through introjection, that the psychic subject comes into being. The ego is a permanent site of struggle between representatives of the life and death drives. Its level of equilibrium is fragile and contingent, and it depends on a multiplicity of internal and external factors. Klein's interest in psychoses, especially manic depression and schizophrenia, shows in her nuanced and detailed descriptions of such mechanisms as splitting, scotomization, denial, and projective identification.

A Lonely Superego

Klein is undeniably the theorist of melancholia. Melancholia is dangerously placed in between neurosis and psychosis. As we saw earlier, failure to work through the depressive position may result in melancholia, mania, or paranoia. Since Klein also aims to posit a theory of love and a theory of the passions—envy, hate, gratitude, jealousy—the near impossibility of ever achieving a feeling of integration and other love that permeates her writing results in her latest thoughts on loneliness.

"On the sense of loneliness" ([1963] 1975) is a posthumously published and unfinished essay in which Kleinian melancholia is even more present, though in different ways, than in her previous work. Klein sets out to explore what she calls the inner sense of loneliness, "the sense of being alone regardless of external circumstances, of feeling lonely even when among friends or receiving love" (SL, 300). It is important to note that Klein places at the core of this inner sense of loneliness a longing for the intimate, earliest relationship with the mother, "the most complete experience of being understood . . . essentially linked to the preverbal stage" (301).[11] This, in her view, contributes to the sense of loneliness and derives from the depressive feeling of an "irretrievable loss" (301).

Paranoid and depressive anxieties that are never entirely overcome are at the root of the sense of loneliness. Crucial to my main arguments is the fact that Klein identifies and explains why loneliness is generally understood to derive from the conviction that there is no person or group to which one belongs. This not belonging is spelled out in terms of projective

identification. Since total and permanent integration of the ego is never possible, some of its split-off parts are projected into other people and contribute to the feeling that one is not in full possession of one's self, that one does not fully belong to oneself or, therefore, to anybody else: "The lost parts too, are felt to be lonely" (SL, 302).[12] In the schizophrenic, this sense of loneliness is exacerbated, since his or her ego, through its multiple splittings and projections, is weakened and felt as fragmented. The fragility of an ego that cannot rely on any external or internal good object is bound up with loneliness, for it increases the feeling that the individual is left alone "with his misery" (303).

The prevalence of depressive anxiety results in loneliness. On the manic depressive's way toward the depressive position, the object is experienced more as a whole, but the feelings of guilt bound up with paranoid mechanisms are prevalent. The manic depressive longs to have the good object safely inside, protected and preserved. But he or she feels unable to do so, as the capacity for making reparation is still uncertain. Finally, the individual succumbs to the threat of his or her destructive impulses. Klein argues that the longing to overcome these difficulties and work through the depressive position results in a feeling of loneliness. Moreover, in extreme cases this expresses itself in a tendency toward suicide.

In her discussion of further difficulties in integration, Klein also acknowledges the importance of the complex ways in which male and female elements appear in both sexes under the sway of maternal and paternal identifications.[13] Here it is the superego that complicates things further and throws the ego into confusion with its almost impossible demands. Klein seems to suggest that the harsher the superego the more difficult it will be to come to terms with the labor of integration.

At the end of her career, as was certainly the case with Freud, Klein has a brilliant insight into one of the pillars on which her theory rests, her ongoing reflection on mourning, melancholia, and manic-depression.[14] In SL, she seems to go beyond her previous positions, giving us an almost subversive reading of her ideas on the superego.

> These identifications [with both parents] vary in strength and also in quality, depending on whether admiration or envy is the more prevalent. Part of the desire for integration in the young child is the urge to integrate these different aspects of the personality. In addition, the super-ego makes the conflicting demand for identification with both parents, prompted by the need to make reparation for early desires to rob each of them and expressing the wish to keep them alive internally. If the element of guilt is predominant it will hamper the integration of these identifications. If, however, these identifications are satisfactorily achieved they become a source of enrichment and a basis for the development of a variety of gifts and capacities. (306)

It is the superego that enters into the picture with the difficult and almost melancholic demand to preserve the identifications with both parents inside the ego. Since guilt arises directly from the superego, how is the subject to make the difficult transit of acquitting itself of guilt and embracing a multiplicity of identifications? Is it not the case that in order to keep and preserve all its possible identifications the subject must deceive the superego and do this in hiding, by resorting to perversion in the most general sense? What seems to be at stake here is an opening up and acknowledging of the complex ways in which the subject assumes its identifications—basically, but not only, same sex or other sex—and how this becomes entangled in and complicated by the question of desire.

Klein also argues that there is a link between loneliness and the inability to sufficiently integrate the good object as well as those parts of the self that are felt to be inaccessible. All the factors that Klein lists as mitigators of loneliness—such as successful internalization of the good object, gratitude and tolerance, among others—never entirely eliminate it, and they are likely to be used as defenses. As she herself admits, Klein merely touches upon the importance of the superego in connection with all these issues. In the penultimate paragraph of this "unfinished" essay, she writes: "A harsh super-ego can never be felt to forgive destructive impulses; in fact, it demands that they should not exist. Although the super-ego is built up largely from a split-off part of the ego on to which impulses are projected, it is also inevitably influenced by the introjection of the personalities of the actual parents and of their relation to the child. The harsher the super-ego, the greater will be the loneliness, because its severe demands increase depressive and paranoid anxieties" (SL, 313).[15]

We may read this harsh and relentless Kleinian superego as an almost paranoid agency of surveillance, which does not only deny forgiveness but instead opts for disavowal. Destructive impulses exist throughout the world, but the superego obsessively demands that "they should not exist." So, by definition, this latter Kleinian superego can be best described as a paranoid and policing agency, which, by way of its own denial, punishes an ego already under suspicion of being responsible for such destruction.

The superego can never forgive, but it can deny. It inhabits the space of the paranoid-schizoid position. The ego finds itself in a nonplace; it is the masochistic victim of the attacks launched by the punitive agency. Feelings of loneliness, melancholia, and the impossibility of ever working through the depressive position increase progressively with the superego's harsher demands. How can the ego be watched by a milder superego if this change would come as a result of a move toward the depressive position (and this, in its turn, would very much depend on the introjection of the personalities of the actual parents)? Klein's legacy in this essay is a melancholic statement on the impossibility of ever achieving integration. The fragility of the ego is more present than ever before. This primary good internal object, which was lost, will always remain inexorably so. Attempts at substitution are doomed to fail. The feeling of not belonging—to a person, a group, or even oneself—brilliantly described by Klein in this essay, is parallel to the feeling of not belonging of the melancholic, of his or her retreat from the world. Why is it that in the field of the social, within the frame of the large group, the melancholic feels so excluded? The retreat to an inner world where the lost object of love is harbored has everything to do with the impossibility of bearing the anxieties that derive from the social in the subject's paranoid-schizoid position. The projection of aggression and violence—in overt as well as more subtle ways—into or onto others is a feature of our present highly prejudiced societies. Xenophobia, homophobia, racism, and class and social prejudices are paranoid defenses articulated on the basis of hatred and projection of our own rejected and devalued split-off parts.

At the core of Kleinian theory, there is a potential for understanding and resignification of what counts as a psychic and social space where the subject may be able to live. The unending and never quite fully achieved task of integration, in the process of recomposing the subject and setting it free from excessive guilt, is both a personal and a social project. Reading and rereading Klein, in the light of the turbulence and concerns of our own times, leaves the door open for future possibilities of change. The dystopia at the center of the Kleinian account of the child's early aggressive relationship with the mother gives us space for thought as to what taking an oppositional stance even to where we feel we most intimately belong may mean. But dystopia and utopia, as opposites, are too close for us to be able to think of one without the other. In a terrain of permanent oscillation between neurosis and psychosis, melancholia and the Kleinian depressive

position signal the impossibility of their practical resolution. In this movable and changing force field, the strivings for integration of our selves and those of others sound like a felicitous promise that holds no guarantees, although it may be worth the effort to assume the risk.

Melancholia, Performativity, and the Death Drive

Freud's discussion of melancholia in "Mourning and melancholia" ([1915, 1917] 1953) provides the context for Judith Butler's persuasive argument about the necessity of a melancholic identification for the process whereby the gendered character of the ego is assumed. Butler understands "gendered character of the ego" to mean the influence upon the ego of the prevalence of a heterosexual matrix in the construction of gender as it emerges in many of Freud's texts as well as in cultural forms that have absorbed heterosexuality as their naturalized cultural norm (1990a, 57–65).

Butler reminds us that in *The ego and the id* ([1923] 1953), Freud makes room for the notion that melancholic identification may be a prerequisite for letting the object go, and giving up the object becomes possible on condition of a melancholic incorporation. This incorporation is also a way to disavow that loss. Butler claims that "masculine" and "feminine" positions are produced through melancholic identification, that they are established "in part through prohibitions that *demand the loss* of certain sexual attachments and demand as well that those losses *not* be avowed and *not* be grieved" (1990a, 168). If the assumptions of femininity and masculinity proceed through the accomplishment of heterosexuality, Butler suggests that we might understand the force of this accomplishment as "the *preemption* of the possibility of homosexual attachment, a certain foreclosure of possibility that produces a domain of heterosexuality understood as unlivable passion and ungrievable loss" (168).

The Oedipal conflict presumes the heterosexualization of desire and is produced by enforcing the prohibition of homosexuality, even prior to implementing the prohibition of incest. Heterosexuality thus enforces the loss of homosexual objects and aims, which is foreclosed from the start.[16] According to Butler, we can expect a culturally prevalent form of melancholia, which signals the internalization of the "ungrieved and ungrievable homosexual cathexis" (1990a, 171). In the absence of a contemporary public discourse through which such losses might be acknowledged, named, and mourned, melancholia has important consequences. Butler specifi-

cally refers to contemporary conditions of grief over the loss by AIDS of so many gay men and suggests that the cultural "unreality" of these losses may be attributable to the foreclosed status of homosexual love as that which "never was" and so "never was lost." She uncovers the blind spots of our culture of gender melancholy in which, "In opposition to a conception of sexuality that is said to 'express' a gender, gender itself is here understood to be composed of precisely what remains inarticulate in sexuality" (172).

Butler documents and discusses the issue of homosexual desire as a source of guilt in Freud's texts, underscoring that in melancholia the superego can become "a gathering place for the death instincts" (1990a, 173). She writes: "Where melancholy is the refusal of grief, it is also always the incorporation of loss, the miming of the death it cannot mourn. In this sense, the incorporation of death draws on the death instincts such that we might well wonder whether the two are separable from one another, either analytically or phenomenologically" (174). This is a crucial point of convergence with several of the arguments I have put forward in this volume. If the superego of the melancholic is "a pure culture of the death instinct" (Freud [1923] 1953, 53), reading Klein's and Butler's views together would lead us to reflect upon the forms of violence that are culturally enforced on a macrolevel and those that are enforced on a microlevel. The latter show on the first grid of cultural semiosis, that of the infant in relation to the mother, who is sadistically attacked, destroyed, and devalued in his or her finite and extinguishable condition of frustrating, ungiving, and selfish breast. In the conflictual relationship between the infant and the mother, and later the parental couple, in the passage from the paranoid-schizoid to the depressive position, and prior to the onset of the Oedipal conflict, sexuality is felt as a loss, disoriented and troubled. The value of Klein's insights with regard to the issue of the achievement of any sexual position lies precisely in her effort to show the constant interaction between pregenital and genital impulses and tendencies and in her resistance to the possibility of ever attaining a stable and fixed sexual position. Her exploration of the workings of the death drive and her crucial work on mourning, melancholia, and manic depression have authoritatively proved how the capacity for mourning and its opposite, melancholia, shape the ego's development through a complex narrative made up of the phantasies that constitute it. These narratives, as much as the development of the ego, eschew any notion of teleology—in the constant ebb and flow of moving

forward and backward—in the history of the ego. Consequently, the history of the subject and its sexuality is shaped through constant negotiation, always provisional and subject to change.

In her important discussion of gender melancholia, in the context of her theory of gender performativity, Judith Butler refers to the example of the drag performance to further illustrate her point: "What it [drag performance] does suggest is that the performance allegorizes a loss it cannot grieve, allegorizes the incorporative fantasy of melancholia whereby an object is phantasmatically taken in or on as a way of refusing to let it go. Gender itself might be understood as the 'acting out' of unresolved grief" (1990a, 176). In Butler's view, drag allegorizes heterosexual melancholy, the melancholy by means of which masculine and feminine genders are formed from their respective refusals to grieve same-sex possibilities of love by preserving them through the heightening of strong masculine or feminine identifications: "Indeed, it may be, but need not be, that what constitutes the *sexually* unperformable is performed instead as *gender identification*" (177).[17] For Butler, what is most apparently performed as gender is the symptom of a pervasive disavowal. She briefly touches on the issue of suicide and argues that the melancholic effects of the public proscription of losses can achieve suicidal proportions.

But we may as well consider that delusions, hallucinations, and "acting out" are the first step in and the precondition to the cure of psychosis, the first step in the subject's own private battle with manic depression, paranoia, or schizophrenia. If acting out is in itself the first step on the way to the cure of the melancholic, breaking the long silence of noncommunication, of the absence of speech and movement, we may as well consider the performative episode as an attempt to resolve the melancholia of gender, one with no guarantees. For there can be no mourning without the acknowledgment of what was lost.[18] In my view, this state of melancholia has to do with the impossibility of mourning all the tendencies the subject had to relinquish in his or her previous history in order to become what he or she is at the moment, in order to enjoy and/or suffer his or her present sexuality. An infant no longer, the "mature" individual has had to abandon his or her "polymorphous perverse sexuality" and in so doing, must mime, reproduce, and replicate socially sanctioned behaviors and practices. In the absence—or social abjection—of alternative models, of alternative and nonrepressive ways of living sexuality, the individual is doomed to either compulsively repeat or be socially massacred and erased.

The Kleinian version of these facts would necessarily consider the vicissitudes of the passage from the paranoid-schizoid to the depressive position and the need to secure good internal objects as a precondition of it. When the subject is entrapped in the vicious circle of aggression, envy, and fear of retaliation, there is no easy way to break free. Paranoid-schizoid morality, with its concomitant manic and obsessional defenses, gives a perfect view of the psychic and social enforcement of post-oedipal sexuality, always already heterosexual in our cultural organization in the West.

What seems to me most important in Butler's arguments for future work on melancholia, and in a wider sense for sexualities and gender at the present conjuncture, is precisely her suggestion that we rethink melancholy within homosexuality and in the context of a politics of identity that may be able to operate in terms other than those of the logic of mutual exclusion by which heterosexism reproduces itself. I also believe that we must rethink the role of melancholy in the constitution of the subject, not only in psychoanalytical terms but at the crossroads of psychoanalysis and politics. For not until we are able to uncover the social and political implications of the melancholization (or, in more general and current terms, depression) of some subjects and not others will we be fully able to understand melancholia as a contemporary culture of the death drive.

Melanie Klein and Luce Irigaray: The Role of the Death Drive in New Symbolic Economies

And I have suffered the violence of your passions so many times that often peaceful serenity tries me. I am lifeless but deprived of yet living my death. Indefinitely in death. A mourning veil into which you endlessly transfigure me so as to make yourself immortal. Dwelling in death without every dying, I keep for you the dream—of being able to overcome your body. And this ideal—not to feel life passing by. Neither to suffer from nor even to imagine the matter from which life is made, and unmade. And to descend into the depths of your existence to ask you the question of your sustenance.—Luce Irigaray

The question Irigaray negotiates is the tension between the death drive as destructive and the death drive as creative; or between eros as thanatos and thanatos as eros.—Margaret Whitford

In her essay "Reading Irigaray in the nineties" (1994b),[19] Margaret Whitford briefly identifies what she will engage in depth later in her study of

Irigaray's images—particularly the utopian ones—in "Irigaray, Utopia, and the Death Drive" (1994a), as a "difficulty" that Irigaray, and perhaps feminism in general, have produced for themselves (1994b, 29). Whitford thus undertakes her discussion in terms of images, in terms of how Irigaray envisions her feminist philosophical project, which is one for the future.

Irigaray argues that there is a patriarchal death drive, that patriarchy has been constructed on a sacrifice (an originary matricide), and that we need to bring the mother into symbolic existence. Nevertheless, Whitford remarks, it seems paradoxical that Irigaray also comes dangerously close to suggesting that there might be a culture without sacrifice, and her recent work, with her emphasis on love, explicitly moves in this direction (Whitford 1994b, 29). Whitford seems too close to several of the questions on aggressivity, violence, and the death drive that have been raised through a rereading of Klein in this project. What is at stake for Whitford is exploring, understanding, and identifying the locus of violence. She writes: "It is easier to attribute violence to an *other* (like patriarchy) than to consider the implications of the inevitable violence at the heart of identity, which brings it closer to home" (29). This is no doubt one of the main issues at stake in Kleinian theory as well.

Whitford aptly links these questions to the larger picture of feminism as critique and feminism as construction. The issue of violence is seldom addressed, and in her view Irigaray's earlier work, from *Speculum of the other woman* ([1974] 1985) to *An ethics of sexual difference* ([1984] 1993), provides ample resources to start us thinking about "the kind of alibi that patriarchal violence offers for feminism as critique, and the kind of difficulties that might lie in the way of fundamental symbolic reorganizations (of which the conflicts engendered by differences between women is only the most obvious example)" (1994b, 29). In "Irigaray, utopia, and the death drive" (1994a), Whitford uncovers some of the ambiguities inherent in the concept of the death drive.[20]

Irigaray rereads Lacanian formulations in *Le temps de la différence* (1989). Reinterpreting Lacan's three registers in terms of sexual difference, she diagnoses a failure to sublimate owing to the condition of woman as Other: "Destruction [is] at work in the life drives themselves, insofar as they fail to respect the other, and in particular the other of sexual difference. Instead of being in the service of creation or recreation of human forms, [eroticism] serves destruction or the loss of identity in fusion" (109–11). For Irigaray, psychoanalytic theories "describe and perpetuate an

uncivilized state" (1992, 209), and we are living in "a primitive chaos" (1989, 104). She moves on to talk about love as a philosophical issue. Whitford writes: "The point of civilization is in part to tame the destructive energies of eros (*J'aime à toi*, 212); Aphrodite is love sublimated, the union of spiritual and carnal, the death drive mediated by the symbolic. . . . While the male universal is governed by death, Irigaray wishes to replace this with eros—life or love" (1994a, 392).

For Whitford, there is a turning point in Irigaray's work when the image of nuptials or amorous exchange begins to emerge more strongly. This corresponds to the idea that *each* sex should have access to life and to death.[21] It is basically an image without sacrifice, an image of fertility, an image that stands for relations between men and women at the level of sexuality or at the level of the polis. Her quote from Irigaray is most telling: "A sexual or carnal ethics would demand that both angel and body be found together. This is a world that must be constructed or reconstructed. A genesis of love between the sexes has yet to come about in all dimensions, from the smallest to the greatest, from the most intimate, to the most political" (Irigaray 1992, 107). Whitford remarks that this image of nuptials is explicitly linked to the problematics of life and death.

According to Whitford, in Irigaray's recent work the idea emerges that we live in a dangerous epoch for women. In her view, "The dangers in feminism, as Irigaray sees them, lie in a politics that is heedless of the functioning of the patriarchal death drive. Such a politics risks an escalation and counterescalation of violence that leaves the sacrificial foundation untouched" (1994a, 394). She sees Irigaray's project as involved in a new symbolization, in which the death drive is bound with eros. In *J'aime à toi*, Irigaray understands Eros to be an "unbinding" force, and Whitford believes this is because Eros remains "primitive, 'uncivilized,' unsublimated, a purely private affair, when it should be a civil and social recognition of two generic identities" (394).

When Whitford contends that Irigaray negotiates the tension between the death drive as destructive and the death drive as creative, or between Eros as Thanatos and Thanatos as Eros, we come all too close to Melanie Klein's ideas on the death drive in its multiple manifestations: anxiety, aggression, guilt, and paranoid-schizoid and depressive defenses. Klein writes that a certain degree of anxiety—and the like—is necessary in normal development. The death drive read as stasis and Klein's image of the "vicious circle" are fundamentally the same. They are a circular movement

that translates into immobility, a stasis that becomes reified, so to speak, solidified in circles of pure pain.[22] For Whitford, Irigaray's images of utopias can be understood as attempts to bind the death drive in a stable imaginary formation. Nevertheless, she warns that any stable imaginary formation is itself implicated in the death drive in its sense as stasis, which makes any image problematic. She believes the problem is how to keep the space open, to hold the tension, without succumbing to either fixation or uncontrolled and endless disruption (1994a, 394). Stability immobilizes, but perpetual disruption is immobilizing and also disruptive.

In Whitford's own terms, the problem for feminism is that it is "destined to remain contestatory—feminism as critique—or can it legitimately move to a more constructive moment?" (1994a, 395). There are no definitive answers for these questions, as "identity is both necessary and violent" (395). Whitford sees continuity in the evolution of Irigaray's work. In her later work, violence is located in patriarchy, but as we know from her earlier work she is aware that violence also comes from inside ourselves. This continuity in Irigaray's thinking, in Whitford's view, "is provided at least in part by the need to address the death drive in its destructive as well as creative potential" (395).

We may raise similar questions in the terrain of Kleinian theory. To a large extent, I have been trying to engage Klein's representation of the death drive and melancholia in terms of failed narratives, of a narrativization that traces the sinuous paths the individual psyche may take in its development from infancy into adulthood. Phantasy and space are fundamental categories in my approach to the foundation, construction, and reconstruction (re-creation) of this psyche, which is no longer built upon a structural model.

Given Whitford's insight, we may rethink these questions in terms of images, in terms of a rhetoric of the image that in Klein is mobile and in flux and cannot easily be apprehended. The complex Kleinian syntax of introjections and projections, in its very inability to attain closure, may allow us to link the Kleinian to the Irigarayan image. Paranoid-schizoid and depressive images are overlaid in a rich texture of phantasies that finally, in Klein's later work, are resolved in reparation, in the healing of open wounds, and in the destruction and dereliction that we ourselves have caused. Splitting, scotomization, and mania give way to the melancholic landscapes of depression. In the remainders, in the interstices of all these ruins, the subject strives to make repairs out of love for the damaged

object. The utopian images of bliss, harmony, and reunion in Irigaray intimately connect here with the melancholic longings for a peaceful state in which we, as subjects, may come to terms with the shadows of our troubled and most turbulent interior landscapes.

A Positional Ethics

In its broadest terms, the psychoanalytic world-view is constituted by a commitment to rational understanding of the self and to such freedom of choice as can be furthered by this.—Michael Rustin

In view of our previous reflections, we may wonder whether or not there are alternative ways inside the Kleinian oeuvre and its tradition to read *reparation* and *guilt* differently. It seems to me that one of the most positive insights Kleinian thinking can offer is precisely the opening up of a vast array of possibilities through which the individual can negotiate his or her liberation from guilt and freedom of choice in a space where no position is ever completely established and therefore no ontological or epistemological assumptions can be granted. The Kleinian oeuvre offers the possibility of our playing different roles in different scenarios and circumstances. As Graham Dawson has remarked, "the really radical potential of Kleinian theory lies in its conception of the reciprocal contingency of psychic life upon social contradictions. It brings the full range of complex, conflictual social relations into dynamic interaction with the struggle for greater psychic wholeness and integrity, not as a once-and-for-all process occurring in infancy, but as an ongoing process throughout all social life" (1994, 42–43).

Klein deeply explored the development of moral capacities in the child. With her bold elaboration and ardent defense of her ideas as they were exposed during the Controversial Discussions, she showed that in a rapidly changing world in which there are continuous differences between lived experiences and points of view there is no reason to believe that psychoanalysis should make room only for one ontological, ethical, or aesthetic standpoint.

In the context of the evolution of Kleinian thinking up to the present, the central importance of the ethical and moral stance in psychoanalysis has been stressed in the Kleinian tradition by Michael Rustin, among others. He claims that "The relation between psychoanalytic knowledge

and human interests therefore consists in the fact that psychoanalysis is a ground, a legitimation and a consequence of certain definitions of purposes, in what might be thought of as a virtuous circle of reasoning. It begins from a point (or points) of view regarding human nature and possibility, but then provides evidence and justification of its plausibility and claims. The density and richness of psychoanalytic accounts of human motivation have made it, in fact, into an exemplary form of moral reasoning" (1991, 142).

Kleinian analyst Roger Money-Kyrle, in his essay "Towards a common aim: A psychoanalytical contribution to ethics" (1944) sets himself up to explore to what extent, if at all, psychoanalysis can contribute to the central and unsolved problem of ethics, "the choice of ends" (106), and so be as effective in society as it has been in helping individuals. His analysis is pervaded with the climate of paranoia and social tension produced by World War II and the threat of the extension of nazism. According to him, "the most conspicuous feature in their [the Nazis'] unconscious make-up appears to be a kind of sadistic phallic worship, the surrender to the 'bad' phallic deity symbolized by a loud-voiced but probably impotent fanatic" (112). Money-Kyrle strives to find a common pattern of ethical values valid for "normal" individuals and defines *normality* as "an optimum freedom of neurosis" (106), acknowledging that "there is no reason to suppose that two different individuals would approach the same normality" (106–7). Following Klein, he identifies as a positive characteristic of normality freedom from excessive unconscious anxiety by virtue of having a less distorted unconscious picture of the world.

The origin of morality is closely connected to the sense of guilt, which, understood in Kleinian terms, is "the peculiar blend of anxiety and despair that follows aggressive acts or phantasies against a loved object" (Money-Kyrle 1944, 110). There exist at least three general forms of morality: negative morality, which aims at the avoidance of a repetition of aggression against the loved object or its symbols; positive morality, which aims at the reparation of the damage done; and aggressive morality, which aims at the defense of the loved object against a threat by a third party.

Money-Kyrle manages to enunciate three fundamental principles of primary morality: "It is bad (i.e., it arouses guilt) to injure or threaten a good object; it is good to love, repair and defend a good object; it is also good to hate, attack or destroy a bad object, that is, any thing or person that threatens to destroy a good one" (1944, 111). In his view, it is obvious that

the developed morality of the adult is relative and different in different societies and in different individuals in the same society. His assessment of the Kleinian contribution to the issue of ethics underscores that the superego is no longer "a single personality. It is a collection of many, often mutually incompatible personalities and part objects, and many relationships, including different forms of tension, can and do subsist between its various members and the ego" (117). Guilt, therefore, is not the result of all sorts of tension between ego and superego but only of aggression against loved objects, external or internal. This is what Money-Kyrle calls "the first law of primary morality—it is bad, that is, it arouses guilt, to attack or threaten a good object" (117). In the Kleinian sense, *guilt* is thus defined in a wider sense, which confronts us "with a great variety of consciences" (117). This new theory of guilt may lead us to a universal system of ethics, according to which there is "only one type of conscience; and the man who deserts and persecutes his good objects does so from fear, and not because of, but in spite of his guilt" (117).

Money-Kyrle explains this in a most awkward way by reducing the multiple possibilities opened up by the Kleinian insight into "a great variety of consciences" to only one type of conscience. We gather that for the sake of simplicity he means one pattern of "bad" conscience, namely, the opposite of reparative morality. If we follow the implications of Kleinian thought, this paranoid-schizoid form of morality may as well offer many variants depending on the amount of anxiety, the degree of disintegration of the early ego, and the defense mechanisms displayed.

In the Kleinian elaboration, the internal object in the depressive position is felt to be damaged, the result of an injury, an attack, the focus of violence or aggression. This damaged internal object is what generates the ambivalent tone of the depressive position. The achievement of the depressive position aims to sustain the feelings of concern without always reverting to paranoid fears. Reparation strives to reinstate or repair the object that has been damaged or destroyed.

I believe that the concept of projective identification must also be considered as an important Kleinian contribution to an understanding of ethics. Whereas projective identification can be read as a mechanism of defense, it is also a crucial element in making emotional contact with others and it may function as a form of communication. Projective identification is the basis of empathy, which, as Robert Hinshelwood has remarked, "occurs without serious distortions to the identity of either the

subject or the object. In this case the violence of the primitive forms has been so attenuated that it has been brought under the control of impulses of love and concern" (1994, 133).

The forms of love that arise from the phantasies of the depressive position elicit concern and a deep sense of grief. In the intricate and complex interactions of love with hate, aggression and fear, Klein delineates a "positional" ethics in which individual perspectives and situations place concern and altruism at center stage. Aggression toward the object lurks on a horizon that can never do without opposition and antagonism, a horizon where there is no place for complacency. I believe that a Kleinian ethics of care, gratitude, and appreciation of the other qua other opens up new avenues of generosity that are yet to be explored and exercised.

15 See the section devoted to Radó in chapter 1.

16 Klein stresses that ambivalence is "partly a safeguard against one's own hate and against the hated and terrifying objects" (M-DS, 288).

17 Here I am borrowing Eric Santner's felicitous expression "stranded objects," which also provides the title of his book *Stranded objects: Mourning, memory, and film in postwar Germany* (1990).

18 In her later work, Klein sticks to her idea that the process of unification depends on more realistic splitting of the object. See especially her "Some theoretical conclusions regarding the emotional life of the infant" ([1952] 1975c) for a detailed discussion of the splitting that is a characteristic of the depressive position.

19 Klein quotes from "Mourning and melancholia" to illustrate her point: "Why, then, after [mourning] has run its course, is there no hint in this case of the economic condition for a phase of triumph? I find it impossible to answer this objection straight away" (Freud [1915, 1917] 1953, 255).

20 In "Absence of grief," Helene Deutsch describes situations in which there is a complete absence of the manifestations of mourning. She puts forward the hypothesis that the ego of the child, unsufficiently developed to bear the strain of the work of mourning, utilizes some mechanisms of "narcissistic self-protection to circumvent the process" (1937, 13). She is in agreement with Klein's views on the persistence of the ongoing necessity to mourn in the psychic apparatus.

21 See, for example, "An obsessional neurosis in a six-year-old girl," chapter 3 of *The psycho-analysis of children* (Klein 35–57).

6 *The Death Drive and Aggression*

1 See Freud ([1915] 1953, 122–24).

2 See Freud ([1915] 1953). At any rate, the Freudian concept of drive (Trieb) is opposed to the biological notion of instinct—as in self-preservative instincts versus erotic or libidinal drives. This stems from the absence of a predetermined or given object. In *Three essays on the theory of sexuality* ([1905] 1953), Freud writes, "It has been brought to our notice that we have been in the habit of regarding the connection between the sexual instinct and the sexual object as more intimate that it in fact is. Experience of the cases that are considered abnormal has shown us that in them the sexual instinct and the sexual object are merely soldered together—a fact which we have been in danger of overlooking in consequence of the uniformity of the normal picture, where the object appears to form part and parcel of the instinct. We are thus warned to loosen the bond that exists in our thought between instinct and object. It seems probable that the sexual instinct is in the first instance dependent of its object; nor is its origin likely to be due to its object's attractions" (147–48). The major characteristics of the drives are: they are derived from and supported by instincts, they have no pregiven objects, and they are dominated by an erotogenic zone (182–83). Later, with his description of perversions, which can be defined in terms of both object and goal, as Laplanche puts it, "the text is an eloquent argument in favour of the view that drives and forms of behaviour are plastic, mobile and interchangeable. About all, it foregrounds their *Vertretungsfähigkeit*, or vicariousness, the ability of one drive to take the place of another, and the possibility of a perverse drive taking the place of a non-perverse drive, or vice versa" ([1987] 1989, 30).

3 In a footnote, Klein explains that when the essay was published she was using *paranoid position* synonymously with W. R. D. Fairbairn's *schizoid position* and decided to use the combined name. Nevertheless, Klein makes clear her differences with Fairbairn's approach, which she characterizes as taken "from the angle of ego-development in relation to objects, while mine was predominantly from the angle of anxieties and their vicissitudes" (SM, 3).

4 W. W. Meissner (1987) has pointed out that "internalising and externalizing processes may be differentiating rather than defensive processes, and thus directed to the formation and establishment of boundaries between the inner and the outer worlds, between self and object. They would then be the fundamental processes through which internality and externality are constituted" (30).

5 Klein once again remarks in a footnote on the insufficiency of language to express those primitive phantasies that arise in the infant previous to the acquisition language: "I am using the expression 'to project into another person' because this seems to me the only way of conveying the unconscious processes I am trying to describe" (SM, 8).

6 Joseph Sandler has approached the complexity of the notion of projective identification by distinguishing three stages. The first stage corresponds to Klein's formulation in SM, and Sandler remarks that "M. Klein can be taken to refer here to shifts and displacements within the child's representational world. *Identification* with parts of an object can be regarded as 'taking into' the self-representation aspects of an object representation. Projection is then a displacement in the opposite direction" (1987a, 16). In this context, splitting involves a division of parts of the self-representation or the object representation and projection in the process of identification of the object with split parts of the self. The "real" object is not regarded as being affected, Sander writes, because "the parts of the self put into the object are put into the fantasy object, the 'internal' object, not the external object" (17). The second stage corresponds to the notion of countertransference as theorized from a Kleinian perspective by Paula Heimann (1950). According to Sandler, Heimann and others made a significant extension of projective identification by bringing it into conjunction with the analyst's identification with the self or object representation in the patient's unconscious phantasies and with the effect of this on the countertransference. The countertransference reaction could then be a possible source of information for the analyst about what was occurring in the patient. The third stage was theorized especially by Bion in the late 1950s and found expression in his concept of the "container" (see Bion 1962a, 1963). Projective identification is now described as if the externalization of parts of the self or of the internal object occurs directly into the external object. Bion describes a concrete "putting into the object," as when he writes, "An evacuation of the bad breast takes place through a realistic projective identification. The mother, with her capacity for reverie, transforms the unpleasant sensations linked to the 'bad breast' and provides relief for the infant who then reintrojects the mitigated and modified emotional experience, i.e., reintrojects . . . a non-sensual aspect of the mother's love" (quoted in Sandler 1987, 19). In Sandler's view, Bion's formulations can be related to Winnicott's "holding" function of the "good enough mother"

(see Winnicott 1958). From a different angle, Otto F. Kernberg has suggested a developmental line from primitive projective identification to projection, which he sees as proceeding "from projective identification, which is based on an ego structure centered on splitting (primitive dissociation) as its essential defense, to projection, which is based on an ego structure centered on repression as a basic defense" (1987, 94).

7 In this appendix, Klein acknowledges Freud's contributions to the study of schizophrenia and paranoia, together with Abraham's important insights—especially in his "The psycho-sexual differences between hysteria and dementia praecox" (1908), which opened up the possibility of understanding and studying psychoses.

8 In one of her footnotes, Klein notes that in *Civilization and its discontents* Freud adopted her hypothesis (put forward in her 1928 "Early stages of the Oedipus complex" and 1930 "The importance of symbol-formation in the development of the ego") that the severity of the superego to some extent results from the child's own aggression, which is projected onto this p~~sychic in~~stance (A&G, 26).

9 Klein refers to the well-known Freudian attempt to distinguish between both of them: "Real danger is a danger that is known, and realistic anxiety is anxiety about a known danger of this sort, Neurotic anxiety is anxiety about an unknown danger. Neurotic danger is thus a danger that has still to be discovered. Analysis has shown that it is an instinctual danger" (Freud [1925, 1926] 1953, 165).

10 Klein explains that during latency "the child deals with his strict super-ego by projecting it on to his environment—in other words, externalizing it—and trying to come to terms with those in authority. However, although in the older child and in the adult these anxieties are modified, changed in form, warded off by stronger defences, and therefore are also less accessible to analysis than in the young child, when we penetrate to deeper layers of the unconscious, we find that dangerous and persecutory figures still co-exist with idealized ones" (*DMF*, 242). As it is clear from this passage, Klein problematizes the achievement of any stable position, since anxiety always poses a threat.

11 Klein has been accused from some fronts, especially Lacanian and other "discursive" postmodern positions, of a disregard for the issue of language. I would argue that she does not aim to give a prelinguistic version of the process of becoming subject; rather, acknowledging the precarious position of mothers and infants in the turbulence of Europe between the wars, her focus is in the complex syntax of unconscious phantasy that comes before language acquisition in the infant. Surely, the field of culture is always there. Klein showed in several occasions her concern with language, with the inadequacies and the impossibilities one has to face when trying to translate unconscious phantasy into words. Her play technique and child analysis provided her with an exceptional vantage point from which to become aware of and reflect on these issues. For a detailed account of the Kleinian group's position on this, see chapter 7, especially my ~~discuss~~ion of Mary Jaco~~bus's (1990)~~ reading of Klein's "The importance of symbol formation in the development of the ego" ([1930] 1975) with Lacan and Kristeva.

12 Klein advances, more clearly than even before, her contention about the precarious stability of the ego: "Full and permanent integration is never possible for some polarity between the life and death instincts always persists and remains the deepest source of

conflict. Since full integration is never achieved, complete integration and acceptance of one's own emotions, phantasies and anxieties is not possible and this continues as an important factor in loneliness" (SL, 302).

13 Klein's interest centers on what she calls "the psychological aspect in bi-sexuality" (ibid., 306).

14 Freud also left unfinished his insightful "Splitting of the ego in the process of defence" ([1938] 1940b). Freud's later work, especially his "Splitting of the ego" ([1938] 1940b] 1953) and *An outline of psycho-analysis* ([1938] 1940a), has aroused an unprecedented amount of critical writing and interdisciplinary debate in recent times. I am referring to work in the areas of perversion—fetishism in particular—and psychosis. In analytic circles, much has been said on the challenge that Freud's later work poses to some of his earlier positions. The structural theory of the psyche and the question of narcissism are two salient instances of it.

15 The editors of Klein's works point out that she had not submitted "On the sense of loneliness" for publication before her death. Apparently, the present version has undergone some slight editorial changes. They argue that this may be due to the fact that she did not consider it yet ready for the press, because, as her editors say, "it seems in places incomplete, and its thought is not altogether resolved" (Klein 1975a, 336).

16 Butler explains that the term *foreclosure*—borrowed from Lacanian theory—is different from Freud's *Verwerfung*: "Distinguished from repression, understood as an action by an already formed subject, foreclosure is an act of negation that found and forms the subject itself" (1990a, 171).

17 Butler provocatively argues, following from her argument, that "In this sense, the 'truest' lesbian melancholic is the strictly straight woman, and the 'truest' gay male melancholic is the strictly straight man" (ibid., 177).

18 Butler herself seems to be close to this argument when at the end of "Melancholy gender-refused identification" (1995), she writes: "Indeed, we are all made the more fragile under the pressure of such rules [imposed by a logic of repudiation], and all the more mobile when ambivalence and loss are given a dramatic language in which to do their acting out" (180).

19 This is the second of the introductory essays—the first one was written by Naomi Schor—to the excellent *Engaging with Irigaray*, edited by Carolyn Burke, Naomi Schor and Margaret Whitford (1994, 15–33).

20 Whitford makes reference to Richard Boothby's Lacanian interpretation of the death drive in his *Death and desire: Psychoanalytic theory in Lacan's return to Freud* (1991). I am drawing what follows from Whitford's account of his ideas. For Boothby, each of Lacan's registers—Symbolic, Imaginary, and Real—seems to claim the death drive for its own. Whitford writes: "Imaginary identity involves exclusion and also violence. Its integrity and form are threatened by pressure from the unrepresented, to which it reacts with anxiety and aggression. On the other side the symbolic functions as a disruptive and disintegrative factor. Boothby calls this a sublimation of the death drive. The symbolic can negate or transform the imaginary, break up imaginary formations. The stablity of the imaginary allows life to continue, but it impedes creation or transformation. In so far as it breaks up fixed forms, the death drive as symbolic may be creative. However, this

may also be experienced by the imaginary as symbolic violence. The death drive may be purely destructive, but it may also be creative" (1994a, 391).

21 For her discussion of Irigaray's image of nuptials, see Whitford 1994a, 392–93.

22 See especially Klein [1946] 1975 and [1957] 1975.

7 *The Setting (Up) of Phantasy*

1 In this essay, Isaacs clarifies why the Kleinians write *phantasy* with *ph*: "The English translators of Freud adopted a special spelling of the word 'phantasy,' with the *ph*, in order to differentiate the psychoanalytical significance of the term, i.e., predominantly or entirely unconscious phantasies, from the popular word 'fantasy,' meaning conscious day-dreams, fictions and so on" ([1952] 1983, 81).

2 The exact quote is found on page 104 of the 1933 edition of the *New introductory lectures*. This passage was heavily altered in the new translation for the standard edition: "We picture it as being open at its end to somatic influences, and as there taking up into itself instinctual needs which find their psychical expression in it" ([1932, 1933b] 1953, 73).

3 Here I am borrowing Teresa de Lauretis's notion of "structuring" as defined in her "Habit changes": "By *sexual structuring* I want to designate the constructedness of sex, as well as of the sexual subject, its being a process, an accumulation of effects that do not rest on an originary materiality of the body, that do not modify or attach to an essence, matter or form—whether corporeal or existential—prior to the process itself. In other words, neither the body nor the subject is prior to the process of sexuation; both come into being in that continuous and life-long process in which the subject is, as it were, permanently under construction" (1994b, 301–2).

4 Isaacs refers specifically to language acquisition and to the interval that mediates between comprehension and use of words ([1952] 1983, 74).

5 See Freud's "Formulations on the two principles of mental functioning" ([1911a] 1953, 215).

6 Isaacs quotes the following fragment from Freud's essay: "The objects presenting themselves, in so far as they are sources of pleasure, are absorbed by the ego into itself, 'introjected' (according to an expression coined by Ferenczi): while on the other hand, the ego thrusts forth upon the external world whatever within itself gives rise to pain (*v.infra*: the mechanism of projection)" (Freud [1915] 1953, 136).

7 See Ferenczi [1913] 1956.

8 Jacobus quotes from Lacan's graphic critique: "She slams the symbolism on him with complete brutality, does Melanie Klein, on little Dick! Straight away she starts off hitting him large scale interpretations. She hits him a brutal verbalization of the Oedipal myth, almost as revolting for us as for any reader—'You are the little train, you want to fuck your mother'" (Jacobus [1930] 1975, 166).

9 Kristeva's "Freud and love: Treatment and its discontents" appeared originally in a shorter version as "L'abjet d'Amour" (1982). It later became chapter 1 of *Tales of love* ([1987] 1989).

10 In this respect, Jacqueline Rose, referring to the mechanism of scotomization and to Isaacs's ([1952] 1983) reporting of the phantasy, "It is all right if it comes out of my anus as flatus or faeces, but it mustn't come out of my mouth as words," has written, "For if the body can become a mechanism of disavowal for language, then the body is already being inscribed in a linguistic process, is being called up as a metaphor even as it is metaphor that the subject exists" (1993, 158). From here it follows that for Rose the Kleinian view is not outside of language, even when language is not at the center of her elaboration.

11 Jacobus refers to the following passage in Klein's analysis of Dick: "The early operations of the reactions originating on the genital level was a result of premature ego-development, but further ego-development was only inhibited by it. This early identification with the object could not as yet be brought into relation with reality. For instance, once when Dick saw some pencil shavings on my lap he said 'Poor Mrs Klein.' But on a similar occasion he said in just the same way, 'Poor curtain'" (Klein [1930] 1975, 227).

12 By "critical response" I mean engagement on the part of critics or scholars outside the strict psychoanalytical domain.

13 Here Isaacs directly addresses one of the most important objections to the Kleinian group raised during the Controversial Discussions, namely, that of the differences between phantasy and mechanism—that is to say, between incorporation and introjection—and the definition of *drive*. She elaborates on Freud's "Negation," defines *imago*, and offers innumerable examples of how to distinguish between an internal object and a bodily concrete one.

14 Klein first develops her concept of the symbolic equation in "The importance of symbol-formation in the development of the ego" ([1930] 1975).

15 See Hinshelwood 1989, 452–55.

16 Born in Poland, Segal was trained as a doctor in Great Britain and then as a psychoanalyst, becoming an important member of the Kleinian group. She pioneered the psychoanalysis of schizophrenics in the 1940s. She also devoted much effort to the investigation of symbol formation and aesthetics.

17 In "A psychoanalytical approach to aesthetics" (1952), Segal had already remarked: "With the establishment of the depressive position the object becomes more personal and unique and the ego more integrated, and an awareness of an integrated, internal world is gradually achieved. Only when this happens does the attack on the object lead to real despair at the destruction of an existing complex and organized internal world, and with it, to the wish to recover such a complete world again" (198).

18 See Klein's definition of *position* in "A contribution to the psychogenesis of manic-depressive states" ([1935] 1975, 276).

19 Roland Barthes published his well-known essay "The death of the author," in 1968, while Michel Foucault questioned artistic authority in the pages of "Qu'est-ce qu'un auteur?" (1969).

20 Bersani points out that "identification . . . works as an extension of regions of pleasure" (1990, 16–17) and quotes the following from Klein to support his view: "Objects and activities, not in themselves sources of pleasure, become so through this identification, a sexual pleasure being displaced onto them" (EA, 85).

21 Bersani (1990, 21) argues that Freud's views in "Leonardo da Vinci" are very much like those in Klein's "Early analysis."

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