

Negativity in the work of Melanie Klein

Jacqueline Rose

Editor's note:

Jacqueline Rose's essay on the Kleinian concept of psychic negativity is a model of what a 'return to Klein' can achieve. It is one of two remarkable chapters from her book *Why War? – Psychoanalysis, Politics, and the Return to Melanie Klein* (1993), that together offer a sustained and productive reading of Kleinian analysis addressed, in part, to an intellectual constituency familiar with contemporary critical and cultural theory. Rose's writings on psychoanalysis have always emphasized central yet notoriously unassimilable issues – sexual difference, perversion, fantasy and, here, negativity – that bring psychoanalysis into the political field, thus focusing on the possibility of theorizing the psyche and the social together – or better, of theorizing the psyche as the social (a project developed to some effect in Rose's recent *States of Fantasy* (1996)). In this essay she focuses on the Freud–Klein 'Controversial Discussions' as a key moment in analytic history, from which two issues arise. First is the question about psychic negativity – a question, as Rose demonstrates, that is capable of resisting the various forms of theoretical and clinical institutionalization that psychoanalysis undergoes. The second – which is examined in more detail by Rose in 'War in the Nursery' (*Why War*, pp. 191–230) – concerns the relationship between education and the unconscious, and the crucial question of what is centrally at stake in child analysis. But by reading Klein in the context of this historical moment Rose not only identifies the issues that underlie the row that split the British Psycho-Analytical Society in 1944; she also reveals that the concept of negativity at the heart of the row remains the essentially unassimilable limit of all theory and thus of knowledge in general.

Rose's 'return' to Klein must be thought of as a means of going

forward. In a powerful re-reading she shows that it is possible to rethink the epistemological basis for theory itself. Far from being over-empirical or under-theorized, Rose argues, Klein produces a theory that, owing to the nature of what it is attempting to theorize, can neither contain nor delimit itself. In Klein's work 'truth' and 'knowledge' belong not to a scientifically objectifiable order but emerge contingently from the work of psychic negativity, which conditions the infant's relationship to its reality from the beginning. It is this that implies strict limits to the possibility of objective knowledge and, by extension, to the scientific supremacy of the West. Rose reads Klein as 'fleshing out' the Freudian and Lacanian structure of negativity, which is seen as constitutive of the subject. So where Anna Freud argues that an early version of the infant's ego precedes its development, and its acquisition of knowledge is the gradual separation of reality from emotion, Klein insists on negativity as the precondition for the emergence of any ego at all. Negativity in Freud already makes the notion of the infant as pure pleasure-seeker difficult to sustain, but once it is shown that death is central to processes of psychic meaning, the pleasure/reality dichotomy is no longer pertinent. Klein's theory is not an instinctual reductionism but an inflation of the power of phantasy to create or destroy the infant's world. This is a kind of phantasy from which any 'objective' detachment would be impossible – not just for the infant but also for an adult subject and 'an adult science.' The dispute represents not merely the depressing failure that it seemed to be for many participants at the time, but an insight into psychoanalytic theory itself, revealing its creatively unmasterable limits.

In an extraordinary postscript Rose points out a number of analogies between Klein's attempts to theorize psychic negativity and the theoretical difficulties that confront Stephen Hawking's attempt to describe 'black holes' in the realm of cosmology (in his *A Brief History of Time*). What is striking about this section is the revelation of the degree to which elements of phantasy overdetermine Hawking's speculations. (JP)

Analytic theory has treated the two instincts in an unusual manner: the libido is the first-born and privileged child, the destructive instinct is the latecomer, the stepchild. Libido was recognized as such from the first; the other instinct, its adversary, went under various disguises, and had several names before its true identity was established.

(Paula Heimann, *Freud–Klein Controversies*)

If we stick to Freud's elaborated categories . . . we are able to conceive the primitive psychical make-up of an infant and the elaborate organization of an adult personality as a lawful continuity.

(Hedwig Hoffer, *Freud-Klein Controversies*)

For anyone attempting to follow the tracks of the psyche across the terrain of contemporary political life, it is hard to avoid Melanie Klein. The new brutality of Thatcherism in the 1980s and the Gulf War, with its renewed and absolute moral antinomies for the West, are just two instances where some seemingly irreducible negativity, bearer of a violence sanctioned – if only momentarily – by State and subjects, appears to rise up to the surface of political consciousness, setting the parameters of our being-in-the-social, confronting us with something at the limits of psyche and social alike. High priestess of psychic negativity, Melanie Klein pushed the institution of psychoanalysis in Britain – and, some would argue, her child patients – close to the edge. In the tradition of Freud, she saw her task as one of excavation, as the retrieval of something which even Freud, she argued, had barely been able to approach. Thus outmanoeuvring the father of psychoanalysis, while claiming her unswerving loyalty to and continuity with his project, she assigned to him as much the role of repressor as uncovers of the hidden repressed. And yet, in the recent and continuing turn to psychoanalysis in the humanities, Klein – compared with Freud – has received relatively little attention. Why, then, has there been no rereading of Melanie Klein?¹

In the context of the humanities, the idea of rereading has become something of a commonplace. Without assuming that a writer has necessarily been read before, it refers instead to a strategy of reading which heads past the most immediate or professionally received meanings of the writer, straight for the points of creative tension in her or his works. This way of reading 'otherwise' is interested in the moments when writing slips its moorings, when it fails – as all writing must fail, it is suggested – its own tests of coherence, revealing – the analogy with analysis is intentional – its 'other' scene. In relation to psychoanalysis, this way of reading, often described as 'deconstructive,' takes on a particular weight. Less interested in a general instability of language, it places itself instead *inside* the psychoanalytic project, aiming to demonstrate the triumph of the unconscious over all attempts at hermeneutic or therapeutic control. In a recent discussion on 'Melanie Klein Today,' organized in London as part of a series aiming to promote dialogue between psychoanalysis in the clinic and psychoanalysis in the academy, Elizabeth Bott Spillius, editor of two volumes of contemporary analytic essays on Klein, argued that Klein was not a theorist in the strict sense of the term.² What happens if we read her comment not as a statement *against* theory, but as suggesting that Klein does theory *otherwise*, that Klein produced a theory which, because of what it was trying to theorize, could not, by definition, contain or delimit itself? Another way of putting this would be to ask whether Klein's writing is a monolithic, singular text; or, can she be read as producing in her

writing something as intractable, as creatively unmasterable, as what many readers have become accustomed to discovering in Freud?

In the humanities, a post-Lacanian orthodoxy has blocked access to Klein. In a reading of which it should theoretically, according to its own tenets, be more suspicious, this orthodoxy has accused her of taking apart – but only to resolder more rigidly – body, psyche, and speech; it has imputed to her something of a psychic and sexual fix. Klein's ego is too coherent; it eventually takes all conflict and phantasy under its control. Her concept of the instinct is reductive; deriving all mental operations from biological impulses Klein leaves no gaps, no space for the trials and errors of representation, in the mind. Her account of sexuality is coercive; sexual difference, and hence heterosexuality, is given in advance by the knowledge which the bodies of girl- and boy-children are assumed, from the beginning, to have of themselves.³ And yet, alongside these criticisms we have to place the no less fervent rejection of Klein for proposing something so negative that it is incapable of assimilation by human subjects, by theory. Especially in the United States, Klein's work has been rejected on account of its violence and negativity. It is a critique which, as we will see, was at the centre of the fierce dispute which, in England too, was originally aroused by her work.

Far from offering reassurance, these reactions suggest, Melanie Klein disturbs. That disturbance, largely responsible for the rejection of Klein in analytic circles in the United States, has been mirrored in recent feminist debate. Searching for an alternative femininity free of the dictates of patriarchal, oedipal law, one feminism has turned to the preoedipal relation between mother and girl-child only to find Klein's account of early psychic processes standing in its way.⁴ Too negative, this account blocks the new identification, troubles the ideal. Against the idyll of early fusion with the mother, Klein offers proximity as something which devours. Is there a way of linking the two criticisms – Klein as too safe and too dangerous, Klein as taking too much under, letting too much slip out of, control?

It is in the context of these issues that I want to return here to the earliest disagreement over Melanie Klein's work in England, which threatened to divide the psychoanalytic institution and has left its traces on the organization of the Institute of Psycho-Analysis to this day. The focus for this was the 'Controversial Discussions,' relatively unknown outside analytic circles, which took place at the scientific meetings of the British Psychoanalytic Society between 1943 and 1944, centring on the disagreement between Anna Freud and Melanie Klein. In this instance, the theoretical issue reveals itself unmistakably as an issue of the psychoanalytic institution and its continuity. As if in response to the dictates of unconscious time – amnesia as the first stage in allowing something to return – this moment of psychoanalytic history has gradually and recently come back to the fore of debate. In 1991, the full edition of the 'Controversial Discussions' was published as Volume 11 of the New Library of Psychoanalysis, a monumental feat of editing running to over 900 pages and including all the original papers and the ensuing debates (prior to this, only a selection of the papers had been available

in a 1952 edition itself reprinted in 1989).⁵ Articles have been written on the subject; two books have appeared on the institutional vicissitudes of psychoanalysis in Britain – *Freud in Exile* and an anthology of articles *The British School of Psychoanalysis – The Independent Tradition* (the independents were those who chose to affiliate with neither party to the dispute).⁶ Within feminism, a sometimes celebratory (Klein as ‘mother’ of a new second-generation psychoanalysis), sometimes critical (Klein as sexually normative) attention has produced something, if not quite, in the order of a ‘return’ to Melanie Klein.⁷

More oddly, this originating moment of local institutional dispute had its highly successful passage across the London stage. Nicholas Wright’s play *Mrs Klein* played to packed houses in 1988 at the Cottesloe Theatre, and then transferred to the West End.⁸ Vicariously, the play offers the spectacle of three women – Melanie Klein, her daughter Melitta Schimideberg, and Paula Heimann – battling it out over the legacy of Klein’s work. Femininity becomes the site on which the vexed question of affiliation and institutional continuity is explored. It is a shocking play, not least of all, as one student commented, because of the terrible way analysts are seen to behave. Now this story of dreadful behaviour on the part of analysts has of course been told over and over again in relation to Freud; for some thinkers, it has become the key to the analytic institution itself (Roazen, Roustang, Derrida, Grosskurth⁹). But this has been seen to date as an affair strictly between men. The affair involved here, by contrast, is strictly between women, between mothers and daughters (literally and metaphorically), which might suggest another reason for looking at it again.

It is a point worth making in relation to a book like François Roustang’s *Dire Mastery*, one of the more nuanced, less simply accusatory readings of the historic trials of psychoanalytic affiliation and descent. Roustang traces what he sees as the psychotic fantasies underpinning the institution and its (patri)lineage, and locates these fantasies on more than one occasion in an unconscious image of femininity which, he argues, that same institution refuses and on which it relies. Yet, he never makes the link from there to the work of Melanie Klein, theoretician of the psychotic in all of us and, together with Anna Freud, the first woman inheritor, contestor, and transmitter of the legacy of Freud. When Jacques Derrida asks in a final essay in his book on Freud: ‘Who will analyse the unanalysed of Freud?’ (*Qui paiera à qui la tranche de Freud?*) more exactly, ‘Who pays the price for the unanalysed slice of Freud?’), it is tempting to answer, ‘Melanie Klein.’¹⁰ Similarly, Julia Kristeva has argued that Freud’s obsessional return to the oedipal narrative was a way of rationalizing his own more psychotic discovery of a negativity which he both theorized and effaced. Freud, she suggests, thus repeated in his own intellectual trajectory that process of flight from, disavowal, and semi-recognition of something murderous and unmanageable which, at the end of his life, he read in the story of Moses.¹¹ What all this points to is a residue – theoretical, institutional, sexual – of the Freudian institution, in which Melanie Klein, or more specifically the controversy over her work, occupies a crucial place.

Two issues arise centrally from this moment of analytic history, both with relevance for how we think about the psyche and the social (the psyche as social) today. First, the concept of psychic negativity in Klein: What is it? Is it an instinctual reductionism, with biology the final court of appeal for what is most troubling in the mind? Or is it something else, perhaps closer to, even if crucially distinct from, the negativity which Lacan places at the heart of subjectivity – not as instinctual deposit, but as the price that all human subjects pay for the cruel passage of the psyche into words? Secondly, what was at stake in the row over child analysis between Anna Freud and Melanie Klein? Central to the psychoanalytic institution is the problem of how to transmit knowledge of – which must mean educating – the unconscious without effacing the force of the unconscious as such. What happens when this problem turns into the question of whether one can, or indeed should, analyse a child? It is the point where the institution comes up against its own subjective origins, or rather the fantasy of its own origins, its own infancy – an infancy which, according to its own theories, it must both relinquish and repeat. It is also one of the points where the issue of power in the analytic scenario reveals itself most starkly, since the analyst’s intervention in the mind of the child seems to be disputed according to the alternatives of education or violation, moral control or abuse. Clearly a matter of psycho-politics, because it touches on the limits of the psychoanalytic institution in its dealings with its own outside. But if the issue of psychic negativity can be included under the same heading, it is because it also seems to bring us up against a limit: the limit of what a society, of what a subject, can recognize of itself. It does so, however, in a way which is absolutely unassimilable to that idea of transgressive liberation which has been the most frequent radical political version of Freud (what would a ‘liberation’ of unconscious negativity mean?).

In the context of Klein’s work, the dialogue between psychoanalysis and politics therefore shifts. As it does, we can see just how tightly the institutional and disciplinary boundaries and points of affiliation have recently and restrictively been drawn. Instead of the dialogue between psychoanalysis and literature or film, for example, we find psychoanalysis in confrontation with pedagogy and the law. Instead of the unconscious as the site of emancipatory pleasures, we find something negative, unavailable for celebration or release. One could argue that it has been too easy to politicize psychoanalysis as long as the structuring opposition has been situated between an over-controlling, self-deluded ego and the disruptive force of desire; that this opposition has veiled the more difficult antagonism between superego and unconscious, where what is hidden is aggression as much as sexuality, and the agent of repression is as ferocious as what it is trying to control. Much of the psycho-political colouring of the past decade suggests that the political import of psychoanalysis may reside in what it has to say about the passage across the social of thanatos as much as eros (not the unconscious which the social denies, but the unconscious which it sanctions and pursues). By seeing the unconscious as the site of sexual or verbal free fall, the humanities have aestheticized psychoanalysis, bypassing other points of (greater)

friction, both internal to psychoanalytic thinking and in the historically attested confrontations between psychoanalysis and its outer bounds. Could it be that the humanities, inadvertently repeating a legacy of which they have been unaware, have, like psychoanalysis itself, preferred the 'legitimate heir' over the 'stepchild'?

The 'Controversial Discussions' were originally published in 1952 in a collection edited by Joan Rivière under the title *Developments in Psycho-Analysis* (Volume 43 of the Hogarth International Psycho-Analytical Library). The book included three of the original papers; 'The Nature and Function of Phantasy' by Susan Isaacs, 'Certain Functions of Introjection and Projection in Earliest Infancy' by Paula Heimann, and 'Regression' by Paula Heimann and Susan Isaacs. It also included an introduction by Rivière, additional papers by Heimann and Rivière, as well as four papers by Klein, including a revised version of the paper which she herself delivered to the scientific meetings in March 1944.¹² In what follows, I concentrate on the papers by Isaacs, Rivière, and Heimann. Apologies for, and defences of, Klein's work, they speak for Klein, although not in her voice, hovering in that hybrid space of identification where bodies and psyches at once recognize each other as separate and get too close (whether identification as incorporation necessarily destroys its object will be one of the issues of theoretical dispute). Less well known than Klein's own writings, these papers offer perhaps the clearest account in Kleinian writing of negativity in the process of emergence of the subject, as the passage through which subjects come to be. What is also remarkable about them is their degree of theoretical self-elaboration, or self-consciousness about theory, which means that they read very differently from that extraordinary direct lifting of theory out of the act of interpretation which more than one commentator has remarked on in relation to Klein.¹³ Taken in conjunction with the responses now made available with the 1991 publication of the full text of the debates, these documents provide a unique opportunity to examine *in statu nascendi* the founding, theoretically, of a school. It should be stressed, then, that this is an analysis of one key moment of self-representation in a body of evolving thought, not an account of what Kleinianism has become, in theory and practice, today.

One reason for the self-elaboration of these papers is that they are presented, had to be presented, in terms of an argument for their own legitimacy, their right to contest areas of Freudian orthodoxy even as they claim to be developing from the true letter of his text. In Britain, Melanie Klein was to find herself at once the heiress and usurper of Freud – brought to England by Ernest Jones in 1926, twelve years before Freud himself arrived in 1938 accompanied by Anna Freud. Recently published correspondence shows Freud, long before his arrival, troubled by a number of Klein's theoretical innovations (on the superego, on the sexual development of the girl), but even more concerned about the critiques of his daughter by Klein and her supporters, which he took as a personal affront.¹⁴ When Anna Freud arrived, therefore, she took up a position which was at once

laid down – she was the daughter of the founding father of psychoanalysis – and occupied or contested in advance. Who, we might ask in this context, is the legitimate child?

It follows that Klein and her followers could only partially base their claims for authority on their fidelity to Freud. In his Preface to the 1952 collection, Ernest Jones writes: 'What is certainly illegitimate is the Procrustean principle of assessing all conclusions with those reached by Freud, however great our respect for the latter can and should be.'¹⁵ Joan Rivière opens her General Introduction with this quotation from Freud: 'I have made many beginnings and thrown out many suggestions . . . I can hope that they have opened up a path to an important advance in our knowledge. Something will come of them in the future.'¹⁶ Given what we know of Freud's vexed relation to filiation and legacy, we already have to view this with caution, as something of a rhetorical strategy, a calling up of Freud against Freud. Freud is being invoked here as permitting – demanding even – a future for his discipline which goes beyond his own name (something of a self-cancelling proposition in itself). But it allows Rivière to argue that, while Freud's central discovery was the world of unconscious phantasy, 'there are many problems to which he did not apply it,' which have subsequently been brought nearer to a 'solution' by Klein ('her consistent awareness of its significance').¹⁷ And she continues: 'The circumstances under which his work began and was carried through, i.e. its origin in medicine, no doubt affected his outlook,' leading him to concentrate on the differences between 'normal' and 'morbid' mentality at the expense of general laws and to an over-estimation of the 'force of the reality principle.'¹⁸

The case for Melanie Klein rests, therefore, on this image of her as inheritor of the Freudian 'truth' (Rivière's word), one which the limits of Freud's own scientific training made him unable fully to pursue. What is already clear is that this truth, in the name of which Rivière speaks for Klein, does not belong to an order of scientifically verifiable knowledge. In the heat of the discussions, Susan Isaacs replies to her critics: 'Dr Friedlander refers to the fact that Mrs Klein's views as to mental life is 'inferred knowledge' as of course it is.'¹⁹ Critiquing the Kleinian concepts of phantasy, Marjorie Brierley states: 'if we persist in equating mental functions with our subjective interpretations of them, we forfeit our claim to be scientists and revert to the primitive [sic] state of the Chinese peasant who interprets an eclipse as the sun being swallowed by a dragon.'²⁰ To which Paula Heimann replies: 'The science of psychology is not to be equated with the science of astronomy. What we are studying is not the solar system, but the mind of the Chinese peasant, not the eclipse but the belief of the peasant concerning the eclipse. How do such beliefs arise? . . . And further, how does the knowledge that the sun is not swallowed by a dragon develop in the mind of peasants and philosophers?'²¹ For Heimann, psychoanalysis makes no distinction between peasants and philosophers. The unconscious conditions of all knowledge and belief systems are what need to be explained. As Rivière later puts it, citing Bacon: 'There is a superstition in avoiding superstition.'²² The dispute about

the transmission of the Freudian legacy thus appears as a dispute about the possibility of objective knowledge and (thinly veiled behind the first) the scientific supremacy of the West.²³

These, then, are the grounds of the first opposition to Klein; the second Rivière attributes to Klein's idea of a destructive instinct and a psychotic part in all human subjects: 'The concept of a destructive force within every individual, tending towards the annihilation of life, is naturally one which arouses extreme emotional resistance; and this, together with the inherent obscurity of its operation, has led to a marked neglect of it by many of Freud's followers, as compared with any other aspect of his work': '[in] the very early phases of mental life . . . she finds in operation mental mechanisms (splitting, projection, etc.) closely similar to those of the psychotic disorders, another aspect of her work which arouses strong emotional resistance.'²⁴ Thus the argument about fidelity to, and divergence from, Freud carries the weight of psychosis and death – precisely the discoveries which Kristeva argued were rationalized by Freud. (Note too the link between destruction and obscurity as if destruction were conceivable only if it can be fully – scientifically – mastered or grasped.) It is, however, another classic rhetorical move, where opposition or resistance to a theory is seen to belong inside, or be tributary of, what it is that the theory itself invokes. But we should perhaps ask what a legacy can be in this context, how an institution can perpetuate itself, when what it offers as the true content of that legacy is death? Death, after all, as Paula Heimann puts it in her paper on introjection and projection, is the one thing which the mind cannot expel.²⁵ It is in this context with all its institutional ramifications, that the 'Controversial Discussions' offer their account of what is meant by the destructive impulse or the death instinct in the work of Melanie Klein.

The first thing that becomes clear is that the concept of the death instinct or impulse is in no sense a biologicistic concept in the work of Klein.²⁶ It was the Anna Freudians who insisted on the biological status of the concept (the principle of conservation and the return to the inanimate state) in order precisely to keep it outside the range of analytic work. The objections to the centrality accorded to the concept by Klein rested, therefore, not on her biologizing of the concept (instinctual reductionism) but on the opposite, on the way she assigned to it psychic significance, made it part of the phantasy life of the child. Whether the child could inhabit a world of meanings would be another central issue in the dispute over Klein's work. To cite Isaacs: 'The word "phantasy" serves to remind us always of this distinctive character of meaning in mental life'; Michael Balint: "'Phantasy" suggests "meaning"'; Barbara Lantos: 'This pleasure we call auto-erotic . . . organ pleasure . . . and intellectual pleasure – they all are the same in so far as they are pleasures in themselves, that is to say: pleasures without meaning'; Edward Glover: 'And so we come back once more to the dispute over "meaning" and "implicit meaning."²⁷

Death for Klein was *meaning*, which also meant that death had meaning for the infant. When Freud argues that the infant could have no knowledge of death, this

does not preclude the possibility, Rivière argues, that the child 'can experience feelings of the kind, just as any adult can feel "like death," and in a state of great anxiety often does.'²⁸ What seems to be going on here, if we look closely at the passage, is not an undiluted appeal to feeling, but rather the suggestion that feeling itself is simile ('feel "like death"'), that the most severe anxiety that a child can feel opens up the path of indirect representation by putting it at a fundamental, at *the* most fundamental, remove from itself. Thus the child's anxiety becomes the foundation for the first experience of 'as if': 'We surmise that the *child feels as if*: "He behaves as if," to my mind, is the same thing as saying "He has phantasies . . ."²⁹ It is this fundamental negativity which these papers put at the basis of subjectivity. This is a moment of infancy when, if an ego can be postulated, its powers to integrate mental processes are weak. The problem for Klein's critics was that conflict was seen to arise before there was an ego there to manage it: 'According to the theory of the English school of analysis, introjection and projection, which in our view should be assigned to the period after the ego has been differentiated from the outside world, are the very processes by which the structure of the ego is developed.'³⁰ Edward Glover, in his long critique of Klein published in the first volume of *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child* in 1945 argued that, unlike the customary teaching which overestimates the primitive ego, there is an underestimation of the primitive ego in Klein.³¹ Two common recent theoretical assumptions about Klein therefore fall to the ground: her biologism and the pre-given category of the ego. If Klein was objected to, it was precisely because she was seen as bringing the death drive under the sway of a subject, as making the death drive constitutive of a subject, who is not yet enough of a subject for death to be mastered or controlled.

The third point of dispute was the early relation to the object (these are the three basic points of disagreement which Rivière lists in her Introduction). For the Anna Freudians, the infant – again posited in essentially biological terms – is narcissistic and auto-erotic, pure pleasure-seeker under the sway of the erotogenic zones. One way of describing the Freudian position, then, would be as a plea to keep pleasure out of the reach of meaning, to leave pleasure *alone*: 'Does Isaacs think – as we do – that there are activities just carried out for the sake of auto-erotic pleasure without any phantasies being attached to them . . . just for the sake of the organ-pleasure which is gained?'³² For the Kleinians, the child relates to the object from the start, meaning not that the child has some inherent capacity for relatedness, the version of object-relations which has become best known, but that even in the state of auto-eroticism there are bits and pieces of objects – fragments of introjects, objects that are not quite objects – inside the mind. Objects without propriety, neither fully appropriated nor whole: 'Miss Freud speaks of object relationship "in the proper sense." I do not think there is a "proper" sense.'³³

No ownership, therefore, and no agent of control. At each stage, the infant and its world seem to emerge in *absentia*, or *at a loss*. It is by withholding that the external world comes to be. Rivière writes: 'painful experience does much to

bring about the recognition of an external object.³⁴ The infant oscillates between 'seeking, finding, obtaining, possessing with satisfaction' and 'losing, lacking, missing, with fear and distress.'³⁵ In this scenario, and despite references to satisfaction obtained, the emphasis is far more frequently on the negative pole. For the loss of the object forces a breach in the primitive narcissism of the subject, a breach which, in a twist, then produces the object as its effect: 'the ego's need to dissociate itself from the unpleasure is so great that it *requires an object* upon which it can expel it. . . . For such an experience of unpleasure is too intense to be merely "killed," hallucinated as non-existent. Narcissistic phantasy would thus in itself lead to object-relations and these object-relations will at first be of a negative order.'³⁶ Note again that reference to death in the instigation of the object, an experience of unpleasure so intense that it cannot be 'killed,' cannot be negatively hallucinated. And note too how different this is from the more familiar idea of hallucination ('narcissistic phenomenon *par excellence*'³⁷) – not in this case something desired, but something instead which fails to be effaced. The lost object is not, therefore, only the hallucinated object of satisfaction; it is also and simultaneously an object which, because of this failure of negative hallucination, is required – is actively sought after – *in order to be bad*. In these papers from the 'Controversial Discussions,' the genesis of the famous Kleinian bad object is nothing less than the genesis of the object itself.

Rivière will qualify her account in her 1950 footnotes to her essay: 'The view that the earliest relation was negative and hostile was expressed by Freud. Later work leads to a correction of this hypothesis,' referring to two later papers by Klein included in the 1952 collection; and in her Introduction to the book: 'it will be seen from Chapters VI and VII that this is not Melanie Klein's view.'³⁸ Likewise she will answer those who objected to the weakness of the Kleinian ego by insisting on its integrative powers. But in the overall context and feel of the papers, these qualifications sit oddly – symptomatic presence of something which it became too difficult to sustain? Another way of putting this would be to ask how an unconscious identification with death *could* – theoretically, institutionally – be sustained. This would be just one way of reading the editing, the start of a theoretical shift between the original discussions and the 1952 publication of the book.

In these earlier papers, it is stated over and over that the subject first comes to experience itself negatively. Self-alienation gives the colour of the subject's coming to-be: 'nothing good within lasts . . . the first conscious idea of "me" is largely coloured by painful associations'; 'It would seem with every infant that we have to give far more experimental weight to the felt hostility of the external world over a considerable period in early development than we had thought'; 'the relation of hate to objects is older than that of love.'³⁹ The persecutory object relation rises up as the first defence against something without 'definite name and shape' (like the patient Klein describes in *Narrative of a Child Analysis* who dreamt of an 'indefinite object' stuck to a car, something which 'she both wished to see and not to see'⁴⁰). Object-relations are 'improvements on' and 'protections

against' primordial narcissistic anxiety; distrust of the object is better than despair.⁴¹

More than primitive instinct, therefore, the Kleinian concept of negativity appears as a psychic activation of the *fort-da* game as famously described by Freud, an answer of a sort to this question which, as Klein and Heimann both point out, was left in suspense by Freud: 'When does separation from an object produce anxiety, when does it produce mourning and when does it produce pain? Let me say at once that there is no prospect in sight of answering these questions.'⁴² Freud did not believe that absence of the mother could be connoted as loss of love or anger, whereas for Klein the mother rapidly comes to be experienced as bad. 'This fundamental fear of loss of the loved object,' Klein states, 'seems to me psychologically well-founded' – 'predetermined, one may say, in the infant from the experience of birth.'⁴³

It is at this point that the account offered here of psychic beginnings starts to sound uncannily like that of Jacques Lacan; so it is perhaps not surprising to discover Klein and Lacan converging on Freud's paper on 'Negation' (the link is not wholly coincidental, since this was the time when Lacan was working on his never to be completed translation of Klein).⁴⁴ 'Negation' was the key text for Rivière, Isaacs, and Heimann, who took it as the model for their theory of the subject's relation to its object-world.⁴⁵ Given the awkwardness as we have seen it of their relation to Freud's legacy, the terms with which Rivière declares this affiliation are at least worthy of note: 'one of the richest and most highly condensed productions that he ever composed . . . Melanie Klein's theories dovetail with exquisite precision into its tight and rigorous propositions.'⁴⁶ Easy or forced entry? What more fitting image for an intimacy uncertain of the legitimacy of its own claims. As if it were being acknowledged that the only passage for these doubtful inheritors was to come up on Freud from behind (sphinxer theory, we might say).

The problem of beginnings, it would seem, is at least partly tributary to the problem of descent. What 'Negation' offers is a way of theorizing a subject who comes into being on the back of a repudiation, who exists in direct proportion to what it cannot *let be*. If there is no presupposed category of the subject in Kleinian theory, then the subject can emerge only in a moment of self differentiation, as a difference from itself: 'when exactly does the ego, the differentiation from the amorphous id, begin?'⁴⁷ It is through the category of negation, the category in which Lacan locates the fundamental negativity of the symbolic function, that Klein and her followers find the reply. Let's consider first what Lacan reads in this famous – and famously cryptic – text by Freud.

Lacan's discussion of Freud's article takes up three chapters of the full version of his 1966 *Écrits* – an analysis by the Hegelian scholar Jean Hyppolite with an introduction and commentary by Lacan.⁴⁸ All three were originally part of Lacan's first seminar of 1954 on the technical writings of Freud⁴⁹ – the only works by Freud, interestingly, not included in the Pelican Freud, a comment in itself on the severance between psychoanalysis as clinical and as wider cultural

discourse in Great Britain today. Hyppolite focuses on this sentence from the end of Freud's paper: 'Affirmation – as a substitute (*Ersatz*) for uniting – belongs to Eros; negation – the successor (*Nachfolge*) to expulsion – belongs to the instinct of destruction (*Destruktionstrieb*).'⁵⁰ He reads in Freud's distinction between 'substitute' (or 'equivalent') and 'successor' a crucial difference in the way affirmation and negation relate to the instincts from which they are said to derive. For Hyppolite that 'successor' (as opposed to 'equivalent') opens up a gap between negation and destruction; they are precisely not equivalents, not the same thing. Hence, he argues, we can read in Freud two concepts of negation: on the one hand, a pleasure of denying which results simply from the suppression of the libidinal components under the domination of the instincts – this already suggests, in a way that troubles some cherished boundaries, that the instinct of destruction is attached to the pleasure principle (Rivière: 'many psychic manifestations show that a threat from the death instinct produces a strong uprush of Eros'⁵¹) – and, on the other, negation as the basis of the symbolic function: 'a fundamental attitude of symbolicity (symbol-making capacity) made explicit.'⁵² What Freud's article shows is that this capacity emerges in a 'space of suspension,' from a 'margin of thinking' where thinking – and being – can only emerge through what they relegate to non-being, to the not-thought: 'what one is in the mode of not being it.'⁵³

It is this second emphasis which is picked up by Lacan: 'negativity of discourse, insofar as it brings what is not into being, sends us back to the question of what nonbeing, manifested in the symbolic order, owes to the reality of death.'⁵⁴ Negation, for Lacan, is death in the structure, or what he also calls the 'real,' which, for symbolization to be possible, has to subsist outside its domain. Negation shows the subject, and its world, arising in an act of demolition. For the subject to enter into the possibilities of language and judgement, something has to be discarded, something falls away. For Lacan therefore, negativity resides on the edge of speech. In an account which is strikingly resonant of this vision, Ella Sharpe reinterprets Melanie Klein: '[the breasts] become the symbol of that undecomposed world which was once the baby's before knowledge entered to start him on the path of detachment.'⁵⁵ Knowledge, as much as – inseparably from? – aggression, breaks up the unity of the world. We could say that Lacan goes furthest in detaching negation from the destructive impulse – 'successor' precisely, but not 'equivalent' – because the moment of negation posits the end of equivalence, the end of unity, as such. As Hyppolite puts it: 'primordial affirmation is nothing other than to affirm, but to deny is more than to want to destroy.'⁵⁶ For those accustomed to reading Freud in terms of the concept of 'after-effect' (*Nachträglichkeit*), it is easy to read in that *Nachfolge* or 'following after' the idea that what precedes has not necessarily come before.

In this commentary by Lacan, the reference to Melanie Klein, moreover, is explicit. A discussion of Klein's 1930 paper on symbol formation ('The Importance of Symbol-Formation in the Development of the Ego') follows immediately after Hyppolite's commentary when it was originally presented to

Lacan's seminar in 1954, and the discussion ends with a link between Hyppolite and Klein for what they each demonstrate regarding 'the function of destruction in the constitution of human reality.'⁵⁷ In his reply to Hyppolite, Lacan makes a passing reference to a paper by Melitta Schmideberg, identifying her as the first analyst of a patient of Ernest Kris whose acting out of a prematurely cut short orality might explain, he suggests, the relative failure of that earlier analysis with Schmideberg.⁵⁸ Thus Lacan's commentary on Freud's 'Negation' leads, in a beautiful circularity, back to Melanie Klein.

In fact, the reference to Schmideberg could be seen as the vanishing-point of Lacan's commentary, as well as of the history and theory being discussed here – a part of analytic literature which, as Lacan says, has 'unfortunately become very difficult of access.'⁵⁹ and an orality embedded somewhere in a paper by an analyst, the daughter of Melanie Klein, who, one could argue, as an effect of its unbearable intensity, its acting out inside the analytic institution, will finally reject all such concepts and sever her links with the psychoanalytic world. Ella Sharpe: 'I assume hopefully a possibility of discussing Mrs Klein's theory, of being critical in the constructive meaning of that word, of accepting some things without its being interpreted that one has swallowed Mrs Klein and her work whole.'⁶⁰

It is through orality that Isaacs and Heimann read Freud's paper on 'Negation.' For them, this is the key passage:

Expressed in the language of the oldest – the oral instinctual impulses (*Triebregungen* – impulses of the drives), the judgement is: 'I should like to eat this,' or 'I should like to spit it out'; and, put more generally: 'I should like to take this into myself and keep that out.' That is to say: 'It shall be inside me' or 'it shall be outside me.' As I have shown elsewhere, the original pleasure-ego wants to introject into itself everything that is good and to eject from itself everything that is bad. What is bad, what is alien to the ego and what is external are, to begin with, identical.⁶¹

For Isaacs what this passage reveals is that the function of judgement is derived from the primary instinctual impulses. This is the famous 'instinctual reductionism' for which Klein is often criticized.⁶² Indeed, Isaacs stresses the concept of derivation, and dismisses Freud's phrase 'expressed in the language of the oral impulses' as 'picturesque.'⁶³ But, as her commentary on this passage makes clear, it is the mechanisms of introjection and projection which are crucial, and the role of phantasy as the operational link between the two, 'the means by which the one is transmuted into the other': "I want to eat that and therefore I have eaten it" is the phantasy which represents the id impulse in the psychic life; it is at the same time the subjective *experience* of the mechanism or process of introjection, an interpretation in turn, therefore, of the symbolic process of taking in.⁶⁴ Judgement devours and expels its objects: it derives from an orality which in turn becomes a metaphor for judgement itself. This, as

I read it, is less derivation than circularity: 'one of the "results of the phantasy of introjection" is the process of introjection.'⁶⁵ No less than Lacan's commentary, which turns on the concept of foreclosure, the ability of the psyche under pressure of denial to wipe something out, this is a process which can have as its logical outcome the effacement, or scotomization, of the world:

the mechanism of denial is expressed in the mind of the subject in some such way as 'If I don't admit it [i.e. a painful fact] it isn't true.' Or: 'If I don't admit it, no one else will know that it is true.' And in the last resort this argument can be traced to bodily impulses and phantasies, such as: 'If it doesn't come out of my mouth, that shows it isn't inside me'; or 'I can prevent anyone else *knowing* it is inside me.' Or: '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.' The mechanism of *scotomization* is experienced in such terms as: 'What I don't see I need not believe'; or 'What I don't see, other people don't, and indeed doesn't exist.'⁶⁶

What is striking about this passage is the way it seems to undermine the very causal sequence from which it claims to derive. For, if the body can become a mechanism of disavowal for language ('it is all right if it comes out of my body as flatus or faeces, but it mustn't come out of my mouth as words'), then the body is already being inscribed in a linguistic process, is being called up as metaphor even as it is metaphor – the passage of bodily process into language – that the subject resists. So the more Isaacs carries out her derivation of phantasy from impulse, the more the impulse becomes after the fact ('successor' we might say) the metaphoric correlate of the phantasy it supports. Thus the Kleinians flesh out the structure of negation. At one level it is without doubt a more literally – vulgarly – corporeal reading than that of Lacan; but no more than his can it guarantee the reality of the world which it constitutes but can equally efface. Orality appears here as the transcription or metaphor of itself. What primacy is being given here to the concept of the impulse – 'mythological beings superb in their indefiniteness' as Heimann and Isaacs put it, citing a famous remark of Freud's?⁶⁷

It is, I think, worth stressing this question of transcription because, in relation to Klein, it is most often misread. Thus Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok criticize what they call Klein's 'panfantastic instinctualism'; while Jean Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis take Isaacs's definition of phantasy as the 'mental expression' of the impulse as evidence of a potential reductionism in Klein, one which Klein herself resisted but which has been exacerbated by other interpreters and followers of her work.⁶⁸ In her Introduction to the 1952 collection, Rivière cites Isaacs's definition together with the lines from Freud on which it is based: 'Freud said: "We suppose that it [the id] is somewhere in direct contact with somatic processes and takes over from them instinctual needs and gives them mental expression.'" Now in the view of the present writers, this *mental*

expression is unconscious phantasy.' But, Rivière continues, the passage goes on: 'There is no impulse, no instinctual urge or response which is not experienced as unconscious phantasy.'⁶⁹ The two propositions are clearly not symmetrical: to say that one thing is the *expression* of another is not the same thing as to say that one thing *has to find another* in terms of which it can be expressed. As Isaacs summarized in her original paper, 'instinctual urges . . . cannot operate in the mind without phantasy.'⁷⁰ The second implies translation, mediation, or, as Isaacs puts it, 'operative link'; that is, it implies interpretation, or rather misinterpretation, the word used explicitly by Rivière: 'on Freud's own hypothesis, the psyche responds to the reality of its experiences by interpreting them – or rather misinterpreting them – in a subjective manner.'⁷¹ Subjective experience involves the child in perpetual misreadings of the world: '[the child's] misunderstanding of the situation is precisely that subjective interpretation of his perception.'⁷²

Phantasies, Isaacs writes, are the 'expression of wishes and passions': 'It is primarily because he *wants* his urine to be so very powerful that he comes to believe it is so.'⁷³ The destructive impulse therefore turns on a tautology – destructive because of the omnipotence with which the child wields and translates it to her or his own ends. This is the impulse 'pressed into the service of need' of phantasy, to use Rivière's expression, far more than phantasy as the 'mental expression of' instinctual need;⁷⁴ not a reduction of phantasy to a biological instinct, but a massive inflation of the power of phantasy to make, and break, the world.

What emerges most strongly from these papers is the impossibility of assigning some simple origin to destruction. Hate may be older than love, but Melanie Klein's conclusions 'do not stand or fall on the concept of the death instinct.'⁷⁵ What seems to be outrageous – paradoxically harder to manage than death as a pure force, as something which assaults the subject from outside, is this internalization of death into the structure. If death is a pure point of biological origin, then at least it can be scientifically known. But if it enters into the process of psychic meanings, inseparable from the mechanisms through which subjects create and recreate their vision of the world, then from where can we gain the detachment with which to get it under control?

It is clear that for the critics of Klein and her supporters, it was the priority accorded to subjective experience and the implications of this for knowledge which was at stake. (Recently Meltzer has suggested that this is *the* philosophical problem posed by Klein.⁷⁶) Klein, Isaacs, and Heimann were confusing 'the mental corollary to instinct' with 'what we are used to call phantasy,' subjective definition with mental mechanism – 'The mixing-up of conceptions impresses all of us as most undesirable'; 'What happens when the distinction is lost?'⁷⁷ Each time, Isaacs and Heimann respond by insisting on the impossibility, within the logic proper to psychoanalysis, of holding the elements apart: '*What I believe is that reality-thinking cannot operate without concurrent and supporting Ucs phantasies*' (emphasis original); 'A rigid separation between "mechanism"

and "content" is a danger to psychological understanding . . . it springs from a basic fallacy: a rigid divorce between the id and the ego'; 'perception and image-formation cannot be sharply separated from unconscious phantasy'; 'the suggestion that we should discuss "the nature of the process itself" rather than its content seems to rest on a false assumption. The nature of mental process, as well as of the structure and mechanisms of the mind, is partly determined and characterised by phantasies, that is to say, by the subjective content of the mind.'⁷⁸ Compare Anna Freud from her 1945 paper 'Indications for Child Analysis': 'All through childhood a ripening process is at work which, in the service of an increasingly better knowledge of and adaptation to reality, aims at perfecting these functions, at rendering them *more and more independent of the emotions until they become as accurate and reliable as any non-human mechanical apparatus*' (my emphasis).⁷⁹

What seems to be involved, therefore, is something in the nature of a boundary, or category, dispute. How much is subjective experience allowed to *take in* (can the category of cats be a member of itself)? Marjorie Brierley proposes that 'introjection' be kept as the term for the mental process, 'incorporation' for the experience of taking things in: 'When the baby is trying to put everything into its mouth, it comes across many things that won't go in. Image formation as a function of mind will not go in to incorporation.'⁸⁰ To which Heilmann replies: 'Mentally, anything can go into anything.'⁸¹ But if anything can go into anything – both mentally and theoretically, then what is there to distinguish psychoanalysis, as a form of mental activity, from the all-devouring, all-incorporating child?

Or, to put it another way, what is left of identity and its (self-) definition if these distinctions cannot be sustained? If incorporation cannot be distinguished from introjection, or introjection from identification (as Sharpe points out, Freud blurred the distinction between the two), then the idea of identity as distinct from, even if created through, its objects becomes unclear. How can incorporation be the foundation of identity when it seems to imply as a concept a dissolution of the separateness on which identity relies?⁸² The issue here is not whether these distinctions can, or cannot, be theoretically mounted, but the form of loss that seems to threaten when they fail. What do these uncertainties imply for an adult subject (an adult science)?

Brierley makes it explicit that the distinction between subjectivity and mechanism carries with it the distinction between first and third person, between identification and object-relationship, between knowledge and science.⁸³ If psychoanalysis cannot distinguish between knowledge and phantasy, it becomes an infant incapable of taking its measure of reality, incapable of stepping out into the world. So when Glover insults his adversaries – accusing, for example, Klein of projecting into children, Heilmann of playing with Freud's theories like a 'kitten plays with a ball of wool' – I read this as more than personally symptomatic.⁸⁴ He has, like others of Klein's critics, spotted one of the most far-reaching and troubling implications of her theories: not just the point convincingly made by many recent commentators of Freud – that psychoanalysis can be only a

speculative form of knowledge, that it must, if it is to remain loyal to its object, undo its claims to authority as it goes⁸⁵ – but that, in relation to the project of child analysis, that same undoing propels the analyst *and her theories* back into the realm of the child. Psychoanalysis cannot ignore, cannot separate itself from, the unconscious conditions of knowledge. Could it be the force of this recognition during the 'Controversial Discussions' that led, in reaction, to what today is often seen as the opposite – the rigidity of Kleinian interpretation, the fierceness with which Kleinian thinking now lays claim to its status as science? Walter Schimideberg: 'I listened to [the papers] in silence and some of them made me think that the accusations of our enemies that it is impossible to distinguish between the phantasies of the patients and those of the analyst contained more than a grain of truth'; Karin Stephen: 'Do we really know what we are doing?'⁸⁶ What happens if we read this as the insight and not the failure of the dispute?

Clearly, then, it is the status of psychoanalysis as scientific knowledge which is at stake – what might be called its coming of age. Is psychoanalysis an adult science? Do children develop from point A to point B, or do they evolve according to a different sequence, one which throws into crisis our idea of what a sequence should be? Thus the question of development arises logically out of the question of knowledge and science. It is, writes Brierley, 'to put the cart before the horse' if you make introjection, based on bodily behaviour, responsible for image formation.⁸⁷ If mental mechanisms are partly determined by phantasy, then 'expressed in theoretical terms this would mean that the end results of mental processes determine the processes themselves which is absurd.'⁸⁸ Complicated emotional attitudes are assumed to be in existence before instinctual urges; the infant interprets its experience in terms of a superego not yet in force: 'Coming events cast their shadow before.'⁸⁹ What has happened to sequence and causality? What priority – theoretically – is being given to unconscious time?

Once again the theoretical point takes its colour from the psychic processes being described. What Brierley and Glover have identified is that Klein's account of beginnings, of the infant's first being in the world, inaugurates circular rather than sequential time. This is how Rivière describes the 'vicious circle' which is the child's first apprehension of cause and effect: "'You don't come and help, and you hate me, because I am angry and devour you; yet I *must* hate you and devour you in order to make you help.'⁹⁰ The child is caught in an impasse, 'the fear of destroying the mother in the very act of expressing love for her' and of 'losing her in the very process designed to secure her possessions.'⁹¹ Incorporation does not only take everything in; it also abolishes its object. If we go back to those moments of primordial absence and negation and put them together, we can watch this scenario emerge. What is lost is a persecutor; the only way of being of the object is as something devoured or expelled; the lost object is bad *because* the only way of being the object is as something devoured or expelled. If this is a vicious circle, it is also, in these early papers, a process without end; inherently contradictory, these mechanisms serve the very impulses against which they defend, and they founder on the 'problem of preservation' as

emptiness, aggression, and sadistic impulses all return: 'The omnipotence of phantasy is a weapon which cuts both ways.'⁹² Similarly, what is seen to resolve the cycle belongs no less in circular time: 'Here we have a benign circle.'⁹³

One of the most interesting things about these papers, therefore, is that they lay out so clearly the problem of generating an account of positive development out of the processes they have described – positive as in psychic, positive as in linear time. Not that Klein does not add, as Rivière insists, a new emphasis on the mother as good object, on the early love relation, on the depressive phase in which the child takes everything back (as opposed to 'in') and subjects it to a meticulous and loving repair. 'Even during the earliest stage,' Klein writes, 'persecutory anxiety is to some extent counteracted by the experience of the good breast.'⁹⁴ And yet, even inside this account (and on the same page), the experience of gratification turns into idealization, which then sets up the object as 'perfect, inexhaustible, always available, always gratifying.'⁹⁵ As Klein puts it in the discussion following her paper in 1944: 'Even when the feeding situation is satisfactory, hunger and the craving for libidinal gratification stir and reinforce the destructive impulses';⁹⁶ and again in an earlier paper: 'some measure of frustration is inevitable . . . what the infant actually *desires* is unlimited gratification.'⁹⁷ Gratification therefore sets up the terms of its own demise. Or, where it repairs, it also repeats: 'The experience of gratification at the mother's breast after frustration' develops the infant's confidence that 'bad things go and good things come',⁹⁸ it enters into the logic of expulsion and projection that it is also intended to subdue.

Klein's contribution to the debate can be read at least partly as a reaffirmation of love against what has come before. But this love, she insists, is complex; it is not a value or thing in itself. If it is present from the earliest stages, it none the less comes at least partly in reply to the mother's demand ('an infant knows intuitively that his smile and other signs of affection and happiness produce happiness and pleasure in the mother'); turning on her pleasure, it seeks out her desires and her words. Klein provides a graphic image of this early relation in the five-month-old patient who put his fingers in Klein's mouth in 'an attempt to fetch the sounds out' (introjection, as Lacan would put it, as 'always introjection of the speech of the other').⁹⁹ These feelings, Klein states in reply to Brierley, are not a 'primary simple affect'.¹⁰⁰

Likewise, reparation can reinforce omnipotence. (Although Klein herself had insisted on the distinction from 1935, one point of dispute was whether it simply derived from Freud's concept of reaction formation and obsessional undoing.¹⁰¹) In these discussions the concept of reparation appears less as part of a naturally evolving development, and more as a *requirement*, something enjoined internally and externally – on the child. It is, in fact, striking in the way it appears as a concept in the imperative mode: 'The objects within, feelings about people *must* be put right'; 'The external objects, real parents, brothers and sisters and so on, *must* be pleased and made happy'; 'the full internalization of real persons as helpful loved figures *necessitates* abandoning this defence-method of splitting

feelings and objects into good and bad'; 'good and bad feelings *have to be* tolerated at one and the same time.'¹⁰² Manifestly replying to criticisms from the earlier debate, Rivière states: 'The significance of the phantasies of reparation is perhaps the most essential aspect of Melanie Klein's work; for that reason her contribution to psychoanalysis *should not* be regarded as limited to the exploration of the aggressive impulses and phantasies.'¹⁰³

To what *necessity* we might ask – theoretical and institutional as well as psychic – does the concept of reparation correspond? Two recent Kleinian commentators have described the development of the concept as something of a mystery in Klein's work. For Meltzer, at the point where Klein starts to distinguish between manic reparation 'as defence against persecutory or depressive anxiety' and 'something more genuinely in the service of the objects,' it begins to take on a 'more mysterious meaning'; in the discussion cited at the start of this chapter, Elizabeth Bott Spillius described as 'mysterious' the shift of attention from sadism to love in Klein's later work: 'I don't know where it came from.'¹⁰⁴ It is as if reparation can theorize itself only as absolute necessity and/or absolute unknown. What these papers suggest is that reparation cannot be detached from the issue of knowledge. Indeed, one might say that, as psychic process, reparation requires a suspension of absolute knowledge if it is not to turn into pure omnipotent defence. It is not, therefore, to deny the validity of the experience of reparation to note that it has often come to serve in the Kleinian corpus as a solution to difficulties – of negativity, causality, and knowledge – which, in this earlier debate, seem to be without end. The point is made, although from very different perspectives, by both Glover and Lacan.

For it is central to Kleinian theory that the anxiety which leads to fixation and regression in both sexes also plays its part in precipitating the libido on its forward path: 'each of the fixations and pathological symptoms apt to appear at successive stages of development have both a retrogressive and progressive function, binding anxiety and thus making further development possible.'¹⁰⁵ Which is to say that development is in some sense pathological – Heumann calls this the 'negative aspect of progression.'¹⁰⁶ Klein herself states repeatedly, with reference to the depressive position, that each step in unification leads to a renewed splitting of the imagos – of necessity, since the depressive position genetically derives from the paranoid state that it is meant to surpass. What Heumann and Isaacs refer to as a 'benign circle' follows the same logic: 'These ego achievements . . . are prime factors in the fight against anxiety and guilt. A certain degree and quality of guilt and anxiety stimulate reparation and thus encourage sublimation.'¹⁰⁷

Thus, when Isaacs writes, '*the established principle of genetic continuity is a concrete instrument of knowledge*' (emphasis original), 'the essence of Freud's theory lies in just this fact of detailed continuity,' this is not a developmental paradigm in any straightforward sense.¹⁰⁸ The movement is constantly in two directions – progression being constantly threatened by the mechanisms which move it on. Hence the well-known paradox that, in Klein's account, homosexuality arises out of the anxieties of heterosexual phantasy; that if heterosexuality is

somewhere pre-established for the subject, it is so only as part of an unmanageable set of phantasies which are in fact incapable, in the theory, of ensuring heterosexuality itself.¹⁰⁹ As much as the idea of a developmental sequence, this could be argued to be the logic proper to Kleinian thought: 'Anxiety and guilt at times check and at other times enhance the libidinal development'; 'while in some ways these defences impede the path of integration, they are essential for the whole development of the ego.'¹¹⁰ Thus, as Lacan points out in his commentary on Klein's paper on symbol formation, the ego appears twice over and in the space of a single sentence, as precocious or overdeveloped and as what, through its weakness, is preventing normal development from taking place: 'The early operation of the reactions originating on the genital level was the result of premature ego development, but further ego development was only inhibited by it' (Lacan: 'She says that the ego was over precociously developed . . . and then in the second part of the sentence that it is the ego which is preventing development from taking place').¹¹¹

Too much and too little of an ego whose role it is to master the anxiety out of which it has itself been produced. Anna Freud objects: 'According to the theory of the English school of analysis, introjection and projection, which in our view should be assigned to the period after the ego has been differentiated from the outside world, are the very processes by which the structure of the ego is developed.'¹¹² Only if the ego comes first is development assured. Those who criticize Klein for developmental normativity (the idea that subjects progress naturally to their heterosexual goals) would do well to note that, at least as much as regards Freud's own normative moments, it is not in these terms that Klein's writings can theoretically sustain themselves.¹¹³ The value of the stress on negativity would then reside in the trouble it poses to the concept of a sequence, the way that it acts as a bar, one could say, to what might elsewhere (and increasingly) appear as normative and prescriptive in the work and followers of Melanie Klein.

For Glover, in his long critique of Klein, a central problem – if not the central problem – was that 'the author cannot tell a developmental story straight.'¹¹⁴ (For those in the humanities seeking after the trials of writing, this would be the ultimate accolade.) The 'subversive nature' of Heimann and Isaacs's paper on 'Regression' is precisely that 'if fixation can be regarded as a reaction to (result of) regression and if regression itself works backwards through a developmental aggression series, it follows that progression must be attributed to the same factors.'¹¹⁵ For Glover, this is to undermine or deviate from – the 'biological progression of an instinct-series' – that is, the whole conception of libidinal development as laid down by Freud: 'It subverts all our concepts of progressive mental development.'¹¹⁶ Only 'if we stick to Freud's elaborated categories,' writes Hoffer, are we 'able to conceive the primitive psychical make-up of an infant and the elaborate organization of an adult personality as a *lawful continuity*.'¹¹⁷ Thus Melanie Klein, in the eyes of her critics, theoretically dis-inherits herself.

The objections to these papers thus make it clear that the emphasis on negativity operates not as a primordial, biological pre-given from which an orderly sequence ('an orderly series and correlations') can be derived, but as the subversion of sequence and biology alike. And Glover is explicit that this subversion is the direct consequence of the emphasis on phantasy in the work of Klein. It is at that moment of primitive hallucination when, he argues, the child misinterprets its experience 'against the whole weight of the biological evidence of survival' that the instinct loses the 'realistic aim' on which such a concept of orderly progression relies. And what, Glover asks, does this make of the infant if not 'fantast' and 'fool'?¹¹⁸

It seems to me that this is the problem which then works itself out inside the analytic institution and specifically in relation to the analysis of children. Let's note that the genesis of the persecutory object in Kleinian thinking casts a shadow over interpretation, since, according to the logic of negation, interpretation comes as a stranger from the outside. And let's note too that if Klein makes of the analyst a fool and a fantast, it is from this place that the analyst has to try to speak, bridging the gap, as Rivière puts it at the end of her Introduction, between the baby ignorant of the external world and the scientist aware of nothing else. For the baby derives and imputes meanings which, because they do not relate to external or material reality, the scientific worker cannot appreciate. And the analyst can bridge the gap only in so far as 'she can assume the baby's condition.'¹¹⁹ What is this, other than to require psychoanalysis to enter into what Kleinians seem to theorize, to the consternation of their critics, as an infinite regress? a place which Rivière assigns to those 'gifted and intuitive mothers and women' who know that the child inhabits a world of psychic significance and who are 'almost as inarticulate as babies themselves.'¹²⁰ Leaving aside this extraordinary image of women's relationship to language in an introduction to a book in which only women in fact speak,¹²¹ the question has to be asked: What problems must it pose for an analytic school to situate itself in the place of an infant to whom interpretation is by definition unwelcome and who is fantast and fool?

A point finally about the wider political resonance of this dispute. The discussions, as is well known, were staged at the height of the Second World War. The emphasis on negativity, the ambivalence about reparation (reparation as ambivalent), takes its reference from, even as it casts light on, the conflict going on all around. Ella Sharpe comments: 'For a belief in the actual good object the actual bad one results in world affairs with a Hitler-ridden Germany and pipe-smoking optimists elsewhere who say "God's in His Heaven, all's right with the world."' And again: 'The "status quo" is a frequent phrase heard today. The full phrase is "the status quo ante." How many people still hope that the end of the war may mean a restoration of the pre-war conditions for which they are most homesick, although progressive minds on every hand warn us that restoration of old conditions could only lead to renewed disaster.'¹²² What clearer statement of the political provenance of theory? What clearer indication that,

for this analyst at least, if psychoanalysis concentrates on the good and the restorative, it heads straight into a theoretical and political blind?

A postscript on black holes

During the course of working on this chapter, I read Stephen Hawking's *A Brief History of Time* (I am one of thousands, as it has been at the top of the best-seller list in Britain and the United States since it was first published in 1988).¹²³ I could not help but be struck by the remarkable analogies between what Hawking was describing in the realm of cosmology, the theoretical difficulties and points of tension of that description, and what Melanie Klein confronted in her attempt to theorize the negative components of psychic life. Hawking's investigation of black holes and the Big Bang theory of the universe can be read as an investigation of how to think negativity and outer boundaries, the points where what we take to be the recognizable and at least partly knowable universe comes into being, goes off its own edges, collapses into itself, ceases to be – all questions which are central to the psychoanalytic discussion of the boundaries, coming into being, and internally intractable limits of the psyche. As Paula Heimann put it: 'when exactly does the ego, the differentiation from the amorphous id begin?'¹²⁴ Compare Hawking: 'What really happens during the very early . . . stages of the universe? . . . Does the universe in fact have a beginning? . . . What were the "boundary conditions" at the beginning of time?' (pp. 115, 122).

In his book, Hawking discusses the famous concept of the black hole – points (or singularities) in the universe where all matter collapses in on itself: stars which have contracted to the point where light cannot escape, and if light cannot escape, since nothing can travel faster than light, 'neither can anything else; everything is dragged back by the gravitational field' (p. 87). All-incorporating, the black hole has, at the very least, extraordinarily metaphoric resonance for anyone thinking about Melanie Klein's work (irresistibly, current attempts at unified theory in physics are called 'grand unified theories' or GUTs).¹²⁵ However, it is in the relation between the black hole and its conceptual theorization that I think the most interesting points of connection appear. How can a black hole – how can negativity – be thought? This, as much as resistance to the idea of a destructive force in all of us, is what I consider to have been at the heart of the dispute with Melanie Klein.

It is central to Hawking's account of the black hole that what happens inside it cannot, by definition, be known. Since anyone entering a black hole is destroyed by it, she or he cannot observe it; inversely, those at the distance that allows observation are protected from the breakdown of the laws of science which occurs inside a black hole. If you are inside, you lose the capacity and conditions for knowledge; outside, you retain knowledge, but cannot grasp what it is you need to know. The black hole thus provokes two complementary anxieties: too close, it devours you; safely outside, you don't know what's going

on. This is called the 'cosmic censorship hypothesis' (rephrased by Hawking as 'God abhors a naked singularity': p. 88). Like the unconscious, a black hole is censored, and can be known only by its effects. As a concept, the black hole wipes out the possibility of knowledge, of its own total or absolute theoretical grasp. It is therefore the place where not only all light and matter, but our laws of science in relation to them, as well as the relationship we presume between observation and knowledge, equally disappear.

Lacan, in a passage cited by Shoshana Felman, draws on the Heisenberg uncertainty principle also discussed by Hawking (pp. 53–61) – that it is impossible to locate exactly the speed and place of a particle at the same time (the process of locating one affects the other, and conversely): 'as soon as [the elements] are interrogated somewhere, it is impossible to grasp them in their totality.'¹²⁶ Hawking's discussion constantly returns to this question of the possibility of knowledge (although in relation to the uncertainty principle he in fact suggests that some forms of unpredictability might be removed). Thus, for example, the question arises as to why this universe, among the possibility of many different universes or regions of a single universe, developed in such a way that complicated organisms are possible, and why the universe is the way that we see it – to which the reply, according to what is called the strong 'anthropic principle' is: 'If it had been different we would not have been here' (pp. 124–7). Not everyone accepts this principle of course – Hawking himself is committed to a unified theory of physics which would ultimately reveal the mind of God. But what is striking about the principle is that the state of the universe is explained as the consequence of the subjects who, according to a more obvious logic, should appear as its effect. Or to put it another way, in this account, it is only through a fantasy of our being-in-the-world that we can theorize the fact that the world comes to be.¹²⁷

It is, therefore, not just that contemporary science points to the 'irreducibility of ignorance' (Felman's expression for the epistemological principle proposed by Lacan¹²⁸), but that the question of knowledge and the question of origins – the question of the origins of knowledge – appear to be inextricably linked. At the very least, the terms of this discussion should act as a caution to any attempt to legitimate psychoanalysis through a naive appeal to science (since today science itself will not support the idea of definitive knowledge to which such descriptions of psychoanalysis make their appeal). More, and in a way that echoes the insistence by Isaacs and Rivière on the inseparability of knowledge and subjective experience, fantasies are always in on the (scientific) act. 'It is greatly to be hoped,' writes Hawking, 'that some version of the censorship hypothesis holds because close to naked singularities it may be possible to travel into the past. While this would be fine for writers of science fiction, it would mean that no one's life would ever be safe: someone might go into the past and kill your father and mother before you were conceived!' (p. 89). The point of quoting this is not to reduce scientific investigation to the status of oedipal fantasy or 'primal scene' (what exactly did parents get up to before one was

born?), but, resisting any reduction of psychoanalysis to cosmology or the reverse, to suggest that if knowledge always borders on fantasy, fantasy is always in part fantasy about (the borders of) knowledge. Where does the possibility of knowledge come from? Can we conceive of a limit point where it ceases to be?¹²⁹

It is the advantage of theories like that of the black hole or the Big Bang that they are so apocalyptic. The drama of their imagining compensates for what scares. The idea of something negative as explosion or pure inexplicable force seems oddly to be more manageable or acceptable than the idea of something negative which is at once less certain and which seems to wipe out the conditions through which it can, or should, be known. This, it seems to me, is what we saw in relation to Klein: leave the death drive in the sphere of biological science; don't mix it with meaning, with the psychic glosses and qualifiers of the inner world. It is not just that this brings the death drive in closer (Rivière's comment on psychoanalytic 'resistance' to the death drive); it is also paradoxically that this same proximity weakens its visionary force. In the Kleinian account, it was exactly in proportion as negativity entered the psychic structure that it slipped from the realm of logic and sequence – for the theory and for the psychic development being charted – and out of any totalizing grasp.

It seems significant, therefore, that Hawking has qualified the concept of the black hole – one chapter is entitled 'Black Holes Ain't So Black' – but this is much less often talked about (pp. 99–113). More difficult than the idea of the black hole as total destruct or all-incorporating negativity is the idea that the black hole emits something positive, radiation, which 'seems to imply that gravitational collapse is not as final and irreversible as we once thought' (p. 112). Hawking says that when he presented this result at a conference, he was greeted with incredulity. The images that Hawking offers here are in themselves graphic for psychoanalysis: negative virtual particles which fall into a black hole leaving their positive partner with nothing to 'annihilate with,' at which point the partners either also fall into the black hole or, having positive energy, escape (p. 106). Perhaps we could substitute this strange image of partnership for the dualism of the life and death principles – 'pairing' as an alternative to the notions of 'balance' or 'triumph of one principle over the other' through which the link between them is most often described.

Again, more difficult than the idea of the Big Bang is the idea of a universe without beginning or end. This might be why Hawking's new proposal about the initial state of the universe – no boundary to space-time: 'The boundary condition of the universe is that it has no boundary' (p. 136) – is so unsettling. A universe without boundary disturbs, not just because it leaves so small a 'role for a creator (the Pope instructed the participants at one conference which Hawking attended not to enquire into the Big Bang itself because it was the work of God), but because, paradoxically, it is the idea of something without a limit that pushes us conceptually off the edge.

The issue then seems to be not how much we can take of negativity, but how much negativity itself can take. If it appears to be the potential black hole

of psychoanalytic theory, it is perhaps even more disturbing to think that it might not be such an absolute, that there might be random particles which escape (not a collision between two absolute principles but particles left with no one 'to annihilate with'); that the black hole, like theory, cannot get everything under its sway. It is as if negativity can be taken on board only as Big Bang or black hole (without qualification), either pure origin or end.

It feels to me that, against the grain of this way of thinking, Hawking can be fruitfully read alongside Melanie Klein: negativity as the limit of theory or total knowledge; negativity as caught up in the positive partner as much as antagonist, and not something to which the positive can only be opposed. The concept of negativity will not provide us with a clear account of origins (even if it affects the way that the idea of origins can be thought); nor can we place it at the distance from which it could be conceptually controlled; if it is mixed up with the positive, it ceases to be a pure entity; at the same time the positive, implicated in its process, cannot be appealed to as the counter-principle which will placate and subdue it or get it back under control (the relationships are more shifting than this). In Hawking's universe, as I read it, negativity is unavoidable – on condition that we do not reify it, but recognize its place in the speculations which we cannot but choose to spin about the world and about ourselves.

Notes

- 1 Leo Bersani gives a largely critical appraisal of Klein in 'Death and Literary Authority: Marcel Proust and Melanie Klein,' in *The Culture of Redemption* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1990) ch. 1 [this volume, ch. 12–Eds]; *Women: A Cultural Review* devoted a large section of its second issue, *Positioning Klein*, to Melanie Klein (Summer 1990). These appear, however, to be exceptions. There is no full discussion of Klein, e.g., in the influential collection *The Trial(s) of Psychoanalysis*, ed. Françoise Meltzer (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1988). For discussion of feminism and Klein see n. 3 and 4 below.
- 2 Elizabeth Bott Spillius (ed.), *Melanie Klein Today: Developments in Theory and Practice*, vol. 1, *Mainly Theory*; vol. 2, *Mainly Practice*, New Library of Psychoanalysis, vols 7 and 8 (London and New York: Routledge in association with the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1988).
- 3 The clearest statement of these criticisms, focusing more directly on Ernest Jones but also addressing Klein, is given in 'The Phallic Phase and the Subjective Import of the Castration Complex,' in *Feminine Sexuality – Jacques Lacan and the école freudienne*, eds Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose (London: Macmillan; New York: Norton, 1982) 99–122; also Juliet Mitchell, 'Introduction' to *Feminine Sexuality* 1–26; and Jacqueline Rose, 'The Cinematic Apparatus – Problems in Current Theory,' in *Sexuality in the Field of Vision* (London: Verso, 1986) 21In. Bersani, 'Death and Literary Authority'; Noreen O'Connor, 'Is Melanie Klein the One Who Knows Who You Really Are?,' *Women – A Cultural Review*, 1, no. 2, 1990, 180–8. For a suggestive discussion of Lacan and Klein, see Malcolm Bowie, *Lacan* (London: Fontana Modern Masters, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991) 144–8.
- 4 See, e.g., Madeleine Sprengnether, '(M)other Eve: Some Revisions of the Fall in Fiction by Contemporary Women Writers,' in *Feminism and Psychoanalysis*, eds

- Richard Feldstein and Judith Roof (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989) 298–322. The absence of Klein, both in this article and in Sprengher's more recent book, *The Spectral Mother – Freud, Feminism and Psychoanalysis* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990), which describes the absence of/haunting by the mother in Freud's work and the place of the pre-oedipal mother in subsequent analytic theory, seems striking. In discussion following the original presentation of '(M)other Eve' as a paper at 'Feminism and Psychoanalysis,' a conference held at the University of Illinois, Normal, in 1986, Sprengher explained the absence of Klein in terms of the negative component of Klein's work. See also *The (M)other Tongue: Essays in Feminist Psychoanalytic Interpretation*, eds Shirley Nelson Garner, Claire Kahane and Madeleine Sprengher (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985) and Jane Gallop's critique in terms of what she calls 'the dream of the mother without otherness' ('Reading the Mother Tongue: Psychoanalytic Feminist Criticism,' in Meltzer (ed.), *Trial(s) of Psychoanalysis* 136).
- 5 *The Freud–Klein Controversies 1941–45*, eds Pearl King and Riccardo Steiner, New Library of Psychoanalysis, vol. 11 (London and New York: Routledge in association with the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1991); and Melanie Klein, Paula Heimann, Susan Isaacs and Joan Rivière, *Developments in Psycho-Analysis*, ed. Joan Rivière, preface by Ernest Jones, International Psycho-Analytical Library, vol. 43 (London: Hogarth, 1952, and London: Maresfield, 1989).
- 6 The fullest and most informative account is given by Riccardo Steiner, 'Some Thoughts about Tradition and Change Arising from an Examination of the British Psycho-Analytical Society's Controversial Discussions (1943–44),' *International Review of Psycho-Analysis*, 12, 27 (1985) 27–71; see also Pearl King, 'Early Divergences between the Psycho-Analytical Societies in London and Vienna,' and Teresa Brennan, 'Controversial Discussions and Feminist Debate,' both in *Freud in Exile*, eds Edward Timms and Naomi Segal (New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale University Press, 1988) 124–33, 254–74; and Gregorio Kohon, 'Notes on the History of the Psychoanalytic Movement in Great Britain,' introduction to *The British School of Psychoanalysis: The Independent Tradition*, ed. Gregorio Kohon (London: Free Association Books, 1986) 24–50. For a discussion of the controversy, specifically in relation to the concept of phantasy, see Anne Hayman, 'What Do We Mean by "Phantasy"?', *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 70 (1989) 105–14.
- 7 Janet Sayers, *Mothering Psychoanalysis – Helene Deutsch, Karen Homey, Anna Freud, Melanie Klein* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1991); *Women: A Cultural Review*, 1, no. 2. The first reappraisal of Klein in this context, although not explicitly addressed to feminism, is Juliet Mitchell's introduction to *The Selected Melanie Klein* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986). Nancy Chodorow discusses Klein in *The Reproduction of Mothering* (Berkeley, Calif., and London: University of California Press, 1978), criticizing her for instinctual determinism, but praising her recognition, *contra* Freud, of the girl's early heterosexuality.
- 8 Nicholas Wright, *Mrs Klein* (London: Nick Hern Books, 1988); and review by Elaine Showalter, 'Mrs Klein: the Mother, the Daughter, the Thief and their Critics,' *Women: A Cultural Review*, 1, no. 2, 144–8. Paul Roazen, *Freud and his Followers* (New York: Knopf, 1974; London: Allen Lane, 1975).
- 9 François Roustang, *Un destin si funeste* (Paris: Minuit, 1976) trans. Ned Lukacher, *Dire Mastery* (Baltimore, Md and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982); Jacques Derrida, 'Du tout,' in *La carte postale – de Socrate à Freud et au-delà* (Paris: Flammarion, 1980) 525–49, trans. Alan Bass, in *The Post Card – From Socrates to Freud and Beyond* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1987) 497–521; Phyllis Grosskurth, *Freud's Secret Ring – Freud's Inner Circle and the Politics of Psychoanalysis* (London: Cape, 1991).

- 10 Derrida, 'Du tout,' 548; trans. 520.
- 11 Julia Kristeva, 'The True-Real,' in *The Kristeva Reader*, ed. Toril Moi (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986) 214–37. Kristeva is undoubtedly the French psychoanalytic theorist who draws most consistently on the work of Melanie Klein.
- 12 None of the papers published in the 1952 *Developments in Psycho-Analysis* correspond exactly to the versions delivered to the scientific meetings of the British Society. I therefore use the different versions where appropriate, always indicating the source in the notes.
- 13 Donald Meltzer comments: 'Any systematic attempt to teach Melanie Klein's work runs almost immediately into difficulties that are the exact opposite of the problems facing one in teaching Freud. Where the theoretical tail wags the clinical dog with him, hardly any theoretical tail exists to be wagged with her,' *The Kleinian Development*, Part 2, *Richard Week by Week* (Perthshire: Clunie Press for the Roland Harris Educational Trust, 1978) 1.
- 14 *Complete Freud–Jones Correspondence*, ed. R.A. Paskauskas (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993); cf. also Steiner, 'Some Thoughts.'
- 15 Ernest Jones, preface to *Developments in Psycho-Analysis*, v.
- 16 Joan Rivière, *Developments in Psycho-Analysis* 1.
- 17 Rivière, *Developments* 2.
- 18 Rivière, *Developments* 2.
- 19 Susan Isaacs, opening statement, 'Fifth Series of Scientific Discussions,' 19 May 1943, in *Freud–Klein Controversies* 444.
- 20 Marjorie Brierley, opening comments on Paula Heimann's paper 'Some Aspects of the Role of Introjection and Projection in Early Development,' 'Sixth Discussion of Scientific Controversies,' 20 October 1943, in *Freud–Klein Controversies* 538–9.
- 21 Paula Heimann, 'Seventh Discussion of Scientific Controversies,' 17 November 1943, in *Freud–Klein Controversies* 569–70.
- 22 Rivière, introduction to *Developments in Psycho-Analysis* 2, 3–4.
- 23 Meltzer sees this as the central problem of Kleinian thought: 'It requires an immense shift in one's view of the world to think that the outside world is essentially meaningless and unknowable, that one perceives the form but must attribute the meaning. Philosophically, this is the great problem in coming to grips with Kleinian thought and its implications' (*Kleinian Development* 86).
- 24 Rivière, introduction to *Developments in Psycho-Analysis* 2–3.
- 25 Heimann, 'Some Aspects of Introjection and Projection,' 511.
- 26 For a critique of Klein's 'instinctual reductionism,' see Jacques Lacan, 'Phallic Phase and the Subjective Import of the Castration Complex,' and Chodorow, *Reproduction of Mothering*; Jean Laplanche and Jean-Bertrand Pontalis, 'Fantasme originaire, fantasme des origines, origine du fantasme,' *Les Temps modernes*, 215 (1964); trans. 'Fantasy and the Origins of Sexuality,' in *Formations of Fantasy*, eds Victor Burgin, James Donald and Cora Kaplan (London and New York: Methuen, 1986) 5–34; first published in English in *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 49 no. 1, (1969) (their criticisms are directed more at Susan Isaacs than Klein); also Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok, who refer to Kleinian 'panfantastic instinctualism,' 'Deuil ou mélancolie, introjecter-incorporer,' in *L'écorce et le noyau* (Paris: Flammarion, 1987) 259–74; trans. 'Introjection-Incorporation: Mourning or Melancholia,' *Psychoanalysis in France* (New York: International Universities Press, 1980) eds Serge Lebovici and D. Widlöcher 3–16.
- 27 Isaacs, Balint, Lantos, in *Freud–Klein Controversies* 272, 347, 349; Edward Glover, 'Examination of the Klein System of Child Psychology,' *Psycho-Analytic Study of the Child*, 1 (1945) 103.

- 28 Rivière, 'On the Genesis of Psychological Conflict in Earliest Infancy,' in *Developments in Psycho-Analysis* 43; paper originally published in *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* (1936) 395-422.
- 29 Isaacs, replying to discussion of her paper 'The Nature and Function of Phantasy,' 'Second Discussion of Scientific Controversies,' 17 February 1943, in *Freud-Klein Controversies* 373.
- 30 Anna Freud, *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defence* (London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1937) 57; passage cited by Susan Isaacs, 'The Nature and Function of Phantasy,' in *Freud-Klein Controversies* 295. See also Anna Freud, 'Notes on Aggression,' 1949 (1948): 'The presence of mental conflicts and of the guilt feelings consequent on them presupposes that a specific, comparatively advanced stage in ego development has been reached,' *Indications for Child Analysis and Other Papers 1945-56*, in *The Writings of Anna Freud*, vol. 4 (New York: International Universities Press, 1968) 70.
- 31 Glover, 'Klein System,' 88n, citing his own paper 'Grades of Ego-Differentiation,' *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* (1930) 1-11.
- 32 Barbara Lantos, 'Third Discussion of Scientific Controversies,' continuation of discussion of Isaacs's 'Nature and Function of Phantasy,' 17 March 1943, in *Freud-Klein Controversies* 413.
- 33 Isaacs, 'Fifth Discussion' concluding discussion on 'Nature and Function of Phantasy,' 460.
- 34 Rivière, 'Psychical Conflict in Earliest Infancy,' 45.
- 35 Rivière, Introduction 29.
- 36 Rivière, 'Psychical Conflict in Earliest Infancy,' 45n; Introduction 15.
- 37 Melanie Klein, 'The Emotional Life and Ego-Development of the Infant with Special Reference to the Depressive Position,' in *Freud-Klein Controversies* 781.
- 38 Rivière, 'Psychical Conflict in Early Infancy,' 45n; Introduction 15.
- 39 Rivière, 'Psychical Conflict in Earliest Infancy,' 54-5; Isaacs, 'Nature and Function of Phantasy,' 302; Heimann, 'Some Aspects of Introjection and Projection,' 518.
- 40 Klein, *Narrative of a Child Analysis: The Conduct of the Psychoanalysis of Children as Seen in the Treatment of a Ten-year-old Boy*, in *The Writings of Melanie Klein*, vol. 4 (London: Hogarth, 1961, 1975 and Virago, 1988) 339.
- 41 Rivière, 'Psychical Conflict in Earliest Infancy,' 47, 49.
- 42 Klein, 'On Observing the Behaviour of Young Infants,' also cited by Rivière in Introduction 270n., 30; compare Heimann: 'Freud did not enter into the question of what happens in the infant's mind when he abandons the object' ('Certain Functions of Introjection and Projection,' 145).
- 43 Klein, 'Emotional Life of the Infant,' 763-4.
- 44 See Phyllis Grosskurth, *Melanie Klein: Her World and Her Work* (New York: Knopf; London: Maresfield, 1986) 376-7.
- 45 Isaacs, 'The Nature and Function of Phantasy,' Developments 103-7; Isaacs, 'Fifth Discussion,' 'Sixth Discussion,' 466-7; 554; Heimann, 'Some Aspects of Introjection and Projection,' 505-6.
- 46 Rivière, Introduction 10.
- 47 Heimann, 'Certain Functions of Introjection and Projection,' 128.
- 48 Jacques Lacan, 'Introduction au commentaire de Jean Hyppolite sur la "Verneinung" de Freud'; 'Réponse au commentaire de Jean Hyppolite sur la "Verneinung" de Freud'; Appendix 1: 'Commentaire parlé sur la "Verneinung" de Freud, par Jean Hyppolite,' in *Écrits* (Paris: Seuil, 1966) 369-80, 381-400, 879-88. Throughout this section, where I cite these articles in English, I am making use of Anthony Wilden's unpublished translations of the texts kindly made available to me by Richard Macksey.

- 49 Lacan, *Le séminaire I: les écrits techniques de Freud* (Paris: Seuil, 1975) 63-73; trans. John Forrester, *Freud's Papers on Technique* (New York: Norton; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988) 52-61.
- 50 Freud, 'Negation,' 1925, in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. and trans. James Strachey (London: Hogarth, 24 vols, 1953-74) vol. 19, 239; *Pelican Freud*, 11. 441.
- 51 Rivière, 'Psychical Conflict in Earliest Infancy,' 52.
- 52 Hyppolite, 'Commentaire parlé sur la "Verneinung" de Freud,' 886.
- 53 Hyppolite, 880. Hyppolite's reading, and Lacan's through Hyppolite, derives strongly from Hegel: 'The dissimilarity which obtains in consciousness between the ego and the substance constituting its object, is their inner distinction, the factor of negativity in general. We may regard it as the defect of both opposites, but it is their very soul, their moving spirit' (*The Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. J. B. Baillie, rev. ed. (London: Allen and Unwin; New York: Humanities Press, 1949) 96-7; cf. too Kojève's commentary: 'In contrast to the knowledge that keeps man in a passive quietude, Desire disquiets him and moves him to action. Born of Desire, action tends to satisfy it, and can do so only by the "negation," the destruction, or at least the transformation of the desired object: to satisfy hunger, for example, the food must be destroyed or, in any case, transformed. Thus, all action is "negating"' (Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction à la lecture de Hegel* (Paris: Gallimard, 1947) 11; trans. James Nichols, Jr. *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel* (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 1969) 3-4. For a discussion of negativity in relation to Hegel and psychoanalysis, see Kristeva, 'La négativité, le rejet,' in *La révolution du langage poétique* (Paris: Seuil, 1974) 101-50, trans. Margaret Waller, *Revolution in Poetic Language* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984) 107-64.
- 54 Lacan, 'Introduction au commentaire de Jean Hyppolite,' 379-80.
- 55 Ella Sharpe, 'Ninth Discussion of Scientific Differences,' discussion of Melanie Klein's paper 'Emotional Life of the Infant,' 1 March 1944, in *Freud-Klein Controversies* 811.
- 56 Hyppolite, 'Commentaire,' 883.
- 57 Klein, 'The Importance of Symbol-Formation in the Development of the Ego,' 1930, in *Love, Guilt and Reparation, and Other Works 1921-1945*, *The Writings of Melanie Klein*, vol. 1 (London: Hogarth, 1975, and Virago, 1988); Lacan, *Le séminaire I*, 81-3, 95-103, 83, trans. 68-70, 78-80, 70. For a discussion of Lacan's reading of Klein's paper, see Shoshana Felman, 'Beyond Oedipus: The Specimen Story of Psychoanalysis,' in *Jacques Lacan and the Adventure of Insight: Psychoanalysis in Contemporary Culture* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987) 105-28. For a discussion in relation to Lacan and Kristeva, see Mary Jacobus, 'Tea daddy': Poor Mrs Klein and the Pencil Shavings' [this volume, ch. 5-Eds].
- 58 Melitta Schimideberg, 'Intellektuelle Hemmung und Ess-Störung' ('Intellectual Inhibition and Eating Disorders'), *Zeitschrift für psychoanalytische Pädagogie*, 8 (1934) 110-16; Lacan, 'Réponse au commentaire de Jean Hyppolite,' 396-8. [A translation of Schimideberg's article, 'Intellectual Inhibition and Eating Disorders,' is included as an appendix to *Why War?* and is discussed in chapter 6 of that book, 'War in the Nursery,' Eds.]
- 59 Lacan, 'Réponse au commentaire de Jean Hyppolite,' 396.
- 60 Sharpe, 'Ninth Discussion,' 804-5.
- 61 Freud, 'Negation,' 236-7, *Pelican Freud*, 439; cited by Heimann, 'Some Aspects of Introjection and Projection,' 505-6; by Isaacs, 'Sixth Discussion,' 554-5; by Klein, 'Tenth Discussion of Scientific Differences,' formal reply to discussion of 'Emotional Life of the Infant,' 3 May 1944, in *Freud-Klein Controversies* 838 and 843n. (Klein offers a different translation from the version cited here; see Editor's note 843).

- 62 See n. 26 above.
- 63 Isaacs, 'Nature and Function of Phantasy,' *Developments*, 104.
- 64 Isaacs, *Developments*, 104.
- 65 Isaacs, 'Sixth Discussion,' 555.
- 66 Isaacs, 'Nature and Function of Phantasy,' *Developments*, 106.
- 67 P. Heimann and S. Isaacs, 'Regression,' paper presented 17 December 1943, in *Freud-Klein Controversies* 706. See also Ella Sharpe's 1940 paper on metaphor in which she describes all speech as metaphor – 'an avenue of outer-ance' (in itself a play on words) – through which the child, gradually controlling its bodily orifices, makes speech the outlet for tensions no longer relieved by physical discharge: 'So that we may say that speech in itself is metaphor, that metaphor is as ultimate as speech' ('Psycho-Physical Problems Revealed in Language: An Examination of Metaphor,' in *Collected Papers on Psycho-Analysis*, International Psycho-Analytical Library, vol. 36 (London: Hogarth, 1950) 155–69).
- 68 See n. 26 above.
- 69 Rivière, Introduction 16, citing Isaacs, 'Nature and Function of Phantasy,' *Developments* 83. Note that in a footnote to this remark Rivière insists that, contrary to responses to Isaacs's paper at the time, this is central to Klein's conceptualization and not an innovation by Isaacs.
- 70 Isaacs, 'Nature and Function of Phantasy,' in *Freud-Klein Controversies* 313.
- 71 Rivière, 'Psychical Conflict in Earliest Infancy,' 40.
- 72 Isaacs citing Freud, 'Nature and Function of Phantasy,' *Freud-Klein Controversies* 280.
- 73 *Freud-Klein Controversies* 96, 94.
- 74 Rivière, 'Psychical Conflict in Earliest Infancy,' 50.
- 75 Heimann, 'Some Aspects of Introjection and Projection,' 518; Klein, 'Eighth Discussion,' 16 February 1944, in *Freud-Klein Controversies* 747.
- 76 See n. 23 above. Cf. too Steiner: 'The term phantasy . . . after being bounced back and forth throughout these lengthy discussions, seems to have assumed an enigmatic, evocative power. For one side it came to be synonymous with new discoveries – the more the term was analysed, the more it was enriched with new meanings. For the others it seemed to mean something not unlike belief in a new and hazily-defined mysticism. Some of the latter even saw it as something to be exercised by the expulsion of the entire group led by Klein' (Steiner, 'Some Thoughts about Tradition and Change,' 49–50).
- 77 Kate Friedlander, Marjorie Brierley, in *Freud-Klein Controversies* 409, 536, 539, 536.
- 78 Isaacs, *Freud-Klein Controversies* 467, Heimann, *Controversies* 580, 572, 570.
- 79 Anna Freud, 'Indications for Child Analysis,' in *The Psycho-Analytic Treatment of Children* (London: Imago, 1946) 86. [For a discussion of Anna Freud's dispute with Klein, see Jacqueline Rose, 'War in the Nursery,' in *Why War? – Psychoanalysis, Politics, and the Return to Melanie Klein* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993) 191–230. Eds.]
- 80 Brierley, 'Sixth Discussion,' 537. For a discussion of the possibility of distinguishing between incorporation and introjection in terms of metaphor, see Abraham and Torok, 'Introjection-Incorporation.'
- 81 Heimann, 'Seventh Discussion,' 571.
- 82 Sharpe, 'Seventh Discussion,' 582. For a discussion of these problems in relation to Freud's writing, see Mikkel Borch-Jacobsen, *Le sujet freudien* (Paris: Flammarion, 1982), trans. Catherine Porter, *The Freudian Subject* (London: Macmillan; Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982); also Abraham and Torok, 'Introjection-Incorporation.'

- 83 Brierley, 'Sixth Discussion,' 536.
- 84 Glover, 'Sixth Discussion,' 559, 562.
- 85 See, e.g., Samuel Weber, *The Legend of Freud* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982); Derrida, 'Speculer sur Freud,' in *La carte postale* 257–409; Borch-Jacobsen *Le sujet freudien*.
- 86 Walter Schimideberg, 'The Second Extraordinary Business Meeting'; Karin Stephen, 'Resolutions and the First Extraordinary Business Meeting,' in *Freud-Klein Controversies* 86, 50.
- 87 Brierley, 'Sixth Discussion,' 536–7.
- 88 Glover, 'Seventh Discussion,' 586.
- 89 Friedlander, 'Discussion on "Regression"' (discussion circulated only), December 1943, in *Freud-Klein Controversies* 728; Glover, *Controversies* 715.
- 90 Rivière, 'Psychical Conflict in Earliest Infancy,' 47.
- 91 Heimann, 'Certain Functions of Introjection and Projection,' 161.
- 92 Rivière, 'Psychical Conflict in Earliest Infancy,' 53.
- 93 Heimann and Isaacs, 'Regression,' 703.
- 94 Klein, 'Emotional Life of the Infant,' 201.
- 95 Klein, 'Emotional Life of the Infant,' 201.
- 96 Klein, 'Tenth Discussion,' 836.
- 97 Klein, 'The Oedipus Complex in the Light of Early Anxieties,' 1945, in *Love, Guilt and Reparation* 408.
- 98 Heimann, 'Some Aspects of Introjection and Projection,' 523.
- 99 Klein, 'Emotional Life of the Infant,' 777–8; Lacan, *Le séminaire I* 97; trans. 83.
- 100 Klein, 'Tenth Discussion,' 834.
- 101 Isaacs in reply to Glover, 'Fifth Discussion,' 456–7; Klein, 'A Contribution to the Psycho-genesis of Manic-Depressive States,' 1935, in *Love, Guilt and Reparation* 265.
- 102 Rivière, 'Psychical Conflict in Earliest Infancy,' 60, 62.
- 103 Rivière, 'Psychical Conflict' 62.
- 104 Meltzer, *Kleinian Development* 46–7. Meltzer relates this issue to Klein's uncertainty about the conceptual status of the depressive position: 'She had never absolutely crystallised this in her mind, for sometimes she speaks of "penetrating" the depressive position, "overcoming", "surpassing", all of which have different implications regarding the meaning of the "depressive position"' (p. 114).
- 105 Heimann and Isaacs, 'Regression,' 183; cf. also: '[Klein] has shown too that specific anxieties not only contribute in both sexes to fixations and regressions, but also play an essential part in stimulating the libido to move forward from pre-genital positions to the genital one,' (p. 175); and Meltzer: 'The badness must be sufficiently split off . . . [but] it must not be so widely split off as to diminish the anxiety below the level that is sufficient for development' (*Kleinian Development* 64).
- 106 Heimann, 'Certain Functions of Introjection and Projection,' 162.
- 107 Heimann and Isaacs, 'Regression,' 703.
- 108 Isaacs, 'Nature and Function of Phantasy,' *Developments* 75.
- 109 See esp. Klein, 'Early Stages of the Oedipus Conflict,' 1928, in *Love, Guilt and Reparation* 186–98.
- 110 Klein, 'Emotional Life of the Infant,' 223, 209.
- 111 Klein, 'Importance of Symbol-Formation,' 227; Lacan, *Le séminaire I* 102; trans. 87.
- 112 A. Freud, *Ego and the Mechanisms of Defence* 57, cited by Isaacs, 'Nature and Function of Phantasy,' in *Freud-Klein Controversies* 295.
- 113 Despite the stress on development in Anna Freud's writing, one could equally argue that it is a simplification to read her work exclusively in such terms. Her famous paper 'Studies in Passivity' gives an extraordinary account of the possible vicissitudes of

sexual identification and desire in relation to masculinity and of the resurgence in adulthood of the most primary forms of identification, at the same time as recognizing the limits of its own model of explanation: 'These interpretations are not satisfying . . . What is left unexplained,' etc. - i.e. the text can be read aporetically as much as developmentally (A. Freud, 'Studies in Passivity,' 1952 (1949-51), in *Writings of Anna Freud*, vol. 4 245-59).

- 114 Glover, 'Klein System of Child Psychology,' 112.
 115 Glover, 'Klein System,' 110.
 116 Glover, 'Klein System,' 116.
 117 Hedwig Hoffer, 'Fourth Discussion of Scientific Controversies,' continuation of discussion of Isaacs's paper 'Nature and Function of Phantasy,' 7 April 1943, in *Freud-Klein Controversies* 428 (my emphasis).
 118 Glover, 'Klein System of Child Psychology,' 99.
 119 Rivière, 'Introduction,' 18-19.
 120 Rivière, 'Introduction,' 36.
 121 As Grosskurth comments: 'The Discussions were dominated by women - and what women they were!' (*Melanie Klein* 316). This quote from the manuscript of Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, however, relates interestingly to Rivière's remark: 'Don't we communicate better silently? Aren't we (women at any rate) more expressive silently gliding high together, side by side, in the curious dumbness which is so much [more] to our taste than speech'; cited by Lyndall Gordon, *Virginia Woolf: A Writer's Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984) 195. A whole history of women's relationship to language and of psychoanalysis's relation to modernism is implicit in Rivière's extraordinary comment.
 122 Sharpe, 'First Discussion of Scientific Controversies,' 'Some Comments on Mrs. Klein's theory of a "Depressive Position,"' in *Freud-Klein Controversies* 340, 805.
 123 Stephen W. Hawking, *A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes* (London and New York: Bantam, 1988). (Subsequent references are cited in the text.)
 124 Heimann, 'Certain Functions of Introjection and Projection,' 128.
 125 In his Brazilian lectures of 1974, Bion refers to black holes: 'I am familiar with a psychoanalytic theory of the mind which sounds like the astronomical theory of the "black hole"' (W.R. Bion, *Bion's Brazilian Lectures*, vol. 2, (Rio/São Paulo, 1974; Rio de Janeiro: Imago, 1975) 61. Discussing this passage, David Armstrong suggests that the theory of the mind alluded to is Bion's own ('Bion's Later Writing,' *Free Associations*, 3, 2, no. 26 (1992) 267).
 126 Felman, 'Psychoanalysis and Education', in *Jacques Lacan and the Adventure of Insight* 78.
 127 In his Inaugural Lecture to the University of Cambridge, Hawking states that a quantum theory of gravity (as central to the not yet attained complete unified theory of physics) is essential if the early universe is to be described and its initial conditions explained without 'merely appealing to the anthropic principle' (Hawking, 'Is the End in Sight for Theoretical Physics?', Appendix to John Boslough, *Stephen Hawking's Universe* (Glasgow: Collins, 1984) 120. For a critique of Hawking in relation to the anthropic principle, see Felix Pirani, 'The Crisis in Cosmology,' *New Left Review*, 191 (January/February 1992) 69-89.
 128 Felman, 'Psychoanalysis and Education,' 78.
 129 Cf. Bion on the question of reduction: 'Why should a psychoanalyst invent a theory to explain a mental phenomenon and, independently, the astronomers elaborate a similar theory about what they think is a black hole in astronomical space? Which is causing which? Is this some particularity of the human mind which projects it up

into space, or is this something real in space from which derives this idea of space in the mind itself? . . . I have used this idea of modern cosmology as a model for psychoanalysis, but I would also use psychoanalysis as the starting point of an investigation of the human mind' (Brazilian Lectures 61-2).

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