Psychotherapy and Politics International

2024, VOL. *22*, NO. 2, 1–15
https://doi.org/10.24135/ppi.v22i2.10

Online ISSN: 1556-9195 Journal homepage: https://ojs.aut.ac.nz/psychotherapy-politics-international

PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLE

Exploring the mother's geography: On Klein's settler unconscious

Ahmad Fuad Rahmat * The University of Nottingham, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

This article argues that Kleinian theory is underlined by a 'settler unconscious' by which the trajectory from love, guilt, and reparation is informed by a trajectory defined by seized or taken spaces. Theoretically, the subject is able to reflect on the destruction they caused from the standpoint afforded by an 'external reality,' which in many ways is construed, however implicitly, as dominated space. Politically, we see Klein referring to colonial explorers and settler colonialism to describe psychic development in ways that clearly speaks to how she tacitly internalises settler attitudes to space. Two texts, 'Love, Guilt and Reparation', and 'Early Analysis', are read for how they overlap in settler spatial themes, forming the basis for us to post a settler unconscious in Kleinian thought.

KEYWORDS: Klein; settler colonialism; settler unconscious; the geography of the mother's body; the libidinal determination of geography

INTRODUCTION: REPARATION AS SETTLEMENT

This article takes as its central point of departure what is arguably the most theoretical statement of settler colonialism in psychoanalysis. This occurs in 'Love, Guilt and Reparation', in which Melanie Klein (1937/1975c) unequivocally likens reparation as a process of territorial settlement upon native destruction. It is a brief but richly telling passage for how it confirms her theory to be embedded in a settler colonial view of the world. For the purposes of this inquiry the passage in question is reproduced here in full:

*Contact details: ahmad.rahmat@nottingham.edu.my

> We know that in discovering a new country aggression is made use of in the struggle with the elements, and in overcoming difficulties of all kinds. But sometimes aggression is shown more openly; especially was this so in former times when ruthless cruelty against native populations was displayed by people who not only explored, but conquered and colonised. Some of the early phantasized attacks against the imaginary babies in the mother's body, and actual hatred against new-born brothers and sisters, were here expressed in reality by the attitude towards the natives. The wished-for restoration, however, found full expression in repopulating the country with people of their own nationality. (Klein, 1937/1975c, p. 334)

The passage leaves us with two matters underlying Klein's settler worldview that are key for this article. The first is the close connection that is clearly exhibited here between Klein's psychoanalytic thinking and a distinct type of colonialism. This, unlike the more generalised type of developmental coloniality that has plagued psychoanalysis, is not a question of civilisational superiority or inferiority. The coloniality in Klein's outlook is rooted more specifically to settler colonialism. It is about the seizure of other people's land. The second, perhaps more important point to this passage, is the temporal situation presumed in the seizure. It is not the taking of the territory that Klein is interested in. It is how the taking enables the reparative subject. The basic idea is that reparation is a standpoint that is realised only *after* the subject is able to look back to the violence it caused in trying to retain the mother qua phantasized object. It is upon relinquishing the mother, and the guilt in recognising the damage caused in the failure to do so, that the subject could then begin the reparative process. There is no guilt to usher in reparation if there wasn't destruction to realise in the first place. However, the taken for granted likening of this process with colonial settlement shows how Klein thought of her account of psychic development, the passage from love to guilt and reparation, in territorial terms. Where the structural isomorphy between war and the aggressive instincts is already established and largely taken for granted, this passage emphasises the significance of space, namely its violent seizure, in the equation. The psychic relationship to the mother is no longer 'war' in the abstract. It is to mirror the settler's relationship to seized land. The psyche in this case is not simply the amalgamation of unresolved drives. It appears to proceed in a spatial form.

What follows details the settler dimension in Kleinian thought by showing how Klein ultimately theorised a spatial subject wherein the development of the psyche culminates in the crystallisation of what is best termed, to summarise the gist of the passage above, as 'redemptive space'. This, in a basic sense, refers to the space where the subject is no longer beholden to anxieties about the lost mother. However, it is identifiable in a more substantial sense as the space that affords the reparative standpoint wherein the subject, now no longer clamouring to retain the mother, is able to reflect ethically on what it had just done. It is therefore 'redemptive space' for how it holds out the possibility of being an ethical subject in the wake of destruction. Following this, Klein's reparative subject shall also be described as 'a redemptive' subject insofar as it finds its sense of responsibility upon winning the *space* it destroyed. The idea that violence is redemptive because it could eventually lead to a higher

realisation of 'the good', if it isn't obvious yet, is also very much definitive of the settler outlook of conquest where another land is found precisely to fulfil the promise of progress. The ideal of manifest destiny that galvanised the settlement of 'the new world', was pursued precisely out of this belief.

EXPLORING THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE MOTHER'S BODY

Of course, Klein rarely if ever used the terms 'redemption' and 'colonialism', never mind 'settler' or 'settlement' in her writings. Where empire is mentioned, it is more often matter-of-factly describing the world of empires that led to the World Wars which has been documented to significantly influence the logic of Kleinian theorising and its subsequent politics. We have something of a small but telling precedent however where Lacan discussed Klein to mention 'the mapping… of the mother's inner empire' in his 1948 essay 'Aggressiveness and Psychoanalysis' (Lacan, 2006, p. 93). It was left as a brief reference as Lacan did not elaborate on how a colonial logic was operative at a more fundamental level in Klein's view of mothering, space, and the body. This lacuna indeed is where the notion of 'settler unconscious' that I introduce could be a fruitful frame into the set of presumptions that clearly point to a settler view of entitled land whose presence in Kleinian theorising is significant but only ever indirectly.

It is with the settler unconscious in mind that we shall be particularly attentive to the logic at work in two brief but richly evocative moments in Klein's writings. There is firstly the 'geography of the mother's body' coined in 'Early Analysis' (Klein, 1923/1975a, p. 98). This phrase speaks to how, for Klein, the child relates to the mother in fundamentally spatial terms, that everything the child does in coming to grips with losing the mother is a question of 'spatial ownership'. For the child, in suffering the inability to relinquish the mother, relates to the mother (qua space) as something it cannot have because someone or something else wants it. It is in this spatial threat that the child develops a heightened awareness of its environment as to navigate it as if a geography where the terrain it encounters, however phantasmatically, is coloured in a dynamic of love and hate. Klein's account of the world the child traverses along the way does get rich in its descriptions of the various natural terrain encountered. However, spatiality is apparent in her other brief but also telling evocations of 'dimension', 'movement', 'orientation', and 'territory' as we shall see. With this, a certain attitude of conquest, of the need to win wild space against perceived threats, could be traced to outline the general contours of Klein's theory.

The more colonial sense of the child's relation to the mother's geography could be discerned in the second telling moment of Kleinian thinking, namely, where she speaks of exploration. This refers to what the colonial explorer does where new land is found and traversed. The colonial explorer in fact features prominently where the settler passage above

was written in 'Love, Guilt and Reparation'. The way Klein understands 'explore' in this narrow sense—to indicate an encounter with uncertain lands—further reinforces the geographical nature of the mother's body, as the explorer-child navigates necessarily encounters with threatened spaces in the passage of psychic development. However, Klein also appears to have something more specific in mind with 'exploration'. The child, in coming to terms with the mother's loss, does not simply avail themself of whatever they find. The child does so to eventually distinguish between an internal reality, in a phantasized relationship with the mother, with an external reality that is no longer beholden to the phantasy. It is indeed through this separation that the work of reparation could be done as the child is able to realise that their internal reality is not the full extent of the reality they must be accountable for. The picture 'exploring the geography of the mother's body' paints ultimately is how central the conquest of space is in the developmental picture Klein provides.

We shall begin with contextualising the problems in the above passage by revisiting its source in 'Love, Guilt and Reparation'. However, if this is where the colonial issues are overt, we shall have to turn to an earlier text in 'Early Analysis'—for where the unconscious relationship between the body and space is formed through the child's exploration is detailed—to discern the corresponding spatiality that allows us to think more clearly about Klein's settler unconscious.

LOVE, GUILT AND REPARATION

The child's eventual demarcation between an inside world and an outside world, at times described as 'inner reality' or 'internal reality' and 'outer reality' or 'external reality'—is upheld as an important psychological milestone for Klein because it eventually resolves the traumatic chaos in the loss of the mother that the child suffers as the loss of their source of life and sustenance. This is the loss that makes aggressiveness the fundamental constitution of love as the child violently attempts to seize whatever it can to retain the maternal contact it once had. This is why Klein associates 'the mother' with the child's world—or the world as 'we' readers of psychoanalysis know it—in its totality. The child navigates the world as a search for the lost mother to shape their relationship to objects in light of the loss. Herein lies a tension that shapes the essence of the Kleinian outlook. On one hand, losing the mother is the source of the child's violent attempt to salvage whatever it can of the mother's breast and body. On the other hand, this loss is also productive for how it produces phantasies of substitute love objects that stand in for the mother's tenuous presence and absence. Good objects are objects that can, however momentarily, provide the satisfaction the child craves: The child would treat this object affectionately. Bad objects, meanwhile, are objects that frustrate the child's yearning for satisfaction: These objects will be met with the wrathful passage of the child's destructiveness.

That this distinction is drawn in a state of essential panic means that the child is in effect suffering the inability to determine rightful love and hate. For the child is not only unable to come to terms with the destructive nature of love, they are unable to do so in light of loving and hating what is essentially the same object in the lost mother, whose enigmatic absence is increasingly fantasised with every failure to retrieve her. Objects are consequently reduced to part-objects as they are to be seen as good and bad only in relation to the aggressiveness in the unresolved insecurities rooted to the mother's loss. This inability indeed is where we can begin to trace Klein's reliance on spatial allusions. The child's inability to come to terms with the destructive nature of love sees them projecting material from the aggressiveness of their phantasies onto others, whose difference is construed as 'outside' insofar as they do not directly trigger the child's inner torments. This expulsion of unwanted aggressive elements onto an external object constitutes what has come to be the most well-known Kleinian concept in projection. However, more on the spatiality of it soon.

For now, it is important to note that there is no love beyond aggression. According to Klein, the end point of analysis is to dampen the child's aggressiveness as to love via a reparative gesture. The child's destructive tendencies would be handled by way of the guilt and distress that emerge out of the destruction they inflict. This would pave the way for the need to mend and restore the damaged relations. The child does not stop projecting, owing to the enigmatic relation to the object with which it learned to navigate the world. However, the reparative standpoint does make for an outer world that could be regarded as a space of love: 'Thus making reparation—which is such an essential part of the ability to love—widens in scope, and the child's capacity to accept love and, by various means, to take into himself goodness from the outer world steadily increases' (Klein, 1937/1975c, p. 342. Klein to be sure is presenting a meta-theory. She admits of exceptions and understands that various external factors present variables to the general outlook she presents: 'I cannot do justice to the multiple factors that in the life-long interaction between influences coming from the outer world and the individual's inner forces work together to build up an adult relationship' (Klein, 1937/1975c, p. 313). Regardless, we have enough to conclude that Klein appears committed to an in-built capacity for reparative love to which aggressive love eventually yields. Her following view on love and hate among youths states this belief rather straightforwardly:

> Young people tend to be very aggressive and unpleasant to their parents, and to other people who lend themselves to it, such as servants, a weak teacher, or disliked schoolmates. But when hatred reaches such strength, the necessity to preserve goodness and love within and without becomes all the more urgent. (Klein, 1937/1975c, p. 329)

EXPLORATION AS REDEMPTION

At this point we should note a contradiction that is key for our investigation. On one hand, all of this is to happen in phantasy, that is to say, in the objectal projections and introjections

that happen along the path of coming to terms with the loss of the mother. This is fundamentally about one thing as the child will see everything in light of the trauma of this loss. Indeed, Klein stresses how we never really overcome the loss as it shapes the basic hues of our psychic makeup and struggles. Yet we are to believe that something of a stable 'external world', or 'external reality', in contrast with how the world was coloured through the loss of the mother, could be attained. The question then becomes what exactly is it about the very coming to terms with the mother's loss that makes it so transformative that the guilt could emerge from the ruins of destructive love. There are, to be sure, many familiar Kleinian answers for this. For example, *Narrative of a Child Analysis* mentions the capacity for reversal—that is to say identifying with a parental other enough as to empathise—as a key factor: 'The young child, feeling frustrated, deprived, envious, or jealous, expresses hate and feelings of envy by omnipotently reversing the situation so that he will be adult and the parents neglected' (Klein, 1984, p. 201). However, we read 'Love, Guilt and Reparation' to find at least two presumptions. The essay speaks more obviously about the guilt in the child's realisation of the damage done to the loved object as the key mover of the reparative process. Reparation in this sense is quintessentially ethical because it is sparked by guilt.

However, we read closer to see Klein invested in the redeeming quality of the process of exploring the mother's lost body itself. There is a sense in which 'exploring' is merely a statement of what the child has no other choice to do than to attempt to retrieve the lost mother. There of course should be nothing surprising to this given that this inherent creativity is also the very creativity that makes children's play of psychoanalytic interest. Indeed, unconscious post-traumatic creativity in this essay takes on a more expansive meaning to also include what even motivates the earnest worker. For Klein, the man who searches for a secure livelihood does so:

> Because the sorrow and despair springing from his earliest emotional situations, when he not only felt deprived of food because his mother did not, satisfy his needs, but also felt he was losing both her and her love and protection. (Klein, 1937/1975c, p. 337)

Being unemployed 'deprives him also of giving expression to his constructive tendencies' (Klein, 1937/1975c, p. 337). However, we need not read too far into 'Love, Guilt and Reparation' to see that Klein was working with a particular view of the world, for she also has in mind exploration qua colonial exploration, where the child's developmental play is likened to the literal colonial explorer. In another article, 'A Contribution to the Theory of Intellectual Inhibition', she describes the developmental path through the mother's body as one of conquest, because for the child 'penetrating and exploring are to a great extent synonymous in the unconscious' (Klein, 1931/1975b, p. 240). Even art and scientific discovery, Klein argues, works through the aggressive pursuit of the object that manifests in the child's negotiation with the mother's body, a process which Klein routinely describes in reference to colonialism: 'In psycho-analytic work it has been found that phantasies of exploring the mother's body,

which arise out of the child's aggressive sexual desires, greed, curiosity and love, contribute to the man's interest in exploring new countries' (Klein, 1937/1975c, p. 333).

It is important to emphasise that Klein is not presenting a metaphor. She is not saying that psychic exploration looks like colonial exploration. They share the same structural logic insofar as they inherently move towards a good direction. There is in both an inherent drive to restore. Just as there is a good in post-traumatic creativity, which moves the child to seek repair, so too does colonialism function to do good, 'good' that is colonial terms of conquering another country. The telling passage should be quoted as to not dilute the claim:

> The child's early aggression stimulates the drive to restore and to make good, to put back into his mother the good things he had robbed her of in phantasy, and these wishes to make good merge into the later drive to explore, for by finding new land the explorer gives something to the world at large and to a number of people in particular. In his pursuit the explorer actually gives expression to both aggression and the drive to reparation. We know that in discovering a new country aggression is made use of in the struggle with the elements, and in overcoming difficulties of all kinds. (Klein, 1937/1975c p. 334)

The psychic-colonial isomorphy, however, does not end there. By equating the child's psyche with the colonial explorer's outlook, Klein has positioned her perspective on the side of the coloniser's success. Just as analysis should direct the child to the reparative standpoint so too must colonialism be successful in dominating the land where real, ostensibly non-hysterical, relations can form: To demonstrate the redeeming quality of exploration, Klein compares the colonial explorer's ingenuity with the native's attitude to land. The explorer is able to find a new world (and therefore make up for the loss of the mother) upon braving through 'a struggle with the elements' (Klein, 1937/1975c, p. 334). This is to be contrasted with natives who have no choice but to live with the elements. These are 'people who strive with the severity of nature' (pp. 337–338). They still 'serve nature herself' and thus find no need to discover 'her': 'In not severing their connection with her they keep alive the image of the mother of the early days' (p. 338). The loss of the mother in this regard spurs the explorer to search the new land that would compensate for the loss: 'the explorer is seeking in phantasy a new mother in order to replace the real one from whom he feels estranged, or whom he is unconsciously afraid to lose' (p. 338).

Just as the infant proceeds along the developmental path to differentiate objects like an explorer would discover a new world, so too does the death drive consume the object as how the explorer would destroy those who 'do not belong' to the land. This in many ways reiterates David Eng's influential critique, in which the problematic passage above is read as the fundamentally exclusionary nature of the child's object world, as the will to repair enacts a segregation between those deserving of repair, construed within the object relations that colours the child's narcissism on one hand and those who are not, subjects who—failing to qualify as objects worthy of love to begin with—are 'left to perish in the dark regions beyond the circle of love and repair?' on the other (Eng, 2016, p. 5). However, our attentiveness to

the settler dimension of Klein's scheme—in the exploratory virtues of the process—speaks to the anxieties of exclusion, that the explorer cannot simply assume the production of good objects worthy of love will just happen. Where guilt is a more fundamental ethical given, exploration as Klein has it is riddled with uncertainties, lending the reparative process to be more tenuous and thus more prized. If it can be ethical it is because it can reflect upon something it won after destruction. The repopulation over native land—and the difficulties of displacement that makes such a discovery worthy—metaphorises the contingencies of the process that makes the conquest of spaces a virtue precisely for it allows for the ethical reflection to happen. For only a new *dominated* space can make up for the lost mother just as only the destruction of native land can enact repopulation *after* native destruction. Exclusion is a virtue in other words because it redeems the subject.

THE LIBIDINAL DETERMINATION OF GEOGRAPHY

It is true that this overt settler colonial attitude in 'Love, Guilt and Reparation' does lend the article an anomalous quality. Klein appears to have taken no interest in the colonial context in writings prior to the essay. However, locating the coloniality where Klein speaks of 'exploration' allows us to consider her account of space in an early piece entitled 'Early Analysis'. While coloniality is far less evident here, the essay does resonate with our inquiry for containing the phrase 'geography of the mother's body', a figuration that features quite evidently in 'Love, Guilt and Reparation' as we have seen. Thus while 'exploration' or 'explorer' are not literally mentioned, Klein does identify 'Early Analysis' as where she accounts for the 'libidinal determination of geography' (Klein, 1923/1975a, p. 72), namely, where the antagonism and chaos of the drives, coloured by the anxieties of losing the mother, are resolved through the ability to think spatially wherein the world is no longer to be seen in light of losing the mother's womb and could be instead be seen as a standalone external reality. It resonates significantly, as we shall see, with why Klein could uphold the colonial explorer as a model for the child exploring the mother's body. The ability to stabilise spatial thinking is seen as a developmental achievement, much like the explorer's ability to ward off the new land it discovered from alien threats. In this regard 'Early Analysis' offers much of the bases with which we can think of the 'unconscious' moving Klein's statement about the virtues of settlement.

The idea of exploration in particular is presumed in the technical contrast Klein draws in 'Early Analysis' between inhibition and sublimation. Inhibition—more theoretically described as the 'neurotic inhibitions of talents' (Klein, 1923/1975a, p. 77)—is a problem of repressed *ideas* associated with certain otherwise pleasurable activities. The specific way in which this is framed already poses a link between the psychic dimension of creative bodily expression, insofar as inhibition deserves our attention because it entails the reduction of a subject or child's capacity to move enjoyably. The spatial nature of this problem is hinted early on when

Klein construes the problem of 'movement' as a problem of pursuing space. Thus her examples are as much about 'playing at ball with hoops, skating, tobogganing, dancing' and the like where physical dexterity is key, with walking on 'the road to school' which casts the problem as a broadly spatial one (Klein, 1923/1975a, p. 77). Klein would detail this through a host of examples showing children struggling with direction and movement where their sense of space is key. The problem of being in school, from laziness to slow learning, which are not so much problems of activity as they are problems of locations and situations, is also presented as an example of inhibition. These examples are standard Kleinian insofar as child analysis presumes that the child's play is in many ways a form of world building for the psyche. However, our interest in the conquest presumed in her evocation of exploration should go further to note how Klein was working with a certain perceived attitude to 'space' as a crucial indicator of psychological development. Space is a problematic 'idea' for the child. Consequently, phantasies of space as it manifests in their movement will constitute a crucial aspect of child analysis.

To this, Klein adds the corporeal nature of the problem, as it is rooted to children's inability to handle their drives where the need for an economic handling of their excesses is met with repression instead. What inhibitions show is a problem with 'libidinal cathexis, and genital symbolism always played a part in it' (Klein, 1923/1975a, p. 77). The child is unable to move and play because 'a strong primary pleasure' was 'repressed on account of its sexual character' (Klein, 1923/1975a, p. 77). Klein then stated clearly that 'normal' is to be determined to the extent to which the capacity for pleasure could be attained in activities, where their sexual nature is ostensibly less overpowering. The implication is key and must be stated early on. The child is such that their corporeality sees them never 'at home', as it were. The psychoanalytic subject consequently is never really 'settled', and this is because space is never something they can take for granted.

With this we can now move on to why space should even emerge as a corporeal issue. Children fantasise about a great many things and yet Klein would be especially attentive to its spatial manifestations. Why one might ask should space be the ultimate substratum on which all phantasies rest. This is because Klein roots the origins of repression in the spatial anxieties of overcoming the attachment to the mother's womb. Space in other words is a problem to be fantasised about because it is the primary loss that structures the child's relationship with the mother:

> I came across the fear in a child that when he was on the ice it would give way beneath him or that he would fall through a hole in a bridge—both obviously birth anxiety. Repeatedly I found that these fears were actuated by the far less obvious wishes—brought into play as a result of the sexual-symbolic meaning of skating, bridges, etc.—to force his way back into the mother's body by means of coitus, and these wishes gave rise to the dread of castration. (Klein, 1923/1975a, p. 82)

The insecurity, however, is not so much in the absence of a stable place. It is that the dread of castration sees to it that the child feels continuously unmoored, that is to say, never able to overcome the attachment to the mother's womb. This inability to overcome displacement, despite being able to acquire new substitute objects, would be the basis of hysterical symptom formation. Inhibition cannot be overcome where new activities potentially trigger attachments to the mother's body:

> In the cases I have mentioned of pleasure in motion—games and athletic activities—we could recognize the influence of sexual-symbolic meaning of the playing field, the road, etc. (symbolising the mother), while walking, running and athletic movements of all kinds stood for penetrating into the mother. (Klein, 1923/1975a, p. 86)

DISPLACEMENT

Note how the symptoms foretell the specific nature of the spatial problem that the child grapples with, that Klein will make the focal point of her theorising. Birth is conceived from the onset as a fundamental *displacement*, understood literally to mean a loss of space. In fact, Klein herself presents displacement—she italicises the word no less—as the problem with inhibition. The cathexis to consume the mother—moved by excess drives—is continuously displaced upon the threat of castration. Pleasure is continuously sought somewhere else in discrete contact with momentary 'success'. The spatial solution also logically follows from this premise. The excess drives are to be consequently stabilised because the child was born, and remains confined, within a state of perpetual displacement.

The implication of this problem, which speaks to the importance of space in Klein's theorising, is that the inhibited child has no proper conception of the 'outside world'. He is stuck in a masturbatory dynamic where the mother is found in everything, especially through his own body: 'the feet, the hands and the body, which carry out these activities and in consequence of early identification, are equated with the penis, served to attract to themselves some of the phantasies which really had to do with the penis and the situations of gratification associated with the object' (Klein, 1923/1975a, p. 86). It is to realise phantasy in the 'external world', conceived as an alternative to the perpetual return to the mother, that the notion of sublimation is presented. More specifically put, if hysterical symptom formation occurs when the child is unable to enjoy the object on account of his attachment to the mother's body, sublimation occurs when the movement no longer internalises the mother. This in many ways is about de-maternalising the object: They are 'out there' moving in a domain beyond the subject's anxieties. However, it is conceived 'outside', more properly speaking, because satisfaction would be had in the activity through the object itself instead of a sought after release of pleasure for a forbidden body, 'in pleasure in motion rather than organ-pleasure in itself' (Klein, 1923/1975a, p. 86).

As an example, Klein turns to Freud's reading of a fantasy by Leonardo Da Vinci, specifically the one of Da Vinci's mouth being opened by a vulture's tail. Freud took this to reflect Leonardo's infantile theory of sexuality around his mother possessing a penis, which thus led to his obsessional neurosis. Leonardo's artistic pursuits provided a solution because it was able to transpose the neurosis onto the movement of objects in the world:

> In Leonardo's case not only was an identification established between nipple, penis and bird's tail, but this identification became merged into an interest in the motion of this object, in the bird itself and its flight and the space in which it flew. (Klein, 1923/1975a, p. 87)

With this pleasure in motion the body too is free to find pleasure, however 'deflated', in objects beyond the anxious body: 'Leonardo's genital activity, which played so small a part as far as actual instinctual gratification was concerned, was wholly merged in his sublimations' (Klein, 1923/1975a, p. 88). With this example, Klein is able to summarise his theory of how sublimation, conceived as the clear grasp of things as they move in the world, relieves the hysteric's suffering 'if the interest in orientation is not repressed, pleasure and interest in it are retained, and the extent of the development of the faculty is then proportionate to the degree of success attending the search for sexual knowledge' (Klein, 1923/1975a, p. 99). The ability to conceive of such a world beyond the womb does not simply resolve the anxiety of perpetual displacement. Klein even presents it as the basis of speech and writing.

Where Da Vinci showed how sublimation is shaped out of the pleasurable appreciation of moving objects, Klein would turn to his case studies to detail the pursuit of movement in an external world works to solve inhibition. Key is Klein's discussion of seven-year-old Fritz whose case began with how he enjoys wildly moving 'pipi', the name he gave his penis. One fantasy, for example, 'consisted in being able, without touching it with his hand, to make the Pipi appear with a jerk through the opening in his knickers by twisting and turning his whole body' (Klein, 1923/1975a, p 91). Klein does not mention it, but the territorial conquest entailed is quite evident. Fritz played with his Pipi to the effect of creating phantasies of entire worlds. This was seen especially in his invention of vehicles placed in imagined townships in which Klein noticed how his fantasy of filling up petrol reflected a fantasy of inserting semen into the mother.

The point is that the internalisation of maternal phantasies translates to the inability to pursue the mother in reality, and this translates to a certain stasis in real life:

> Like the inhibition against walking, games and the sense of orientation, its main determinant was the repression, based on castration anxiety, of the sexual-symbolic cathexis common to all these interests, namely, the idea of penetrating into the mother by coitus. (Klein, 1923/1975a, p. 100)

Thus, Klein notices however that this fascination with moving Pipi around is rooted to his fixation on roads and vehicles that went alongside his fear of actually walking outside. He would play with motorcycles, cars, and trains but would be reluctant to actually go outside in

the world among others. However, analysis soon 'removed his distaste for play' and Fritz eventually 'developed a more lively feeling for orientation in space' (Klein, 1923/1975a, p. 93). Space was no longer represented in light of his fear of letting go of the mother and Fritz was able to explore 'the mother' via the world as it is 'out there'. Fritz would gradually speak more and develop an interest in music, both of which are taken as his extensions 'outside'. Mother was still evoked but no longer as a representation within fantasy but among the objects of play. Indeed, what we get is a richer understanding of other objectal possibilities in the world, 'Thus we found that his sense of orientation, which had formerly been strongly inhibited but now developed in a marked manner, was determined by the desire to penetrate the mother's body and to investigate it inside' (Klein, 1923/1975a, p. 98). It goes without saying the geographical element of Fritz's play clearly allowed him to symbolise the mother's body as different spaces. The mother is relinquished as a relinquished body and birthing is no longer regarded as a traumatic loss.

EXPLORATION

Klein does not single out the 'term' exploration for scrutiny but the fundamentally spatial effect of losing the mother sees Klein clearly speaking of the necessity and virtue of exploration as a way to stabilise space. Thus, she describes a key characteristic of uninhibited play as the ability to explore space as to manipulate it: Klein was particularly moved by how Fritz explored bedsheets—that is to say, playing with the spatial fantasies it afforded—as how he traversed its entire length and breadth to create a journey which he likened to an underground trek. The world he created under the bedsheets staged an elaborate train track that Klein took to prove that his body was indeed enjoying 'pleasure in motion'. The sexual curiosity that was concentrated in part-objects was enlarged, in ways that clearly show conquest:

> His original pleasure in roads corresponded to the desire for coitus with the mother, and therefore could not come into full operation until the castration-anxiety had been resolved. Similarly we see that, in close connection with this, his love of exploring roads and streets (which formed the basis of his sense of orientation) developed with the release of the sexual curiosity which had likewise been repressed owing to the fear of castration. (Klein, 1923/1975a, p. 96)

With this exploratory dynamic, sublimation is shown to significantly hinge a great deal on the ability to indulge in a pleasure in motion by which the body extends itself to mother qua in a richer *field* of phantasy. Here Klein brings the link between movement, space, and geography full circle for it was clear by this point that geography was the seat of Fritz's overall ability to relate to the world: 'Apart from the interest in geography I discovered that it was one of the determining factors in the capacity for drawing and the interest in natural science and everything to do with the exploration of the earth' (Klein, 1923/1975a, p. 99). This is important to note where inhibition speaks to the opposite wherein space is phantasized as a

terrain of threats. The continuous encounter with threats in fact accounts for the displacement the inhibited subject suffers. This is evident where Fritz relapsed into his inhibitive state where phantasies presumed a geography of dangers. Klein does not hesitate to describe it in terms of the natural terrain that underlines his inhibition. Fritz expressed a fear of trees which took the form of phantasies of being hit by falling trees. He also feared the fragility of an imaginary bridge whose existence was only to intensify his fear of falling into a hole. A thick piece of string was confused for a snake. The terrain of 'mother space' that was previously free for the taking contrasts with the terrain of new more threatening space to where there was nowhere really to go. Other people also appeared as obstacles. Fritz feared going outside to encounter the boys who once disturbed him. Conversely, geographical sense is also to be upheld as a measure of inhibition: 'Partial inhibitions of this faculty, e.g. interest in geography and orientation, with a greater or lesser lack of capacity, proved to depend on the factors which I regard as essential to the forming of inhibitions in general' (Klein, 1923/1975a, p. 99).

It is with the case of Fritz in any case that we find Klein's footnote about the 'geography of the mother's body'. This takes for granted that the child comes to learn about the shape of 'the outside world' through negotiating their unconscious attachment to the mother's body that torments their inner world. This is the premise for her subsequent theorisations of how a stable conception of the outside world, however tenuous it may be, is the condition for the child's healthier relation to others as whole objects rather than remnants of the mother's part objects. The healthy conception of the inner world in other words is attained through the epistemic grasp of an objective outer world. However, it is important to note that the Fritz example also points to a particular way in which this geography was realised, for the relation to the mother and geography is not metaphorical. We know by now that it is a geography that is realised particularly through the aggressive attempt to retain whatever semblance of contact with the mother's body that was believed to be had. It is a geography that sees the body explored in literal correspondence with things in the world. However, this entails the crystallisation of a clearly marked boundary between an 'inside' and an 'outside':

> His sense of orientation, which had formerly been strongly inhibited but now developed in a marked manner, was determined by the desire to penetrate the mother's body, and to investigate it inside, with the passages leading in and out and the processes of impregnation and birth. (Klein, 1923/1975a, p. 98)

The inner world in other words is to be stabilised only once the drives have arrived at a proper conception of an 'outside world'. With this link between body and space we are able to understand how Klein presents the passage from the inside to the outside as the condition for reparation.

CONCLUSION

Where 'Love, Guilt and Reparation' speak of the child's arrival of the 'outside world' of reflection in terms of the explorer's conquest of new lands, 'Early Analysis' is able to provide us the basis with which we can understand the significance of spatial and territorial thinking in the developmental picture Klein was working with. The tenuousness of spatial thinking—where the spatial quality of sublimation is seen to be something earned through uninhibited play—resonates similarly with the ways in which Klein speaks of reparation as a territorial achievement. The centrality of reparation to redeem the subject's destructive tendencies speaks to the redemptive temporality presumed in the story of psychic development Klein provides, that some good will be met at the end of the day. Insofar as these texts and concepts are crucial for our understanding of Kleinian thought, we can no longer read her today without acknowledging the settler unconscious.

REFERENCES

Eng, D. L. (2016). Colonial object relations. *Social Text*, *34*(1), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1215/01642472-3427105

Lacan, J. (2006). *Écrits: The first complete edition in English* (B. Fink, Trans.). W.W. Norton.

Klein, M. (1975a). Early analysis. In *Love, Guilt and Reparation and Other Works 1921-1945* (pp. 77–105). Hogarth. (Original work published 1923)

Klein, M. (1975b). A contribution to the theory of intellectual inhibition. In *Love, Guilt and Reparation and Other Works 1921-1945* (pp. 236–247). Hogarth. (Original work published 1931)

Klein, M. (1975c). Love, guilt and reparation. In *Love, Guilt and Reparation and Other Works 1921-1945* (pp. 306–343). Hogarth. (Original work published 1937)

Klein, M. (1984). *Narrative of a child analysis: The conduct of the psycho-analysis of children as seen in the treatment of a ten-year-old boy*. Simon and Schuster.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Ahmad Fuad Rahmat is Assistant Professor in Media and Digital Cultures at the School of Humanities at the University of Nottingham Malaysia.