

Recollections of James Gammill (about Donald Meltzer, Martha Harris, Melanie Klein)

in conversation with Meg and Adrian Williams, Rue Jacob, Paris, 29 October 2011



[Dr Gammill recounts how he came over from America to train with Mrs Klein, and when he first met Donald Meltzer.]

JG: I was the first to come over to England for Kleinian training in July 1953, having had selection interviews in November 1952. Melanie Klein was a member of the Training Committee of the London institute at that time, so she knew I had been able through the US Air Force to be stationed at the South Ruislip Hospital. (Because of relationships in the American Psychoanalytic Association, dominant then in the IPA, I and later Don could only be interviewed by Middle Group analysts, and not by either Anna Freud or Melanie Klein. However they participated in the discussion of the interviews.)

In autumn 1953 I received a letter from Mrs Klein indicating that Donald Meltzer was coming to London for the interviews and requesting that I meet and advise him about the possibility of a similar arrangement for him. I arranged to meet him for dinner at the US Air Force Officers' Club, then in Winfield House in Regents Park. Our backgrounds were

rather different because my ancestors came to America in the 17th and 18th centuries from England, France and Scotland. And Don – I don't know whether his parents were born in Lithuania, or if his grandparents had emigrated to the United States.

A: There is an account of his mother travelling from Lithuania to New York to join his father, and she stopped in Manchester, not knowing where her relatives were. There she went to the Jewish quarter and when wandering up and down somebody recognised her and knew which family she must come from. So after a short period of time the family regrouped in America.

JG: I met his parents first when they came to England in 1957 and then went to the International Psychoanalytic congress in Paris. Don somehow got them in to hear Mrs Klein's talk. He started his analysis with her a year after I met him in September 1954 and Pattie his first wife and the children arrived in England shortly after.

Don was a medical student in New York during the Second World War, whereas I had been in World War II in France, Belgium and Germany; and then I went to the University of Illinois and afterwards, Cornell Medical College. After finishing medical school I went back into the service with the United States Air Force in order to go to London to have the training. That is how I came to South Ruislip. In 1953 I started analysis with Paula Heimann (Mrs Klein didn't have a place – she recommended Paula as being closest in thinking to herself). Don in contrast had finished medical school and done psychiatric training in New York including child psychiatry in Bellevue Hospital. I believe he met important people like Laretta Bender and Melitta Sperling there. Then he went to St Louis, Missouri. In those days there was no separate child psychiatry, everything was under psychiatry as a whole, and Don was in charge of the child psychiatry part at Washington University in St Louis. He started analysis there, I think he did at least 3 years, and went into the Air Force because it was obligatory in those days of the Korean War. He was psychiatrist at Scott Airforce base near St Louis. So when he arrived in London he was far ahead of me professionally and I learned quite a bit from him. I had started some psychotherapy cases the year before. There was an American Air Force hospital that had a psychiatric unit at Burderop Park in Wiltshire.

In fact Don had a rather dramatic arrival in England because US

Headquarters in Washington changed his orders to go to Wiesbaden which was the main US Air Force hospital in Europe. The Third US Air Force in London was under the Wiesbaden European command. He made efforts on his part, and meanwhile I had met General Wilson, commander of the Third Airforce at Ruislip. It's a complicated story and I won't go into it, but with his efforts and maybe mine too, he got reassigned. His father was quite wealthy and probably could have pulled political strings in Washington.

M: All he said was that he would kill somebody if he didn't get to England. He didn't mention what went on behind the scenes.

JG: Later he had to go up to Burderop Park for 3 months and so had to make long trips daily, driving back and forth to London for his analysis. Don had no limit of energy. We saw each other every day and I learned a lot about psychiatry and child psychiatry from him. I think perhaps he gained some insight from me because I had lived through the Great Depression – my father lost his job and we had to move from near Birmingham Alabama to a farm in Tennessee, whereas Don's family was always very well to do and he never met any people as poor as I met, in an industrial community like Birmingham or in rural Tennessee. Then the fact that I was in the war meant that maybe I contributed something to him from this experience. His family even made a cruise in the Mediterranean I think.

M: They took off for 6 months.

JG: His father was super-patriotic; he was one of the immigrants in America who felt they'd left everything bad in Europe, and America was the good place.

I started to learn golf in England which was an easy thing to do in the Air Force community. The golf-club was in a big old mansion, Moor Park, 18th Century; and I remember Don's father saying "Look at all the riches that these English people took away from us." I was a bit afraid people would hear him saying that – "those awful English". (I don't know whether these little anecdotes interest you...). I knew the Meltzer family of course when the terrible tragedy of the little boy's drowning occurred. In fact I was medical officer of the day, and by the time I arrived half an hour later there was nothing to be done. I shared this tragedy with the family and I think that Pattie never got over it. It was difficult for her because Don was in analysis with Mrs Klein, and Pattie was in analysis as a training case. I think the feeling was that Don had the very best and she didn't. She was a

very sweet person but could be difficult too. Don tried to help her develop her artistic interests, but it was very unfortunate really. As I remember Meg you were in analysis at the time as a very little girl – 1958 – about the same time I was seeing my first case, in 1957. I had left the Air Force by that time to do the child training. Then you went on – how many years –

M: Eleven - till I was 18, just after my father died.

JG: I didn't know before receiving your book that he was a poet to such an extent. And he was a teacher and a specialist in education, as his profession. You lived near Lancaster Gate at that time didn't you?

M: Until I was about eleven.

JG: At the top of the building –

M: 99 steps.

JG: I remember being invited to dinner there, with Mrs Bick.

I left the training in London in 1959 and went back to France to finish some military obligations that I had to the US Air Force. I was at Evreux from 1959-1960, and in London only twice during that year. I stayed at Mrs Bick's place – it was quite an experience. The last time I saw Mrs Klein she wasn't very well, and she said "Come to see me when Mattie comes for her supervision"; it was the last time I saw her alive - with the pleasure of hearing Mattie's case, Mrs Klein's comments, and joining in the discussion myself.

I was back in America from 1960-66, working at Vanderbilt University Medical College, and I saw Don three times in New York at their family home in Queens: a large house with an extensive garden around it. Don's mother was a very quiet reserved kind of person, very sweet. I also met his sister when I stayed the night at their place. The New York house was rather reminiscent of Don and Pattie's house at Rickmansworth which had a trout stream; I visited there many times in the years 1954-1959, while I was in the Air Force and thereafter.

At that time he was still very close to the Kleinian group and Hanna. When I was in training, Don and Hanna were the best of friends, seeming almost to idealize each other; and Herbert also. I think I was considered the rather dull American, compared to Don. I had a better reputation with the Kleinian group in terms of child analysis, because Mrs Klein told me I was very gifted in child analysis. She told me your mother was very gifted. I saw Mattie more than Don at that time during the child training (1957-59);

we met in the library at the Institute which was a nice place in those days with a garden out the back, and we had child analytic cases to discuss. Later the Society got a lot of money, and they built what I call the “London Airport Extension” – a horrible thing. They had the idea there was going to be a lot of child analysis and they made 10 or 12 rooms, some of them with no windows. Mrs Klein always put great emphasis on the child being able to look out from inside: sometimes the inner world is represented by the outside, and vice versa. Mrs Klein’s ashes would turn over in her grave at this horrible thing. Winnicott was involved in this, which disappointed me; he had been helpful (especially with my adolescent case) when he was Director of the Child Division of the Clinic. They got the money and this manic illusion ... if they’d needed more room there was a small apartment above the original Child unit that was rented out, and they could have made two or three more rooms upstairs. (Apparently former candidates who had used the original setting were not asked for advice.)

M: This was in the 1960’s.

JG: Yes. Mattie did all her child training cases for the Institute, even though she had already done the Tavistock training. If I remember correctly, Mrs Klein said she had already supervised Mattie before she was an Institute candidate. I don’t think she was in accord; she felt that the supervisions at the Tavistock should have counted for the Institute but they didn’t. She said Mattie was so interesting to listen to - she had “a mind of her own”, and so it was a pleasure to hear Mattie’s cases and work with her. We had a few seminars together privately with Mrs Klein.

The last time I saw your father, they came over to the Amsterdam congress in 1965 on his sailboat.

M: I sailed over on the boat too. My mother went by car.

JG: I don’t remember seeing you at the Congress but I did see Roland.

[Discussion of Roland’s poetry.]

JG: I came back from America in 1966 to live in Paris, and shortly thereafter Don sent me his first book on *The Psychoanalytical Process*.

M: You wrote a review of it. [*Revue Francaise de Psychanalyse*, 1970]

JG: I wasn’t in agreement about everything, you see; and I thought at that time that he and Hanna were the best of friends; so I wrote to Hanna

and said I didn't want to hurt Don's feelings in any way; and also in a French review if you wrote a too laudatory account it would turn people against it. Mrs Klein had mentioned to me about reading Proust in her 1958 holidays, saying the reader must decide within himself whether it is true for him. I quoted in the Revue the passage Mrs Klein had indicated to me in *Le Temps Retrouvé*.¹

When I got a letter back from Hanna I was absolutely shocked. She said: "Your mild criticisms of Don's work are all right as far as they go but really it is a terrible book, not at all in keeping with Mrs Klein's theory or thinking; and even though your criticisms are mild, you can be sure you will lose his friendship for ever, because he cannot stand any criticism at all."

M: Why did they split up with each other in fact?

JG: I don't know, I thought maybe you knew. I have the feeling that one of the problems in the Klein group was that Mrs Klein's death was not at all expected. They knew she wasn't too well before the summer holidays, but I think it came as a traumatic shock. She died actually from falling out of the bed. According to the doctors her operation [for cancer of the colon] was successful. The facts are all there in Phyllis Grosskurth's biography. Her book is interesting in the documentation that she made, and a lot of research went into it. But she had no judgement about who she listened to in the British Psychoanalytic Society and in British psychiatry. But to return to the point: I think it went beyond the capacity of the group to do a real work of mourning. Perhaps it was much more difficult than for me and Margaret Evans (who was in Tennessee with me for about five years). We talked about Mrs Klein a lot. But the people in London had to take over the political responsibilities of the Kleinian group.

M: Perhaps they're not very good at mourning.

JG: Well I think the political role interferes with the work of mourning. At first Don and Hanna worked together on the review of the *Narrative*,

¹ "... je pensais plus modestement à mon livre, et ce serait même inexact que de dire en pensant à ceux qui le liraient, à mes lecteurs. Car ils ne seraient pas, comme je l'ai déjà montré, mes lecteurs, mais les propres lecteurs d'eux-mêmes, mon livre n'étant qu'une sorte de ces verres grossissants comme ceux que tendait à un acheteur l'opticien de Combray, mon livre, grâce auquel je leur fournirais le moyen de lire en eux-mêmes. De sorte que je ne leur demanderais pas de me louer ou de me dénigrer, mais seulement de me dire si c'est bien cela, si les mots qu'ils lisent en eux-mêmes sont bien ceux que j'ai écrits..." (Proust, *A La Recherche du Temps Perdu* vol. III, *Le Temps Retrouvé* (Bibliothèque de la Pléiade 1956, p. 1033).

and I think Hanna was wonderful and interesting in so many ways and I learned so much from her in supervision and seminars. But politically I think she wanted people to see things her way. Different from Don's mentality! Also, it seems to me that she sometimes didn't appreciate people that I thought were very good – for example Sidney Klein, who had his own way of being and Mrs Klein thought highly of him as a child analyst.

M: Don used to share his consulting room in his house.

JG: For seeing children – maybe you went there. I think that Mrs Klein made an error in telling her analysands “In the event of my death you will you go a specific person.” Don was supposed to go to Bion; Adrian, I think your father was supposed to go to Hanna Segal; I don't know who Clare Winnicott was supposed to go to. There I disagree with Mrs Klein. I think, rather than going straight to another analyst, it is better to have time to think over and do the mourning work for the lost analyst, and then decide to whom one might go. Don was very much criticized by several Kleinian analysts that he didn't go straight away to analysis with Bion, and so he was considered disloyal to Mrs Klein's wishes. Maybe after a period of mourning for Mrs Klein, he would have chosen Bion himself for further analysis.

A: I've heard it from my father too. It was obviously part of the kosher feeling.

JG: Hanna was quite close to Mattie. Mattie used to pick her up for the evening seminars and drive her home. I remember after one of those seminars being in the pub behind the Institute with Hanna and your mother. They got on famously well in those days.

Paula Heimann had had analysis with Mrs Klein when she was in the firing line over her discussions with the Viennese – how can you do that and have an analytic session the same day! So I think problems were inevitable. About countertransference: at that time Mattie was more of the view of Paula Heimann and of Money-Kyrle than Don was. I don't think Hanna took a position on it then. It seemed to me that Money-Kyrle was also rather pushed to the side by the establishment. I don't know how wise it was of Mrs Klein, but she thought so highly of Don: I was still in supervision with Mr Money-Kyrle and he had gone to Mrs Klein to ask for help with a difficult patient; Mrs Klein did not have the time and she suggested Don, who was still a candidate then and in analysis with her. Is that a good thing for an analysis?

[JG shows a photo of Eric Klein and JG taken in 1979 by Michel Haag.]

I was introduced to Mrs Klein's son Eric in 1959 at a family reunion at the Cumberland Hotel in Marble Arch; the family were all together, around twelve of them. It was my last meeting with Mrs Klein apart from the final one with your mother, Meg. Eric was a wonderful person – kindhearted, cheerful, thoughtful. He asked me to collaborate with Phyllis Grosskurth who was writing a book about his mother. He gave her a lot of letters and documentation that he'd kept over the years. I don't think she was sufficiently grateful to Eric. Eric with his family and his mother had Sunday lunches together at his place, nearly every Sunday. Eric told me that Mrs Klein had often mentioned Dr Meltzer as an extremely gifted person, and a great hope for psychoanalysis in the future. So I know from Eric she had a very high esteem for Don. Whether this may have interfered with dealing with the transference I don't know. Don evidently would have known that Mrs Klein suggested he discuss Roger Money-Kyrle's difficult case. Maybe all this entered into the difficulties with Hanna and the group. Don had a very creative mind and this may have created difficulties. I was not able to agree with Don on certain aspects of the aesthetic conflict, and about shifts in a development from paranoid-schizoid to depressive position. However, this never interfered with our friendship and personal esteem.

Mrs Klein had also spoken of me (to Eric) as gifted for child analysis, and this entered into Eric's wish to contact me in the late 70's. After Michael died I saw him several times in Paris because he brought his grandsons over for weekends, so he took over a loving and caring, fatherly role for his grandsons who were adolescents. We all had dinner together several times in Paris. I sent some letters from him (to me) to Elizabeth Spillius. He appreciated having been invited to participate in the Paris Psychoanalytic Society's programme in honour of the centenary of Mrs Klein's birth.

I remember talking to Eric on the phone and his expressing disappointment about the Grosskurth book. He died shortly after that.

M: Neither my mother nor Don would agree to be interviewed for it because they didn't like her attitude .

JG: Don is mentioned in the book, though there is no interview, but she mixes me and him up as being ex-Air Force, whereas we did the first part of the analytic training in the evenings after our work at the US Air

Force hospital in South Ruislip (Grosskurth p. 444). I did not say “damned Yankees” (p. 445) and Mrs Klein spoke to me of the meeting with Freud in a supervision session, not “over tea at the Connaught Hotel”. She was “somewhat” disappointed, not “bitterly disappointed”, by her interview with Freud – where she did *not* “pour out her theories” (p. 126).

A: When were you born?

JG: I was born in 1925, and Don in 1923 [and died in 2004]. Sometimes I feel I’ve lived too long at 86; there is nobody left of my generation. Now when I came back to France [in 1966] I visited Don pretty frequently – it was Don and Pattie at first. The family were camping some place near Henley and Don was helping Nusia Bick at her nearby hotel to write one of her papers. I remember that weekend because I saw him in between his helping Nusia (whom he loved very much). Afterwards I visited Don and Mattie in London, and also at the farm at Buttermilk (Brill). I discussed an English version of my paper on the dream-screen with him and Mattie, and she helped me quite a bit in formulating things more succinctly. Don often spoke of what he was writing about during the 1970’s and 80’s.

Once when I gave a seminar here in Paris on Mrs Klein’s work, Hanna was invited and I paid for the trip and Joyce McDougall arranged for the honorarium at the Institute, and we had a nice weekend together (around 1968-9). Afterwards I was invited to the Segals in London for dinner – her husband Paul was a wonderful cook – and I said it was my heartfelt desire that Hanna, Don and Mattie should be friends together again. She said, ‘the bridges are burned’. Though when Don and Mattie came into the house [to pick me up to go to Buttermilk] there was pleasant conversation about family and so on. I felt deeply saddened by this.

I think I spent too much time trying to reconcile people and in the Paris society it would probably have been better if they had broken up into 3 separate societies, and maybe we would have had fully accepted child analytic training in one of the Institutes.

At the 1973 international congress, having worked with Geneviève Haag who had much experience of autism, I introduced her to Don and Mattie. Now at the end of that Congress – that’s when Don, Mattie, you and others came to the country house I had and also our colleague from Los Angeles [Albert Mason] – I don’t know where everyone slept, there was quite a crowd there and Albert was quite a personality. He was very

friendly to me then but I had very little contact with him afterwards, even when I was in the States. We talked quite a bit about things in Paris, but I knew Don and Mattie were already going to Italy, Norway, South America and so on. So it was decided to invite Don and Mattie – it was my initiative with the agreement of others – to start coming to Paris regularly, as of January 1974. I know from Joyce McDougall that Hanna did not appreciate my having invited Don and Mattie to come regularly to Paris. I think she saw me as not being loyal to her and to Mrs Klein.

M: Projective identification with Mrs Klein.

JG: Introjection as well. So I saw Don and Mattie here as well as the visits to Buttermilk. I do remember one aspect about Buttermilk; in November of '73 when I went to discuss formally the arrangements for their coming to Paris regularly, I think that was the coldest bedroom I have ever been in – it was a huge long bedroom with one tiny little radiator and I thought, will I survive the night or will I wake up frozen! Otherwise it was such a wonderful place - nice meals, long conversations with Don and Mattie about psychoanalysis and lots of other things. I remember hearing his conversations with you about literature. Mattie would come in and have something to say while she was also working in the kitchen – you were talking about Shakespeare, Milton, Bion and so on. I did mention in my talk that Don was not very favourable about Bion at first, but your mother “converted” him. Did you know that already?

M: I knew my mother encouraged my father to have analysis with Bion.

JG: So she knew Bion before Roland did?

M: Yes. It was her idea – she said my father didn't need analysis but he would be very interested in having analysis with Bion.

JG: Bion writes about “Roland” in his Memoir.

M: I believe he took the name from there even though the character is different.

JG: There was reciprocal stimulation.

M: My mother thought it was my father who encouraged Bion to write the *Memoir* in fictional form – my father would have approved of that.

JG: In the last times I saw Bion I thought he was a much warmer, interactive person. When I was training (I think we had about five evenings with him) I don't remember what Don may have said – if he said anything – when we were candidates – to Bion; I guess the word I would

use is that Bion was “awesome”. Then he was Director of the Clinic [at the Institute] at that time for the adult patients. One of my patients was diagnosed as suffering from obsessional neurosis, and there were problems in her analysis, so I discussed her several times with Bion. At the same time I was in supervision with Rosenfeld; Rosenfeld was often very critical of me; but I felt I knew where I was with his help with the patient. With Bion I couldn’t be sure what he was saying but think he had some positive influence on me that I didn’t recognize. I was present at the meetings for most of those papers of his in *Second Thoughts*; there I was stimulated and inspired but often there were things I did not understand. In the paper on “Remembering Mrs Klein”² – in the Melanie Klein Trust along with Hanna’s and Betty’s – Mrs Klein said she had heard a wellknown analyst the night before who said Dr Bion’s paper was perfectly clear, but she herself had had to read it several times and was still often unsure what it *all* meant.

M: Bion himself was always satirizing that kind of attitude. He said perhaps he didn’t know what he was saying but he was sure “they” did.

JG: That is curious that I can’t visualise or remember what anybody else said in those Institute seminars with Bion. I am sure there was some discussion.

M: Maybe they were all completely silent.

JG: It was quite a big group of candidates that Don and I were in – 16 or 18 – whereas some of the other years were only 5 or 6. There were several World War II veteran people like myself; quite a few South Americans; and a woman from Egypt.

I feel we had a positive international attitude, and Don and I had friendly relationships with others in training: for example, Bob Gosling, very English, and Egle Laufer, originally from Vienna, and still very active in the London Institute and British Society.

JG: Subsequently over the years Elizabeth Spillius has done much work editing papers and books which reflect different points of view on psychoanalysis.

M: She told me she felt bad about not asking my mother to teach at the Institute.

JG: When Mattie was with Don you see, she was treated in the same way as he, to some degree.

² Dr Gammill’s “Some personal reflections of Melanie Klein” (first published in English in *Journal of Melanie Klein and Object Relations*) may be found on the Melanie Klein Trust website.

M: They were ostracised.

JG: I remember a meeting at Broadway in England for IPA training, and I was delegate of the Paris Society. At the last meeting we were talking together and Joe Sandler was at my table. I said that Don and Mattie were picking me up and driving me down to Roger Money-Kyrle's. He said "James, you mustn't speak so loud! The Meltzers are persona non grata."

M: That is wonderful. It's really quite extraordinary. Why did they ostracise Roger Money-Kyrle?

JG: Perhaps because he was close to Don; but I think many analysts continued to have much esteem for Money-Kyrle.

M: He was very much an English gentleman.

JG: He was one of my supervisors and I thought very highly of him. He was even a little bit ahead of Bion on a certain number of things.

M: He wrote good books. He anticipates Bion's grid and was a genuine philosopher, I don't know if people really appreciated that.

JG: Mrs Klein thought that Rosenfeld was very hard worker, and he helped her with her bibliographies and so on. She felt that Money-Kyrle didn't work very hard in the late 1950's. But he had worked for years, editing books and so on; so I think Mrs Klein expected people to be totally dedicated and didn't understand that not everyone is willing or should sacrifice themselves to psychoanalysis till the end of their days.

To get back to Don... coming here to Paris regularly he was greatly appreciated and I always learned something from his point of view about patients; he always had some different line. I don't think he had as deep a feeling for and identification with the parents of children in difficulty as your mother did. He could sometimes be too severe in what he said about parents, whereas Mattie had more sympathy with parents' difficulties. I thought it was wonderful, the dialogue between them. A lot of people here thought Don had genius, charisma and so on, which was true; but some tended not to see Mattie in her value of depth and wisdom. But I felt they were an ideal couple for psychoanalytic dialogue. Don was always deeply respectful of what Mattie said. Sometimes he wasn't in agreement, and sometimes she wasn't in agreement with him; I thought that was wonderful. Perhaps I didn't understand fully his idea about aesthetic conflict – and he regretted I didn't see things that way, but I never lost his friendship over it.

There were sometimes things I was a bit cross with Don about. One thing was, (the things I hold against Don! It doesn't mean I didn't deeply appreciate and love him) he asked me to write something for a book he was making of papers in honour of Roger Money-Kyrle, so I sent him my rough translation of my article on *Oedipus at Colonus* and *Oedipus Rex*. I sent it also to Roger and he was pleased with it, but it never came out.

M: No, that book never came out.

JG: It was planned to be by people who had worked with Money-Kyrle and in honour of him. I don't know what happened. Don had so many things going on in different countries and so on. He sometimes wanted to do more than he could.

M: He started to forget things after the accident though he denied it. It didn't affect his work.

JG: There was I think an underlying depression after the accident and Mattie's decline that he had to deny. When you have to deny that, you lose contact with some aspects of things. Did Mattie die before Money-Kyrle? I can't remember the date.

M: She died in 1987. I forget when Money-Kyrle died. Don certainly respected him a great deal.

JG: The thing I never talked to them directly about was when they arranged for Bion to come back to England and he died so unexpectedly. That must have been a terrible blow to them. Then the film about Bion – I did give money for it, because I had the feeling that if I didn't, Don would feel I was not a true friend. But I did say to him, I don't see why there is such an urgency about this film." He replied, "I am afraid that Bion and his work will be forgotten if we don't do the film." That I thought was very strange.

M: We were very involved in the film – I helped to write the script.

JG: It was said that the Indians involved were very difficult to work with and always wanted more money?

M: That was why it was never finished. Only small bits were filmed which make no sense and the sound was terrible too.

JG: I felt they worked themselves almost to Mattie's death, because they took on extra work to get money for that film. Now Don said that to me with such conviction, that I didn't dare say anything else. After Mattie's death I felt I should have been direct with him, and said that Bion's work

was so well known now, that maybe the film would have added an extra dimension but that was all. I think I should have said it more strongly at the time. I don't know.

There is so much written about Bion now in France, some of which I think is intellectual rubbish. I think what you've written is about his enduring value for psychoanalysis, from a literary point of view and joining the two together. A lot of the things written about psychoanalysis and literature are quite interesting but rather superficial. And a lot have the idea of 'explaining' rather than trying to contribute to *understanding* of the literary works. And curiously enough in sorting through my books this summer, I came across one paragraph in my paper about Mrs Klein that had been taken out in the French version [*reads*]:

It comes to mind in writing this article that Mrs Klein never mentioned to me anything about Austria, where she was born and grew up, nor of Hungary. I recall chance evocations of Berlin, of congresses elsewhere in Germany, and mention of vacations in France and Switzerland. On returning from a holiday in 1958, she mentioned having read *Le Temps Retrouve* of Proust, which she qualified as a "staggering work of genius". She sometimes spoke of her commentary on Aeschylus' *Oresteia* on which she was working; and sometimes quotes from English literature would come to mind to illustrate a point. Curiously, I don't think she ever quote in my hearing anything from German literature. So, for me, Mrs Klein has always seemed more a person of Western than of Central Europe, though perhaps her holidays in Switzerland in her last years put her geographically at the crossroads of her life experience.

It is as though many French analysts want to deny that Mrs Klein had intellectual and cultural interests beyond psychoanalysis. I had not read *Le Temps Retrouvé* at that time;³ I think it is interesting that Mrs Klein used the word "staggering" to describe the impact, which is what encouraged me to read it. That paragraph was entirely left out in the French edition of my contribution to the Centenary. It suggests that she had a deep appreciation of literature, but many people here in France have a need to denigrate Mrs Klein. Perhaps a woman is not supposed to be a genius in psychoanalysis!

The other thing I must ask Elizabeth [Spillius] about: Mrs Klein with Mattie and me emphasized the importance of her article on weaning; Mrs

3 At the University of Illinois in 1946, we only read *Du Cote du Chez Swann* [JG].

Klein said that after some discussion in her group it was decided not to include it in the 1921-45 collection of articles. Now in the latest edition in English I saw that “Weaning” is included. How that was decided on I don’t know. Mrs Klein had wondered whether to include it or not and she said that some of the people in her group in 1952 felt it was not purely analytic. But there are many fundamental things in it. In her last papers and in discussions with Mattie and me she returned a lot to her 1936-7 articles on “Weaning” and on “Love, guilt and reparation”.

M: You wouldn’t like to write a little paper about those last works? You said you use them as an introduction for students.

JG: Well... I feel those last papers are very important; and very clear if one reads them attentively. One felt her heart was in it, in what she said to me and what she said to Mattie about these last papers. She hoped that she could write something like Freud’s *Outline of Psychoanalysis* to give an overall view of her work and to correct some things. With me and I think also with Mattie, she talked for example about the case of Grete in 1932 which evokes repression as a central problem. She said “No – it wasn’t excessive repression; it was projective identification of the lively parts of Greta which were libidinal and aggressive, and her epistemophilic instinct.” That was one of the things she felt needed correcting in a survey of her work.

But I am impressed that some people in the Kleinian group don’t seem to pay much attention to *The Psychoanalysis of Children* and the enormous number of ideas that are there and need to be thought about. Even Herbert [Rosenfeld] in his paper on male homosexuality does not make reference to Mrs Klein’s patients, Mr A and Mr B, in *The Psychoanalysis of Children*.

Don once said that I was too loyal to Mrs Klein and her work, and that it inhibited my creativity. But I don’t agree with him. I guess I felt he was like an older brother. And Mattie as a sister more my age.

M: What else should be corrected? You said somewhere that Mrs Klein once said to you thank God you didn’t put everything down to envy.

JG: She said thank God you didn’t interpret envy when it wasn’t there. I think she went a bit too far in the paper on envy – putting almost all aggression into envy. It was written for the Geneva congress of 1955 and then she made it into a book. By the time I was in supervision with her in ’57 envy was sort of behind her as a topic to be developed, though she certainly still thought it was extremely important. That book unfortunately

coloured some of the perception of her in France, as though that was the only thing she talked about, and that the *Narrative* put forth all she had to say about child analysis. The fact that she wrote those short last papers I think gives a more balanced view. I think another thing she could have developed more (and did in supervision) was the importance of internalizing not just the object but the links *with* the object.⁴

M: Anticipating Bion?

JG: In the GERPEN paper I wrote in 2004 I reproduced this drawing from a child patient of Mrs Klein. [*shows drawing of links, with child in the centre*]. This notion of internalizing links or relations was something she talked about in supervision. She also said to me that with the “monster” [combined object], it is nearly always a combined couple that is not making love but losing one in the other in a dangerous aggressive way; but there could also be a good monster in the child’s mind. I have not found this formulation in her writings.

I don’t think your mother talked much at the Tavistock about her supervisions with Mrs Klein, because people there would say that she was trying to make herself effectively Mrs Klein’s interpreter. I think she was hesitant about it. Who was the third person your mother had supervision with (for children)? There were Mrs Klein, Mrs Bick, and was maybe Margaret Evans the third? [*Meg doesn’t know.*] Miss Evans left London in 1955, and her role for child analysis was taken over by Mrs Bick. Some in the Klein group were critical of Miss Evans. However when Mrs Klein learned I was returning to the United States in 1960, she wrote to me that I should contact Miss Evans. Mrs Klein suggested I do my second supervision with Mrs Bick. However I chose Hanna Segal for this supervision; I had very much appreciated her way of seeing things in a seminar that was open to all the candidates of our year. Hanna had just finished her training for child analysis and was a bit critical of Mrs Bick. It’s true Mrs Bick was very technical. I came to like and love Mrs Bick later, but not when she did her seminars at the Institute; she seemed to me very dogmatic; so I chose Hanna.

[*Dr Gammill brings out the book Love, Guilt and Reparation to find where Mrs Klein quotes Keats’ sonnet on Chapman’s Homer*].⁵

4 Suggested on the last page of “On the sense of loneliness”: “introjection of the personalities of the actual parents and of their *relation to the child*” (underlined by me) [JG].

5 *Writings of Melanie Klein* Vol I, pp. 334-5.

She learned ancient Greek from her brother Emanuel. She had a vision of him as a literary genius; I think she mourned him as a genius and identified with him as such. She recalled that somewhere in Sophocles' work, her brother had noted the word *kleinos*, meaning as an adjective "renowned, illustrious". But she did not recall where. They had read several lines/ passages together. This summer in clearing books to bring to France, I came upon the word in *Oedipus Rex* (l. 1207), which as a noun means "a young man chosen for his beauty". It is evident that Mrs Klein displaced much of the Oedipus complex onto her brother, and the multidimensionality of *thalamepolos* a few lines on is charged with significance for the epistemophilic instinct and multiple points of view.

But, dear friends, I am rambling on too long, and not dealing adequately with remembrances of Don. The new generation of psychoanalysts across the world, influenced by Kleinian and post-Kleinian thinking, can integrate their own points of view linked with their analytic experience, personal and with patients. Their reading of books, including Meltzer, should be influenced by what Mrs Klein appreciated in the quote from Proust.



James Gammill, Geneviève Haag, Eric Klein (Clyne), Michel Haag in 1979 at James Gammill's house near Alabama, Tennessee