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GUILT (KLEIN) In *Studies in Hysteria* Freud had placed importance on persecutory feelings, a significance which increased with his development of the structural model wherein conscious and unconscious guilt marked one effect on the ego of super-ego criticism. Elaborating on Freud's work, Klein in 'Criminal tendencies in normal children' sought to show how primitive unbearable guilt feelings may be externalised and then enacted, the external substitute scenario feeling more manageable than its internal correlate. This type of movement – from scenario to scenario, object to object, in both internal and external worlds – Klein came to see as fuelled by epistemophilic, aggressive and omnipotent impulses on the one hand and guilt on the other. Thus, as the primary object and its early substitutes each became successively encumbered with a burden of guilt over the subject's aggressive phantasies, 'new lands' could be sought out for freer exploration. In this way guilt contributes to symbol formation and representational processes in general. Klein's seminal ideas from 'The importance of symbol-formation in the development of the ego' were later developed by Segal.

As Klein's thinking evolved with her key notions of the paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions and the interplay between these, she catalogued more precisely the very early developmental and 'positional' vicissitudes of affects including guilt. In the paranoid-schizoid state talion law prevails and guilt tends to be more primitive and persecutory, associated with terrors about the torture and destruction of the ego or self. Primitive defences such as splitting, fragmentation, externalisation or projective identification are here mobilised in attempts to manage what otherwise feels unmanageable.

With increasing psychic integration and the recognition of whole objects, guilt shifts away from anxieties about the ego's survival towards concern for the survival of the good object, the formerly split-off shadow of which is increasingly recognised. Klein sees the essence of guilt existing in the feeling that the loved object has been damaged by the self's aggressivity.

Depressive position guilt occurs in tandem with a more robust sense of self and respect for psychic truth, reparative impulses towards damaged yet evidently surviving objects bolstering the perception of the object as a whole object and ego integration. Thus for Klein, guilt in the *depressive position promotes empathy and creative and reparative object relations, supported by the hegemony of the life instinct over the death instinct. Guilt is here more bearable and by-and-large more accessible to consciousness.

Klein, M. [1948] (1975) 'On the theory of anxiety and guilt' in *Envy and Gratitude and Other Works 1946–1963*. London: Hogarth Press, 25–42.

R. Wil.
