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From Freud to Klein, and *Wild Strawberries*

Melanie Klein's significance rests partly on her application of psychoanalysis to children, evident in her earliest work, but throughout her career we find consistency and evolution in the development of her ideas relating to an internal object world for children and adults alike. Most of Klein's writing refers to examples from her practice and involves formulation of her key concepts, often in relation to Sigmund Freud. Klein rarely applied her ideas to a wider context, but there are some writings on culture, including notes for a review of *Citizen Kane* (1941).¹ The relevance of Kleinian thinking for culture rests on its conception of art as a practice that is capable of articulating great negativity for both the artist and the viewer through an understanding of the imagination that is, ultimately, constructive and benign. This vision of an imaginary world operating from birth will be explored further by considering the application of Klein's ideas to film and, in particular, *Wild Strawberries*, one of Ingmar Bergman's most psychoanalytic films. The latter offers comparisons to Klein's preoccupation with the death drive, and the representation of a cathartic process, in which the lead character models a process of psychic transformation and integration.

Applying Klein's ideas to art and film undoubtedly raises methodological issues because of her immersion in psychoanalytic practice and discourse. The elaboration of Kleinian ideas by her contemporaries and theorists dedicated to her ideas is a necessary resource for the application of her ideas to culture. Throughout the chapter I will call on points made by Kleinians including Joan Riviere, Adrian Stokes and Hanna Segal, as well as more recent accounts of the theory. To start with, I will focus on how Klein's ideas build on the work of Freud. In addition to the paranoid-schizoid position and the depressive position, introduced in

the previous chapter, key concepts in Klein's work include those of the inner world, introjection, projection, splitting and envy.

The Kleinian concept of the internal world structured by unconscious impulses is one that requires clarification at the outset. As Klein's fellow analyst Riviere says, for many people the idea that an individual internalises other people or objects is difficult to accept.² Riviere explains that this is partly because this inner world represents the 'unknown' and is thus encountered with apprehension. She also argues that we are more conscious of the threat posed by internal figures at the expense of recognising good elements that have been introjected.³ More important for this chapter is the idea that Klein continues to represent an understanding of the psyche that can throw into question and challenge preconceptions about the individual, and by extension their social world. The appeal of the Kleinian model for analysing Bergman's work rests on its ability to provide a model of integration whilst simultaneously maintaining a vision of negativity. In other words the goal for both Klein and Bergman is not an unequivocal good object, but instead they value awareness and recognition of the way in which good and bad are intertwined. In Klein's case, understanding this vision requires analysis of her response to Freud.

Klein's development of Freudian ideas

Klein's adherence to Freud is apparent throughout her work and includes her development of Freud's later work on the death drive. From the outset, she uses Freudian ideas about sexuality in the analysis of both children and adults. We also find that Klein includes some reflections on the implication of psychoanalytic ideas for the understanding of creativity and culture. An early example of Klein's response to both Freud and her interest in culture is evident in her 1923 essay titled 'Early Analysis'. Here she picks up Freud's account of Leonardo da Vinci. She notes how Freud's analysis draws attention to da Vinci's phantasy of a culture descending on him in his infancy. Klein follows Freud in relating this to da Vinci's early memory of his mother and 'a condensation of Leonardo's early infantile sexual theories'.⁴ Klein goes on, inspired by Freud, to emphasise that da Vinci did not become fixated on the meaning of his infantile sexual theories about this experience. '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.'⁵ Thus, Klein agrees with Freud that artistic activity can