

## REPARATION AND TIKKUN: A COMPARISON OF THE KLEINIAN AND KABBALISTIC CONCEPTS

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### INTRODUCTION

Klein's concept of reparation is original, and thought by some to be her most important contribution to psychoanalytic theory. Referring to fantasies of repairing the damaged internal object, reparation overcomes the anxiety and guilt of the depressive position, re-creating the sense of security and relatedness which is based on the wholeness and perfection of the internal object.

There is a Kabbalistic myth<sup>1</sup> whose central concept, tikkun, can be translated into English as restoration, restitution or reparation. This myth describes the cosmos as fragmenting during the process of creation. Restoration of the cosmos to wholeness and perfection is the task given to mankind. Tikkun is both the process of reparation and its realization.

There is a striking congruence between the Kabbalistic myth of tikkun and the Kleinian concept of reparation, both metaphors of creation, fragmentation and re-creation—of the mystical cosmos on the one hand, of the internal object world on the other. In their manifest structures, underlying themes, forms of symbolic expression and in the issues involved, these two notions seem remarkably analogous.

Klein's concept of the depressive position, including reparation, has in fact been singled out (Winnicott, 1962) as a contribution whose importance ranks with Freud's concept of the Oedipus complex—concerning the two-body relationship of infant and mother, where Freud's concept concerns the three-body relationship. Therefore, it might be expected that cultural

representations of the dynamics of the depressive position exist—just as the Oedipus myth expresses the psychodynamics Freud uncovered.

Tikkun is an age-old myth, which was transformed by the genius of the 'revolutionary mystic' Isaac Luria (Bion, 1970, p. 75). This paper will attempt to demonstrate that tikkun gives mythical expression to the dynamics that Klein's concept of reparation captures on the level of the individual psyche.

### THE MYTH OF TIKKUN

#### *Lurianic Kabbalah*

The myth of tikkun presented here is the work of the sixteenth-century Kabbalist Isaac Luria. Created in the wake of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain, a reality of catastrophic proportions, this myth integrated historical experience into Kabbalistic cosmology, giving symbolic expression and transcendental meaning to exile and the fragmentation of existence. The longing for an end to exile was interpreted as an expression of the desire for tikkun: re-creation of original harmony and overcoming the separation from God.

The Lurianic myth presents three cosmic events: *tsimtsum* (God's self-limitation), *shevirath ha-kelim* (the breaking of the vessels); and tikkun (reparation of the defect in existence caused by the breaking of the vessels).

*Tsimtsum* (God's self-limitation). Luria reasoned that God's first act must have been the creation of nothing, prior to the creation of the

<sup>1</sup> Material on the Kabbalah is drawn from the work of Gershom Scholem, creator of the modern study of Jewish mysticism.



world *from* nothing, and saw God creating 'nothing' through *tsimtsum*, contracting himself into a smaller space. The 'emanation' or projection of creation could then follow. All subsequent acts of creation, from the first mystical universes to the creation of the world, are seen as having this same dual movement of contraction-emanation.

*The Breaking of the Vessels.* The first cosmic creation was a being of light in human form. Beams of light radiated out from him, except from his eyes, from which the light streamed out in sparks, or isolated points. This 'world of punctiform light' or 'world of chaos' was a weakness in creation, whose true aim is stable, finite form. To provide form for the holy sparks of light, special vessels were created to catch and hold them. (In the Kabbalah, anything which is not bounded is seen to risk rising up to rejoin infinity—thus, vessels or garments are created to contain, limit and shape existence.)

But the force of the light proved so powerful the vessels couldn't contain it, and shattered under the impact. The disintegrative forces of chaos thus caused the breaking of the vessels, made to structure being, and scattered the holy sparks throughout creation where they remain, imprisoned in the shards of the vessels (the shells of evil), waiting for the action of mankind to free them. Most significantly, the breaking caused the 'exile of the Shekhinah'—the feminine, maternal aspect of God—at once part of God and separate from him. The breaking of the vessels, the first fault in existence while at the same time intrinsic to it, is the deepest meaning of the experience of 'exile' (Scholem, 1941). In mythical time, everything has since remained broken and scattered.

*Tikkun* (restoration, restitution, reparation). The catastrophe of the breaking of the vessels transformed the process of creation into one of re-creation, which in mythical thought pertains to all aspects of existence. *Tikkun* means freeing the sparks and raising them to their correct 'spiritual' level, repairing the broken vessels, unifying God through the return of the Shekhinah, and unifying man's soul as well. Scholem (1941, p. 286): 'through the *Tikkun* [man] breaks the exile, the historical exile... and that inner exile in which all creation groans'.

When *tikkun* is realized, creation will be

returned to its intended state of wholeness, harmony and perfection, heralding the Messianic age. *Tikkun* expresses the conviction that catastrophe can be overcome.

#### COMPARISONS OF TIKKUN AND REPARATION

##### *The metaphors*

The Kabbalistic myth of *tikkun* is a metaphor of creation, fragmentation and re-creation which expresses the same dynamics that underlie the Kleinian concepts of the depressive position and reparation.

*Creation.* The creation of the cosmos and the origin of the object world (and simultaneously of psychic structure) both begin with an inner transformation, whose aim is to impose limitation. In the Kabbalah the limiting transformation occurs within God, who contracts himself into a smaller space, while in Kleinian theory it is the power of the death instinct which is attenuated by being transformed into aggression. Projection outward follows (emanation in the Kabbalah, deflection in Kleinian theory) resulting in creation of the cosmos in the one case, and of the 'bad' persecutory part object in the other. This projection relieves the subject (God, the infantile psyche) of some part of its evil/aggression, limitation being seen as inherently related to evil in the Kabbalah. The continuous creation of the cosmos and of the object world and psychic structure is accomplished by the analogous processes of contraction-emanation in the Kabbalah and of introjection-projection in Kleinian theory. Structure is achieved—in the Kabbalah it is the vessels, meant to contain and overcome chaos, just as the whole internal maternal object overcomes earlier splitting in Kleinian theory.

*Fragmentation.* However, structure is not stable in either case. In both the cosmos and the internal object world fragmentation and loss are experienced. In Klein's description of the infantile psyche, aggression is fantasized to be so powerful that it smashes the object to bits (Klein, 1935). Similarly, in the Lurianic Kabbalah the first being created was so powerful that it could not be contained, and shattered the vessels. (While it was clear to the Kabbalists that the



breaking of the vessels was related to the question of the origin and nature of 'evil', there was nonetheless profound disagreement among them as to whether evil was the cause or the effect of the breaking of the vessels, of the fault in existence).

It is interesting to note that the concepts of evil in the Kabbalah and of the death instinct and aggression in Kleinian theory seem to be analogous. Evil, in religion, refers to the disintegrative forces inherent in the human condition—the forces of chaos—and the suffering and terror they inspire. Death is the most disintegrative and terrifying of all experience, threatening human relatedness and revealing the fragility of the structures of human life (Berger, 1967). And the question of evil is at the heart of the Kabbalah (Bloom, 1975), whose mystical rites strove to overcome its power (Scholem, 1960). Klein, for her part, gave primary importance to the death instinct, along with the annihilation anxiety and fear of disintegration which it engenders. Aggression represents a similar threat of disintegration, though of the object rather than of the self. Further, where it is held that the Kabbalah, in its reflection on evil, 'sought and found, a power of the mind over the universe of death' (Bloom, 1975, p. 47), in Klein's thinking, similarly, mastery of the death instinct and its derivative, aggression, is both the original and the ultimate task of the psyche. (Thus reparation deals on the intrapsychic level with the threat of death or annihilation, a role which Freud (1927) attributed to religion, and which is in fact symbolically expressed in tikkun.)

The result of fragmentation in the Kabbalah is loss of an aspect of God, with the exile of the Shekhinah. The desire for contact with the deity, the 'Absent One', is a major theme of all mystical experience, expressed in images of quest or journey, of sexual encounter, of possessing God within or being one with him and of harmony, unity and wholeness (James, 1902; Underhill, 1911; Scholem, 1941). This theme, clearly related to the issues of separation and loss, underlies the Kabbalistic myth of tikkun. This corresponds to the Kleinian depressive position, where fragmentation results in loss of the loved whole object, both internalized and real—depressive anxiety encompassing both (Klein, 1935).

The reaction to loss in the Kabbalah is longing for the return of the absent Shekhinah, as for Klein it is longing for the return of the loved object—and longing for the return of wholeness and harmony in both. This reaction motivates the desire for tikkun as it does for reparation.

Thus a relationship between evil/aggression and the experience of fragmentation and loss is described in both systems. Although the impersonal death instinct is primary in Kleinian theory, it is nonetheless personal aggression which damages the object, to which guilt, motivated by genuine love and concern, is the developmentally appropriate response. In contrast, in the Kabbalah mankind is responsible, not for the original breaking, but for perpetuation of the states of fragmentation and exile. Tikkun means 'mend' and 'amend', while reparation includes 'making amends for' as well. Tikkun repairs and perfects the world, while reparation also makes amends for wrongdoing.

*Re-creation.* In response to this fragmentation and loss, tikkun is the task set for mankind in the Kabbalah, as reparation is for the individual psyche. In tikkun the forces of evil are overcome, just as reparation overcomes the effects of aggression. In tikkun the vessels are restored, as in reparation the smashed bits of the damaged object are put back together. In tikkun the exiled Shekhinah returns, as reparation brings back the lost maternal object. Tikkun paves the way for communion between the unified God and the restored 'soul', where reparation permits an improved relationship between the mother and the integrated self. Tikkun is to end the state of exile, reparation to assure the inner sense of home. Tikkun means the coming of the Messianic age, reparation the realization of stability, security and wellbeing.

*Resemblance to Gnostic myth.* In its treatment of the themes of creation, fragmentation and re-creation, the Lurianic Kabbalah is held to be a perfect example of Gnostic thought (Scholem, 1974) manifested in the view of creation as beginning with a crisis within God, in the problem of separating good from evil, in the need to restore the cosmos, and in mankind's having a central role to play in this drama. These Gnostic features also strongly resemble aspects of Kleinian theory. One Gnostic myth identifies the fear of death and destruction as the



experiential beginning of the human quest (Pagels, 1979), recalling Klein's emphasis on the primary motivational importance of the death instinct.

### *Symbolic forms of expression*

Some of the symbolic forms in which reparation is expressed also express tikkun (though Kabbalistic imagery for tikkun has assumed many other forms as well).

*Language.* In the Kabbalah, language has mystical value. The name of God is identified with God himself (one of his euphemisms being 'the Name'). Therefore God's reunification in tikkun also means reunification of his name, split in two when the breaking of the vessels fragmented existence—tearing the YH away from the WH (Yahweh).

In Kleinian thinking the use of language, particularly the act of referring to things by their names (Klein, 1927) implies recognition of their reality. Segal (1957) points out that the Greek term which has given us the word 'symbol' means 'bringing together' or 'integrating', symbolizing—including naming—being understood as an integrative, constructive act. The fundamental aspect of reparation, acceptance of psychic reality—expressed by the naming of objects and experience—means that magic, omnipotence and splitting have been overcome (Segal, 1973). Calling out the word 'Mama' (Klein, 1929), implying the recognition of dependency (Meltzer, 1978) and thus of psychic reality, initiates reparation.

*Organic imagery.* Kabbalistic imagery is based largely on organic symbols. Evil is identified with natural waste products of organic processes, compared to bad 'blood, foul waters' (Scholem, 1971). The Kabbalah also abounds with erotic symbols: images of the phallus, the womb, semen, and children seen as God's emanations. Sexual union and 'true marriage' symbolically realize the union of God and Shekhinah—and of the mystical elements 'abba and ima' (father and mother) (Scholem, 1974)—and thus achieve tikkun.

In Klein's description of infantile psychic functioning, body parts and functions may have the meaning both of damaging and repairing.

The object can be destroyed by being devoured, or by weapons such as urine, faeces, teeth, nails, kicking feet and striking hands. Sexuality, on the other hand, has reparative significance, on several levels. In fantasy, genitals symbolize not only procreation, but also reparation (re-creation) (Klein, 1952), and sexual relations may serve to repair fantasized damage done to the oedipal parents during childhood (Klein, 1937). Further, since infantile sadistic fantasies are often aimed at separating the parents, particularly sexually, reparative fantasies accompanying sexual relations are often attempts not only to restore each parent individually, but also to reunite them (Klein, 1932).

*Anthropomorphism.* Both the Lurianic Kabbalah and the internal world as Klein apprehended it have marked anthropomorphic features. In the Lurianic Kabbalah all creation began with a creature of light in the shape of man. Luria also transformed God's abstract attributes of the earlier Kabbalah into anthropomorphic structures, called 'faces' (partsufim) such as 'abba and ima'. The infantile internal world Klein describes is modelled on body parts, external objects and object relations. The structuring processes in both systems (contraction/emanation, introjection/projection) are modelled on breathing or nutrition.

To summarize, the primitive materials which the infantile psyche described by Klein uses to symbolize experience are also found (among many others) in the symbolic systems of tikkun. Tikkun and reparation share the use of names or naming, organic imagery, and anthropomorphic structures.

### *Issues involved in the two concepts*

*Who is repaired?* In the Kabbalistic myth of tikkun, is it the individual, the other, or the cosmos in its entirety, including God, which is repaired? In Kleinian theory is it the internal object, the real external object, the self or all of these who are repaired? Scholem (1941, p. 279) quotes one Kabbalist: "'in everyone there is something of his fellow man. Therefore, whoever sins, injures not only himself but also that part of himself which belongs to another ...' [Man] is





conceived as a cosmic being which contains the whole world in itself'. Tikkun repairs the self, the other and the world, and God is healed as well.

The Kabbalistic myth has captured the same reality that Klein has in her concept of reparation. Though reparation of the internal maternal object seems to be the essence of the notion, it also extends to the real external object. Further, through the symbolic equivalences of mother's body, own body, internal object, self and the world as a whole, it is in fact all of experience which is restored (Petot, 1979).

*Who is responsible for accomplishing tikkun or reparation?* In the Lurianic Kabbalah, raising the sparks is mankind's responsibility in part, but ultimately it is the co-operation between mankind and God that is held to mend the tear in the fabric of being (Scholem, 1941). In the Kleinian concept, however, it is not entirely clear if the mother plays a role in successful reparation, or if the child's ability to repair the internal object is considered to be independent of her presence, qualities and behaviour. Klein seemed to say that reparation depends on the child alone, without help from the mother, although the process of reparation is held to be reinforced by identification with the maternal object (Klein, 1952).

However, other authors have taken different positions. Winnicott (1962) emphasized the importance of the continued presence of the mother in the development of the capacity for reparation (as for transitional experience). Meltzer (1978) thought that Klein underestimated the importance of the feeling of helplessness and the ability to ask the mother for help. He noted that in Klein's analysis of Richard, when she interpreted to him that he wanted to put together all the pieces but did not feel capable of it, Richard's relation to her became a constant appeal for help, a 'longing for me to support his desire to make reparation' (Klein, 1961, p. 151). Another way that the mother may play a role in developing the child's capacity for reparation is by forgiving aggression, internalization of forgiveness supporting the belief that good relations are still possible (Meltzer, 1967).

Remarkable here is the fact that in the case of a difference between Klein's formulation and the

Kabbalah's, other analysts, following Klein, have shifted the balance in the direction of the Kabbalistic view that reparation is, in its origins, to be seen as a collaborative effort.

*Reality v. fantasy/symbol.* On what level are tikkun and reparation carried out? In the Kabbalah, both action and inner processes effect the restoration of existence, and both may accelerate or retard the process. Acts, both symbolic and concrete (fulfilment of religious commandments, Kabbalistic rites and correct living), repair the world in its outward aspects, while prayer and meditation repair it inwardly. Klein describes reparation as carried out and realized on the level of symbolic activity and fantasy, though she and others do sometimes add 'and in reality' or 'and in action'.

The relation between reality on the one hand, and fantasy (Klein) or symbol (Kabbalah) on the other is treated similarly in the two systems. In Klein's work, reality and fantasy are described as reflecting, interacting with and influencing each other, and experience is seen as being constructed from an interaction between fantasy and reality—the internal and external object worlds—whose structures are similar, though not identical. In the Kabbalah, the natural and 'spiritual' worlds also interact, though the structures of the two realms are held to be identical, and in contrast, it is the natural world which is seen as the symbol, representing the higher 'spiritual' reality.

For Klein there are several modes of symbolic action which facilitate achievement and expression of reparation, activities which are recreational, creative or re-creating in nature.

— *Play* is the means *par excellence* by which the child may express its reparative tendency, providing unending opportunity for reconstruction of what has in fantasy been destroyed. Reparation may even be one of the motives that inspire children to play. The ability to reconstruct reassures the child about the integrity of the mother's body and of its own (Klein, 1932).

— *Artistic creativity* is motivated mainly by the need to restore the damaged object. While sublimation spares the object by redirecting the drive, reparation (in Klein's view an aspect of sublimation) repairs the damage done to it.



Klein (1929) interpreted the reparative function of artistic creativity in the case of Ruth Kjar: 'It is obvious that the desire to make reparation, to make good the injury psychically done to the mother and also to restore herself was at the bottom of the compelling urge to paint these portraits of her relatives'. And Segal (1952, p. 199): 'all creation is really a re-creation of a once loved and once whole, but now lost and ruined object, a ruined internal world and self'.

— *Psychoanalysis* provides a renewed opportunity for reparation. In analysis, 'patients are enabled to revise their relation to their parents... and to rehabilitate them to some extent' (Klein, 1940, p. 337). Development of the capacity to repair the good object may even be considered the aim of psychoanalysis in Kleinian theory (Abraham & Torok, 1967).

*Ineffective tikkun and reparation.* Not all attempts at tikkun were believed effective or proved acceptable to the Kabbalists, who feared their mystical prayer and rites might degenerate into attempts at magic. Scholem (1941) distinguishes between true prayer, which acknowledges God, and magical prayer, which aims to gain influence over him. In addition, true prayer is to be carried out in a mood of contemplative concentration, termed 'unification', and of wholehearted intention, a turning of the total being towards the aim of tikkun.

In Klein's view as well, reparation is not invariably effective. Reparative attempts fall on a continuum, ranging from highly effective to defensive and disturbed (Petot, 1982). Three types of ineffective reparation are described in the literature: defective, failed and false.

— *Defective mechanisms* include manic reparation and compulsive repetition of reparative efforts. Manic reparation is directed against awareness of aggression and ambivalence, and the attempt is to repair the object without guilt or the feelings of dependency or loss (Klein, 1940). Manic reparation, in its attempt to control the object, is expressed in the magical prayer of Kabbalistic mysticism.

Parenthetically, it is striking in this connexion that the false Messiah Sabbatai Sevi (heir to Lurianism), who succeeded in bringing about tikkun of the inner world (ecstasy) but failed in his self-proclaimed mission to end the historical

state of exile, has been described as manic-depressive (Scholem, 1957).

Compulsive repetition of reparative acts is also a defence against awareness of aggressive fantasies, and thus can never come to an end. Such compulsive behaviour is of course expressed in religious ritual (Freud, 1907).

— *Failure* of reparative attempts may be due to intense anxiety about the aggressive attacks on the maternal object. In that case, even reparative efforts may be experienced as aggressive (Riviere, 1936) or the damage may be felt to be irremediable (Klein, 1952). Most authors agree that such failure is a source of despair (Riviere, 1936; Klein, 1952; Segal, 1973). Winnicott (1963) felt that failure leads to a loss of the capacity for concern—regression in object relatedness. Here, anxiety prevents the emergence of the emotional state necessary for reparation to succeed.

— *False reparation* was described by Winnicott (1948), when the child must deal with his mother's guilt and depression before he can deal with his own. This can, however, be exploited as a means of escaping responsibility for one's own aggression, a responsibility that Winnicott (like Klein) considered an important achievement in psychic development. Here too, the necessary mood of guilt, remorse or depression is absent.

To summarize, the Kabbalistic myth expresses many of the same reasons for the failure of tikkun that Klein and others have identified for the ineffectiveness of reparation: lack of acknowledgement (of God, of psychic reality); lack of wholehearted intention and/or an appropriate emotional attitude (which in the case of reparation includes guilt, regret, love and concern for the object); and/or attempts at magical control (of God, of the object).

#### *Underlying themes*

Evil and exile are underlying themes in Kabbalistic reflection, evil meaning disintegration (ultimately death) and exile meaning separation (from God). These might be thought of as variations on one and the same theme, the separation and loss inherent in mortality and thus in the human condition. Klein has also



treated these themes as linked and as intrinsic to the psyche, with death anxiety as primary, and fear of the loss of the object resulting from the vicissitudes of the death instinct (aggression).

Fragmentation and loss are overcome, in the Kabbalah just as in Kleinian thinking, mainly through the processes of unification/integration and containment/internalization. And, most dramatically, in the Kabbalah these processes are symbolized essentially by a maternal image, as they are in Klein's concept of the reparation of the internal object.

*Unification/integration* plays a role in the Kabbalah, which proposes overcoming fragmentation by transforming the relation between good and evil. In their search for a solution to the problem of evil the Kabbalists vacillated between that of separating evil from good, and that of tempering it by integrating the two. Klein has also understood mastery of aggression (in the depressive position, after splitting has been overcome) as a dual process, involving both separation of good and bad (repression of aggression) and reintegration of good and bad (reparation). However, in Kabbalistic imagery, as in the dynamics Klein describes, the solution of integration decidedly predominates.

In tikkun God is unified by reintegrating maternal aspects into his personality. This unification entails bringing together sternness (limitation) and lovingkindness, masculine and feminine, 'abba and ima', and God and the Shekhinah. This resembles the Kleinian concept where reparation focuses essentially on the reconstruction of the maternal object, the integration of good and bad objects.

*Containment/internalization* is also an aspect of the concept of tikkun, as it is of reparation. In mythology, the vessel is a symbol of the mother (Neumann, 1955). And the name of the Shekhinah—the maternal aspect of God—literally means 'indwelling' or 'presence'. Thus, being (the cosmos) is defined and delimited by the dual process of being held within a maternal container (the vessels) and of containing the maternal element within (the indwelling Shekhinah). Kleinian reparation also means reinforced internalization of the whole good maternal object. However, the holding function of the maternal image is not emphasized by

Klein, though it is developed by Winnicott. Nonetheless, containing the mother within and being held within her could be seen as symbolically equivalent.

*The construction of reality.* Integration and internalization can be considered aspects of the construction and organization of reality or being. Tikkun expresses the sense, as reparation does, that this is a continual task, carried out first in relation to a maternal image, and always bearing her mark. The 'sacred order of the cosmos is reaffirmed over and over again, in the face of chaos' (Berger, 1967, p. 53), resembling the continual reconstruction of the object world during the depressive position.

*Dialectical tendencies.* Creation is depicted as a dialectical process in the Kabbalah (Scholem, 1941), similar to that of the Kleinian description of the construction of the object world through ongoing introjection and projection. This dialectic is integral to the Kleinian concept of reparation as well.

The object world, though it is, and is experienced as, objectively given reality (of whole objects in the depressive position), which contributes to the construction of the subject, is nonetheless at the same time (re)created by the subject, this re-creation then re-creating the subject in its turn. The dialectic of reparation is reflected in the Lurianic concept of tikkun, where mankind, though created, is responsible for the (re)creation of the cosmos and of his own being (thus, for bringing about the Messianic age).

—*Clarification of conceptual problems.* A heightened awareness of the dialectical dimension of reparation may help in clarifying some difficulties in the concept, said to have 'a very confusing beginning and...never really [to be] drawn together anywhere' (Meltzer, 1978, II, p. 42). Klein referred to reparation (in noun or adjective form) as: desire (1929), mechanism (1935), feeling (1935), phantasy (1940), act (1940), power (1940), drive (1946), tendency (1952) and wish (1959). These various uses of the term have yet to be reconciled with one another.

In addition, reparation includes a number of functions—original in psychoanalysis—which are not readily grasped as aspects of one and the same concept. Reparation is involved in reality testing, most significantly of inner psychic reality, meaning particularly acknowledgement of



ambivalence toward and dependence on the object; it means tolerating the pain (guilt and loss) caused by that acknowledgement; it is involved in the transformation of psychic reality, the restoration of the internal object; it plays a role in the transformation of and adaptation to external reality, the maintenance of a better object relation.

If reparation is seen as a concept which represents a dialectical reality—the reality of object relatedness—it should then logically include all aspects of that reality: mechanism, drive, etc. Further, its dialectical nature would mean that reparation plays a number of roles in the establishment of relational reality, reflecting the interaction of the subjective and the objective, and the impact of knowledge (of psychic reality) on the process.

#### REFLECTIONS ON THE COMPARISON OF TIKKUN AND REPARATION

Modern study of the Kabbalah has been credited with putting us 'in touch with forces at once alien and yet paradoxically familiar' (Biale, 1979, p. 211). Alien but familiar—suggesting a representation of unconscious factors (Freud, 1919)—the Kabbalistic myth of tikkun seems to express those same archaic anxieties and processes which Klein captured in her concepts of the depressive position and reparation, forces which create and re-create the internal object world as well as the mystical cosmos.

However, the judgement that religion is a reflection of intrapsychic processes projected on to the universe—'psycho-mythology' (Freud, 1897, p. 237)—is not shared by scholars of Jewish mysticism. Both Gershom Scholem (1976) and Martin Buber (1960) rejected the idea of psychoanalytic (Freudian or Jungian) interpretation of mystical symbols. Their objection, though based on religious sensibility, nonetheless raises an interesting problem for a psychoanalytic theory of religion. They claim that the concept of individual consciousness is foreign to traditional Judaism, which in contrast, expresses the life of community: "'Sublimation"

takes place within man, the "raising of the sparks" takes place between man and the world' (Buber, 1960, p. 83).

It is of interest in this connexion to consider two original features of Kleinian theory which have a bearing on its power to interpret Kabbalistic myth.

*Object relations.* Underlying the originality of the concept of reparation is Klein's reorientation of psychoanalytic theory to accord object relations a more fundamental role. In emphasizing the importance of the role of internalized and real object relations in structuring reality and the psyche, Klein placed the relational dimension of human life in the heart of the individual psyche. It is probably this profoundly important reorientation, expressing the intimate connexion between the intrapsychic and the relational, which has made possible a Kleinian interpretation of tikkun—where 'in everyone there is something of his fellow man'—which meets Scholem and Buber's objection to a psychoanalytic interpretation of the Kabbalah.<sup>2</sup>

Further, emphasis on the first object relation, the archaic relation to the mother, makes possible illumination of a myth which gives symbolic expression to the construction and reconstruction of experience—a myth which, what is more, is pervaded by maternal imagery.

*Death instinct.* A second relevant original feature of Kleinian theory is her reinterpretation of the Freudian concept of the death instinct, and the central importance she attributes to it: 'The threat of annihilation by the death instinct within is...the primordial anxiety', defence against which is the prime activity of the ego (Klein, 1957, p. 190). Although Klein's modification of the Freudian concept of the death instinct and the primacy she gives it are far from being universally accepted, we may, without defending her position, note that it is this very emphasis on the death instinct and existential annihilation anxiety, on fragmentation as *intrinsic* to the psyche, which permitted her full understanding of the phenomenon of reparation.

And further, the fundamental connexion Klein conceived between the death instinct and reparation—the construction and reconstruc-

<sup>2</sup> It would be interesting to know whether Klein was aware of the concept of tikkun—a concept still vital in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.





tion of the object and object relation as the response to fragmentation—has made possible a Kleinian interpretation of the Kabbalistic myth.

#### CONCLUSION

One of Klein's important contributions is to have shown 'why there exists a relationship between the deepest conflicts that reveal themselves in religion...and the depressed mood' (Winnicott, 1958, p. 25).

This paper reinforces that observation, and suggests that the Kleinian concepts of the depressive position and reparation are of unique value in interpreting the Kabbalistic myth of tikkun. Further, it is suggested that Kleinian theory, in virtue of its essential and distinguishing features, has opened the way to a new, object-relations approach to the psychoanalytic theory of religion.

After Klein's death, notes for a projected paper on religion were found: 'in heaven there is to be no hate, only love—finding again relatives with whom there had been envy hate jealousy—where will be wholesale reparation because only love—religion an expression of life instinct' (Grosskurth, 1986, p. 455).

Reparation, related in this paper to tikkun, Klein at the end of her life related to heaven—an end to exile, victory over the death instinct. She thus gave explicit expression to the theme discussed in this paper—that of the power of the concept of reparation to interpret religious myth.

#### SUMMARY

This paper presents a comparison between Melanie Klein's concept of reparation and the Kabbalistic myth of tikkun. Both are metaphors of creation, fragmentation and re-creation—of the maternal object on the one hand and of the mystical cosmos on the other. The similarities between the themes underlying the two concepts, the symbolic forms in which they are expressed and the issues they raise are detailed and discussed. The comparison is followed by a consideration of those features of Kleinian theory which have made possible a psychoanalytic interpretation of the Kabbalistic myth. It is

suggested that tikkun expresses on the mythical, cultural level, the same dynamics that the concept of reparation does on the level of the individual psyche. Further, it is suggested that Kleinian theory may open new possibilities for an object-relations approach to the psychoanalytic theory of religion.

#### TRANSLATIONS OF SUMMARY

Cet article présente une comparaison entre le concept de réparation chez Mélanie Klein et le mythe cabalistique du tikkun. Tous deux sont des métaphores de la création, de la fragmentation et de la recréation de l'objet maternel d'une part et du cosmos mystique d'autre part. Les similitudes entre les thèmes sous-jacents à ces deux concepts, les formes symboliques dans lesquelles ils sont exprimés et les questions qu'ils soulèvent, sont examinées et discutées. Cette comparaison est suivie d'une évaluation de ces aspects dans la théorie kleinienne qui a permis une interprétation psychanalytique du mythe cabalistique. L'auteur suggère que le tikkun exprime au niveau mythique et culturel la même dynamique que celle exprimée par le concept de réparation au niveau de la psyché individuelle. Il suggère en outre que la théorie kleinienne peut ouvrir de nouvelles possibilités pour une approche de la théorie psychanalytique de la religion, fondée sur la relation objectale.

Dieser Beitrag präsentiert einen Vergleich zwischen Melanie Kleins Konzept der Reparation und dem kabbalistischen Mythos von Tikkun. Beide sind Metaphern von Schöpfung, Fragmentierung und Neuschöpfung—des mütterlichen Objektes einerseits, und andererseits des mystischen Kosmos. Die Ähnlichkeiten zwischen den Thematiken, die den beiden Konzepten zugrundeliegen, die symbolischen Formen, in denen sie ausgedrückt werden, und die Themen, die durch sie zur Sprache gebracht werden, werden detailliert und besprochen. Dem Vergleich folgt eine Betrachtung der Merkmale Kleinianischer Theorie, die eine psychoanalytische Interpretation des kabbalistischen Mythos ermöglicht haben. Es wird zur Debatte gestellt, daß Tikkun auf der mystischen und kulturellen Ebene dieselben Dynamiken ausdrückt, wie das Konzept der Reparation auf der Ebene der individuellen Psyche. Weiterhin wird vorgeschlagen, daß sich durch die Kleinianische Theorie neue Möglichkeiten für einen Objektbeziehungsansatz zur psychoanalytischen Theorie der Religion ergeben.

Este artículo establece una comparación entre el concepto de reparación de Melanie Klein y el mito Kabalístico de tikkun. Ambos son metáforas de la creación, fragmentación y re-creación del objeto materno por un lado y del cosmos místico por otro. Se describen y discuten las similitudes entre los temas subyacentes a los dos conceptos, las formas simbólicas en que están expresados y las cuestiones que surgen a partir de los mismos. Luego de la comparación, se consideran los rasgos en la teoría kleiniana que hicieron posible una interpretación psicoanalítica del mito Kabalístico. Se sugiere que tikkun expresa a nivel cultural y mítico, la misma dinámica que el concepto de reparación realiza a nivel de la psique individual. Aun más, se sugiere que la teoría kleiniana podría abrir nuevas posibilidades para abordar la teoría psicoanalítica de la religión desde el punto de vista de las relaciones objetales.



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# The International Review of Psycho-Analysis

Published in conjunction with  
the International Journal of Psycho-Analysis

1989

Volume 16

Part 4



Published by Routledge  
for  
The Institute of Psycho-Analysis  
London



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Founded in 1974 by Joseph J. Sandler

Edited by David Tuckett and Thomas T. S. Hayley

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