

PHYLLIS GROSSKURTH

MELANIE KLEIN:

HER WORLD AND HER WORKS

Information on rights

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BIOGRAPHY

Phyllis Grosskurth was born and raised in Toronto, where she attended St. Clement's School and the University of Toronto, obtaining an Honours B.A. in English. She graduated from the University of Ottawa with an M.A. and from the University of London with a Ph.D. She now lives in Toronto and is a professor of English at the University of Toronto.

Grosskurth is the author of THE WOEFUL VICTORIAN: A BIOGRAPHY OF JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS, HAVELOCK ELLIS: A BIOGRAPHY, and MELANIE KLEIN: HER WORLD AND HER WORKS and the editor of MEMOIRS OF JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS. In addition, she contributes articles and reviews to magazines and periodicals including The Observer, The Daily Telegraph, New York Review of Books, and Saturday Night. On the strength of her books, she has become one of the few Canadians with an international reputation for biography. In 1965 Grosskurth was the winner of the Governor General's Literary Award for non-fiction and the University of British Columbia Award for biography. She was short-listed in 1981 for the Arts Council of Great Britain's National Book Award.

SUMMARY

Phyllis Grosskurth's MELANIE KLEIN is the first full-scale biography of one of the most important — and controversial — early psychoanalysts, a woman who challenged Freud and who pioneered the field of child analysis.

Until recently underestimated in North America, Melanie Klein was a leading figure in psychoanalytic circles from the 1920s until her death in 1960. Now, drawing on a wealth of hitherto unexplored documents as well as extensive interviews with people who knew and worked with Klein, Grosskurth has written a superb account of this fascinating, complicated woman and her theories — theories that are still growing in influence around the world.

The book opens in turn-of-the-century Vienna with Melanie Klein's troubled childhood: her domineering mother, her ineffectual father, her beloved, wastrel brother. Grosskurth shows us Klein's marriage to a man with whom, Klein says, she was "up to a point in love," and the birth of her children. We see Klein sinking into depression under the weight of a joyless marriage (complicated by her mother's interference) and then entering analysis with Sandor Ferenczi, a close friend of Freud. Under his guidance, Klein begins to change and grow, as she applies her own analysis to her work with emotionally disturbed children.

The narrative moves to Berlin as Melanie Klein becomes a member of the Berlin Psycho-Analytic Society and is analysed and further encouraged in her work by Karl