Roger Money-Kyrle

Archives and Manuscripts is extremely pleased to announce that the papers of the eminent Kleinian psychoanalyst, Roger Money-Kyrle are now catalogued and available for research, subject to certain Data Protection restrictions on parts of the collection.

Money-Kyrle (1898-1980) had an extremely distinguished analytic pedigree, having been analysed by Ernest Jones and Freud, and later on by Melanie Klein. His initial interest in psychoanalysis was spurred by a belief in what it could contribute to understanding of wider questions of politics, economics, and society in general. He acquired two PhDs – one, working in Vienna, while also undertaking analysis with Freud, with Professor Morris Schlick, on ‘Contribution to the Theory of Reality’, and one at University College London working with Professor J C Flugel, on ‘The Meaning of Sacrifice’. The collection includes two boxes of papers relating to this early, largely philosophically and anthropologically-orientated, work. Although Money-Kyrle was elected an associate of the British Psycho-Analytical Association in 1928 this was on condition that he did not practise.

During the 1930s he published a number of books and articles developing his ideas relating psychoanalysis to wider social issues. In 1936 he was persuaded by John Rickman to undertake a training analysis with Melanie Klein, and in 1945 he became a full member of the British Psycho-Analytical Association, started seeing analysands, and subsequently also qualified as a training analyst.

During the War he was employed at the Air Ministry (he had served in the Royal Flying Corps in World War I). After the War he joined Henry Dicks in Germany, working with the German Personnel Research Branch, which was concerned with identifying individuals who could be trusted to build up the new Germany following the fall of the Third Reich. There is a small amount of material in the collection relating to this period.

The bulk of the collection, however, consists of case histories, and Money-Kyrle’s development of his ideas in his writings. There are many notes and drafts and early versions of material that was later published in various forms. There is a little personalia, some correspondence with colleagues, and a few files relating to professional organisations with which he was involved, including the Melanie Klein Trust. The collection also includes correspondence and drafts relating to his role in editing the special issue of the International Journal of Psychoanalysis to mark Melanie Klein’s 70th Birthday, and the volume New Directions in Psychoanalysis (1955), an important statement of the thinking of the Kleinian school.

The survival of Money-Kyrle’s papers appears to have been somewhat haphazard, and there are a number of lacunae in the materials here. However this is an important collection of papers of a key figure in the promotion and development of Klein’s ideas and also shows his interactions with a number of other colleagues. It adds to our existing strong holdings in this area.
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