

had been unwanted, Sidonie was the best-looking in the family, her father openly expressed his preference for Emilie, and Emanuel was considered something of a genius. Sidonie must have been the center of family attention as she lay in bed wasting away; yet what Melanie remembers is her sister's kindness to her. Emilie and Emanuel took great pleasure in teasing little Melanie, coming up with difficult geographical names like Popocatepetl, while the bewildered child had no idea whether they were genuine or not. The ailing girl took pity on her sister and taught her the fundamentals of arithmetic and reading. "It is quite possible that I idealize her a little," Melanie reflects, "but my feeling is that, had she lived, we would have been the greatest friends and I still have a feeling of gratitude to her for satisfying my mental needs, all the greater because I think she was very ill at the time." She continues: "I have a feeling that I never entirely got over the feeling of grief for her death. I also suffered under the grief my mother showed, whereas my father was more controlled. I remember that I felt that my mother needed me all the more now that Sidonie was gone, and it is probable that some of the spoiling was due to my having to replace that child."

Emanuel was undoubtedly the major influence on Melanie's early development.

He seemed to me superior in every way to myself, not only because at nine or ten years of age, he seemed quite grown-up, but also because his gifts were so unusual that I feel that whatever I have achieved is nothing in comparison to what he would have done. From a very early age I heard the most beautiful piano-playing, because he was deeply musical, and I have seen him sitting at the piano and just composing what came into his mind. He was a self-willed and rebellious child and, I think, not sufficiently understood. He seemed at loggerheads with his teachers at the gymnasium, or contemptuous of them, and there were many controversial talks with my father . . . My brother was deeply fond of my mother, but gave her a good deal of anxiety.

Melanie dated her deep attachment to Emanuel from her ninth year, when she wrote a patriotic poem with which he was greatly impressed and which he helped her to correct.

From at least this time onwards, he was my confidant, my friend, my teacher. He took the greatest interest in my development, and I knew that, until his death, he always expected me to do something great, although there was really nothing on which to base it.

When she was sixteen she wrote a little play that he thought was a harbinger of her latent literary capacities but, although she went on to try her hand at novels and poems (which she claimed that she later unfortunately destroyed), she very early realized that her bent was not artistic; yet Emanuel was not wrong when he recognized her creative potential. Freud spoke of the confidence imparted to a male child by a mother who has absolute belief in