

asked them, "Who is Marie?" so that all the little Maries would put up their hands and reply, "I am Marie." While many of the other children were crouching timidly behind their desks, Melanie, bursting with impatience to speak, put up her hand. The teacher said kindly, "Now say nicely 'My name is Marie,'" to which she replied, "My name is Melanie." Regarding the child a little reproachfully, the teacher chided her, "Your turn hasn't come yet." Melanie felt a little embarrassed, but she knew she had to make the gesture because she was the only Melanie and her turn would not have come. Melanie would never let herself be overlooked in life.

Her ambition was clearly stimulated by the fact that she was the youngest of four children, and very much in competition with her older siblings. The eldest, Emilie, was six years old when Melanie was born, her only brother, Emanuel, five, and Sidonie four, so that the first three always seemed to her a much older, integrated unit. Not only was she the youngest and the most helpless, but she had other causes for grievance. Her mother at some point — "later on" — told her that she was unexpected, but Melanie seems to have sensed this almost from the beginning. "I have no particular feeling that I resented this," she reflects, "because there was a great deal of love towards me." These words were written when she was in her mid-seventies, and they must be considered later in connection with her theories about infantile emotion.

Another possible grievance was that her mother had breast-fed the three older children but Melanie had a wet nurse "who fed me any time I asked for it." How did she know? She does not say whether her mother was unable to nurse her or whether she was too busy tending the shop. The next sentence, following the statement about the fecundity of the wet nurse, reads: "At this time Truby King⁹ had not yet done his devastating work." She then abruptly drops the subject of breast-feeding and continues, within the same paragraph, an account of the attention Uncle Hermann lavished on her. The juxtaposition is very revealing.

In other words, far from being helpless and neglected, she was a beautiful Jewish princess, obviously the favorite of her mother's brother, and also — a fact not mentioned in her memoir — her mother's favorite daughter. Again, it must be remembered that this account was written at the end of a career in psychoanalysis in which her own technique became famous for its multiple and deep interpretations; but in her recollections she uses none of her own concepts to further an understanding of herself as a child. There is none of the transfixed attention that she would apply to one of her own patients. She seems utterly remote from the child she was, nervously pulling away whenever she encounters a memory that might be painful or disturbing to her image of her childhood. This could be interpreted as a failure of nerve, yet in the analytic situation she had always insisted that the analyst must maintain a distance from the analysand, never allowing any glimpse into his own private life. How, then, could she break down that barrier between herself and the putative reader when she had spent most of a lifetime building