

Document

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MELANIE KLEIN

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with editorial notes by Janet Sayers¹ and John Forrester*

Introductory Notes

Melanie Klein was nearing the end of her life when, aged seventy-seven, she worked on her autobiography. By then it was many years since her birth in 1882 in Vienna and since the start, in the early 1920s, of her pioneering work in child psychoanalysis and her formulations concerning the pre-genital origins of the Oedipus complex in love- and hate-driven fantasies about the mother's sexual coupling with the father. She had followed this, after settling in 1926 in London, by defending her play technique against its criticism by Anna Freud, and then by developing an innovative theory about symbol-formation and its disruption, and about the infantile origins of depression and defending against it with mania or paranoia.

Following the arrival of the Freuds in London in 1938 Klein and her followers debated in controversial discussions in the British Psycho-Analytical Society (BPAS) her theory that unconscious fantasy begins at birth. These discussions were followed by the BPAS introducing three separate trainings – Freudian, Kleinian and independent. In the post-war period, Klein developed a theory of the paranoid-schizoid position and the related defence of projective identification; these, together with her theory of the infantile depressive position, were adopted by her immediate

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1. JS: Thanks to Richard Rusbridger for agreeing, on behalf of the Melanie Klein Trust, to this publication of Melanie Klein's autobiography.

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disciples – notably Herbert Rosenfeld, Hanna Segal and Wilfred Bion – with the result that Klein's work, after that of Freud, became the foremost influence on psychoanalysis in Britain and in several other countries today.

In her autobiography, however, Klein says relatively little about her psychoanalytic work. She says much more about her Jewish forebears; her early years in Vienna with her older sisters and brother; his death in December 1902; her marriage to his friend, Arthur Klein, in March 1903; and the birth of their children, Melitta, Hans and Erich. She also writes about her life, from 1910, in Budapest where, having suffered with what might now be diagnosed as post-natal depression, she read Freud's book, *On Dreams*, and began psychoanalytic treatment with Sándor Ferenczi.

To this she adds an account of her life after World War I and the end of her marriage. From 1921 she lived first in Berlin, then in London, in Notting Hill and then in St John's Wood, before moving, due to ill-health, in 1954 to a flat in Hampstead. It was here that – in gaps between her work with psychoanalytic patients and supervisees, writing papers about *The Oresteia*, loneliness and Christianity – she started and re-started telling the story of her life.

This resulted in ten typed fragments the originals of which are in the Wellcome Library in London (PP/KLE/A.52). The following consists of a transcript of these fragments together with annotated details in footnotes and in italics in the main text. Organized chronologically, the fragments begin with one dated June 1959 and end with one composed that November, or thereabouts, after which Klein became seriously ill with cancer the following summer and died in London on 22 September 1960.

First fragment

Melanie Klein, *Autobiographical Notes*. June 6, 1959
[handwritten insertion 'give to Mrs Mc.G'.²]

I was born in Vienna [*on 30 March*] in 1882 as the daughter of a physician [*Moriz Reizes 1828–1900*]. Between the ages of thirteen and fourteen I decided to study [*'for the university' inserted in pen*], which at that time in Vienna was still regarded as a very advanced step; I attended the only school there which prepared girls for the university. Having become engaged to be married very young, I found that I could not carry out my wish to study medicine, and I only attended general [*& later on psychiatry' inserted in pen*] courses in [*replaced in pen with 'at'*] Vienna university.

2. 'Mrs Mc.G' probably refers to the writer and critic, Jean (*née* Howard) MacGibbon, who, following her recovery from a severe nervous breakdown in 1945, was closely involved with Klein and her psychoanalyst colleague, Adrian Stephen.

My interests in psycho-analysis and in the analysis of children arose during the time when I lived in Budapest. By that time I already had three children. I had come across [‘some’ *deleted and replaced in pen* by ‘one’] of Freud’s books and was deeply impressed by [‘them’ *deleted and replaced in pen* by ‘it’]. I was analysed by Sandor Ferenczi,³ and it soon became clear that I was very much drawn to understand more of the inner life first of all of my own children, and then of children in general. Ferenczi told me that I was gifted for this particular, and at that time still very little developed, branch of psycho-analysis, and Abraham⁴ encouraged me to settle in Berlin [‘in 1921’ *inserted in pen*] and to start child analysis there.

In my first case, [‘resulting from the conflict between the impulses’ *inserted and deleted in pen*] which I approached still without having any definite rules, I at once focused on anxiety which was very strong in that child.⁵ I found myself going deeper and deeper into the unconscious and became more and more aware of the unconscious phantasy⁶ life of the child, as well as of the defences used against anxiety. This experience determined also my approach in my subsequent cases. By focusing my attention on the anxiety and the phantasy life of the child, I opened up a new field of knowledge.

Already in my first case I had used toys, and when I analysed children I found that symbolic means of expression by toys enabled me to gain access to those layers of the mind which by then I had already found were essential for the analysis of children. This approach and its implications involved a technique which differed in essentials from the technique used until then with adults and also in the [‘very’ *inserted in pen*] few child cases which had been undertaken up to that time.⁷ I kept, however, very much in mind what I thought to be the pillars of psychoanalysis discovered by Freud: the knowledge of the unconscious and its influence on the conscious; the transference situation; the importance of symbols, which

3. Sándor Ferenczi (1873–1933) founded the Hungarian psychoanalytical society in 1913, the year in which Klein became one of his psychoanalytic patients whom he encouraged in her initial forays in child psychoanalysis and influenced with his theories about projection and introjection.

4. Karl Abraham (1877–1925) helped found Berlin’s psychoanalytic society in 1920 and, following Klein’s move to Berlin in 1921, he became her psychoanalyst in 1924, supported her child psychoanalysis work against its detractors, and influenced her theories about mania and depression.

5. Klein (1921).

6. For further explanation of Klein’s use of the term ‘phantasy’ see Isaacs (1948). Critiques include Laplanche and Pontalis (1968).

7. See, for example, Klein (1932a).

Freud had elaborated in the analysis of dreams.⁸ Although to some extent I seemed to follow ways of my own, I felt and still feel that I have in essentials developed and expanded Freud's fundamental discoveries and applied them to the analysis of children.

When I was asked to undertake the psycho-analysis of a child of two years and nine months,⁹ I had already worked out a technique based on the use of toys and had gained some understanding of the early stages of development. That analysis convinced me of the possibility – even of the advisability – [‘to analyse’ *replaced in pen with* ‘of analysing’] children who are in need of it at a very young age. I had soon started also with the psycho-analysis of adults and found what I had learnt in the analysis of children extremely helpful for the understanding of adults. [‘I also made use of course of any verbal expression which even a very young child occasionally produces’ *inserted somewhat indecipherably in pen*]

I came to England at the invitation of Ernest Jones in 1926 and have worked here ever since. I was fortunate enough to find younger colleagues who [‘I psychoanalysed’ *inserted in pen*] who [‘I could teach’ *deleted in pen*] [‘studied’ *inserted in pen*] my technique of child analysis as well as my approach to adults.

In the course of my work with children I found that [‘this led to’ *inserted in pen*] considerable change in the approach to adults [‘had also emerged’ *deleted in pen*]. I gradually began to formulate my findings resulting from the work both with children and adults, and I came to a number of theoretical conclusions which over the years have been built up both from the technical and from the theoretical point of view into a body of thought which is the essence of my work. There are many hints in Freud which seem prophetic from that angle, [‘since’ *deleted in pen*] [‘(’ *inserted in pen*] he himself had never dealt with children [‘)’ *inserted in pen*], and which I have further elaborated into a consecutive picture of the development of the child from the earliest stages onwards.

Second fragment

[*inserted in pen* ‘sent to Dr Kenward¹⁰ Chicago University, 23.10.59’]

MELANIE KLEIN – Autobiographical Notes.

I was born in Vienna in 1882, the daughter of a physician. Between the ages of thirteen and fourteen, I decided to study for the University, which at

8. See, for example, Klein (1923).

9. For further details of this case, ‘Rita’, see Klein (1932a).

10. Dr John Kenward (c.1914–89) was a psychiatrist and the founder and director of the child psychiatry clinic at the University of Chicago.

that time in Vienna was still regarded as a very advanced step; I attended the only school there which prepared girls for the University. Having become engaged to be married very young [*to an industrial chemist, Arthur Klein*], I found that I could not carry out my wish to study medicine and psychiatry, and I only attended general courses at Vienna University.

My interest in psycho-analysis and in the analysis of children arose during the time when I lived in Budapest. By that time I already had three children [*Melitta, Hans, and Erich*].¹¹ I had come across one of Freud's books and was deeply impressed by it. I was analysed by Sandor Ferenczi, and it soon became clear that I was very much drawn to understand more of the inner life, first of all of my own children, and then of children in general. Ferenczi told me that I was gifted for this particularly, and at that time still very little developed, branch of psycho-analysis, and Abraham encouraged me to settle in Berlin in 1921, and to start child analysis there.

In my first case, which I approached still without having any definite rules, I at once focused on anxiety, which was very strong in that child.¹² I found myself going deeper and deeper into his unconscious and became more and more aware of the unconscious phantasy life of the child, as well as of the defences used against anxiety. This experience determined also my approach in my subsequent cases. By focusing my attention on the anxiety and the phantasy life of the child, I opened up a new field of knowledge.

Already in my first case I had used toys, and when I analysed other children I found that symbolic means of expression by toys enabled me to gain access to those layers of the mind, the analysis of which by then I had already found was essential for the analysis of children. This approach and its implications involved a technique which differed in essentials from the technique used until then with adults, and also in the very few child cases which had been undertaken up to that time. I kept, however, very much in mind what I thought to be the foundations of psycho-analysis discovered by Freud: the knowledge of the unconscious and its influence on the conscious; the transference situation; the importance of symbols, which Freud had elaborated in the analysis of dreams. Although to some extent I seemed to follow ways of my own, I felt, and still feel, that I have in essentials developed and expanded Freud's fundamental discoveries and applied them to the analysis of children.

When I was asked to undertake the psycho-analysis of a child of two years and nine months, I had already worked out a technique based on the use of toys and had gained some understanding of the early stages of development. I also made use, of course, of any verbal expression that even

11. Spelt variously 'Erich' or 'Eric' in the original typescripts of Klein's autobiography.

12. For details of this case (based on Klein's analysis of her four-year-old son, Erich) see Klein (1921).

a very young child occasionally produces. That analysis convinced me of the possibility – even of the advisability – of analysing at a very young age children who are in need of it. I had soon started also with the psycho-analysis of adults and found what I had learnt in the analysis of children extremely helpful for the understanding of adults.

I came to England at the invitation of Ernest Jones in 1926 and have worked here ever since.¹³ I was fortunate enough to find younger colleagues, whom I psycho-analysed and who studied my technique of child analysis as well as my approach to adults. In this way, a group of psycho-analysts, both of children and adults, was formed, of whom I am the representative.

In the course of my work with children, I found that this led to considerable changes in the approach to adults. I gradually began to formulate my findings resulting from the work both with children and with adults, and I came to a number of theoretical conclusions, which, over the years, have been built up, both from the technical and from the theoretical point of view, into a body of thought, which is the essence of my work. There are many hints in Freud, which seem prophetic from that angle (he himself had never dealt with children) and which to some extent foreshadow the consecutive picture of the development of the child from the earliest stages onwards, and its effect on adults, which I have elaborated.

I would like to mention relevant papers, which have appeared in *The International Journal of Psycho-analysis*, by some of my colleagues, for instance, Dr. Herbert Rosenfeld, Dr. Wilfrid [*sic*] Bion and Dr. Hannah [*sic*] Segal.¹⁴ Books by these, and others, are in preparation.

I am still doing a certain amount of work, carrying on some analyses and a number of supervisions.

Third fragment

[*inserted in pen* '[1959] VERY CONFIDENTIAL']

My father came from a very orthodox Polish family and was what was called in the continental term a 'vocher'.¹⁵ His father had been a business

13. Ernest Jones (1879–1958) helped found the British Psycho-analytical Society in 1919 and became a major promoter of Klein's theories and approach to child psychoanalysis following her move from Berlin to London in 1926.

14. These include papers by Herbert Rosenfeld, Wilfred Bion and Hanna Segal published in the *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* in celebration of Klein's seventieth birthday on 30 March 1952.

15. Thanks to Melanie Klein's granddaughter, Diana Brimblecombe, for suggesting 'vocher' should read 'bocher', i.e., 'a student of the Talmud, the ancient, many-volume codification of Jewish law and tradition' (Grosskurth, 1986, p. 5).

man, but, probably because the scientific capacity of my father was recognised, he was destined to be a Jewish scientist.¹⁶ He was married, according to the orthodox rites, to a girl whom he had never seen and only met on the occasion of the marriage. That marriage did not last long and was dissolved. I think at that time he was about 37. He had woken up to other interests and had revolted against his way of life. He had hidden under his Talmud books which gave him the possibility of matriculating. He went out one day without the knowledge of his parents and passed his matriculation at a gymnasium, as these schools were called. When he returned, his parents, particularly his mother, were horrified. He then declared that he was going to study medicine and I know from him that when he went in for his first examination, his mother was praying at home that he would fail. However he passed and after some years became a doctor. By that time, he had completely broken with the whole orthodox attitude and had become independent of his family, though he never quite broke with them.

Cholera was raging at that time in the villages of Poland and there were appeals for doctors to treat people. He answered the appeal, informed his family and, when he returned after several weeks or months, he found a letter from his mother imploring him not to go. In contrast to other doctors, who merely stood outside the cottage windows telling the villagers to take their pulses, he went inside, treated the people in the ordinary way and did not fall ill.

He met my mother [*Libussa Deutsch 1852–1914*], who came from Deutch-Kreutz [*sic*],¹⁷ on a visit to Vienna, where she was staying with people who had a boarding-house. He at once fell deeply in love with my mother, who was 25 and an extremely beautiful girl. At that time he must have been about 44 or 45. They married and for some time he practised as a physician in Deutch-Kreutz [*sic*], and then they decided to go to Vienna for my father to practise there. They moved to Vienna, but he could not make a living from his practice, and my mother therefore decided to have a shop, where she sold plants, reptiles, etc. I know that she had a deep dislike of these creatures and that it was only through will-power that she could have anything to do with them. As I have said, she was very beautiful and some of her customers thoroughly enjoyed coming in and having conversations with her.

Then something happened. My father's father had been living, since his wife's death, with a daughter, who one day put him out on to the street.

16. Here, and elsewhere in these fragments, Klein uses the term 'scientist' to mean 'savant' or 'Wissenschaftler' or corresponding roughly to the English term 'scholar'.

17. Deutchkreutz (eighty-six kilometres south of Vienna) was in Hungary and reassigned to Austria after World War I.

My mother at once agreed to take him in, and he lived with them until he died, apparently quite peacefully. At this time, it was thought to be below standard for the wife of a doctor to have a business, but, owing to circumstances, she had one [*sic*] helped to support the family. One of my early memories is of going to the shop and I remember where it was in Vienna. When my grandfather died, he left them a few savings and a sweepstake ticket, which was quite a usual thing in the Austro-Hungary Empire. As it happened, they won 10,000 florins and everything changed. My father bought the practice of a dentist and we moved into a flat, which, I remember, seemed to me extremely luxurious, in comparison to our former lodging, of which I have no memory, but I do remember that I thought the change was very impressive. I went to the usual state school quite near the flat, which was in the Alserstrasse,¹⁸ and from the first I felt very happy there. I liked the company of children, which I had not had until then, as at this time one did not go to a kindergarden [*sic*], and I also liked acquiring knowledge, and soon became a very ambitious pupil, paying great attention to the marks I received and to the one thing which was at this time expressive of satisfaction, the words ‘*worde belobt*’ [*sic*].¹⁹ No detailed reports were given, only marks given and, in the case of a very good pupil, these particular words.

Now I want to speak of my mother’s family. I have already said that she was very beautiful. She had very black hair, a fair complexion, nice features and the most expressive and beautiful grey eyes. I have already mentioned that some of her customers, who understood that she was what would now be called a ‘lady’, loved to go in and converse with her. She was educated, witty and interesting. I have always been proud of the way in which she acquired her education. Her father was a rabbi in Deutch-Kreutz [*sic*]. His [*sic*]²⁰ grandfather was a very outstanding man. He was known all over the district for his knowledge and tolerance, being very liberally-minded, quite different from the orthodoxy that characterised my father’s family. He had all the German philosophers on his shelves, unlike the attitude of the bigoted rabbis. There were three daughters, two of whom were beautiful, and they acquired their education by teaching themselves, by reading and I think probably also by discussions with their father. My mother even managed to learn the piano by herself. Of course she never played very

18. Alser Strasse is close to Vienna’s university and hospital, to Berggasse, where Freud lived, and to the recently created Sigmund-Freud-Park.

19. Thanks to Ursula Haug for suggesting that this should read ‘*wurde belobt*’ (‘was praised’) – a phrase used to commend excellent schoolwork.

20. ‘His’ should read ‘My’, thereby referring to Klein’s mother’s father, probably born about 1820 and old enough to engage in the liberally minded Jewish enlightenment of 1850s Austro-Hungary.

well, but there was a burning need for knowledge in that whole setting. She also learned French. Many years later, when we lived in the country which is now a suburb of Vienna, she was taking the waters and I remember her walking up and down a large verandah with a little book in her hand which contained idiomatic French expressions.

As far as my mother's mother is concerned, I only know her photograph, which shows a lovely, friendly old lady, and I know that I longed for her to be living, because I never had a grandmother, and I knew that this was a nice, kind and pleasant woman. The whole impression I got, in contrast to my father's family, was one of good family life, very simple in restricted circumstances, but full of interest in knowledge and education.

At the time when the circumstances of the family so much improved, I remember that my father bought some jewellery for my mother, and I was deeply impressed by some diamond earrings, one of which now forms the centre of a brooch, which I shall leave to my daughter-in-law.²¹

I have still something to add about my ancestry on my mother's side. I happened to hear that books by Reb Hersch Mandel Deutsch are still acknowledged by Jewish scholars, and I have tried to find out whether this was my grandfather or my great-grandfather; I believe the latter, because my mother talked to me about my grandfather and his liberal attitude, but did not mention his books. I cannot ascertain which he is, as the names of people and places have changed so much in the last few years.

I also wish to say something about my ancestry on my father's side. I know very little about them, except that they were very orthodox, which put me against them. I gathered from my mother that she got on very well with her father-in-law when he came to live with them. By that time, he was an old man. He had been a business man and I know nothing at all about my grandmother on that side. At intervals during the years, his daughter and son-in-law, still wearing the ritual kaftan, appeared and all I felt about them was that I disliked them thoroughly. The fact that I myself had had no orthodox upbringing and was, through the circle in which I grew up, anti-orthodox, may have contributed to my dislike; and, of course, I could not forget that this aunt had put her father out of the house in a most disgraceful way. The last time I saw them was in the last [*first*] world war,²² when they were flying from Poland because of the Russian advance, and gave them some help in the way of rugs, bedding, etc., which they took to help them settle in Vienna. I have never heard of them again

21. Judy Clyne – the wife of Erich Klein who changed his name in the late 1930s to Eric Clyne (Grosskurth, 1986, p. 239).

22. At this point in her autobiography Klein seems to have returned entirely to her experiences in Budapest during the 1914–18 World War.

and, since my mother died at the beginning of the war, in 1914, every atom of interest in them has gone.

I have said that I had no orthodox upbringing. My mother seemed to keep to certain things more as memories of her childhood and devotion to her family than from religious belief. She tried once to keep a kosher household, but was not successful, and seemed to give up these beliefs once the children grew up more and more against keeping them. I remember, however with pleasure, the first evening of Easter,²³ particularly because, on that occasion, the youngest child had to say a Hebrew passage, of which I still remember the first lines. Since I was very keen to get some attention and to be more important than the older ones, I am afraid this attitude influenced my liking of that occasion. But there is more to it. I liked the candles, I liked the whole atmosphere, and I liked the family sitting round the table and being surrounded in that way.

My mother always kept the great day of atonement with fasting, and that too, remains pleasantly in my mind, how, on the previous evening, there was a particularly festive meal, and similarly after the fast. Every detail of it was interesting to me, starting with the black coffee, and then a good and festive meal. I also went, it was understood, on that occasion to the synagogue, where my mother spent the whole day – I don't think my father did as much – in my best clothes, and being quite aware that the women, who of course were separate from the men, paid great attention to what the children were like; except my mother, who did not take much interest in these things and was deeply engrossed in prayers on that day. Otherwise, I only saw her make short prayers on Friday evenings, out of a lilac velvet bound prayer-book, given her by my father when they were married. It only took a few minutes; then she closed the book and put it back into the wardrobe. My doubts as to how deep her religious feelings were, as contrasted with her attachment to the family and their religious impulses, were confirmed by her telling me once about a student with whom I believe she had been in love. She spoke with some admiration of his courage that, when he was dying of t.b. [*sic*], he said 'I shall die very soon and I repeat that I do not believe in any god.'

I did not see much orthodox feeling in my father, but both he and my mother were deeply attached to the Jewish race, and that has really remained in me to the present. It did not take the same form as they had, because, in the choice of my friends and relations, it hardly matters whether they are Gentile or Jewish, but I have kept a strong feeling for the

23. 'Easter' is a telling and curious term to use here given that Klein is referring to her reading of the Torah at the Passover meal which, although being Christ's last supper prior to his crucifixion and resurrection, now celebrated on Easter Sunday, does not coincide with the Jewish celebration of Passover.

Jewish race, though I am fully aware of their faults and shortcomings. This never led me to be zionistic [*sic*], even in my young days I had no desire to be segregated, but I feel a certain sympathy with the people who struggle to establish Israel and have some admiration for their endurance and the strength of their principles. I should have hated, though, to live in Israel. I have come, in my later life, to adopt England as my second motherland, but have strong ties of an international nature, which has some similarity with what I have been saying about my relation to Jewishness. Another thing I have always hated was that some Jews, quite irrespective of their religious principles, were ashamed of their Jewish origin, and, whenever the question arose, I was glad to confirm my own Jewish origin, though I am afraid that I have no religious beliefs whatever.

In my attitude of sympathy with Israel also enters a feeling which, though it may have originated in the state of persecution of the Jews, extends to all minorities and to all people persecuted by stronger forces. Who knows! This might have given me strength to be always in a minority about my scientific work and not to mind, and to be quite willing to stand up against a majority for which I have some contempt, which in time has been mitigated by tolerance.

I spoke earlier about the change in circumstances which occurred in the fortunes of the family when I was about 5 years old. My father, at the time preceeding [*sic*] this favourable change, became attached to a kind of music hall, called an Orpheum, as a doctor. He had to be present at the performances, which was very boring for him and a sacrifice, because he wanted to be with his family, but a help financially. I remember he made some remarks of a contemptuous nature about some English women performing, and said that, if the English are depraved, they are very much depraved. There is a connection with one of my earliest memories at this time, when he still left in the evening, and our maid, whose name I still remember, gave him his supper before he went. In the same ways as he was, to a degree, faithful to my mother, so that he would look at no other woman, so he was conservative about food.

I remember very well the little rissoles which were what he had every night. The reason why the maid gave my father his supper was that my mother was not back from the shop. I cannot have been more than three when I have my first memory connected with my father having his dinner before leaving to go to the Orpheum. He probably was in a hurry. I remember that I climbed up on his knee and he pushed me away. That is a painful memory. Later, and this is a pleasant memory, when we went, from May to September, to Dornbach [*'on the Heuberg' inserted in pen*],²⁴ which at that time was still countrified, though by now it is part of Vienna,

24. Heuberg is on the north-western outskirts of Vienna.

he held my hand walking up the hill on which we lived. I also overheard, when I was just over 13, him say the [*sic*] somebody that his youngest daughter would go to the gymnasium, and this definitely made me decide to go there, so I already had at that time some wish to study. It was a painful thought to me that my father could openly state, and without consideration of my feelings, that his favourite was my oldest sister, his first-born. On the other hand, I was very much loved in the family and very spoilt, in that I was given so much attention. My remarks were quoted and there is very little doubt that I was thought to be good-looking and that the family were proud of me.

I was the youngest of 4 children, the oldest, Emily²⁵ [*born 1876*], being six years older, my brother Emmanuel [*born 1877*] 5 years older, and the third, Sidonie [*born 1878*], about 4 years older. I have no doubt, and this was told to me by mother later on, that I was unexpected. I have no particular feeling that I resent this, because, as I have stated, there was a great deal of love towards me. My mother had no particular pedagogic [*sic*] principles, and no strict rules were kept. On the other hand, this had the disadvantage in something for which one could not be blamed nowadays. I do not remember ever having been punished, except on one occasion when I really provoked my father in a very cheeky way. He had suggested, when I did not want to eat something, that in his day children were made to eat it, and I replied that what was done some hundred years ago did not count today, which I knew would annoy him. He came over from his place and hit me on the shoulder. That is the only occasion on which I was smacked.

My mother had breastfed the three older children, but I had a wet nurse who fed me any time I asked for it. At this time Truby King had not yet done his devastating work.²⁶ My mother's brother, Hermann, lived with us for some years, whilst studying law. I was very fond of him and he too spoilt me very much. I heard him say many things, among them that, being so beautiful, a young Rothschild [*sic*]²⁷ would have to come to marry me. He also had a lovely big dog, on which I rode.

I don't think I sufficiently understood my father, whose interest in me was not so great, because he had aged so much by this time. I admired certain things, such as his having done the whole of his medical studies by being a tutor, and had accumulated a large library and, what is more, learnt

25. Spelt variously 'Emily' or 'Emilie' in the original typescripts of Klein's autobiography.

26. Truby King (1858–1938) was a New Zealand doctor whose work emphasizing strictly scheduled infant feeding was very influential in the 1920s and was still very influential in Britain in the 1940s and 1950s.

27. The Rothschild family name had been synonymous with considerable power and wealth since the early nineteenth century.

by himself 10 languages, including Hebrew, in which he was a scientist. I know that he spoke Italian very well, because this was confirmed by an Italian who had a conversation with him, and that I could ask him for French and English expressions without bothering with a dictionary. His French was rather quaint and a little outdated, having fed on Moliere, Racine and the older poets. He also had had the opportunity of learning French from a veteran of the Napoleonic wars. I was told that it was rather classic French, but I had at the same time admired his capacity to learn all this by himself. Actually, he was a perfect scientist, with very little capacity for practical life. Looking back, I understand him much better than I did at the time. He died when I was 18 and by that time had for years been [*somewhat inserted in pen*] senile.

I think I had an attachment for my eldest sister in early childhood, but later on, when I developed intellectually, I found that we had little in common, and that remained throughout life. On the other hand, there was a very deep love and friendship with my brother, the starting point of which I remember, was when I had written a poem at 9 years of age, which he looked at with interest and commented on.

Of my other sister, Sidonie, I have very pleasant and painful memories. I only remember her on her return from hospital, where she had been for scrofula. She was, I have no doubt, the best looking of all of us; I don't believe it was just idealization when, after her death, my mother maintained that. I remember her violet-blue eyes, her black curls and her angelic face. What I remember of her is her lying in bed, after her return from hospital, and her goodness towards me. At this time, and I must have been between 4 and 5, the older ones had a knack of teasing me. They spoke amongst themselves of geographical things in a joking way, talking of Popacatepetl and other names, and I was entirely uncertain whether these were genuine or not. I was wildly keen on knowledge, deeply ambitious and very hurt by their being so superior to me. Sidonie, lying in bed, took pity on me, and she taught me the principles of counting and of reading, which I picked up very quickly. It is quite possible that I idealize her a little, but my feeling is that, had she lived, we would have been the greatest of 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 died when I was about $4\frac{1}{2}$ and 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 had gone, and it is probable that some of the spoiling was due to my having to replace that child. It still fills me with grief that at that time we had no cure for t.b. [*sic*] and I always feel it was unnecessary that she did not live her life. My knowledge of myself told me that the very good relations with women and the capacity for friendship, which was always very pronounced in me, were

based on my relation with that sister. Even to the present day, there are many occasions when I think what she would have said or felt about what I am doing, and I regret that she is not able to see that I have achieved something. ['Even to . . . achieved something' *deleted in pen*]

I have mentioned my relation to my brother, who seemed to me superior in every way to myself, not only because at 9 or 10 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 could 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. One of the always recurring topics was that my brother maintained that there was nothing in Schiller and that Goethe was everything that counted, when my father grew very angry and quoted whole passages out of Schiller's work, which he admired. I remember him saying, in his anger, that Goethe was a charlatan, who tried to dabble in science.

My brother was deeply fond of my mother, but gave her a good deal of anxiety.

The relation with my sister Sidonie, who died in her ninth year, when I was in my fifth year of life, was of great importance in my early life and has never entirely lost that importance. At every progress in medicine [*sic*], particularly when ways have been found of dealing with t.b., I feel a grief that she had to die of scrofula, which is t.b. of the glands, when nowadays an entirely new treatment would have kept her alive, and she could have lived her life; I still feel I would have had the best friend of my life in her. In a sense, this early grief has never been entirely overcome, and my relation with my older sister, with whom I had nothing in common, did not make up for that.

The relation with my brother was, I think, a most important factor in my development. I remember the early days, when I was in my fifth year, when he and my older sister teased me with their knowledge, and my sister Sidonie counteracted that by teaching me. But that soon changed. I date my deep friendship with him definitely from my 9th year onwards, when I had written a patriotic poem, and he took care about correcting it and seemed to appreciate it. From at least this time onwards, he was my confidant, my friend, my teacher. He took the greatest interest in my development, and I know that, until his death, he always expected me to do something great, although there was really nothing on which to base it. I remember that I wrote a little dramatic play when I was 16, and he even said that that was the beginning of something permanent, but it did not turn out that my capacity for writing, which was expressed in the

beginnings of various novels and some poems (all of which I have destroyed) would ever have been to my satisfaction and probably not any good.

I deeply admired my brother, who had a genius as a writer and as a musician, and who often dictated to me what he was writing. Later on, after his death [on 2 December 1902], when I was 20, I collected his writings together, with a great friend of his and mine, Irna Schofend [*sic*], and managed to publish them.²⁸ By then I was married and expecting my first child, and I travelled quite a distance to meet Georg Brandes,²⁹ the literary historian, whom my brother had admired, to get a preface from him for this book, since he had refused by letter. Actually he had already left the house from which he had replied to me that he was too old and too tired to give any more prefaces or read any more books, but the friends with whom he had been staying, whose name I cannot remember, a woman writer and her sculptor daughter, seem to have been so impressed with me that their letter to Brandes produced the preface. Actually he used nearly all of what I had written about my brother in this preface. When, after a long struggle, I managed to get a publisher, and a good publisher, for him, it was a great grief to me that he went bankrupt soon after and the book was nearly lost. This book does not really give any idea of what my brother might have achieved, because we used every scrap in his notebooks, some of it quite immature, to put the book together, and it is a feeble picture of what might have come, although there are some beautiful things in it.

The illness of my brother and his early death is another of the griefs in my life, which always remain alive in me. I have said that he was rather a wilful child, though he could be extremely kind and was very fond of my mother and me. He had had scarlet fever when he was, I think, 12 years of age, and that was followed by rheumatic fever. I always heard from my mother, with self-reproach, that, because all the family were going out to the [*‘Pravda’ deleted and replaced in pen with ‘Prater’*],³⁰ he also would go, and this was supposed to have caused a relapse and occasioned that first fever. I do not know if this was so, but I have always felt that the family should not have gone and forced him to go with them. That rheumatic

28. The result was a book, *Aus einem Leben*, authored by Emanuel Reizes, Melanie Klein-Reizes, Irma Schneider-Schönfeld and Georg Morris Cohen Brandes, and published in 1906 in Vienna.

29. Georg Brandes (1842–1927) was a Danish critic and scholar who was very influential on Scandinavian and European literature from the 1870s through to the early 1900s and much admired by Freud.

30. The Prater is the large public amusement park in the Leopoldstadt district of Vienna.

fever affected his heart and he had what was then known as double heart failure. It was always understood, and he knew it very well, that he could not live longer than some time in the twenties. This knowledge, of which he never spoke, must have had a great deal to do with his being rebellious and at times difficult. I have a beautiful letter from him, also one of the few things I have kept, in which he says that he hopes that Fate will give me in years what it has deprived him of in days.

He studied medicine [*sic*], but it was one of the reasons why he stopped his studies and got permission to do some travelling, that he felt that he wanted to use his gift as a writer as much as possible. I know another factor which might have driven him away from home, but I will speak of that later on. He died in Genoa, on his way to take a ship to Spain. A postcard was found on his table, addressed to my fiancé, and he was notified of his death. He travelled to Genoa to fetch his luggage, which had already been deposited by my brother for shipping, and no receipt was found to show which it was. The luggage had been described to my fiancé, who was looking through an enormous hall full of baggage for it, when he saw a periodical protruding from a case. It was a number of the *Fackel*, by Krauss [*sic*],³¹ of whom my brother thought well. He then claimed this lot of luggage and was given it, and it contained manuscripts which I wanted to put together into a book. He was 25 when he died. Here again I have the feeling that, had one known more about medicine [*sic*], one might have been able to do something and keep him alive longer, but I have been told that even now rheumatic heart diseases are not always curable. I don't know whether this is true or not, but it left me with the same feeling that I had about my little sister, that many things could have been done to prevent his illness and early death. Writing now at the age of 77, and he was 5 years older than myself, I cannot imagine him as a man of 82. In my memory he remains a young, strongminded man, as I knew him, strong in his opinions, not minding if they were unpopular, with a deep understanding of art and a passion for it in many ways, and the best friend I ever had. My eldest son, Hans, who died [*in April 1934*] at the age of 27 when mountaineering, had, particularly in his early years, quite a resemblance to my brother, and I think also Eric. I think also that my grandson, Michael, has something of his appearance, but I may be wrong, because all these figures had so much in common in my feelings.

31. Karl Kraus (1874–1936) founded and edited the newspaper *Die Fackel* (*The Torch*) from 1899 till 1936, as a vehicle for attacks on hypocrisy, psychoanalysis, corruption, pan-German nationalism, laissez-faire economics, etc.

Fourth fragment

[typed page number insertion '- 1 -']

The relation to my father was more complex, partly because he took, so I felt, relatively little interest in me and so often professed that my elder sister was his favourite. My relation to my mother has been one of the great standbys in my life. I loved her deeply, admired her beauty, her intellect, her deep wish for knowledge, no doubt with some of the envy which exists in every daughter. Up to the present day, I still think a great deal about her, wondering what she would have said or thought, and particularly regretting that she was not able to see some of my achievements. I wonder often what she would have thought about those. Although she was extremely ambitious for me when I was a young child, when she grew older and things became more difficult – my father had largely become senile and my brother's illness got worse, and she had really to keep the family going – I often heard her say that she didn't care for any greatness, she would wish him to be healthy, even if he had just been a wine merchant or something like that. I am convinced she felt similarly about me, and that her great wish was for me to be happy, and yet I have a feeling that she would have been proud had she been able to realise what I have actually done.

Again, it is difficult for me to picture that by now she would have been 110 years old, because I still see her as she was before she died. She died in my house, having lost, through circumstances, everything to my sister, whose husband had taken over the practice my father had before. She died when the 1914–18 war had begun and was very much concerned because my brother-in-law [*Emilie's husband, Leo Pick*] had by then been taken prisoner by the Russians, or rather when the Premysl [*sic*] fortress was being beleaguered by the Russians.³² My husband and others told her that this fortress was practically impossible to take, but I wonder whether she believed them. She had at this time grown very thin and she was X-rayed and examined at the clinic in Budapest, where we then lived. She complained that the room where she was examined was icy cold, though it was late autumn, and she felt that the bronchitis which followed on that examination was due to the room being so cold. At that time one of the assistants at the clinic where she was examined told me that the X-ray did not show anything about cancer and he suggested that she should, in a few months be examined again. I have since come to the conclusion that she must have had cancer, which caused her loss of weight.

32. The Premysl fortress, constructed by the Austro-Hungarian empire in Premysl (now in the Czech Republic), was captured by the German army in mid 1915.

I remember still how we walked up the hill in Buda,³³ where we had a very nice home. She was a little in front with my husband, and I was behind. I could hardly keep back my tears and was full of grief. Of course I felt, as one would, that I might have looked after her better, though living in the house with her grandchildren was obviously the best thing for her. Eric [*born 1 July 1914*] was four months old when she died [*6 November 1914*] and she enjoyed the baby, but ever since my brother had died, and that was much more distinct than after the death of her husband, she had to a large extent lost interest in life. This did not show in an unpleasant way; she still remained interested in everything concerning me and other people, she still took an interest in my clothes and in my looks, but, looking back, I know that she withdrew more and more her interest in life as far as she herself was concerned. I never imagined anyone could die the way she did, completely in possession of her faculties, calm without any anxiety, and obviously not at all afraid or reluctant to die. I nursed her for some of the time, but we had a nurse for the last week. She was ill for about three weeks. The only thing in which I saw something of her anxieties having come up was that she told me that the nurse was strict. When she saw me so deeply grieved about the approach of her death, she said 'If it means so much to you, make a gruel and I will eat it' because by that time she took hardly any food. Being an excellent cook, she told me how to make a chicken broth and forced herself to take it. It was quite obvious that she attempted to go on living for my sake. Even then she had not lost interest in me and my activities, my children, my home. I had a wet nurse for Eric, due to circumstances which I might mention later, who behaved very badly and terrorised the whole house. When I told her about this, she suggested that I should put up with everything and have the child fed only about 9 or 10 months, and I followed her advice. I remember that, with a certain feeling of guilt that I might have done more for her, and we know that such feelings exist, I knelt down by her bed and asked her forgiveness. She replied that I should have at least as much to forgive her as she to forgive me. Then she said 'Don't grieve, don't mourn, but remember me with love.' I have since seen my sister die,³⁴ full of anxieties and feelings of persecution and heard of other people die, where anxiety was very prominent; I did not imagine that one could die in such a serene way, completely without anxiety and regret, no accusation against anyone, and friendliness towards my sister, though there she did actually have cause for complaint. But I never heard her complain about my sister in the preceding years and everything she had left from the pocket money my husband gave

33. Buda, situated on the west bank of the Danube, is the western part of Budapest, the capital of Hungary.

34. Klein's sister, Emilie, died in London on 13 May 1940.

her she sent to my sister, who needed it. She has in many ways remained my example and I remember the tolerance she had towards people and how she did not like it when my brother and I, being intellectuals, and therefore arrogant, criticized people. She would not agree with us. She had never had any particular feeling that she was in fact an outstanding woman; she was modest and when the question arose about something concerning the maid, she used to say ‘Well, I would not like to do that, why should she?’ Of course, at that time, maids did not have the same treatment as they have now, but, in the best sense of the word, I think my mother was a socialist. As far as her means went, she really tried to make a relation with the maids, and we had one for many years, who was on equal terms. Sometimes she was taken advantage of, but she did not seem to mind that.

I am not sure of the relation between my parents. It was a very united family life. My father even travelled from the Martinstrasse where we lived and he worked to Dornbach for his lunch.³⁵ It would never have occurred to him to go out alone or even to go to a restaurant. My mother was extremely dutiful, both as a wife and as a mother and everything was for the education of the children. I do not remember any occasion when my parents went out by themselves. However, whereas my father was deeply in love with my mother, until his death, and extremely jealous, which was quite noticeable, I am not sure whether my mother was in love with him; in fact, I do not believe she was. She looked after him, she was good with him, but occasionally I saw signs of dissatisfaction in her. In my fantasy, or was it perception, she had been in love with that student in her little home town, to whom I have referred earlier, who died of t.b. Of course, in those days marriages were not simply ended, as is the case today. She had respect for my father and appreciated his qualities, and it seemed a good thing to accept his proposal. Sometimes I thought that perhaps she was glad, but I have never been able to get to the bottom of this, whether she was simply not passionate or not passionate as far as my father was concerned, but I do believe that occasionally I saw a slight aversion against sexual passion in her, which might have been the expression of her own feeling an [*sic*] upbringing, etc.

I have already referred to the change in circumstances, which was extremely important to my feelings. I have no memory of the place where we lived before our fortunes improved, but it seems it was not good. I was very proud when we moved into a very nice flat with a balcony, which I remember very well, when I was about 5 years old. There is something of which I am not sure. I don’t know whether my sister died before we moved, but I believe she died in the flat. I remember that I was extremely happy about the jewellery, silver, canteen which my mother received and about

35. Martinstrasse is about an hour’s walk to the east of Dornbach in Vienna.

the flat being so nice, and this was very much increased when my parents decided to buy the house where the dentistry practice which my father had bought was carried out. I remember that an old friend of my mother, Mme. Mennier, also mortgaged some money on this house, and it seemed to me an enormous thing that my parents should actually own a house.

I had begun to go to school from the flat in the Alserstrasse³⁶ and was very happy there. There was no shyness, in fact I never was shy, and I remember the first day at school, when the teacher, dealing with a number of timid and anxious children, asked them their names in the following way. When she asked 'Who is called Marie?', the little girls called Marie had to put up their hands and say 'My name is Marie'. I waited anxiously for my turn to come, though a number of the children were under the benches, being so anxious, and had to be dragged out, to tell their names. My name, being a little unusual, did not come, and being unable to wait any longer, when the teacher said 'Who is called Marie?', I put up my hand when she said 'No say nicely "My name is Marie"', I said 'My name is Melanie'. She looked at me a little reproachfully and said 'Your turn hasn't yet come' and I felt rather ashamed, though actually there was no other Melanie and my turn would not have come.

Fifth fragment

[*handwritten page number insertion '22'*]

I had decided at about 14 that I would study medicine, but I may have been stimulated by hearing my father say to a patient that I was going to a lyceum (lycée), where I learnt French, English and all the things that a girl of good family was expected to know. At that very moment, I decided that I was going to change over to the gymnasium, and, since it was the middle of the year, my brother taught me Latin and Greek, to keep up with the subjects taught at the gymnasium. I still remember, with amusement, that, though he was very keen to help me, he was a most impatient teacher. My prep. from one day to the next was to learn the four conjugations in Latin, and, when I muddled them, he cried out in anger: 'You want to study! You must become a shop assistant.' Still, with preparation, I could pass the exam, which consisted mainly of Latin and Greek, and life took on an entirely different aspect for me.

I must have been longing to study, or do something, without having been aware of it. Now I knew that I was going to study medicine and had even thought of psychiatry. I was extremely happy in that school, where the girls' intelligence was above the average, and where the teachers were much more interesting and interested than at the previous school, and

36. See n.18 above.

I was looking forward with great happiness to further studies at the University, though at this period the financial situation at home was very stringent, as my father had become more and more senile, and the house was kept going by the indefatigable capacities of my mother. I bore all sorts of deprivations, in comparison with those of my schoolmates, fairly easily. It was on rare occasions that I got a new dress, and theatres and concerts were also rare occurrences [*sic*], but I had a lively and happy connection with my schoolmates and was soon introduced to friends of my brother. It was altogether a very intellectual circle in which I lived and I blossomed out. This was also a time when I read passionately whatever I could get hold of, deep into the night. My mother did not know this, as my room was apart from hers. I know that I did my prep largely in the tram, which was at the time still horse-drawn. I got behind in geometry, which was a subject I did not like, and a friend of my brother undertook to help me. He fell deeply in love with me, and at the time I also had opportunities of meeting a few other young men and, when I was 17, I met my future fiancé [*Arthur Klein*]. At that time, there were actually four young men in love with me, all of which I knew would have wished to marry me. I was very much impressed by my fiancé, who seemed to me to be intellectually outstanding, and again I am afraid that I was influenced by my brother's opinion, who made friends with him. He was a second cousin and had visited us for that reason, but he fell in love with me and very quickly decided the issue by proposing to marry me. While being intellectually very forward at this time, well-read and stimulated by a very intellectual circle, and therefore believing myself mature, I was in many ways only a child. At this stage, intellect was what impressed me most. I think I was both flattered and impressed by my future fiancé's proposal, though it was clear we would have some time to wait. He already had his degree as an engineer, but still had his way to make. I accepted his proposal and it did not take very long for me to fall in love with him. From that time I was so loyal that I refrained from any entertainment where I might have met other young men and never expressed a feeling that I already had in my mind, that we were not really suited to one another. I could not continue my studies because there was not enough time to take a course in medicine, but I went to extra-mural classes in art and history, feeling all the time that I was missing something terribly, my intended study of medicine and psychiatry.

I married at 21 and 10 months³⁷ afterwards I had my first child, my daughter Melitta [*born 19 January 1904*]. I threw myself as much as I could into motherhood and interest in my child, and my mother, who had more or less lost her home through different circumstances, came to live with us,

37. In fact, as Klein subsequently recalled, she married Arthur Klein the day after her twenty-first birthday, i.e., on 31 March 1903.

which was a very great comfort. I knew all the time that I was not happy, but saw no way out. Three years after Melitta's birth, my son Hans was born [2 March 1907], who showed in the early stages of his life a preciousness and intellectual ability which was quite outstanding. At 18 months, he could speak Slovakian (I had spent the first three years in a small Slovakian town [Ružomberok], where my husband was engineer in a paper factory) and German, which I cultivated in the beginning, in such a way that he could turn from speaking German to me to speaking Slovakian to the nurse without any difficulty.

We moved to a Silesian town [Hermanetz], where my husband had a much better position as director of several factories, and where I disliked life very much. Then, partly because I felt unhappy there, he accepted a position which centred on Budapest, where I found life entirely different. There were relatives of my husband there, to whom I became extremely attached, and altogether life in Budapest, with theatres, parties and pleasant company, was in complete contrast to the three years I had spent in the little Silesian town, which seemed inhabited by narrow-minded people, with whom I had nothing in common.

My third child, Eric, was born a month before the first world war [*sic*] started and, when he was five years old, we left Budapest. This war, from the Hungarian point of view, was carried out without any interest. People knew very well that the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy was doomed, something I heard long before the war started. There was plenty of food for people who could pay for it, and the idea that was so important in the second world war [*sic*] in England, that one should not buy things when others could not afford them, did not exist. Civilians were in no danger, the war was happening somewhere else. When the short-lived but very stringent Communist regime started in 1919 at the end of the war, we left Budapest and I went to live for a year with my parents-in-law [in Ružomberok], with whom I had always been on very good terms, especially my mother-in-law, and my husband found a position in Sweden. This was the preliminary of our actually parting from one another, and lasted until 1922, when we were divorced. I took [*sic*] with me my youngest son, who was then only eight, and nominally I also had the right to have my other two children, but that was not practicable at the time, as I was still financially dependent on my husband. While living in Budapest, I had become deeply interested in psycho-analysis. I remember that the first book of Freud's that I read was the small book on Dreams³⁸ and, when I read it, I knew that that was it – that was what I was aiming at, at least

38. Almost certainly the brief version of Freud's *Die Traumdeutung* (*The Interpretation of Dreams*), *Über den Traum* (*On Dreams*) published in 1901 with a second edition in 1911.

during those years when I was so very keen to find what would satisfy me intellectually and emotionally. I went into analysis with Ferenczi, who was the most [‘outstanding’ *inserted in pen*] Hungarian analyst, and he very much encouraged my idea of devoting myself to analysis, particularly child analysis, for which he said I had a particular talent. I heard – a memory which is very important to me – Freud at a congress in 1917 [1918]³⁹ between the Austrian and Hungarian societies,⁴⁰ and I remember vividly how impressed I was and how the wish to devote myself to psycho-analysis was strengthened by this impression. In 1919 I read a paper to the Hungarian Psycho-analytical Society, which aroused great interest. (It was the first one in my book ‘Contributions to Psycho-Analysis’).⁴¹ I remember with gratitude Anton von Freuna [*sic*],⁴² who was most encouraging and quite convinced that here was a blossoming talent that should be used. I am very sorry that he died young, I always felt that we would have been friends. On that occasion he put certain questions to me, which I could not answer at the time, but which in retrospect seem quite relevant to a deep understanding of children, which was then not so pronounced in me.

After I had lived with my parents-in-laws [*sic*] for a year, I decided to go to Berlin. By that time the estrangement between myself and my husband had very much increased. My reason for going to Berlin was that I had met in the autumn of 1920 at the congress at the Hague, already as a member of the Hungarian Society, Abraham, who strongly encouraged me to settle in Berlin and to devote myself to child analysis, and promised me his support, a promise which, like others he made, he fully kept.

So I arrived at the beginning of 1921 in Berlin. My daughter, who had passed her matric in that Slovakian town where I had lived with my parents-in-law, joined me and my three children were with me. She went to Berlin University to study medicine [*sic*], and I began slowly to gain ground in Berlin as a psycho-analyst. A description of how I soon got access to the deeper layers of the mind [*sic*] in children is given in my paper **PLAY TECHNIQUE AND ITS HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE**,

39. Klein seems to be referring here to hearing Freud present his paper ‘Lines of advance in psycho-analytic therapy’ at the fifth International Psycho-Analytic Congress held in Budapest from 28–9 September 1918. See Grosskurth (1986, p. 464).

40. Klein interestingly mis-remembers first hearing Freud at a 1917 meeting of the Vienna and Budapest psychoanalytic societies. In fact, she first heard Freud and saw him ‘in person’ at the 1918 international congress of psychoanalysis. See Grosskurth (1986, p. 71).

41. Klein (1921).

42. Anton von Freund (1880–1920) was a patient of Freud’s during World War I and subsequently worked for the Budapest Psychoanalytic Society and as secretary-general (from September 1918) of the International Psychoanalytic Association.

in ‘New Directions’.⁴³ I could never [*sic*] explain the question often put to me, how I know that, in approaching children, I had first of all to tackle their anxieties and phantasies. My interest in children’s minds goes back a very long way. I remember that, even as a child of eight or nine, I was interested in watching younger children, but all that was still dormant until it became alive in my psycho-analytic work. Or, rather, it had become very much alive in my relations to my own children. Maybe the fact that many ideas about education did not have the effect that I aimed at contributed to my conviction that there was something which lay deeper – the unconscious, which has to be tackled if one wants to bring about changes in the difficulties of children. From 1922, when the divorce became effective, my practice in Berlin grew, and I had opportunities of analysing children, also some of my colleagues, and some of the fundamental approach which I used has remained true until today. No doubt much has been added, but this is all shown in my papers and books.

I met Ernest Jones at a congress in Salzburg in 1925 [1924],⁴⁴ where I gave my first paper on the technique of child analysis, an approach which was entirely new, completely controversial and strongly doubted by many analysts. Ernest Jones was very much impressed by it and I remember that, when I asked whether he would publish a paper of mine in the National [*sic*] Journal of Psycho-Analysis, he said he would publish a book if I wrote one. This was very encouraging and so was Abraham’s impression of the value of my work with children. He was very cautious, the real scientist, who should weigh carefully the pros and cons, uninfluenced by emotion, but who seemed to feel that something here was growing which might be of great importance. It was unforgettable that, when I participated in 1925 [1924]⁴⁵ in a congress, he said at the end of the paper I read (ERNA’S HISTORY), which later made one chapter in ‘The Psycho-Analysis of Children’, that the future of psycho-analysis rested with child analysis. He had never before expressed his opinion so strongly to me and, since I was really in those first years unaware of the importance of the contribution to psycho-analysis that I was making, his saying so came to me as a surprise. I felt that I was working in the only way one could work with children, though I was of course gratified by results and by some papers which I had already written. I did not evaluate [*sic*] my contributions in the way in which they have since by many people been judged and in which I now myself

43. Klein (1955).

44. Klein first met Ernest Jones at the eighth international congress of psychoanalysis held in Salzburg in April 1924 when she presented her controversial paper published as ‘The technique of early analysis’ in *The Psycho-Analysis of Children* (Klein 1932b).

45. Klein initially presented this paper at the first conference of German psychoanalysts held in October 1924 in Würzburg (Klein 1932c).

judge them, considering how much light they have thrown, not only on the child's mind, but on the whole development of the adult, and that they have become the approach by which really ill people can be cured or improved, and that many children who might never have been cured have been made better in this way.

In 1925 Ernest Jones, stimulated by the opinion of Mrs. James Strachey,⁴⁶ who at the time was in analysis with Abraham in Berlin, and Mrs. Riviere,⁴⁷ who from the beginning took a great interest in my papers, invited me to give lectures on child analysis in England. By that time I had been able to have analysis with Abraham, feeling very strongly that what Ferenczi would not do might be done. This was a very important factor in my development. At this time I was still unhappy, feeling my divorce, and both in need of some help and driven by the urge to know more. When I approached Abraham with the request for an analysis, he told me that it had become a principle with him not to analyse any one remaining in Berlin. He was referring to some very unhappy situations which had resulted from broken-off analyses with colleagues who had become hostile to him. I don't know where I found the courage, but my answer was: 'Can you tell me of anyone in Berlin to whom I can look up in such a way that I can go to them for analysis?' He never replied to that question, but he accepted me for analysis. I had to wait a few months and the analysis started at the beginning of 1924 and came to an end when Abraham fell very ill in the summer of 1925 and died at Christmas of that year; a great pain to me and a very painful situation to come through.

To return to Ernest Jones' invitation to give lectures on child analysis. I had neglected to write the paper on my work with children in the form of lectures. I had six weeks to write six lectures, which were at the time translated into English by Mrs. Strachey and one or two other people who helped. In 1925 I had the wonderful experience of speaking to an interested and appreciative audience in London – all members were present at Dr. Stevens' [*sic*] house⁴⁸ because at that time there was not yet an institute

46. Alix Strachey (1892–1973) was an American-born psychoanalyst who, with her British-born psychoanalyst husband, James Strachey (1887–1967), translated works by Freud into English and was the first to translate Klein's work into English in 1924–5. See Meisel and Kendrick (1986).

47. Joan Riviere (1883–1962) was a London-based psychoanalyst who also translated works by Freud into English.

48. Gordon Square was the centre of London's Bloomsbury Group in this period: 46 Gordon Square was the residence of Dr Adrian Stephen (1883–1948) and Dr Karin Stephen (1890–1953), who, together with the Stracheys residing at 41 Gordon Square, were the principal members of the Group devoted to psychoanalysis. Jean MacGibbon, to whom Klein sent the first of these autobiographical fragments, subsequently wrote a biography of Adrian Stephen, *There's the Lighthouse*, eventually published in 1997.

where I could give these lectures. Ernest Jones asked me whether I would answer in the discussion. Although I had learnt a lot of English privately [*sic*] and at school, my English was still not good and I remember well that I was half guessing what I was asked, but it seemed that I could satisfy my audience in that way. The three weeks that I spent in London, giving two lectures a week, were one of the happiest times in my life. I found much friendliness, hospitality and interest, and I also had an opportunity of seeing something of England and I developed a great liking for the English. It is true that later on things did not always go so easily, but those three weeks were very important in my decision to live in England. In 1926 Ernest Jones invited me to come for a year to England to analyse the children of some colleagues. It was first a question of six children, including Ernest Jones' two. I remember that my Berlin colleagues said that I was absolutely [*sic*] mad to undertake this, as it was sure to lead to catastrophe with my colleagues, but I did not feel this was so. In fact, apart from one case where I had some difficulty with the mother, things went quite well. I had already in Berlin started to analyse adults as well, and that I continued in London. After a few months Ernest Jones asked me, and here I think the influences of Mrs. Riviere and Mrs. Strachey also came in, if I would settle in London. I was quite free to decide about my future and I accepted his suggestion, in particular as, since Abraham's death, in 1925, the Berlin society had begun to deteriorate and support for my work had become very questionable. Three months after I had come to England, I was able to take my son, Eric, whom I had left behind with the family of a school master in Frankfurt, to England. He was then $12\frac{1}{2}$ and when he was $13\frac{1}{2}$, after having been tutored privately and at the Hall,⁴⁹ he passed his examination into St. Paul's, where he finished his schooling. My son, Hans, had chosen to be an engineer and paper-maker, and had become more or less independent from his father. My daughter, Melitta, had finished her medical studies, had decided to become an analyst, had married and settled with her husband in England in 1932.

I have never regretted having come to England and when, at the beginning of the thirties, there was a possibility for me in the United States, I did not even consider it. England had become my adopted motherland and, since the situation in Austria, both from the analytical point of view and from other angles, was not attractive any more (in 1926 appeared Anna Freud's book,⁵⁰ which started the ever-lasting controversy against

49. Probably The Hall, a preparatory school in Belsize Park near St John's Wood where Klein lived from 1933 till 1954.

50. The publication in 1927 of Anna Freud's book, *Einführung in die Technik der Kinderanalyse*, criticising Klein's play technique of child psychoanalysis, was followed by Klein defending her technique at a symposium organized in London by the British

me, and the Viennese society was extremely hostile to me and my work), there was nothing to attract me to live in Austria. My mother, who had lived with me, died in 1914, at the beginning of the war, and my only bond with Vienna was my sister, who lived there, but this tie was not strong enough to take me back. So more and more I have really accepted England as my country and went through the second [*sic*] World War with all the feelings of English people at that time. This was very much increased by Hitler having destroyed so many of my friends in various lands, and Germany having become a country which I have always abhorred. In spite of so many difficulties developing in a psycho-analytical society in England from about 1935 onwards, I have never regretted coming to England; working here and founding a school of thought and approach to child and adult analysis, which I do not think will ever be killed by controversial trends. Within the limits of human capacity, I feel that I have done something which perhaps in the future may prove to have been a great contribution to the understanding of the human mind, and I have colleagues who can continue and will continue this work after my death. All that is bound up with my attitude towards England, and I remember with gratitude Ernest Jones standing by my [*sic*] until 1935, when he began more to retire from conflict even before the war.

Sixth fragment

[*handwritten page number insertion '33'*]

I remember my childhood as a happy one. I loved school and play, and, being the youngest, I was on the whole really spoilt and I think had too much attention. In some ways, until the relation between my brother and me developed into a deeper one, I did not feel that I was completely understood, but at this time no one really thought that any special understanding of a child was necessary. However, on the whole, they were all quite kind to me, and since I gave no trouble at school and was generally an obedient child, there were hardly any difficulties. I do remember, though, that, at the time when the fortunes of the family improved and we moved into a nice flat in the Alserstrace [*sic*],⁵¹ the pride and happiness that I felt about it made it clear to me that I had been worried about the financial difficulties, I would almost say poverty, which preceeded [*sic*] the move, because my father as a physician could make very little money. As I have mentioned, my mother took to having a shop. I remember very

Psycho-Analytical Society on 4 and 18 May 1927. See Klein (1927). Anna Freud's book was not published in English translation until 1946 when it was then included in her book, *The Psycho-Analytical Treatment of Children*.

51. Alserstrasse, see n.18 above.

strongly how happy I felt when things had become very much nicer. I also had nicer clothes, which made me feel happy and proud.

It was at this time that I had French governesses. The first one was Mlle. Chapuis. My parents engaged her through some agency from a convent, and I know that she was very religious. She was very kind and I have no memory of any unpleasantness [*sic*] about her, but she did not stay long because she got very homesick. She recommended a young girl, also from this convent, Mlle. Constance Sylvester. She still had plaits, was 19 year [*sic*] old and at first was very timid and anxious, but blossomed out very quickly. She was very good with me and took an interest in my thoughts, whereas the other members of the family spoilt and admired me, but were not particularly interested in what went on in my mind. Mlle. Chapuis had taken me repeatedly to church with her and I knelt when she did. I felt extremely guilty about that, because I felt convinced that my parents, being Jewish, would not have agreed to my kneeling in a Catholic church and participating in the services. However, I did not want to give Mlle. Chapuis away, since she was otherwise very kind to me and I liked her and also I had a feeling of attraction to these Catholic services. There must have been, in fact I know there was, some revolt against my Jewish origin and an attraction to something else. Constance did not do that. She soon seemed to lose some of her fervour and became extremely gay. I was her favourite, because not only did she understand me, but I thought I understood her better than the others. I know that my brother teased her a lot. My sister Emilie was a bad pupil and, since she had no trouble with me, my relation with her was quite a close one. I had another secret which I did not tell my mother and which made me feel very guilty, and that was, when she went out with me, according to the Viennese fashion, young men would talk with her and on a few occasions she allowed them to walk with her on the street. I was quite sure my mother would disapprove but my loyalty to Constance would not let me report it. She gave it up herself at a certain point, probably feeling that it was wrong.

This attraction to the Catholic church, which was stimulated by Mlle. Chapuis, led later on, when I was 9 or 10, to some things which tortured me and which I could only confess to Constance. That was the feeling that I would one day become Catholic and how I would hurt my my [*sic*] parents. I remember I told her 'I don't want to do it, but I shall have to' and she replied very understandingly 'Well, if you have to do it, you can't help it.' Between 10 and 12 I felt unhappy before going to sleep and I remember Emilie was kind enough to move her couch near mine and I went to sleep holding her hand. I also have the feeling that as a young child I might have liked her very much, because no doubt she was very fond and proud of me. But later on we seemed to have very little in common. Apart from these anxieties, I remember myself as a happy child, very ambitious at school, always bringing the best reports home, spoilt also by the teachers at school.

This Catholic attraction showed itself at school, where I felt very deprived when I saw the Catholic children running to the priest and kissing his hand. I remember that on one occasion I plucked up my courage and also kissed his hand. He patted me on the head in a very friendly manner, but that occasion I did not mention.

Seventh fragment

[*handwritten page number insertion '36'*]

My memory is, as I have often said, that I was in some ways spoilt and conceited. I certainly very much wanted praise and liked to be in the picture. In a sense I was the opposite of being shy and I was rather what one would call in German 'vorlaut' [*'cheeky'*].

Another feature, which was linked with the desire for praise and admiration, was that I was very ambitious. From the moment that I entered school it was very important to me to get the best possible marks, and that attitude, I remember, I had until I went to the gymnasium. There I had begun to be very interested in the subjects themselves; I had very interesting teachers, very intelligent schoolmates, and I think my ambition had already abated there. When I started psycho-analytical work, I was, I think, still very ambitious; it is contradictory that, at the same time, I had no idea that I was really putting forward entirely new contributions to theory and I really felt that that was something that was self-understood. I was not conceited at that time, because I felt that no other conclusion could be drawn in analysing children and in following what Freud had laid down. Nevertheless, for years to come, I still felt very ambitious, and the struggle which I had against my critics – this became very strong after Abraham's death and in particular when Anna Freud's book,⁵² which denigrated my work, appeared [*sic*] – referred not only to my work, but also to myself. That is to say, at the beginning of my psycho-analytic work, the old ambition was still there. The further I progressed, the less it grew. My own psycho-analysis, which played such a large role in my development, must have contributed to that, because more and more I lost my personal ambition, which probably applies more to the thirties, and concentrated on the interest of producing what I know to be an extremely important contribution to psycho-analysis. This change-over from personal ambition to protecting my work must have gone with great changes to myself. There is no doubt that I had become, from the beginning of my analytical work dedicated to psycho-analysis, and the feeling that that was the main object to be protected diminished the old interest in personal ambition. The older I got, the less my personal ambition became, and it is true that personal

52. See n.50 above.

experience contributed to my becoming resigned, and even resigned about the protection of my work, which I took really to be the protection of the development of psycho-analysis. For years I was still working and went to all the congresses from 1922 onwards, except the one in [2–8 August] 1936 in Marienbad, and always did my duty by psycho-analysis, but I became more and more doubtful whether my work would survive and whether the depth to which I was able to take psycho-analysis was something which many people could bear, and whether there were many people who could carry out analysis to such a depth. I became very sceptical as time went on about the survival of my work, but in recent years, with a group of outstanding colleagues, who have the capacity to protect this work, I am again hopeful. In all these years up to now, I have actually never shirked my duty to psycho-analysis, even in recent years – I am speaking in November, 1959,⁵³ very near my 78th birthday – I have hardly ever cancelled a session and have attended nearly all meetings, even when I knew that the paper was not worth while, because I felt that in the discussion I might be useful and because I felt that my presence and my voice might have some influence on the younger people, even those who do not belong to this group.

That change from strong personal ambition to the devotion to something which is above my own prestige is characteristic of a great deal of change that went on in the course of my psycho-analytic life and work. When I abruptly finished my analysis with Abraham, there was a great deal which had not been analysed and I have continually proceeded along the lines of knowing more about my deepest anxieties and defences. In spite of the scepticism which I said was quite characteristic of a large part of my analytical life, I have never been hopeless, nor am I now. It is a mixture of resignation and some hope that my work will perhaps after all survive and be a great help to mankind. There are, of course, my grandchildren [*Eric and his wife Judy's children – Michael, Diana and Hazel, born in 1937, 1942 and 1947, respectively*] who contribute to this feeling that the world will go on, and when I speak of my having been completely dedicated to my work, this does not exclude my also being completely dedicated to my grandchildren. Even now, when they have become much less close to me, I know that I have been a very important figure in the first few years of their lives and this must have been of great benefit to them. All three loved me deeply until 6 or 7 years old, and Hazel even up to 9 or 10, and I believe that they have kept some affection for me, though unfortunately they are far less in contact with me; except Michael, who has in recent years become much closer to me again and who I know has at least unconsciously and

53. It has not proved possible to ascertain the context in which Klein was speaking about her life in this November 1959 fragment of her autobiography.

perhaps partly consciously, the feeling that I am of great value and also that he can speak freely to me.

I have not pursued my story from the time I became engaged to be married and have only made a few general remarks about this event. I have already said that during my engagement, without realizing it sufficiently, I was already deeply disappointed. Both loyalty to my fiancé, with whom I was up to a point in love, and circumstances prevented me from mentioning this to my mother or my brother. I often wonder whether my brother, with whom I had such a deep and close connection, did not realize that I was doing the wrong thing. He soon left his medical studies and, with very little money, travelled and could not bear to remain in Vienna any more. He was already collecting what he felt was the only thing he could do in the few years left, his writings. The book⁵⁴ which, together with a very intimate friend of his and mine, Irma Schonfeld [*sic*], we put together, though it is very little justice to what he was or might have been. I still believe that he had genius and always thought that he had very much more creative capacity than I had, though he did not seem to think so. He always said that something outstanding was expected from me. I don't know on what he based this, as I was 20 when he died and had only written some poetry, which I have destroyed as I don't find it on the level of my later achievement. But I sometimes wonder did he or did he not unconsciously know that I was going to make myself unhappy. Certainly I had not spoken of any doubts either to him or to my mother, so, though they may have thought my fiancé a difficult person, they also knew that I was in love with him, and ['thought' *inserted in pen*] that I did not mind him being difficult. I must allow for the fact that, since my sister's marriage and brother-in-law's taking over the dental practice, the whole financial situation had become worse and it would not have been easy for me to return to my studies, which I was longing to do. Whether or not this was the main factor of my doing something which I knew was wrong – my marriage – I cannot say any more, but it must have been an important reason.

Eighth fragment

[*typed page number insertion '40'*]

When I became engaged, my fiancé had finished his studies as a chemical engineer, but had still to have more practice and to make a position for himself, so the marriage was planned for two or three years later. I used this time for attending courses at the Vienna University in art and history, but even then I felt that I was not doing what I actually wanted to do, which was to study medicine. My engagement lasted four years and I was married

54. *Aus einem Leben* (1906). See n.28 above.

the day after my 21st birthday.⁵⁵ My husband had a position in a paper factory, partly owned by his father, in Ruzomberok [*sic*],⁵⁶ which at that time was part of Hungary, but with a predominantly Slovak population. After the war it became part of Czecho-Slovakia.

My first child, Melitta, was born on the 19th January, 1904, and I was very happy with her. I gave her much of my time and attention and she was very attached to me as well as to her nannie [*sic*], who was a good Slovakian peasant woman. At that time I learnt Slovakian, and spoke it fluently. Melitta was a beautiful and fairly easy baby and soon showed herself to be very intelligent.

My second child, Hans, was born on the 2nd March 1907, and developed very well. I also fed him, and we found that he was an extremely precocious child. At eighteen months, he spoke fluently German, which I had started to speak with him, and Slovakian in such a way that he could turn from speaking with me in German to carrying on the conversation [*sic*] with her in Slovakian.

Considering how little I had travelled as a girl, I had two important travels; one when Melitta was one year old, with my husband to Trieste, Abbazia⁵⁷ and Venice, and the second more impressive journey in May 1906 to Rome, Naples and Florence, which opened up a new world. I was entirely indefatigable about seeing paintings and sculptures, and these journeys, of which my husband also was very fond, gave me a good deal of happiness. My honeymoon, too, had been an experience along the same lines, because we travelled to Zurich and, on the way, went to Constanza [*on the Black Sea east of Bucharest*]. It was all very new and impressive to me, as I had hardly travelled before.

When Melitta was three years old, six weeks after Hans was born, my husband got a better position as director of several factories in Silesia, and we lived in Krappitz, a small provincial town without any charm, and I felt very unhappy, as I could not find anyone with whom I could even converse. I was very much strengthened by my mother, who, soon after my marriage, came to live with us, and with whom I always had company. This was a great help to me, as the incompatibility [*sic*] between the character and views of myself and my husband was becoming increasingly obvious. I am glad to say that he liked her and never had any objection to her living with us, since she was a very retiring and quiet person. There was no trouble between him and her.

55. I.e., the marriage of Melanie to Arthur Klein took place on 31 March 1903.

56. The Slovakian town, Ružomberok, is 337 kilometres north-east of Vienna.

57. Abbazia is the Italian name for Opatija, a town in western Croatia just south-west of Rijeka on the Adriatic coast.

Ninth fragment

[typed page number insertion '42']

My husband accepted a position at a big Hungarian factory, where he was also the director of several factories, and that brought about a very great change in the situation. I loved living in Budapest, where I had friends and very much loved relatives and the opportunity of going to theatres and concerts. It was about 1914 that I came across, for the first time, a book by Freud, and that was the small book on dreams (not *The Interpretation of Dreams*).⁵⁸ When I read it, I felt that that was what I was aiming for. I remember that I had at that time a full conviction of the existence of the sub-conscious and that I had been aiming at that for years past. I entered into analysis with Ferenczi. Technique at this time was extremely different from what it is at present and the analysis of negative transference did not enter. I had a very strong positive transference and I feel that one should not underrate the effect of that, though, as we know, it can never do the whole job.

During this analysis with Ferenczi, he drew my attention to my great gift of understanding children and my interest in them. I had, of course, three children of my own, at that time, and, as I said, I had not found that the information that education and understanding could provide could cover the whole understanding of the personality [*sic*] and therefore have the influence one might wish to have. I had always the feeling that behind that was something with which I could not come to grips. There is much that I have to thank Ferenczi for. One thing is that he conveyed to me, and strengthened in me, the conviction in the existence of the sub-conscious and its importance for mental life. I also enjoyed being in touch with somebody who was a man of unusual gifts. He had a streak of genius. Also he strengthened in me the desire to turn to child analysis and he carried it out in fact by talking to Abraham at the Congress in 1919 at the [*sic*] Hague. Abraham took this up very strongly. There was somebody doing child analysis at this time in Berlin (later she became the wife of Müller-Braunschweig [*sic*])⁵⁹ but in a very restricted way, and I never could get an impression of what she was actually [*sic*] doing, nor was she analysing children under six or seven years. I am quite sure that we had very little in common and I do not think it too conceited to say that I introduced into Berlin the beginning of child analysis. I was successful in my work and I treated, though his analysis was broken off, a child sent by the school

58. See n.38 above.

59. Klein is presumably referring here to the child analyst, Dr Josine (née Ebsen) Müller (1884–1930), who was the first wife of the psychoanalyst, founder and president of the German Psychoanalytic Association, Carl Müller-Braunschweig (1881–1958).

authorities. All this contributed to my practice widening. I believe that, if I had persisted in staying in Berlin and had had the further support of Abraham, child analysis on my own lines would have been stabilized.

I must describe how I got to Berlin. At this time, my husband was working in Sweden; this was in 1919, at the end of the war. I had passed nine years in Budapest and, after the war, my husband left in order to further his career anew. Deflation had devalued all money. During the war, since no one kept to any regulations, one used all one's money to feed the children, and in Hungary they had not suffered as they did in Austria. Hungary seemed in an absolute debacle, and when my husband decided to look for other possibilities, I went with my three children to stay with my parents-in-law in Slovakia, which at that time was still thought to belong to Hungary, but at the end of the war became Czecho-Slovakia. I stayed there for nearly a year with my children, and my husband found various possibilities, from which he chose work in Sweden. Having been by birth an Austrian subject, I had now become a Czecho-Slovakian subject and, with my husband, settled in Sweden. He soon managed to become a Swedish [*sic*] subject, since he was not keen on being Czecho-Slovakian. In this way I became a Swedish [*sic*] subject, which, at a later time, was very useful to me.

While my husband was away, the intention of separating became much stronger, and was definitely carried out in 1923 as a divorce. In the meantime, I had left my parents-in-law, who had been most hospitable, and, being uncertain where to go because, as I said, the separation was practically a divorce, I chose to settle in Berlin, supported by Ferenczi's recommendation to Abraham and his great willingness to help me start child analysis there. By that time, I had already done some psycho-analysis with one child, which is described in my first paper in 'The Contributions'.⁶⁰ I still went to the Congress in the [*sic*] Hague, as I have mentioned, in 1920, leaving my children with my sister in Vienna. I met one of the pioneers in psycho-analysis there, Hug-Helmuth,⁶¹ and had great expectations of learning something from her. I found her particularly unwilling and in fact, looking at her papers, I would say that she had nothing to teach me. She herself had only done analysis with children over 6 or 7 years, avoiding completely interpretations, though she used some play material and drawings, but I have never been able to understand what she actually did with it. Feeling that I might be somebody oncoming, she was most reluctant to have anything to do with me.

60. Klein (1921).

61. Hermine von Hug-Hellmuth (1871–1924) wrote one of the first papers on child psychoanalysis, 'The analysis of a dream of a 5-year old boy', published in 1911 in the *Zentralblatt für Psychoanalyse*. See also MacLean and Rappen (1991).

So I worked on my own in Berlin and I only remember one important occasion on which I asked Abraham's advice. That was when the anxiety in the child, whose analysis was the first I mentioned, grew in a way which frightened me. Abraham more or less advised me to go on, some quite important changes in the child had happened, and it turned out that I had been at a climax and that a few days later the anxiety went down again. This experience has been definite [*sic*] in developing my methods of approach. I knew now that it was anxiety that one had to analyse, and that, if one could find the unconscious reasons for it, with all the implications, one could diminish it.

I never had any supervision. I had become [*sic*] a full member of the Hungarian Society only on the grounds of having read there the first one of my paper [*sic*] in the 'Contributions'. I shall never forget my gratitude towards Dr. Freund, who was very much taken by my paper and strongly supported that, on the strength of it, I should become a full member. I was very grieved to hear that, very soon afterwards, he died of cancer. He remains one of the good figures in my life.

After all, I was inexperienced, did not know myself about my gifts and had to find my way according to my intuition. I have often been asked how it was that I tackled the children I analysed in the way I did, which was entirely unorthodox and, in many cases, in contrast to the rules laid down for the analysis of adults. I have described this in my paper 'Play technique: its history and significance' in the 'New Directions'.⁶² I still cannot answer what made me feel that it was anxiety that I should touch and why I should proceed in the way in which I did, but experience confirmed that I was right and, to some extent, the beginning of my play technique goes back to my first case.

Tenth fragment

[*handwritten page number insertion '47'*]

The relation with my mother was, for some reason, much more vivid than the one with my father. I was the youngest and he was already in his fifties when I was born. He was an old fifty. I have no memories of his ever playing with me and he made it clear that he preferred my elder sister, the first-born child. Nevertheless, I treasured the memory of his holding my hand, when we went up the Heuberg [*sic*]⁶³ together, hand in hand, at lunch time. My father was so set in his habits that he would never go to a restaurant by himself. He would always come home for what was then called a dinner and go back to his work afterwards, though it was quite a

62. Klein (1955).

63. Heuberg is on the north-western outskirts of Vienna.

distance from his working place, and I fetched him coming from school and we went up together.

That was when I was a little girl. Not only was my father old for his age, but I think that, in his sixties, he must have had a stroke, and he became rapidly senile. He certainly was so when I was 12 or 13 years old, and then our fortunes began to decline very badly. It was only my mother who held the family together. I have, of course, vivid memories of the years preceding this, when [‘the family’ *inserted in pen*] read [‘together’ *inserted in pen*] classical works, and his boundless admiration for Schiller, from whom he quoted long pieces, in conflict with my brother, who depreciated Schiller in comparison with Goethe.

Somehow my mother was so much nearer to me, because she was much more alive and understanding, and, after all, she attended to all our needs. By saying understanding, I really do not mean understanding in the full sense of the word, or what I now would think of as understanding, but the picture of her as the devoted mother and wife, and her great love and interest for art and lectures and everything beautiful, stands out much more than what I received from my father. I think I began to understand my father and the way in which he arrived at his development much better later on, and I still regret that he was so distant to me. But I think of my childhood as one of a good family life and I would give anything for one day of having it back again; the three of us, my brother, my sister and myself sitting round the table and doing our school work, and the many details of united family life. I have hardly any memory of my parents going out by themselves in the evening.

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ABSTRACT

This document consists of the first publication of Melanie Klein's draft of her autobiography beginning with a fragment dated June 1959.

Key words: Melanie Klein, Sigmund Freud, Sándor Ferenczi, Karl Abraham, Ernest Jones, Vienna, Budapest, Slovakia, Silesia, autobiography