## II

Because Nietzsche's way was toward insanity while Lou Salomé's way led in the direction of emotional maturity and intellectual vitality, they had to part. In the year that Nietzsche finished the fourth and last part of Also sprach Zarathustra, Lou Salomé published under the pseudonym "Henry Lou" her first novel, Im Kampf um Gott, a reflection of her friendship with the philosopher. Gertrud Bäumer analysed the novel as "another tragedy of the religious freethinker (which was also what Lou called Nietzsche) whom the same spiritual darkness enveloped."[1] Erwin Rohde[2], one of Nietzsche's friends, commented:

> "With all the great defects of the novel - its lack of body and its ghostlike spirituality (gespensterhafte Geistigkeit) - yet it is attractive by the pure flame of its intimacy, of its truth, of its feelings, which breaks through everywhere. But a frightful melancholy, in no way attenuated by the freest will to life (Lebenswillen) emanates from all pages! Truly (it is) something like that which stirs itself in Nietzsche's later works, more fearful than the blackest pessimism, a subdued sobbing (hidden) under a valor of mind (Starkmuetigkeit), assumed as a means to convalescence. . ."[3]

Im Kampf um Gott was neither a description nor an explicit commentary on the case of Nietzsche. Lou Salomé does not have Nietzsche appear as the hero; she wanted to paint some of the problems she had in common with him. The book was composite of her own observations and Nietzsche's dilemma as she saw it. The theme of the novel was the essence of her problems before she met Nietzsche; it was the topic of the conversations between them: the battle for God.

Im Kampf um Gott points to the social and religious conditions of the nineteenth century, the rift between the church and the individual, between the human soul and the God on whom his salvation depends. The break with doctrinal Christianity is the source of her

hero's difficulties. Not only he, but various other characters are faced with the dilemma. From several angles Lou Salomé attempts to illustrate the psychology of the religious crisis.

The hero is the son of a strict and courageous preacher. The boy is a passionately religious child, but in contrast to his father who is inclined to be practical, the son has intellectual leanings. So long as his thinking is immature and ineffectual, the boy is warmly pious. The passion with which he clings to his childhood God protects Him for just so much longer from intellectual assaults upon his divinity. The breakthrough is all the more violent when the boy discovers his God to be an unconscious creation of his own childlike mind on the pattern prescribed by his parents. The novel is based upon the conviction that in every true religious experience our feeling for God is the unconscious creation of him out of ourselves. He is the highest being whom we create out of the most forceful and enthusiastic moments of which we are capable. Our emotional comprehension of God arises only when our convictions drive us to create him from our own nature and our own will.[1]

The conflict which Lou Salomé describes is but an image of her own youth and a fictive presentation of her interpretation of Nietzsche's boyhood. She was the first critic to point out the break between Nietzsche and traditional faith which he underwent in his youth; she is the only one to attribute major importance to it. Im Kampf um Gott is Lou Salomé's first attempt to arrive at a solution of her own, an intellectual analysis of the religious process. This intellectual analysis is paradoxical: to analyse a religious concept is to destroy [redacted] absolute faith. Still, Lou Salomé did not pursue the fatal curiosity to its logical conclusion. A poetic

mysticism like a protective fog about her own soul obscured the solutions of psychoanalysis. For Lou Salomé the icon was the oracle of Angelus Silesius[1]. In her Der cherubinische Wandersmann and Sigmund Freud balanced each other. Their fusion was momentary and very doubtful.

Lou Salomé's first novel was also her first psychological analysis. Its theme was not theology but psychology. God was conceived of no longer as the omnipotent monarch of heaven and the omniscient creator of earth; He is not even the loving father, the careful provider and the tender comforter of the individual. God has become the object of a mental battle, as for Rénan and Strauss he had become the object of an historical quest. The almighty Maker was no longer; first an historical event, now he had evolved into a psychological phenomenon.

Gertrud Bäumer points out[2] that here is one of the origins of Lou Salomé's psychoanalytic studies. Can one say more than that ? In the light of Nietzsche's own psychological aspirations, - Zarathustra the psychologist[3] vies with Zarathustra the prophet, - may one not come to the tentative conclusion that from the religious problem as one of many sources , the psychoanalysis of the twentieth century issued ?

Closely linked to the "divine decay"[4] was the weakening faith in the validity of all moral concepts. If the god who had laid down the ethos was dead and had to be recreated from individual fervor, was the ethos itself not outdated ? The hero's younger brother is given the role of raising the issue:

> "But suppose the might of religious power in the world... were dedicated to the cause of death ? Suppose it resembled the figure of Jesus, who actually perished through his own work of redemption. Suppose the might of religious power in the world obtained a martyr's death at the stake of unbelief, the cross instead of the crown of Jesus, perishing through its own task of redemption without hope for a return or a beyond ? Suppose it distinguished itself as a religious power by the very fact that in the process of development its decline should be brought about by the only eternal and lasting powers, which are mean and common and rough.
>
> "Now then, if the highest, the most beautiful, and the greatest things should at the same time be the most tender . . . and perishable ones and should be survived by that which is rough and mean - well, then we are fighting for declining gods."

The inquiry regarding the validity of moral values Lou Salomé had learned from Nietzsche. Zarathustra's judgment of the virtues of men was negative. Lou Salomé's answer was equivocal.

The solution which Lou Salomé finds for her hero's woes is a common one for all philosophical sufferers (or suffering philosophers). "The heroic experience (Erleben) of religion conquers pain, in so far as it elevates necessary suffering to voluntary suffering and accepts the attendant pain."[2] Lou Salomé's "Gebet an das Leben" gave voice to the same idealism. Only time could tell of its validity.

Meanwhile Lou Salomé had married an orientalist scholar, (1887) who soon after their marriage received an appointment at the University of Goettingen where he remained all his life. Goettingen became Lou Andreas-Salomé's home in Germany; she always gave Russia a favored place in her mind. In 1894 she published her biography of Nietzsche. The storm of protest and vituperation[3] it aroused from Nietzsche's sister did not subside until after Lou Andreas' death. According to the Nietzsche family Lou's sin was twofold.

In the first place, by basing her analysis upon the assumption that Nietzsche is inconsistent with himself, that he underwent three great intellectual revolutions, Lou Andreas-Salomé destroyed the saga of Nietzsche's infallibility. In the second place she insinuated that her friendship with the philosopher was much more intimate than the Nietzsche archivists would have the public believe. Lou's greatest affront was the publication in facsimile of personal letters from Nietzsche. According to Frau Förster they were either forgeries or addressed to Reé. Lou Andreas-Salomé never answered the accusations. No further essays on Nietzsche appeared, and at her death in 1937 the Gestapo confiscated her personal papers, probably because of the documents concerning Nietzsche they might have contained.

For scholars the situation was unfortunate. Henceforth they would have to take sides for Elisabeth Foerster if they desired access to the Nietzsche Archiv[1]. When Franz Overbeck's wife defended Lou Salomé's integrity, Elisabeth succeeded in making an enemy even of one of Nietzsche's most faithful friends.

With the publication (1894) and the republication (1904) of the Nietzsche biography, and as scholars began to accept her interpretations, Lou Andreas-Salomé turned away from the echoes of the friendship that had made her famous to less controversial subjects. Her writing became evermore concerned with literary criticism as Lou Andreas herself became an author of some note. Psychology took a progressively more important place in her thought.

Russia interested Lou Andreas-Salomé most. Originally her home, she had exchanged it for the land of her mother's birth. Her emotions were not unanimous in applauding the choice. Russia, she became convinced was her spiritual home; her religious cares were

Western and did not exist for the typical Russian, whom she conceived of as a lowly and pious peasant. Standing as she did half-way between the opposing influences of East and West, she was unusually conscious of the difference that separated them. The strongest link that bound Lou to Russia were Russian authors as they expressed the spirit of the Russian people. Very soon it became one of Lou's most devoted tasks to interpret for her German friends the literature of her homeland. In the course of her life she wrote a number of critical articles on Russian literature in general and on Russian authors in particular. Of these one of the most interesting and the one that contains the fullest account of her interpretation of Russian literature she called "Leo Tolstoi unser Zeitgenosse"[1]. It was published in Die Neue deutsche Rundschau in 1898.

Almost through all of Russian history and literature runs an eruptive tendency which seems to be a part of the Russian character, the breaking forth of extensive impulses and mighty initiatives from the broad and steady substrata of dull and peaceable inertia. It is the sprouting forth of the cultural grafts implanted in Russian character and customs by the West.

> Russian literature was the result of such grafting, which most readily affected the aristocratic class, since it was most directly exposed to Western influence. Pushkin himself belonged, according to his birth and education to this educated class, and in the short span of his sojourn in the Crimea and in the Caucasus represented the most valuable and creative period of his life, a fact which emphasizes the fact that although Russian literature took much of its form from the West, the substance of it belonged to the Russian people, the common peasants themselves. "Until noon", wrote Pushkin, "I write in my diary, I eat late, after dinner I ride horseback, but at night I listen to fairy tales, thereby filling the gaps in my damned education."
>
> What Pushkin did when at the evening hour he sat and listened to the simple stories of his old nurse that he might blissfully forget what Europe's artificial politesse had taught him, -

> is the same thing which since his time all Russian poets have done, descending as it were, from the Western European level of culture to which they had been educated and on which for the most part they lived, with all the dreams and with all the longing of their poetry down to the Russian people....[1]
>
> For they interpret not themselves as individual poets but they find the object of their interpretation [redacted] in the day to day naivité of the Russian masses. In the masses they find themselves; the consciousness of the poet is reenforced by unconscious untouched depths of the character of the people. For that reason their attitude is not one of superiority, but rather of the reception of revelation, of something which is exemplary and normgiving. And hence the realism of the Russian poets, particularly of the greatest, is not a literary movement in our sense of the word, but far beyond that is already the poetic attitude itself which has to investigate the exact conditions. For it is these poor and common people from whom the poets derive their inspiration and their poetry. Their realism <u>is</u> poetry and every emendation becomes only prosaic ornamentation.
>
> This degree of identification of the poet and the people, this selfinterpretation by the poet through the people, betrays a corporeal unity and fraternity which we are tempted to deny as impossible. For a Russian - he appears individually to us only as a symbol of all his brothers - brotherly love is extended to his whole people. And consequently this people, to whom the individual's emotions stream, is so to speak a barrier to anything further. Russian poetry lacks accordingly the sense of the cosmic, the ultra-mundane reality. . . The Russian lacks in that respect our sentiment and our sentimentality, because he, like the peasant on his field, is inseparably bound to the earth, - which has no limits.[2]

Such was the interpretation by Lou Andreas-Salomé of Russian literature; for her it was inseparably bound to the Russian soil and the Russian people. It was an interpretation generally accepted as Tolstoi and Dostoievski became more widely read in Germany. Lou Andreas-Salomé's opinions appears like a sentimental parallel to the Pan-Slavism of her time. To what extent her analysis is justified is open to question and debate..

But there can be no doubt that her opinions were founded in a thorough knowledge of Russian literature and a deep and sincere

love for the Russian soil and the Russian people. Hers was moreover the attitude toward Russian literature that was popular in Germany, and her evaluation of the Russian character is a key to the influence which the Russian realism of Dostoievski had in Germany. It was not, for most readers, something to be imitated, but something to be understood as the expression of a national soul which was peculiar to Russia.

Scandinavian literature was more immediate, more relevant to most Germans, and Lou Andreas-Salomé was very much concerned with it. If the realistic strokes that portrayed Raskolnikoff were inseparably linked with the Russian character and if Anna Karenina was an expression of the Russian soul, - as Lou Andreas-Salomé believed it was, - then Ibsen struck much closer home. Lou Andreas-Salomé succeeded in embodying a good many contradictions in her personality, and not least of these was the contradiction between East and West. About Nora's Doll's House she wrote as readily as about Dostoievski's Siberian prison.

Unlike Dostoievski's, the realism of Strindberg was not easily dismissed as being an expression of the Swedish soul. At the time when Scandinavian literature was becoming immensely popular in Germany, Lou Andreas-Salomé made her contribution. She entitled it: Zum Bilde Strindbergs.[1] The article is psychological in its treatment and concerns itself with what Lou considered to be the strangest and most significant trait in Strindberg, that as a poet he illuminated his character as a spiritual invalid, that in his works we see the universal human background shine through , that having read him, we

are able to peer more knowingly than before into the uncomprehended face of our own questions and sufferings. It turns out to be a method of psychoanalysis, long since the foremost interest in Lou Andreas-Salomé's life, by which she analyses Strindberg's realism, and what she finds is justification for her method and approach. The affinity between literary realism and psychoanalysis has not escaped her. In her analysis of Gerhart Hauptmann's Hannele it played a dominant role.

Besides Strindberg there are other Scandinavian realists. In 1920, - it was the time when Hamsun was reaching the peak of his popularity in Germany, - Lou Andreas-Salomé turned to the Danish author Agnes Henningsen of whose works four novels, all of them on erotic themes, had been translated into German. The attempt to analyse Agnes Henningsen's characters is obscured by a very personal and strongly emotional point of view. Her article on Agnes Henningsen reveals not only the extent to which Lou Andreas-Salomé stood in the focus of her own work and thought but it emphasizes as well a weakness common to most of Lou Salomé's writing, the womanly inability to detach herself from her experiences and to view them objectively and critically. Although her style is clear and precise, the conclusion of her essay becomes gushingly sentimental:

> "Above the gardens where in erotic flower-language whole vistas of chromatic wealth have been planted, it is getting fall.
>
> "Love shall remain for us, although we speak with different words of love than 'once in the springtime!'"[1]

Where in her evaluation of Agnes Henningsen, Lou Andreas-Salomé succumbs to sentimentality, in her book on women in Ibsen's plays she exploits to the full the richness of her womanly sentiment. Soergel[1] has called Henrik Ibsens Frauengestalten a re-creation of Ibsen's characters. Indeed Lou Andreas-Salomé lavished on this book which was written soon after her Nietzsche commentary some of the finest qualities of her essentially emotional perceptivity and her prowess as an author and a creator of characters in her own right as well. Lou Salomé's essays demonstrate that the symbol of the wild duck is a common meeting ground of Nietzsche and Ibsen. The wild duck has become the symbol of all[2] of Ibsen's women characters, and for purposes of comparison Lou Salomé collects them all in Hjalmar Ekdal's attic. In her introductory essay she expands the Ibsen symbol. While four of the allegorical wild ducks are touching by the sincerity of the feeling they seek to convey, the fifth one symbolizing Rebecca[3] is noteworthy as an example of the application of Nietzschean concepts to Ibsen. The danger described is "the influence of tame animals on the wild one, the infection . . ." through the weak ones, the danger of becoming accustomed, of being weakened by a "Hausthiergewissen" (domestic-animal-conscience). "The wild duck has been paralysed by the powers of tameness."[4]

The only one of Lou Salomé's attempts at literary criticism in book form, Ibsens Frauengestalten became one of the most popular of her books. It was timely and it interpreted Ibsen the way that most Germans wanted to have him interpreted, the author not of plays epitomizing social anomalies, but of characters pitiable and heroic in their humanness.

From Ibsen to Hauptmann is a mere step in most people's minds. Lou Salomé was no different. The realism of Sudermann and Holz[1] held little charm for her. Hauptmann she considered the greatest of the German realists.

One should take Schoenberner's story[2] that "after Gerhart Hauptmann's first nights, usually ending in a theater scandal, Lou always had the seat of honor at the side of the dramatic genius" with some scepticism. That Gerhart Hauptmann, as Schoenberner further reports was terribly afraid of her, and told her, "I know you take me for a simpleton," is even more unlikely.[3] Suffice it to say that Lou Andreas-Salomé was a great admirer of Hauptmann, that when Rilke in the fall of 1897 was struck by the beauty of Michael Kramer, it was Lou who had opened his eyes. But of Gerhart Hauptmann's dramatic creations, Hanneles Himmelfahrt was her favorite. In 1893 she reviewed the drama for the recently founded literary journal Die Freie Bühne; in the figure of Hannele all of Lou's own problems found expression. The childlike religiousness of Hannele Lou Salomé herself had lost, and found it depicted in Gerhart Hauptmann's play. The nostalgia for her own childhood found in Hannele a compensation, and all her literary inclinations found in Hannele a focus.

The method, she thought, which Gerhart Hauptmann had always followed in his dramatic creations contained the determination to portray human life in the garb of its daily reality. What Lou Salomé praised in Hauptmann was very similar to what she praised in the Russian authors of her homeland. But Hauptmann went further. Although he crusaded with justified onesidedness against the remnants of the

romantic school, and although he succeeded in showing his spectators many realities of which they had not been hitherto aware, Gerhart Hauptmann himself arrived at the point where he could go no further in naturalistic description and portrayal. Hannele, so to speak, is the climax and turning point of Gerhart Hauptmann's artistry. To the use of the dream device, Lou Andreas-Salomé with all her psychoanalytic inclinations attaches particular significance. Every single dream has its double meaning, and Hannele's magic is the airy, inseparable unity of life and dream. Actually one need know very little of the naturalistic description with which Hauptmann surrounds Hannele, for according to Lou Salomé, the real drama lies invisible and underneath the surface. The stage presentation is after all, in spite of every care which the poet has lavished on it, only an Illustration of the character of Hannele, and represents by no means Hannele herself.

The position of works of Lou Salomé and Hanneles Himmelfahrt in German literature bear striking resemblances to each other. Both of them represent a transition from realism to symbolism, both of them emphasize the interest in childhood feelings, both of them are strongly tinted with religious, naively religious insights, both of them point the way toward dream interpretation and psychoanalysis, both of them are mixtures of the crudest naturalistic description with the shadowy symbolism that Rilke would carry to its height.

Lou Andreas-Salomé seemed well aware of the significance of Hannele, and bestowed upon Gerhart Hauptmann's drama her unrestricted love and admiration:

> "For it ( Hannele's Himmelfahrt)is beautiful because it negates nothing and invites believers and unbelievers alike to enjoy it. Precisely in that point it is modern, - modern in the sense that even those who have already dissociated themselves from the old battles of faith can accept in self-forgetfulness and with undivided devotion the poetic inspiration from the world of faith simply as a part of human nature. To him who appreciates Gerhart Hauptmann's dream pictures, the modern artist will speak not through philosophical interpretation but through psychological treatment of the subject."[1]

Lou Salomé succeeds in making Hannele the focus of her own concepts and she reads into the play implications which Gerhart Hauptmann himself may not even have been conscious of. In Hannele the cross currents of the time fuse into a whole, - as they do in the personality of Lou Salomé herself:- childhood and maturity, dream and reality, religion and art, psychology and faith, naivité and sentimentality, God and devil, death and resurrection, the naturalistic and the symbolistic trends. Hannele's Himmelfahrt was dominated not by the background of misery but by the character of the child, and in the character of the child naturalism retreats before symbolism:

> "In the dream of Hannele the ghostlike (geisterhafte) and the realistic elements are realised in a touching Illusion . . .
>
> . . . Hannele is greatest as a character representing the fusion of heaven and earth in the world of a child. This world alone was the sufficient expression of Hannele's character."[2]

This world, thought Lou Salomé, was precisely the world of the Russian people, and by their nature they stood so close to the childlike elements in Hannele that they did not even require the artist to bridge the gap between dream and reality which for the childlike soul does not exist. In the Russian production of Hannele's Himmelfahrt they borrowed without compunction from their Byzantine kingdom of heaven.

Lou Salomé's admiration for Hannele's dream world point to a fundamental notion in her theory of art: that the child was a true artist because it was naive, standing, so to speak, at the center of its creative efforts without being aware

of them. Of the modern tendency of art to become criticism she was only too well aware, both from her own work and from that of Rilke whose Geschichten vom Lieben Gott[1] are the classic attempt in modern German literature of an author to maintain a childlike simplicity in his writing. The Geschichten vom Lieben Gott, as will be seen, were written under the immediate influence of Lou Andreas-Salomé.

In 1914 she published an article expressing her opinion on the relationship that existed between the child and the artist. The article was written at a time when Lou was much concerned with psychoanalytic studies, and is colored by that influence. It is entitled "Kind und Kunst": [2]

> To the extent that the activity of the child demands the aura of reality for the products of its playing fancy, it is similar to the creative activity of the artist. The childs activity, like that of the artist, even though it be immediately deduced from the happenings of daily life, and even though it represent the imitation of such happenings, is cut off from the reality of daily life as if by invisible walls. For like the artist the child is able to create from but a single isolated stimulus a wealth of imaginary reality.
>
> Finally, from the psychological point of view, according to its anthropological origins, all art rests upon and goes back to an accomplishment of life (Lebensbewaeltigung). The activity both of the child and the artist is a necessary adjustment to life for the unconscious purpose of conquering its difficulties.

In exactly the same way, Rilke interpreted the inner necessity out of which the artist creates.[3]

The most extensive criticism of art which Lou Salomé wrote was composed for the periodical Pan in 1898. It was entitled: "Grundformen der Kunst, eine psychologische Studie." Here Lou

Andreas-Salomé analyses modern art and the modern artist, significantly enough, in the very year of her first journey to Russia together with Rilke, and in this article she gives voice to the theories which consciously or unconsciously guided the youthful Rilke in his literary endeavors. It stands in contrast to Stefan George's theories of art, and seems to be a theoretical digest of the maxims according to which Rilke wrote, certainly in the years before he came under the influence of Rodin in Paris. It is the most significant document of its type that we have.

The secrets in the soul of the artist are inexpressible,[1] because they lead an altogether embryonic existence, before they are brought by means of the artistic vehicle itself to see the light of day. When the spectator, accordingly, looks at a piece of art, for instance a painting, the effect on him is not caused by the subject of the painting, nor by the technique used, which is perhaps wholly incomprehensible to the layman, but the effect is brought about by the emotional foundation out of which the artist painted it. Through the medium of art, emotions and thoughts which otherwise would never have taken shape are made expressible for the spectator. He is now able, in some way, to dispatch the secrets of his own being onto the way which the artist has levelled for him and begun. The specatator can thereby arrive at an attenuated perception of the same feelings which solely composed the happiness of the artist. This happiness consists in the conscious use of the inner life as a springboard from which we o'erleap the whole practical life, landing as it were somewhere beyond it in our chosen homeland which we have built for ourselves. And although there be

individual differences, the essential beauty has always the identical effect of liberating in the spectator a new and undreamed-of life, and releases in his soul unheard-of harmonies.

This is the creed which Rilke believed when he wrote his Frühe Gedichte, his Stundenbuch, and his Neue Gedichte; (of the last particularly those poems which were written before Rodin exerted his forceful influence upon Rilke.) These theories of Lou Andreas-Salomé, although they are not altogether novel, are the composite philosophy that lies unexpressed and perhaps to a large extent unconscious behind all of Rilke's early writing. Rilke had no philosophical inclinations himself[1], and unlike George he did not care to state his ideals of art formally. Besides the fragments of his thought as one finds them in the letters[2], in diary[3] sketches and an occasional essay[4], there is no record of the aesthetic theory that lay behind Rilke's work in his early years. Similarly to the way in which Rilke himself recorded what he had learned from Rodin in the biography he wrote about him, so in this essay Lou Salomé recorded the thoughts which she offered to Rilke:

The subject of a poem should be for the sole purpose of transferring from the artist to the reader the emotional freedom and harmony from which it was created. Only in our relationship to things, do they take on meaning, do they become the world we possess in them, and particularly in view of the intensified, creative relationship we have toward them, do they lose their meaning per se, as ends to themselves, but become meaningful only in so far as they are the means to an end, a means to build a different, an autonomous

world, which on the summit of human endeavors (Menschentum) like a second creation repeats a higher analogy of life."[1]

Apart from the recurring theme of human creation, be it of God or of a higher analogy of life, the preceding paraphrase throws an interesting sidelight on Rilke's theory of "die Dinge". For this part of Rilkes life, when he was influenced primarily by Lou, "die Dinge" are not so much the vessels into which life has put its secrets, but rather they are the vessels into which we put life's secrets. In the Stundenbuch there is not yet the steady and craftsmanlike contemplation of the individual thing which Rilke learned from Rodin. In the Stundenbuch it is the poet who gives significance to "die Dinge"; later it will be the poet who finds it there.

"Die Dinge aber müssen willig halten,
was einer ihnen in die Hände legte,"[2]

Rilke wrote in 1899,

and in the same year he expressed the idea in prose: "Every thing (jedes Ding) is only the space, the possibility, and it is for me to fulfill these perfectly or badly."

In the same essay Lou Andreas-Salomé defends the seclusion from the world, the anti-social attitude of her protege and his colleagues: these young poets have fled from the world for fear of its desecrating their inmost feelings. They know well that all great works spring from a firm contact with the breadth and depth of life, but until the great works can be created, - they know that too - until then many other and more silent works must precede

them "garbed in white robes, bearing shy rosebuds in their hair, and witnessing to the fact that there are already human souls, clothed festively, who are willing and ready for a new beauty in their lives."[1] Rilke put the same feeling into poetry:

> Du musst das Leben nicht verstehen,
> dann wird es werden wie ein Fest.
> Und lass dir jeden Tag geschehen,
> so wie ein Kind im Weitergehen
> von jedem Wehen
> sich viele Blüten schenken lässt.[2]

In the passage quoted above, Lou Andreas-Salomé's prose displays those qualities of symbolism which she herself analyses:

> "Art speaks in a language different from everyday life, it combines, posits and transforms the words of common usage in its own peculiar fashion, because it speaks of things which are different from every day, and speaks of daily, common things only symbolically . . .
>
> "The beauty in the things (Die Dinge) is nothing which we add to them, nor is it anything which we remove from them, but beauty rests on the fact that we use it as a code language, in order that we might confide our secrets to each other."[3]

The definition is as good as one can find of German symbolism.

For Lou Andreas-Salomé the a priori relation between art and religion is that both of them are modes of expression which will not submit to logical and rational concepts. The difference between the two is that art fulfills its purpose to whatever extent it succeeds, by use of the parables of the sensual world, in making the rationally inexpressible elements of life eloquent. Religion, on the other hand contains the paradox that the purer and more powerful it is, the more effectively it keeps its secrets, being only indicative but not expressive of its contents. Religion emphasizes nothing so much as that which is inexpressible; it is eloquent only in proclaiming the triumph of the impossibility of expression.[4]

Lou Andreas-Salomé's notions concerning the essentially hidden and secret quality of religion differed from the theology of the late nineteenth century as it was represented by Adolph von Harnack.[1] A student of theology in her own right, she looked askance upon every attempt to rationalize the mysteries of the Christian religion by scientific interpretation or historical research or to explain away the irrationalism of the Christian creed: to prove that what Christ said is what all modern liberals are saying, to ignore the differences between the mysteries of Christianity and the contemporary opinions of Herr Hinz or Frau Kunz. To transform Jesus into a glowing nineteenth century progressive, potentially quite useful to modern humanity, was not Lou Salomé's idea of religion.

Still Lou Andreas-Salomé gave to the gospels an interpretation which was by no means that of St. Paul's epistles. Although not rationalistic in origin, her point of view was primarily historical, because she liked to understand her own dilemma in the fourth dimension of time which soothes pain and dulls disappointment by revealing supposedly unrelated events as links in a necessary chain of causality. She postulated five ages of religion,[2] which, she said, succeed each other with almost mechanistic regularity. Originally, creation of faith out of man's deepest need and longing; then intellectual fixation of its content by the establishment of dogma; next, the use of dogma to subdue the human will to the divine law to the point of asceticism; fourth, reaction against asceticism by an emotional reversal to mysticism where man sees himself to be similar to God. The fifth stage, according to Lou Salomé, is the state of her contemporaries: suspicion and the rise of rationalism. Like the established dogma of the second stage, rationalism leads to an intelleg

tual consolidation of ideas. And like the first dogmatic fixation, the rationalistic consolidation of dogma ends with emotional starvation of the religious man. We then experience something similar to what the mystics did, in that they turned away from all custom and attempted in their own way to satisfy their religious needs. Our time, says Lou Andreas-Salomé (who was a friend of Rilke, of Nietzsche and of Freud) is full of mysticism in just this sense, of violent emotional surges which have no organic unity with the pattern of normal life, but tend to anaesthesize their victim momentarily, to tear him away from the every-day world. Our modern mysticism is pitilessly stared down by science, but science, according to Lou Salomé, is one of the most precious gains of our development, because it has so often won a victory over mankind, and yet has never been able to deprive man of anything which grows out of the depths of life. And if science looks with a cold and silent eye over the longings of our age, it has given us moderns the almost perversely superior position of a spectator at our own drama, to observe whether the needs and longings of our time are able to give us a new savior, - or not.[1]

In her thought Lou Andreas-Salomé returns again and again to the central thesis of her theology, that having once lost its faith our time has no other recourse but to strike out anew, to attempt to find its own solution to the problem. For her the attempt to reconcile traditional Christianity with modern thought is anomalous. The attempt to reconcile God with anything implies that God is already dead. Lou, from her own experience and from that of Nietzsche, was convinced of the fact that God was dead, at least the God of history; whether our modern world could create another God, - was a different matter.

As Lou Andreas-Salomé's position in literature was equivocal, - she stood midway between realism and symbolism, or rather, she oscillated between the two, in the same way her religious position was ambivalent. She oscillated in her own life and in her writing between mystical introspection and scientific analysis. In her life these two opposite extremes were symbolized by her friendships with Rilke and Freud. In her writing they were represented by her novels, which are primarily introspective and her psychological essays, which are coldly scientific. Somehow she managed to combine the two extremes in her character.

Lou's psychoanalytic writings, which cannot be analysed in this essay because they represent an extreme which is a specialized science in itself, consist primarily of three contributions to the Freudian journal of applied psychoanalysis Imago, a psychoanalytic play entitled Der Teufel und seine Grossmutter, where mystical symbolism alternates with crudest naturalism at a dizzying rate; besides there is a study in psychical development called Drei Briefe an einen Knaben, and most famous, a letter written to Freud on his seventy-fifth birthday, thanking him for his achievements and recapitulating some of his theories which impressed Lou most strongly. A good deal of Lou's writing throughout her whole life bordered on psychoanalysis. In 1899 for instance, she published in Die Neue Deutsche Rundschau an essay entitled "Der Mensch als Weib"[1], Lou's commentary on a revolt of the radical faction against the conservatism of older members at the Hamburg Congress of German Women'sclubs. The article is a subdued analysis of woman's place and character

in modern life. Judging by its tenor one can hardly call Lou Salomé, as has been done, one of the foremost fighters for women's rights.

From the essay Mein Dank an Freud one learns that the principal attraction of psychoanalytic studies for Lou was the knowledge of oneself and of other people, of the world as well, that one gained thereby. If Lou was conscious of the dangers of knowledge, she unflinchingly accepted them. She studied psychoanalysis in spite of the possibility that the knowledge of herself gained thereby might destroy her happiness, - and to what extent it did is impossible to say. She maintained that she forgot right away what she had learned about herself. Nietzsche's definition of heroism was also her own: to attempt that of which one is incapable in the full knowledge that one may perish in the attempt.

She led a strange life in Goettingen. Her relationship to her husband is characterized by his nickname: Loumann. It is said that she kept aloof from all social activities, even in university circles. Professor Andreas is said to have had the curious habit of holding his classes at night, - he slept during the daytime. - for the few advanced students he had. Andreas made a name for himself as one of the foremost scholars of oriental culture in Germany. Lou occupied the first story of the house, while he reigned on the ground floor, and each of them lived rather much to himself. Lou's life was an utterly independent one of intellectual friendships, of Viennese studies and of writing.

From her novels and from the letter to Freud can be ascertained

her main interests in her psychoanalytic studies. The religious problem was ever in the forefront of her thinking. In Im Kampf um Gott the hero at the moment of his crisis indulges, like most heroes have done since Hamlet, in a psychoanalytic monologue:

> "I stood face to face with the desperate fact of a cutting opposition of thought and desire, with the damning consciousness of being the guilty cause, of having to recognize the activity of my mind as forbidden surges of my will. I could suspect nothing of the hidden inner connection between the two inimical forces in the make-up of my character. I could not know . . . that it only mattered to possess the necessary healthy strength, to suffer the fever and the crises without being destroyed by them."[1]

These were the words of a psychologist. It is characteristic indeed, and reminiscent of of previously cited quotation from Thomas Mann regarding the relationship of humanist, theologian, and psychologist to notice how for Lou Salomé the religious problem which would not be solved intellectually or emotionally was analysed as a last resort.

Inseparably connected with the religious problem was the problem of the artist. Lou did not altogether accept Freuds ideas on the source of art, but she accepted his methods of interpretation. Life, which has become in a religious sense the attempt to create God, is also in a poetic sense the attempt to create a world outside and above reality. Lou even in the most technical and scientific aspects of psychoanalysis never becomes materialistic; her studies were not the attempt to deny the supernatural element in the structure of the human mind, but if it were possible, to rationalize it. Her studies are for her the heroic attempt to look without flinching into the cold and relentless eye of science, and to view from a dispassionate and perversely superior standpoint whether our modern age would be able to find its substitute for the god that was dead.

Lou Andreas-Salomé practiced her own theory that art should be a means by which the human being maintained himself in spite of the problems of life. Where her psychoanalytic studies were one extreme of her attempt to adjust herself to a life altogether too problematic, her fiction represents the opposite extreme.

The novels and short-stories of Lou Andreas-Salomé are without exception the mirrors of her own soul. One can discern no marked development either in the style or content of her fiction, although it was written over a span of more than thirty-five years. The characters who appear remain essentially the same, intellectualized, bourgeois, tamed in their thought and action to Lou Salomé's own horizon. They are doctors, retired generals, or merchants; probably some of them are actually members of her family or acquaintances whom she portrays. They come from her childhood, intact, with fragments of childish imagination still clinging to some of them. In so far as they are described at all the characters of Lou's novels might well have lived in the uncut pages of many a bourgeois novel of her time, and no one should have known the difference.

Indeed no one did know the difference. The novels were not extremely widely read; they rarely went through more than two or three editions, and only occasionally were they singled out by critics to be the objects of haughty criticism or sympathetic interpretation for the characterization and description they contained.

These characters, although they lived in frame houses perched on verdure slopes overlooking a city whose inevitable heart is a

hospital, though they dwelled on estates in the Russian Ukraine, although they traveled by steamer up and down the Volga, or rode horseback through the White Russian plains, have never more than a co-incidental relationship to their environment, a fact which is particularly unfortunate since quite obviously they were meant to be children of their time and products of their soil. But they are modern, in the sense that they are as intellectualized as Lou Salomé herself and as divorced from life about them. Occasionally a Russian peasant loses his way and errs into one of her stories or novels, where he automatically assumes the language of a German university town like Goettingen, and with admirably bland naivité ponders such problems as happen to be on Lou Salomé's mind.

The outstanding merit of Lou's fiction is the consistency with which intellectual problems are posed and treated and the thoroughness with which they are investigated. This virtue is one of their primary weaknesses. It takes an unusually great artist at the height of his career, as was Thomas Mann when he wrote the Zauberberg, successfully to intertwine the threads of fictional action and philosophical thought. With Lou Andreas-Salomé the intellectual theme is far too evident as is also the personal experience which underlies each of her novels. Nothing about them gives them the mark of greatness, and still, a great many things give them the mark of importance.

Not only that Lou Andreas-Salomé succeeded in filling these novels with the religious questions that concerned her so, and with Russia where she considered her home to be, - indeed most of these

novels and stories contain at least one character who is searching for God, and practically all of them are set in Russia, - but the significance of these novels themselves is that they reveal a style of transition from the naturalistic to the symbolistic mode. Like her criticism which linked the worlds of Ibsen and Rilke, the style of her fiction leads, as one critic[1] put it, "from those to whom art is a means to those to whom it is an end, . . . from the painters of conditions, to the searchers of the soul, . . . from Zola's years of domination to those of Nietzsche." Unlike for the naturalists, for Lou Salomé writing is not only observation, but also a sort of experimentation; a little girl in her teens is made to say:

> "To make poetry is like this: one goes about and looks at everything there is to see, but even while one is doing that, one puts sort of a little hat on everything, which it happened to need; one touches up everything a little bit, and makes it a little different; one really is just finishing it. Every thing (Jedes Ding) is waiting for its poet."[2]

Of all her books the short-story cycle Im Zwischenland, from which the above quotation is borrowed, is the most revealing of the childhood problems that formed Lou Salomé's strange personality. Dedicated to a friend "in memory of our childhood" and avowedly autobiographical, Im Zwischenland gives an insight into Lou's early home, the environment of her girlhood and the religious and sexual tensions that shaped her youth. It represents with its five psychological studies of young girls a fusion in form as well as in content of psychoanalysis and art on the one hand, and symbolism and naturalism on the other.

The title "Im Zwischenland" is to designate that period in life when the girl stands between childhood and youth, having outgrown the

former and not yet at home in the second. These stories were made the subject of study for the psychology of the young girl; they are for such purposes very valuable, although their value is limited by the fact that in so far as they are the images of Lou Salomé herself, these girls with such melodious Russian names as Ria, Musja, or Masha are every one the embodiment of a single, forceful personality. It is the characteristic mark of these in-between years that they are neither dreamt, like the unreal, phantastic days of childhood, nor are they lived passionately and consciously like the years of youth. These years are filled only with the dynamic force that changes the personality from that of a child into that of a girl. It is a relentless force that takes each soul to the very brink of her destruction, because the spirit is mature whereas the mind is not. Therefore they become the period of the birth of the first serious concept of God.[1]

The characters of the girls described in Im Zwischenland might well be taken as the keys to the enigmatic poem cycles of Rilke which he entitled Mädchengestalten[2] and Lieder der Mädchen.[3] Rilke's poems are the poetic expression of the dangers and uncertainties, the hidden fears and the all-pervading atmosphere of apprehensiveness to which Lou Salomé gives a psychological interpretation. She herself, indeed, chose one of Rilke's poems from the former cycle to introduce one of her stories; it tells the theme of her whole book.

Ich war ein Kind und träumte viel
und hatte noch nicht Mai;
da trug ein Mann sein Saitenspiel
an unserm Hof vorbei.
Da hab ich bange aufgeschaut:
"O Mutter, lass mich frei..."
Bei seiner Laute erstem Laut
brach etwas mir entzwei.

Ich wusste, eh sein Sang begann:
Es wird mein Leben sein.
Sing nicht, sing nicht, du fremder Mann:
Es wird mein Leben sein.

Du singst mein Glück und meine Müh,
mein Lied singst du und dann:
mein Schicksal singst du viel zu früh,
so dass ich, wie ich blüh und blüh,
es nie mehr leben kann.

Er sang. Und dann verklang sein Schritt,
er musste weiterziehn;
und sang mein Leid, das ich nie litt,
und sang mein Glück, das mir entglitt,
und nahm mich mit und nahm mich mit
und keiner weiss wohin. . .[1]

## III

Lou Andreas-Salomé was making rapid strides in her own literary work when she met Rilke in 1897. She had reached the peak of her intellectual powers and she was fully conscious of her emotional maturity. At the end of September 1896 Rilke had arrived in Munich, where he had come with the hope of finding a path which he might pursue toward stature and success as a poet. As yet he had neither a name nor money, and the artistic abilities which he possessed were latent and undeveloped. One evening René Maria Rilke attended a theater party[2] at which he met Lou Andreas-Salomé. She was in the company of Frieda von Bülow, the once celebrated Africa explorer, who also became a friend of Rilke's.