

Michel Matarasso

ANTHROPOANALYSIS
AND THE BIOGRAPHICAL
APPROACH:
LOU ANDREAS-SALOMÉ

- *Ysé*: Mesa! Je suis Ysé — c'est moi...
- *Mesa*: Mais vous croyez en vous-même.
Et que vous êtes belle.
- *Ysé*: Si je suis belle, ce n'est pas ma faute.
- *Mesa*: Du moins vous, l'on sait qui vous êtes
Et à qui l'on a affaire.

Paul Claudel, *Partage de Midi*

Ah! brouillons les cartes! (...)

Le masque que je mets est l'impudeur où se dissimule la passion.

Louis Aragon, *La Mise à mort*

Il se peut que la vie demande à être déchiffrée comme un cryptogramme.

André Breton, *Nadja*

Certain lives are transcribed like musical scores that compose themselves in a transparent register and whose traces—memories

Translated by Jeanne Ferguson

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and written works—remain present, long-lasting or eternal. In a way, biography consists in deciphering them, then recomposing them through some process—condensation, for example—in modifying chronological time into writing-reading time or in shifting, regrouping certain facts or certain parameters. In some cases we discover that they give a dynamic and structure homologous or very near to those of narratives, epics or marvelous tales. The life of Lou Andreas-Salomé belongs to these cycles that are, in some respects, exceptional.

By her daring initiatives and resolute actions, her spirit and her “superior intelligence” (Nietzsche), the way she posed in a distinct manner the question of the feminine and the masculine in modern relationships, her unconditional commitment to Freudian psychanalytics from 1911-1912 up until her death and, above all, a freedom that was always alert, without false prudery, opening up to the exalted passion of life, Lou incarnates for many the image of modern woman and her anticipation, reflected in the crisis of the contemporary world. She died, as we know, on February 5, 1937.

However, this reassuring “representation” raises a question. The most recent biographical works put it to the test of new facts and different interpretations. The light and the “*parure solaire*” that seemed to surround her with a halo are gradually giving way to other, more complex examples than appear in her autobiography, *Ma vie. Esquisse de quelques souvenirs** and her later writings, *Carnets intimes des dernières années**.

If in her work and in certain episodes of her life there are aspects that seem to justify the opinion that Freud expressed in the obituary he wrote for her in February 1937—“Whoever was near her was strongly impressed by the sincerity and harmony of her being” (no obituary of the close friends of Freud show such praise), other parts of her work and other episodes raise questions in the reader. In other cases, whether it was deliberate or unknowing on the part of Lou Andreas-Salomé, the cards are shuffled and there is confusion. Is the sigh of Aragon, “Ah, let us shuffle the cards!” also present here and there in Lou Andreas-Salomé?

Auto- and bio-graphical variations

* Bibliographical references for the different works cited in the text will be found at the end of this article.

No doubt different viewpoints and methods throw different lights on the same life. Let us agree to set aside the “portraits”, pleasant or not, she received during her lifetime, without forgetting that the autobiographical contributions were in some respects the product of her own reactions, so as to amend the image. What do we find?

Ma vie and the *Carnets intimes des dernières années* are the “product” of a life as retranscribed on the register we mentioned at the beginning. At the same time, for the attentive reader, it is a first collection of data (in the rough state) and a first record of the treatment she gives them. Of the two works, produced in a short span of time (between 1931 and 1936) the second has as object in several passages to make corrections, sometimes contradictory, in the preceding collection. We would say, in turn, that there was a going back, a repentance, of extreme lucidity and courage. Biographers also disagree about *Ma vie*, some considering—from a responsible source—that there were several variants on this text (a letter from Lou to Freud, May 4, 1932).

Let us consider the biographical contributions. With regard to the approach, treatment and evaluation of the data on the life of Lou Andreas-Salomé the differential variations are such that we are forced to reconsider these works in the perspective of a pluralism in life histories—a pluralist approach that echoes anthropological research, this discipline being in essence comparative. This leads to gradually disengaging the new aspects in an “anthropoanalysis” of auto- and bio-graphical variations based on methods of simulation—“Simulation is an art of models” (Quéau).

In the first frame of reference we will assemble whatever has to do with the personal writings of the “figure” under consideration: among others, the diary of Lou Andreas-Salomé and her autobiographical works. Both are a collection of “data”, a record of the treatment of the data.

Second, we will assemble texts having to do with biography in general and/or texts of indirect reference.

For Lou Andreas-Salomé we have at our disposal:

1. intimate and personal texts: diary (partial), various *direct* autobiographical texts (R_1, R_2, R_3, R_4)
2. *indirect* autobiographical parts coming from other sources (R_6)

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3. "correspondence" with friends and colleagues (R₅)
4. fictional accounts alluding to her life (R₇)

For the biographers we have:

1. *direct* biographies of Lou Andreas-Salomé (R₈)
2. *indirect* biographies, in which Lou Andreas-Salomé is mentioned (concerning Nietzsche, Rilke, Freud and others) (R₁₁, R₁₂, R₁₃)
3. prefaces, postscripts, introductions and bibliographical notes inserted in the works (R₁₀)
4. articles and essays about her (R₁₁, R₁₂, R₁₃)
5. fictional works representing her (R₁₄)

These last aspects present different approaches: historical, psychoanalytical, psychobiographical, etc. We will find these different codes in the models that follow.

In short, we have at our disposal several groups of auto- and bio-graphical "material," treated in a direct or indirect way, published and dated. When we think further about it, we see that these "groups" devoted to Lou Andreas-Salomé form intercommunicating "pathways."

At the source of these texts we discover the existence of several "memories" (in the life sense/in the machine sense, in the model). Thus the living "memory" of Lou Andreas-Salomé produces the intimate diary (written day by day, logically, or occasionally [G. May]). This diary furnished the reader with one or more pieces of information. In the auto- and bio-graphical material we call "residual information" what persists in a flux of signs (in the Saussurian meaning) when we go from one text to another and the textual difference has been eliminated. In a way, it is "something else for someone else," as C. A. Peirce and C. Lévi-Strauss noted to define the "sign." The residual information is treated here as a major sign, a syntagmatic unity, presenting this same property. This enters the new texts: it is recycled. Moreover, we dispose of a "memory" and two operators" or "machines":

Machine I	Memory	Machine II
or		or
word processor		residual information processor
private diary		residual information from diary

In considering this material we find seven series of texts in the first table: diary, fictional works (stories and novels of Lou Andreas-Salomé, indirect and metaphoric aspects); the autobiographical version *Ma vie. Esquisse de quelques souvenirs*; the auto-biographical complement *Ce qui manque à l'Esquisse*, the *Carnets intimes*, another complement; the correspondence of Lou Andreas-Salomé; the indirect auto-biographical parts of essays, studies and works of philosophical or psychoanalytical nature.

Here it is wise to go back to the “mechanisms” of memory. In summary we will say that this model refers to two memories: a “controlled memory” in some respects referring to a social discourse, admitted or not, concerning information on personal life; a “second memory” referring in some respects to certain aspects of the “primary processes,” (Lantéri-Laura) which comes from the order of the Unconscious and whose fleeting “images,” reminiscences and insights may throw new light on the texts already written and/or lead to their reformulation.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY, BIOGRAPHY AND ANTHROPOANALYSIS

In the conclusion to a work on autobiography, Georges May observes the lack of calculable data in this area and inquires into the means that would permit a solution to these difficulties. He suggests some directions. For instance, beginning with a sample to calculate:

- the average age of the auto-biographer: generally around fifty, but it would be possible to calculate with precision;
- the relationship between the length of time given in the narration and the duration of the empirical life of the narrator, and disengagement of an indication from that. Thus it is that the *Confessions* of J.-J. Rousseau cover fifty-three years of the sixty-six he lived—the index of calculation recommended, $53/66 = 0.8$. On the other hand, Maurois wrote the last pages of his *Mémoires* very close to the time of his death: index = 1.

Another question: the time lapse between the moment of the event and date of the transcription of the memory of the event. This point, like the preceding, is certainly to be considered in the

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case of Lou Andreas-Salomé.

As far as the diary is concerned, May brings up the possibility, following research by Alain Girard, of a calculation of frequency of notations by unit for duration. He also observes the important “lapses,” a sort of blank periods, in autobiographies. For example, in the United States, Henry Adams skips twenty years in his autobiography, corresponding to the period of his marriage and the suicide of his wife. In France, George Sand creates an impasse concerning her amorous relationships—which were commonly known—in *Histoire de ma vie*.

Since it is a matter of the autobiography of Lou Andreas-Salomé, such “lapses” are not without a challenge. In fact, *Ma vie* seems to erase several periods in the life of our “figure”. In the notes he writes on this work of prime importance for our research, Ernst Pfeiffer, heir to the written work of L. A.-S. and designated by her as such in 1934, observes, “in the *Exergue* (of the book) the group of ten chapters (first writing of the manuscript) was mentioned as the “*Esquisse de quelques souvenirs*,” with the exception, Lou Andreas-Salomé wrote, of some others that did not want to give up their solitude.” In other words, Lou Andreas-Salomé clearly indicated that “all” would not be told in the work. Two “complements” would be written in the following three years. That is, the work would undergo successive alterations. Even better, Pfeiffer indicates that after the first edition, in German, of this book (1951) he discovered an earlier manuscript. We will return to this subject.

With the prudence of a scientific researcher, May concludes that it is impossible today to define precisely what an “autobiographical genre” is. However, he holds to the following orientations in the form of seven parameters:

- autobiography tends to be written in maturity;
- usually the facts are relatively known to the public;
- usually it obeys more or less pure and/or more or less conscious motives. Among these motives are:
 - obsession with the passing of time;
 - the need to know oneself better;
 - the need to be better understood by others;
 - a certain “egotism” plays a determinant role.

These characteristics of autobiography are shown to be eminently pertinent to the “figure” of Lou Andreas-Salomé. None of the parameters given should be omitted.

Now let us take up some quantitative aspects. Lou Andreas-Salomé wrote *Ma vie* in 1931-1932, when she was seventy-one. She dies shortly before her seventy-sixth birthday—value factor (related duration/duration of empirical life): $71/76 = 0.93$. However, she completed this manuscript in 1934 for *Ce qui manque à l'Esquisse*—value factor $72/76 = 0.94$. She then wrote her *Carnets intimes* between 1934 and 1936—or $75/76 = 0.98$.

The verified “lapses” in the written episodes bring up one of the questions that are central to autobiography. Lou Andreas-Salomé had the right to conceal from the regard of others what is juridically designated as the intimacy of her private life. But from the time that she began to publish some fragments, she activated the immense machine of biographical research, in the sense that the biographer means to understand the ensemble of the sequences of a life and like any “hunter/collector” he tends to flush out the slightest fragments of the missing links. *Dura lex sed lex*.

PRELIMINARIES FOR CERTAIN MODELS

The development of a “non-retranscribed” life in its stages, growth, conflicts, contradictions, denouements and solutions only has value through the knowledge we have of it, either in writing or orally. Moreover, any life tends to “rewrite” itself (in the broad meaning of the term) in the case of some. However, up until the first narration it is as though all the attitudes and behaviors and the situations in which they occur or that they generate (two probable cases) were only a negative—like a photographic proof whose positive, allowing the image to gradually appear, would be only the different variants of one and the same figure. But the different “developments” vary. It is a question of method. Like a musical score that composes itself, life “acts” and in acting appears like the “zero proof” and the different variants, oral or written, like positive proofs.

This proof of life, although the “producer” of writings, we designate by R_0 in the sense that it is not yet retranscribed (orally

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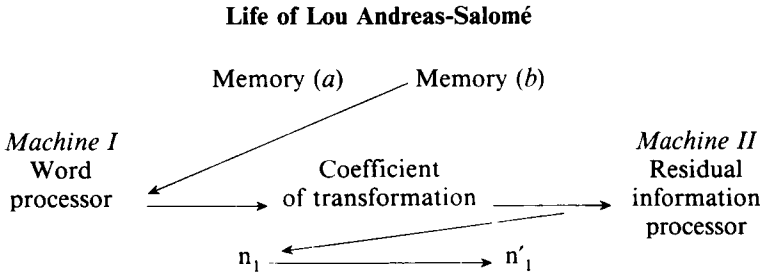
or written). R_0 is supplied from two memories. We call n_0 the number of events contained in R_0 . The event is distinguished from information in that it introduces a break in a “monotone series” of signs or circuits of these signs. At this level the number of events is undetermined. Each series of texts responds to a cadre: R_1, R_2, \dots, R_7 , and n_i is the number of events in R_i . Each series of corresponding residual information responds to a position $R':R'_1, R'_2, \dots, R'_7$ and n_i is the number of events in R'_i .

Below we see two models that we call *zig-zag models* because of the “paths” that cross each other between Machine I Text and Machine II Residual information. The first refers to the personal writings of Lou A.-S., the second corresponds to the different aspects of the existing biography on the author of *Ma vie*.

Let us consider the personal writings and the biographies. In both cases, we have “memories” and “operators” (or machines). The memories supply the word processor and this supplies the “residual” information processor (in that all the information is not retained). Transposed into the well-known model of Lasswell, the schema is the following:

who	says what	to whom	by what means
source	<i>processor</i>	reader	information
memory(ies) (1)	text (2)	coefficient of transformation (3)	
with what objectives	what effect	what lasting result	
need to be better understood, need to know oneself better.	to form or modify the perception or the orientation of a life.	calculation of the coefficient of reading “Personal writings”.	
(2) and (3)	<i>processor</i>		
	residual information		
	(4)		

We have simplified the model and retained only four headings: (1), (2), (3), (4). We have several “memories” which are presented in the following manner:



The “product” of the two machines (text and information) in this model follows the paths that cross each other in a zigzag pattern: we designate it as *model in zigzag*.

The first zigzag table was presented in the 18th century by the economists of the physiocratic school. This was the first economic table, precursor of national accounting elaborated by Dr. F. Quesnay. The zigzag responded to the circulation of wealth. This problematic and its risks interest us, although the discipline is apparently far from our subject. The objective was to detach a net product from the value of the country’s production beginning with the natural product (the land). Harvests coming to add each year a value distributed between different partners. We consider that the different auto- and bio-graphical memories envisaged here (a), (b), (c), (d), function as “sensors” of an entire natural product that we will call a “life” and designate by *net product*. What results is: 1. the personal writings of Lou A.-S. (Model 1) and 2. biographical writings (Model 2) that have to do with Lou A.-S., making up the sum of the autobiographical writing (a term that in this case covers the personal writing of Lou A.-S.) and biographical writing existing today concerning this figure, or “holobiography.”

In the circulation of information through the zigzag paths (Text → Residual information → Text), “objects” or “events of life” are conveyed. Machine II (Residual information) recovers with some “profits and losses” what comes from Machine I (Text). This is supplied from several memories: a and/or b in Model 1, c and/or

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d in Model 2. Memory *a* refers to social discourse (admitted or not), Memory *b* refers to the “primary processes” in Freud’s meaning (cf. supra). Memory *c* and memory *d* refer to contextual discourse or of others (contextual memory) on Lou Andreas-Salomé or her works. The ensemble of memories is the equivalent R_0 of the decline of life (cf. page 13) with a number of events *not yet transcribed*.

Model 1

Each of the memories *a* and/or *b* supplies the series of texts in R_i and contributes objects-events or n_i ; these are taken and transformed by Machine II, processor of residual information into n'_i , R'_i . That is:

$$R_i (n_i) \rightarrow (\text{processing}) \rightarrow (n'_i) R'_i$$

We call:

- n_0 all events not yet transcribed;
- n_i all events in the text (Machine I);
- n'_i the number of items of residual information (Machine II);
- m_i the number of events lost by memory (*Ce qui manque à l'Esquisse...*);
- y_i the number of events found (cf. memories *b*);
- k_i the coefficient of mnemonic recuperation (anamnesis);
- $t_{(i-1)}$ the coefficient of transformation into residual information;

$$n'_i \rightarrow n_i t_i \quad \text{while: } 1 > t_i > 0 \quad 1 > k_i > 0 \\ \text{and: } m_i < n_0 \quad y_i < n_0.$$

Model 2 follows the same processing. Although set apart it is a continuity with Model 1, with extension of the memory (cf. contextual memory *d*). In the processing given here, we will consider the *net holobiographical product* as the sum of the events (n_i) with regard to the global residual information:

$$n_i = n_{(i-1)} t_{(i-1)} - m_i + y_i + k_i n_0$$

(Refer to the two preceding tables)

Note on the zigzag model

The hierarchy of the (R₁... R₁₄) “levels” is so in terms of several parameters (chronology, direct or indirect value of testimony, etc.) This order is not exclusive. The memories feed the “auto- and bio-graphical” field, guaranteeing the possible “autonomy” of the sources, although the levels have influence on each other. Each reader arranges “his levels” that is, the grasp of information as he sees fit, according to his reading.

ACHRONY AND CHRONOBIOGRAPHY: THE CODE

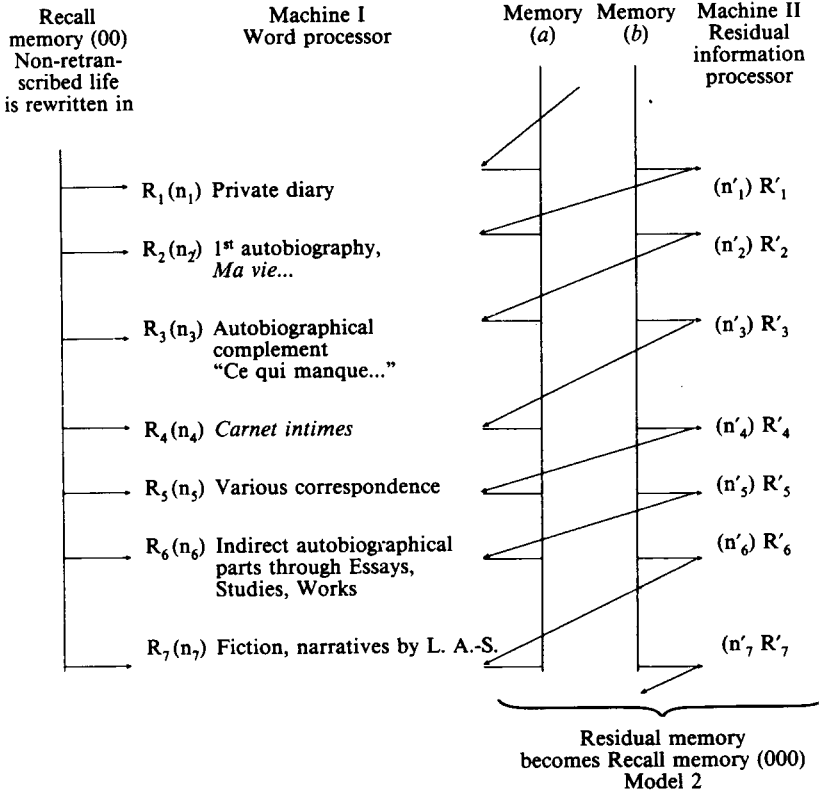
These first models send us to the following one. The question is put in this way: how to evaluate the “written memory” with regard to the empirical duration of a life. Let us open *Ma Vie*: what do we find there?

	<i>Code</i>
Experience of God	D
Experience of love	A
Experience of family	F
Experience of Russia	R
Experience of friendship	Am
Among men	H
With Rainer (cf. <i>Carnets intimes</i>)	Ra
Meeting with Freud	Fr I
Memory of Freud (cf. <i>Carnets intimes</i>)	Fr II
Before the war and afterwards	G
F.C. Andreas	And

What is lacking in the <i>Esquisse</i> (1933)	-m

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ZIGZAG MODEL (1)
(Personal writings of L. A.-S.)



R_i = relation(s) (n_i) = number of objects (or events)

R'_i = relation(s) (n'_i) = amount of residual information

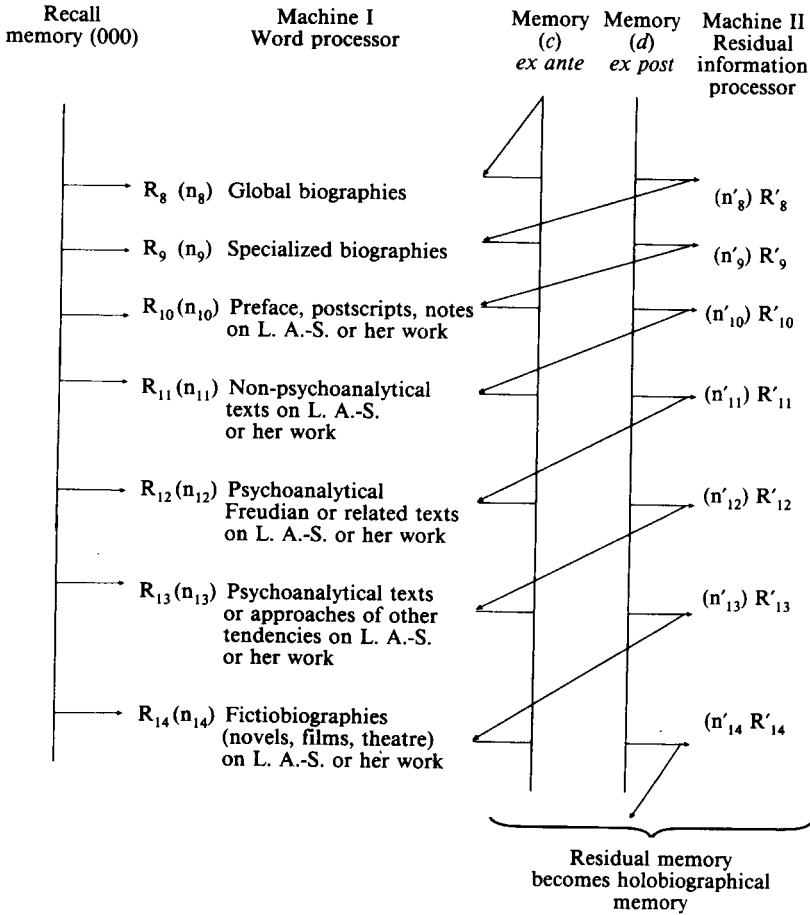
Memories *c* and *d* = contextual memory: other people accounts on L. A.-S.

1. The series of levels ($R_1 \dots R_7$) is not hierarchical. It is redistributed according to the work of Memory (00). Each number is that of the code.

2. The Recall memory (00) works selectively on the recall of "programmes".

3. Voluntary memory (*a*), socially controls whatever is data. Involuntary memory (*b*), refers to primary processes (dreams, insights, etc.).

ZIGZAG MODEL (2)
(Biographies of L. A.-S.)



R_i = relation(s)

(n_i) = number of objects (or events)

R'_i = relation(s)

(n'_i) = number of objects (information)

Memories *c* and *d* = contextual memory: other people's accounts on L. A.-S.

1. The series of levels ($R_8 \dots R_{14}$) is not hierarchical. It is redistributed according to the work of Memory (000). Each number is that of the code.

2. The Recall memory (000) works selectively on the recall of "programmes".

3. Memory (*c*) = contextual memory *ex ante*, that is, during the author's life. Memory (*d*) contextual memory *ex post*, that is, after the author's death.

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Let us consider for example the historical biographical approach of H. Peters. The retained items tend to set up a continuity where L. A.-S. had deliberately established a discontinuity. Memory short-circuits chronological time and recomposes it internally according to a breath, to internal rhythms. From that come these bits and pieces—this patchwork that L. A.-S. tries to reconstruct closer to a life impulse. Where H. Peters makes “invisible collages” L. A.-S. marks stops, cuts, boundaries. She scans her life by recomposing it in writing as a “poem/*poiesis*” that will end only at her death. Let us look at them both: we are struck by the biographer’s will to rationalize the course of the life with regard to the “outbursts” of the autobiographer. Like the smoothing out of a mathematical curve, the biographer tends to soften the asperities of the course of a life that here and there presents discontinuities and contradictions.

Hierarchy of sequences and circularity of cards

Once translated into a coded language, each title of the autobiography of L. A.-S. is seen as a card: they are in a series, are shuffled, redistributed whatever the chosen order—thus, D, A, F, R, Am, H, Ra, Fr, Fr II, G, And, $-m^1$ are a series but may be taken inversely ($-m$, And, G, etc.) or beginning with any letter. Even better, all the cards, once shuffled and redealt show different configurations. From this we can disengage a remarkable property (in the mathematical sense): the distribution established by L. A.-S. in her autobiography is equal to a circular process: it is altered by *aleatory redistribution*. There is no theoretical or empirical reason to place God (D) at the beginning of the series and Andreas (And) or *Ce qui manque à l'Esquisse* ($-m$) at the end when it is a matter of a biographical observation of an empirical nature. This circularity is opposed to the hierarchy of the sequences.

This latter responds to a well-known principle of order: early childhood, childhood, adolescence, etc. It is this principle that Peters followed—we can see that its distribution is of the ordinal

¹ We use the retained code for the chapter titles of the auto-biography of Lou Andreas-Salomé, *Ma vie*.

type—first, second, third, etc. Each theme taken up is determined by the preceding and in its turn determines the following.

Moreover, autobiography is perceptively separated from biography as developed by Georges May. Of course, they have in common a contribution of information and events that are indispensable to the reader. They are distinguished by the way the memory functions, the procedure of inquiry on the history of a life. But especially by the *test of death* (May). The biographer is working on the life of a deceased person. The autobiographer “inquires” into his own existence while he is still living. This aspect changes everything. In the sense that at his last breath he can no longer write what within himself demands to be written.

HERMENEUTICS AND PARERMENEUTICS

Some remarks are necessary on this point:

1. We immediately note the plurality of the interpretations.
2. Today we can hardly set up the basic frame of interpretative reference because of the axiological/axiomatological crisis of the contemporary world—that there is no question of developing. There are two consequences: no interpretation can be superior or inferior to the “concurrent” (cf. Dostoyevsky: If God did not exist...) in the limits of a minimal scientific ethic: the construction of a provisory “interpretative model” is presented with the aim of better clarifying “factual data” (they being partly constructed through means of observation).
3. In this cadre we will therefore accept *all* expressed and published interpretations concerning the life and/or works of L. A.-S., not as a “hermeneutic” but (each being specific and singular) as “parermeneutic.”² We thus dispose of a set of *parermeneutic variants* since as we have seen for the figure of Lou Andreas-Salomé: the *basic* referential interpretation = “neutral space.” Neither the autobiographer nor the biographer would be able to avail himself of the ultimate deciphering.³

² We keep the spelling found in Littré, “*parerméneute*” instead of *par(h)erméneute*.

³ Each variant becomes a center: multicentered space.

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INTERLUDE

Lou Andreas-Salomé returned several times to the “lapses” in the first text. The act of “saying/not saying” reiterates the response in the question itself. However, what seems exceptional to us in this *ordeal* is the double and intense work on herself, published in *Ce qui manque à l'Esquisse* and the *Carnets intimes des dernières années* (several chapters) in the sense that the two researches constitute, to whoever reads them attentively, a rare, even surprising, dimension, that is, “an autobiography within an autobiography” that does not hesitate to correct itself or to contradict the first (*Ma vie*). In the game of covering up and exposing, of admission and denial—memories are never anything but half sincere (Gide)—, Lou Andreas-Salomé ceaselessly looks for herself, and what she finds—coming from far away— she dares, she says and she writes, believe us, with probity and integrity. That is what makes her greatness. However, the phenomena remain opaque: the game with the mask is not lacking. Entire passages of her life are hidden from our view. Did she attach some importance to that at seventy-four? It is not to be excluded that certain episodes, considered as scandalous by others, seemed quite secondary to her. The “whom I dare to love” in the *Religieuse portugaise* is terribly present: it is Lou von Salomé, entirely, and we can say without danger of error that she was, among other things, a great Nietzschean—among other things because the “question” is somewhat complex.

The question of the personal writings of Lou Andreas-Salomé engenders in its way a questioning even of the status of the autobiography. Without a doubt, Lou Andreas-Salomé is not the first nor the last to give rise to this debate: what is true in what the autobiographer holds for true in what he has to communicate to others? Once the mask is removed or torn does it not lead to a new questioning? And this, in its turn to others that would make up an interminable/unterminated (terminated analysis, interminable analysis [Freud])? Like those portraits placed between nearly parallel mirrors that reflect them to infinity? Three decisive chapters are given regarding Rilke, Andreas and Freud. In reading each of them we find that the enigma, far from being solved, gradually becomes more mystifying. As if the removed mask

uncovered many others, underlying, many-layered, each one leading to another. In Eskimo societies these masks exist. In the West are faces substituted for masks? Let us listen to Lou as she speaks of Nietzsche in her work (1932):

“The Nietzschean conception of the highest ideal implicitly contains the idea that appearance is right to present itself as reality—and that all profound truth is recognized by the effect it has.”

A striking consideration on the mask and the effect of truth—in agreement with “the highest ideal.”

AUTOBIOGRAPHY, BIOGRAPHY AND ASYMMETRY

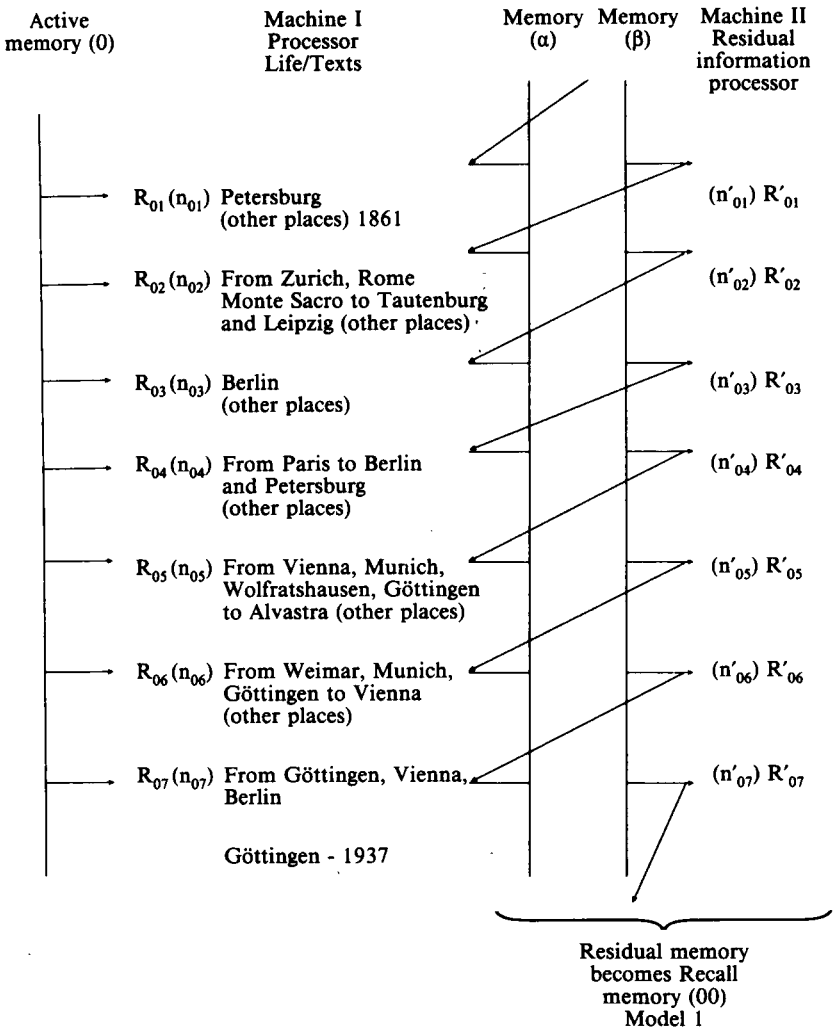
The third model is designated as *Model zero*. It is *life* before the text and in proportion constitutes the prototype. Thus in this model we can read the different *places* during the life course of L. A.-S.

The distinction between the three zigzag models designated as M_1 , M_2 and M_0 is strictly methodological. It is clear that for an author who keeps a diary life is written down at almost the same time it develops, or shortly afterward. But the distinction between them appears to be necessary.

These three models interpenetrate: the base model is finally the *last*. It regroups in seven sequences (but a larger number would have been possible) the “events in the life” of L. A.-S., around the essential places (the geographical space of L. A.-S. goes beyond this framework: as has often been noted, it is a European space, from St. Petersburg to Zurich, Rome, Berlin, Vienna and Paris, with frequent comings and goings, aside from the trips from the Arctic to Greece, etc.) The M_0 can only be conceived in a *holobiographical* perspective, that is, when the majority of the available documents has been assembled. In other words, the access to a life can only be made at the end of the research, as a result, while life comes before any written document.

For convenience, we make a distinction between the *ex ante* documents that were known during the lifetime of the

ZIGZAG MODEL (0)
(Life/Texts)



1. With Model 0, the cycle comes full circle since the life seems provisionally restored in expectation of further research. This restoration in memory only occurs after work on the texts. In the elaboration of biographies and biographical research life only comes after the texts. In this sense Model 0 can only be constructed regressively: this third step leads to the origin.

2. Memory (α) = voluntary memory, socially controlled.

Memory (β) = involuntary memory, (primary processes, insights, etc.).

autobiographer and *ex post* documents known or established and constituted after her death. In this perspective, biography is always *ex post*.

M_0 comes at the end of the investigation and should be at the origin. In other words, in any biographical research, *ex post* by definition, the perspective is always inverted.

Autobiography is supported in its register by the law of continuity resting on the memory of evocation, the guarantee of integrity. In return, it furnishes different data, apparently discontinuous, with their internal necessity. Conversely, such discontinuous material gathered by the biographer would present only pure contingency if he himself did not add, in reconstruction, his own theory, his epistemological cadre and his method that connect but connect externally. Thus reconstituted, does biography preserve its character of necessary trustworthiness for all research into truth? Are we justified in taking a position against the biographical genre?

Paul Valéry: against biography

The author of the *Méthode de Léonard de Vinci* (1957), written in 1894, completed in 1919 and augmented with notes and *marginalia* in 1930, expresses only scorn and distance with regard to any biographical enterprise, whose “exterior details of a vanished personality” he mocks and to which he opposes “the method,” a way of saying an “antibiography.” “The word *Method*,” he wrote in 1919, “was a little strong... Method makes us think of some well-defined operation, and I saw in the latter only a singular habit of transforming all the questions in my mind.” He maintained that method against the biographer of Leonardo that he could have been but that he stubbornly refused to be, in that it was “in any case preferable to the series of doubtful anecdotes, comments in collector’s catalogues and dates.” A radical opposition to the “genre” rarely expressed with such force by others. “Such an erudition is not unknown to me but I especially do not wish to talk about it” (...) “The life of a man is not the life of the author.” “The real life of a man, always badly defined, even

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by those closest to him or by himself, cannot be used in an explanation of his work if not indirectly and by means of a very careful elaboration.” The only admitted concession, and the conditions are Draconian. Would not the biography of an author be a mirage or a delusion in relation to the work he created? It is a question worth asking. Valéry’s position, however controversial it may be, at least has the merit of its radicality. Nevertheless, Paul Valéry proposes the rapport of intellection with the sensitive, the *aisthesis*, with the precise and singular work.

In opposition to biography, Paul Valéry chose the method in the sense of the approach to a work through the way the mind of the creator functioned. The mind, but not the “psychic apparatus” in the Freudian sense. The *Léonard* of Valéry and that of Freud (1977) are diametrically opposed.

The question posed by Valéry is without a doubt valid for Lou A.-S. Of the two alternatives, Lou, her life or her work, which approach finally prevailed?

SOME CONTRASTING PORTRAITS: ASYMMETRIC VARIATIONS AROUND A FIGURE

Fifty years after her death, Lou A.-S. remains a controversial “figure.” She continues to arouse interest, fascination or discussion. Here we will consider that there is a “sum” of a life—which belongs to biography—and the “remainder” that guarantees the persistence of a figure or a model or provokes debate. The “residual” of a life is memory, “Mnemosyne”, said the Greeks, “is the fountain of immortality” (J.-P. Vernant) against Lethe, the water of death. That Lou A.-S. re-emerged after a 15-year silence attests to her vitality.

Nevertheless, although partly known, the portraits that have been drawn of “her life, her work” are contrasting, indeed, contradictory. Among the authors specializing in Nietzsche, Curt P. Janz does not hesitate to blacken the picture. “Lou von Salomé was one of those actresses who in spite of her ambition never really appeared at the front of the stage, although her importance was undeniable... In what speciality? H.F. Peters goes so far as to call her a *femme fatale*... A few decades have sufficed to inter most of

her work as an author... An episode (in the drama of Nietzsche) among the most distressing in the life of the hero, *whom it will lead to the edge of self-destruction.*"

The often-quoted remarks of Daniel Halévy (*Nietzsche*): "The young girl's name was Lou Salomé. She was twenty: Russian, daughter of a general... they say half-Jewish. Unclassifiable, surprising for her intelligence and intellectual ardor, not beautiful but extremely seductive." Twelve pages further on, in conclusion, "Lou will remain a conqueror, dominator and slave of men, determinedly polyandrous. Rainer Rilke will fall into her net: she knew how to choose (...) and Barrès listed her among his "*Notre-Dame du sleeping-car*" who were in broad circulation in 19th-century Europe."

Contrary to all expectations, another Nietzschean, Jacques Benoist-Méchin, translator of the *Nietzsche* by Lou A.-S., (with whom he must have corresponded if only for the needs of publication) gives the following eulogy in his introduction: "Among the many important works devoted to Nietzsche that of Madame Lou Andreas-Salomé occupies a place apart." The following comment is surprising: "This young Jewess of twenty years, with a graceful and slender body, was able to lead (Nietzsche) towards that promised land he had lately begun to sense, towards that "Unknown India"..." in 1932 Lou A.-S. was 71 years old. Knowing French very well, she must have read this text and this translation. She does not seem to have reacted. We will return to this problem (Lou, of Germano-Baltic ancestry, Huguenot, of Russian culture, had she "imaginarily" assumed this other figure?). Retrospectively, in the hand of this latter, the sentence is not lacking in piquancy and humor. It should be pointed out that by means of this book he was the first in France to diffuse the thought of Lou A.-S. This fictitious half-identification and the fascination that the "Jewish question" exercised on her left a pronounced mark on the complex personality of Lou A.-S.

As for Nietzsche, after having praised the heroic character of "this young Russian" in 1882, he wrote a year later in a letter to Georges Rée (late July, 1883) with regard to his brother:

"Paul Rée lied to me on the subject of Mlle. Salomé, repeating that the world was unworthy of her [...] A martyr to knowledge

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from early childhood, completely disinterested [...] had sacrificed her happiness and all the pleasures of life to the truth. Well, M. Rée, every fifty years such a being grows up on the earth [...] I have therefore met the young girl. I was quite simply the victim of a lie.”

Later Nietzsche will retract these words, will ask his sister Elisabeth “to be reconciled with Mlle. Salomé” and will praise the latter’s first book, in 1885, *Une lutte pour Dieu*. In other words, Nietzsche could not decide on a precise judgment of Lou. His opinions remained contradictory. Certain passages in the *Correspondance* in the form of notes concerning Lou, at the end of 1883, depict her as “unfaithful and betraying everyone in front of no matter who” (Nietzsche had not accepted the episode in Leipzig and the departure of Lou with Rée—a student comradeship.) It appears that in a number of cases the Nietzscheans followed this last position of Nietzsche. Like a chemical precipitate, Lou had “activated” the collapse of her mentor (Podatch). Had she broken off the strong intellectual friendship between Paul Rée and Nietzsche? Or had she simply “precipitated” the separation that was already in the offing? Without Lou, Nietzsche had already separated from Wagner who was, at one time, “his master,” the way he would later be separated from his great friend E. Rohde, among others. Whatever the case, Lou had marked Nietzsche with an “unimpaired imprint.”

“Lou is by far the most intelligent person I have met” (to F. Overbeck, February 22, 1883). “She is a being of first rank for me whose loss is *forever* irreparable. The energy of her will and the originality of her mind destine her for great things: as for her effective morality, certainly prison or an asylum would be more relevant to the case” (to Ida Overbeck, early 1883): “I *miss* her even with her faults (...), I have never found anyone so free of prejudice, so sensible and so well-prepared for my kind of problems.”

Lou will not be drawn into this but in return she will herself be marked by Nietzsche with an “unimpaired imprint”.

The remarks of Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche, sister of the philosopher, are known for their defamatory nature: the great majority of Nietzsche specialists do not consider them trustworthy.

Nor, with rare exceptions, do specialists on Lou A.-S. But praise is not lacking from different sources: male and female friends of Lou A.-S. devoted books or articles to her during her lifetime. Peter Gast (H. Közelitz), a faithful friend of Nietzsche, drew this “heroic” portrait of Lou A.-S. (quoted in the notes of E. Pfeiffer to *Ma vie*): “This woman is really a genius, she has quite a heroic character. A little taller than I am, well-proportioned, blonde, with a Roman expression. Her ideas show that she has ventured up to the confines of thought.”

Did Peter Gast remember the first impressions of Nietzsche, still subjugated by her whom he retained had “the piercing eye of the eagle and the courage of a lion,” while remaining “definitely a very feminine child”? (Letter to P. Gast, July 13, 1882). Some months later she would be for the same person the incarnation of the “eternal masculine”—something that others had also observed. Who changed? The observer whose judgment is associated with a personal coefficient? Or the one who received the judgment and whose apparent polymorphism astonishes, dazzles or disconcerts? Fifty years after her death nothing can yet be irrefutably settled. As we have seen, the recent book by C.P. Janz gives some supplementary touches to the statue that Freud had erected to Lou A.-S.:

“The last twenty-five years of this extraordinary woman were devoted to practicing psychoanalysis, to which she brought a valuable scientific contribution. I do not exaggerate when I say that we all considered it an honor that she came to enter the ranks of our collaborators and companions in the struggle [...] Whoever was near to her was deeply impressed by the sincerity and harmony of her being and saw with stupefaction that all the feminine weaknesses and perhaps most of the human weaknesses were foreign to her or that she had overcome them during the course of her life.” (Freud, *Notice nécrologique de Lou A.S.*)

Nevertheless, concerning the discoveries of Lou A.S., particularly her “conceptions on female sexuality,” that she easily integrated “into the ‘black continent’ in the Freudian theoretical system”—one psychoanalyst mentions that “Freud did not consider it useful, in spite of the admiration he had for her” (J. Cosnier). Perhaps, she goes on, the woman in Lou, the optimistic slant “that made her consider irrational subconscious demands as

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a source of life somewhat disquieted Freudian rationalism” (*Ibid.*) Freud did not think it useful. In short, who changed? She or they, Nietzsche and Freud? What did that “valuable scientific contribution” of Lou A.-S. signify for Freud?

Sketches of a biographical profile

Dictionaries operate like road signs: it is advisable not to overlook them. The notice in the *Dictionnaire des littératures* (Larousse, 1985) indicates:

Andreas-Salomé, (Lou). German woman of letters,⁴ (St. Petersburg 1861, Göttingen 1937). Daughter of a Russian general, she studied theology in Switzerland. Author of psychological novels and narratives of a *fin de siècle* sensitivity (*Ruth*, 1895; *Enfants des hommes*, 1899; *Ma*, 1901; *Rodinka*, 1922). This intelligent, sensitive woman, passionately fond of liberty, frequented the greatest minds of her day. She played an important role in Nietzsche’s life, then in that of Rilke, before becoming a disciple of Freud and Adler. She left an autobiography (*Ma vie*, 1951)⁵ and a large correspondence.

Certain excerpts from this text revive memories. In his preface to the book of Alma Mahler, also entitled *Ma vie* (1985), Roland Jaccard cursorily presents these few lines, aspects of the life of Lou Andreas-Salomé:

Vienna at the end of the 19th century. On the other side of the frontier, Nietzsche was sunk in the black night of insanity. In the shadow of the philosopher stood the haughty silhouette of his disciple Lou Andreas-Salomé, who was also the companion of Rilke and the faithful partisan of Freudian theories. By accepting to stay in the background behind the great men she had known and loved, Lou Andreas-Salomé silently garnered their teaching, their philosophy, their friendship that she related and

⁴ Lou A.-S. acquired German nationality through her marriage with F.C. Andreas. She was Russian, of Germano-Baltic origin through her father (Latvian, to judge from the cities she mentions) and of Germano-Danish origin through her mother. Her German nationality is not mentioned elsewhere.

⁵ The French edition published in 1977 (Bibliography) was taken from the German edition of 1968, with some additions.

retransmitted with the fervor, and at times naiveté, of a student in his studies and notebooks. Her role as Egeria made her famous and, more than her personal works posterity has kept her memories that we are rediscovering with such avidity today.

Certainly Jaccard did not intend this text for a biography of Lou A.-S., but the essential themes of a life are recalled. Aside from the first notice in Larousse 1985 and a second exception discovered in the supplement *Thesaurus I* (1980) to the *Encyclopaedia Universalis*, it does not seem that Lou A.-S. figures in French dictionaries or encyclopedias, except that her name is found, in a peripheral way, in some notices on Nietzsche or Rilke. In that on Freud, there is little or nothing about her. That shows her relative marginality in the contemporary encyclopedic institution.

SOME PARERMENEUTIC VARIANTS: SQUARES ON A CHECKERBOARD

The figure of Lou A.-S., very controversial during her lifetime, has strongly marked succeeding generations. Today several parermeneutic tendencies or variants are discernible. We may simply consider two tendencies, favorable and unfavorable. The facts are more subtly shaded. We are led to envisage a very broad range of work and research.

We will make several distinctions between the parermeneutic variants and T. H. Kuhn's concept of "paradigm" (1983). First, characterized by its "close ties with normal science" in a society or civilization, at a given time, thus like a scientific tradition or reference supported by the consensus of the most eminent scholars, the paradigm must be defined by a certain number of rules, thanks to which the recognized epistemological theory is accepted and transmitted. Now, the author points out difficulties that arise: on one hand these rules are not always perceptible in the sense that the scientist does not refer to them "as long as the paradigm is sure." On the other hand, the multiplicity of scientific disciplines pluralizes the paradigms. Science is not a monolithic and coherent edifice but is composed of a "fortuitous structure" often "without an internal coherence." Finally and most important, the scientist works on problems whose ensemble makes up a field and to the solution of which he conducts his research. The question of the

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“rationalization” of the theory is thus subordinated to the kinds of theoretical applications and techniques used in the laboratories.

The internal crisis is more decisive and proper to one or the other of the paradigms, or to several, when a series of problems make a critical mass around the scientific work, without perceptible or even conceivable solutions, which the author defines as “enigmas.” This crisis results in an epistemological cadre that is insufficient or too narrow. The crisis opened gives free rein to the development of “concurrent paradigms,” opposed or contradictory. A “scientific revolution” begins which through conflicts and debates gradually aims at imposing the recognition of a type of paradigm tending to “best adapt” to the scientifically defined “facts” and to bring a broader scientific development. However, Kuhn, a vigilant observer, notes: “Actually, things never present themselves in that way. The scientists of concurrent paradigms never really agree, neither of the parties wanting to admit all the non-empirical suppositions the other party needs to validate his point of view.”

It is admissible to suggest that each of the epistemological theories in human sciences refers to a mode of the “non-empirical suppositions” which it needs “to validate its point of view.” It is this referent which makes sense that we call “parermeneutic” in that the hermeneutic today is “decentralized” and dispersed. The parermeneutic is thus not a paradigm in the Kuhnian sense but the consequence of the crisis of the scientific paradigm. Furthermore, this notion would draw closer to it in periods of crises in the outset of “normal science” and “scientific revolution” and the eventual installation of a new, more satisfactory epistemological theory that would gradually rally a certain consensus in the scientific world. Parermeneutics correspond to the outburst of a central referent that has meaning and to its redistribution in multiple referents. In the *Dictionnaire de Littré* “par-ermeneute” is “the name given in the 7th century to those who explained the Scriptures without regard to the meaning held by the Church.” Parermeneutic in the contemporary meaning appears in the domain of uncertainty to which any interpretation, whatever it is, may refer. In the bibliography of the works on Lou A.-S. each work, indeed fragment of a work, has reference through its own authority.

To open this dossier raises a number of questions. Lou A.-S

<p>Themes Lou A.-S. biography</p>	<p>Biographical approaches A</p>	<p>Civilisation Literature and philosophy theatre, film B</p>	<p>A propos of Nietzsche C</p>	<p>A propos of Rilke D</p>	<p>A propos of research on, or referring to psychoanalysis E</p>	<p>A propos of the feminine F</p>
<p>Genres and domains of research</p>						
<p>General biographies</p>	<p>R₈-A</p>	<p>R₈-B</p>			<p>R₈-E</p>	<p>R₈-F</p>
<p>Specialized biographies ● on a discipline ● on other authors</p>	<p>R₉-A</p>		<p>R₉-C</p>		<p>R₉-E</p>	
<p>Prefaces, postscripts Notes</p>	<p>R₁₀-A</p>	<p>R₁₀-B</p>	<p>R₁₀-C</p>		<p>R₁₀-E</p>	<p>R₁₀-F</p>
<p>Non-psychoanalytic texts, life, work, relationships</p>		<p>R₁₁-B</p>		<p>R₁₁-D</p>		<p>R₁₁-F</p>
<p>Freudian psychoanalytical or related texts, life, work, relationships</p>				<p>R₁₂-D</p>	<p>R₁₂-E</p>	<p>R₁₂-F</p>
<p>Psychoanalytical texts of other tendencies, life, work, relationships</p>		<p>R₁₃-B</p>			<p>R₁₃-E</p>	
<p>Fictiobiographies</p>	<p>R₁₄-A</p>	<p>R₁₄-B</p>			<p>R₁₄-E</p>	

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succeeded, fifty years after her death, in giving rise to philosophical, critical, literary or psychoanalytical writing on herself or her work. Some of these combine several genres.

This method of presentation allows us to deal with, as in cartography, the “nodal intersections” between the genres or fields of research, the relatively frequent themes in the corpus of writing (or other work, films and theater) on Lou A.-S. These nodal points have a code number for an easy guide to the orientation of the research. This strictly documentary table gives no judgment or measure of evaluation of the mentioned works. When it seems necessary, but not systematically, the parermeneutic orientation is indicated.

THEMES AND GENRES OR FIELDS OF RESEARCH

As we have already seen and briefly noted, on examination the documentation gathered shows different examples. At times we observe a strong or relative coincidence between the “genre” to which the text belongs and the “parermeneutic referent” as though an ideogenic web existed between them. Conversely, the gaps between the one and the other are sometimes obvious. In this branch of the alternative, we clarify the parermeneutic position of the considered text. We have obtained about 25 coded items. To be briefer, we indicate the work by the name of the author. We of course refer to the biography *in fine* for the works themselves. Except for three of them, the authors quoted are mentioned for works published after 1951, the date of the first edition in Germany of the autobiography of Lou A.-S. due to E. Pfeiffer.

Lines R₈ to R₁₄: genres and fields of research

R₈-A H. Peters: a well-known biography whose directive lines we have indicated. The biographical approach and the parermeneutic coincide. The work was successful.

R₈-B I. Schmidt-Machey. This biography is registered in the current of German civilization and literature. Lou: “inspirer and interpreter of Nietzsche, Rilke and Freud.” First biography published in France on Lou A.-S. (1956). We call attention to the thesis of Hans J. Bab, defended in Berlin, one year earlier: *Lou A.-S., Littérature et personnalité*.

R₈-E R. Binion: a work of 575 pages, registered on the line of psychobiography, presents a clinical approach: “*Frau Lou* is the psychoanalytical study of a woman brushing madness and genius at the same time;” unusual pareremeneutic orientation.

R₉-C Ch. Andler and D. Halévy are quoted here among the specialists on Nietzsche, although their works are previous to 1951. Both are in line with the classic “biographical genre”, but the first has a neutral attitude with regard to Lou A.-S. and the second a polemical one. C. Janz, in his biography of Nietzsche also has a polemic tone (cf. quotation) toward Lou A.-S. while staying very close to Nietzsche, his hesitations and his enthusiasms. E. Podatch, in a work published in 1979, is registered on the same line. In all these cases, “biographical genre”, and “pareremeneutic” coincide.

R₉-E J.L. Tribout, the only one in France to present research of a medical and psychiatric nature. He is registered on the line of psychiatry with psychoanalytical orientation in the Freudian sense. Interested in Lou as a philosopher, analyst-theoretician and therapist, notably of R.M. Rilke. Medicine and biographical ascertainment constitute a “field of research” rather than a “genre” in the literary sense.

R₁₀-A E. Pfeiffer, due to whose care the work and figure of Lou A.-S. came out of the purgatory of oblivion. His prefaces or postscripts accompany a large part of Lou’s work or correspondence, but it is the abundant and precise annotation that makes his research a privileged source of information. Designated by Lou A.-S. as heir to her written work, he preserves still-unpublished archives, notably the “Journal intime” and the novel “Juta”.

J. Nobécourt. His preface of a dozen pages to *Ma vie* (French edition, 1977) remains a classic text. He poses some major questions on the relationship of Lou with her text—she hunts down the truth, but there are some blanks—and with those around her. He stresses “her long march toward Freud” but also “the union with Andreas that was so paradoxical,” the screen-function perhaps of her father and brothers. As well as her rapport with “psychoanalysis that was not a decoding for her but the truth...close to a pure signifiant. And Freud incarnated it.”

M. Moscovici. Wrote two prefaces: that to the *Lettre ouverte à Freud* (acknowledgments to Freud) and that to *L’Amour du narcissisme*. Lou summoned by Freud as a “third party” in his arguments with dissident psychoanalyst—as a woman, a foreigner, and free, as a thinker and an intellectual. In combat and argument between the opposed poles. Tempted by the enemy camp, mysticism, but led back to the Freudian camp while remaining “on the fringes of mysticism” and on the side of synthesis. Regarding Freud whom she admired she affirms her personal positions on

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Le Narcissisme comme double direction and on art. "Freud did not excommunicate her."

J. Le Rider. Preface to the *Carnets intimes des dernières années*. Lou remained true to herself—the theme of this writing—rids herself here of all "oaths of allegiance." "I keep myself on a leash for guidance, provided the leash is a long one," she wrote to Freud. The preface accentuates the cultural context, the civilization in crisis of the last years of the 19th century, *Lebensphilosophie*, neo-romanticism, anti-naturalism, post-symbolism and if the word "expressionism" is not used, it is still in the text in spirit. Lou in an effort to define woman between the Slavic and Germanic worlds: between Freud and Jung?

R₁₀-B The same text by Le Rider is placed under this code number (civilization, literature, philosophy).

R₁₀-C J. Benoist-Méchin. This preface is the first study in French on the first work translated in France, by the writer of the preface, in 1932: *Nietzsche* by Lou A.-S. She spent twelve years writing it, between 1882 and 1894. We have already quoted J. B.-M., whose very favorable attitude is in strong contrast with the specialists on Nietzsche. 1882, "under Michelangelo's cupola in St. Peter's in Rome"; "From the first moment, Nietzsche was subjugated. Did she not have all the required qualities?"

R₁₀-E The prefaces by J. Nobécourt, M. Moscovici and J. Le Rider are put under this number (psychoanalytic research or referring to it).

R₁₀-F The prefaces of Marie Moscovici are put under this number (apropos of the feminine).

R₁₁-B Among the texts of non-psychoanalytical nature or bearing is the one by F. Paul inquiring into the rapports of Lou A.-S. with the theater of Ibsen, in which she had a lasting interest. (*Six réponses et six histoires, Lou A.-S. interprète d'Ibsen*) and under the same code we are inclined to put the text by Le Rider already mentioned, as well as that of J. Schumarer, who in an article "Les Lettres allemandes en France" inquires into the reasons for the French infatuation with the works of Nietzsche and Lou A.-S., in 1979, the year of the publication in French of the *Correspondance Nietzsche, Rée, Lou* (civilization, literature and philosophy, theater).

R₁₁-D The non-psychoanalytical texts are polarized under this code number that calls attention to the well-known relationship of Lou A.-S. with R.M. Rilke. Without prejudging the value of his poetry, the attraction Rilke exerts is durable. P. Pollok-Brodsky maintains the influence that Lou A.-S. had over Rilke from the preparations for the two trips to Russia (in the first, 1899, they were accompanied by Friedrich G. Andreas, Lou's husband; they made the second one alone, 1900). The Russian peasant world and poetry. Under the same number we place the text by B. Thum, "Rilke et Sainte Angela de Foligno" in that the figure of Lou is evoked

several times. J.F. Angeloz's well-known research on Rilke associates the influence of Lou A.-S. with the poet's discovery of a more open world. The text by P. Berendt uses various quotations from the *Correspondance* between Lou and Rilke. That of A. Barreto plunges the reader into mysticism: "Duas almas que se correspondian."

R₁₁-F We find a certain number of texts having to do with feminism *outside* the current of Freudian thought. We note the one by B. Martin on ideology, feminism and power: the author bases himself on Foucault's research; the figure of Lou A.-S. is in this regard mobilized on very present themes. An exemplary list of the positions and texts of Lou on the feminine question. Conversely, the text by Le Rider notes how controversial the texts and positions of Lou A.-S. were within the feminist milieus of her time. Under this same code number the article by A. Jimeno-Valdes on woman faced with sociocultural change also refers to the exemplary figure and texts of Lou A.-S.

R₁₂-D F. Rella presents one of the rare recent texts on the rapports of Lou and Rilke, in a psychoanalytical light, with reference to Freud and currents of thought in Germany at the beginning of this century, particularly expressionism.

R₁₂-E This important code number is amply furnished with various contributions. We have placed under it that of F. Rella. That of P. Moortgat has a bearing on Lou A.-S. and Simone de Beauvoir. His study is also developed in the light of psychoanalysis. This confrontation between the two "figures" has a particular bearing on the question of the feminine and feminism. J. Cosnier presented in French research one of the first studies on *Lou A.-S. et la sexualité féminine* basing himself on texts that had not yet been translated into French at that time, notably "Du type féminin", "Anal et sexuel" and "Le narcissisme dans sa double direction." Of course, the *Correspondance avec Freud* and the *Journal des années 1912-1913* contribute. Above we quoted the final remark concerning a certain indifference of Freud concerning the discoveries of Lou A.-S. in the field of psychoanalysis. We will also mention the study by Jean Chambon on "Anal et sexuel" by Lou A.-S. that he published in 1973 and that of K.M. Abenheimer published two years earlier (1971). Under the same code number is the contribution of R. Spiegel, "Freud et la femme dans le monde." The author takes up the rapport of masculine-feminine in the work and life of Freud. Women have a certain ascendancy over him and among them, she estimates, Lou A.-S. For Spiegel the question of the ambivalence of Freud toward women is posed, as well as his sense of the secret and the "private." According to her, this relation of dependency would be manifested with regard to Marie Bonaparte and Lou A.-S. Human, even too human, Freud would not be immune with respect to his counter-transfer. The author brings up the

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relationship of Freud with his mother. The prefaces of J. Nobécourt and M. Moscovici are put under this number. Three other contributions are added to them, although in an indirect manner: those of M. Kanzer, M.A. Sperber and K.R. Eissler: they are interested in the “case” of V. Tausk who committed suicide in 1919. P. Roazen maintained the thesis of the responsibility of Freud in the suicide. Lou would have been the stake in Freud’s “jealousy” with regard to Tausk. But Eissler contests this thesis (1978). Before this date, Roazen’s version was widely accepted. Nobécourt (1977) mentions the fact that Freud abruptly broke off with the analysis that Tausk was following with him, sending him to H. Deutch for analysis, who herself was in analysis with Freud. This does not simplify the inquiry. And Lou? Lou followed a “didactic analysis” with Freud (Pfeiffer). According to R. Binion’s inquiry, Lou was in analysis with Freud.

R₁₂-F Here we will place the contributions of M. Moscovici, J. Cosnier, R. Spiegel and P. Moortgat but pointing out with regard to the comparison made by this last between Lou A.-S. and Simone de Beauvoir that if there are exterior connotations, indeed, similarities between these two “figures” (feminism, personal diary, autobiography...) the interior experience and the goal were quite different. In *Mémoires d’une jeune fille rangée* (that is, her autobiography) de Beauvoir wrote: “This fine story of mine became false as I told it” (Quoted by G. May). This gives us the measure of one of the essential differences between these two figures. We only need to read Lou’s *Ecrits intimes des dernières années*.

R₁₃-E Other tendencies in psychoanalytical currents are concerned with the orientations and reflections of Lou A.-S. on God, mysticism, prayer, rapport with cosmic life, “oceanic sentiment”...in short, that leaning about which Freud had warned Lou and to which it seems, when we read *Le Rider*, she had ceded during her last years, thus remaining “true to herself.” H. Sunden takes up this theme in the analysis he makes of the hypothesis of regression to infantile stages and discusses the Freudian theses on narcissism by referring to the research of Lou A.-S.

R₁₃-A Here we quote from memory, under I. Nilsson’s signature, the episode in the life of Poul Bjerre, an intimate friend of Lou, in the months that preceded her arrival at the Congress of Weimar (September, 1911), he himself a psychoanalyst having introduced her to the Congress. Dating from this event Lou will draw away from Bjerre, whose ideas seemed to approach those of Jung (beginning of conflict with Freud).

R₁₄-A Under this code and the following on the same line, we place all the works of fiction devoted to the figure of Lou A.-S. Roland Jaccard, in publishing his novel *Lou*, using biographically verified facts and elements of pure fiction in its setting and construction, established, a new direction in the corpus of writings on Lou. In doing this, he countered using means borrowed from fiction, the images that Lou wanted to give of herself by

employing the techniques of narration and the novel. As far as these stories are concerned, they have been called semi-novellas, semi-novels or, conversely, semi-autobiographies of Lou A.-S.

R₁₄-B Since it is a matter of fictional works (cinema and theater) we mention under this number the film by Liliana Cavani *Al di là del bene e del male*, whose success is well known and which contributed to the knowledge of Lou's personality. The theatrical setting by Utta Wagner, *Lou A.-S.*, has also been given.

INTERPRETATIONS: FROM PRUDENCE TO EXCESS

J.L. Tribout, a psychiatrist, acts with prudence. If he notes signs of "primary delirious experience" in the author of *Zarathustra* he refuses the "snare of an obliged adequation between delirium, hallucination and psychotic structure," in spite of obviously known disturbances. "The richness of literary production up until the collapse (of Nietzsche) does not allow the assumption of an already-developing insanity." His reasonable conclusion is "a particular organization of the personality" of Nietzsche. In a diametrically opposed manner, no longer apropos of Nietzsche but of Lou Andreas-Salomé herself, R. Binion, considering some elements from the childhood of Lou (called Lolja) mostly coming from her autobiographies and from certain narratives, brusquely concludes from page 8 of his work that the child was affected with "autistic psychosis." Among other things, he bases himself on the irremediable loss of God that she experienced when very young; on a withdrawal into herself; on a strong propensity to tell stories to God and then to herself; to separate the world into two parts: that of the imaginary—God, her stories, her prayers—prevailing over the sentient world and modeling it in the dimensions of the preceding. Given at a distance, and by definition "outside the clinic", this brusque diagnosis presents a problem. It would call for one or several contradictory counter-evaluations. It should be noted that Binion's position does not seem to have been taken up by any other biographer.

Another picture: at the death of her father, February 20, 1878, Lou was only 17 years old. Disturbances of a somatic nature appear and become worse during the Gillot episode: ocular, speech and writing disturbances; loss of appetite, frequent fainting spells,

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anguish, spitting up of blood. Lou Andreas-Salomé shows a retard in physical development with respect to her psychic development, which is precocious; she says she suffered from a “pulmonary hemorrhage” (*Ma vie*). The author of *Frau Lou* sees in these somatic manifestations a semiologic picture related to hysteria. He is the only one to so designate these disturbances.

A moral monstrosity?

To the double clinical picture given, the author of *Frau Lou* adds personality traits in his subject referring to anality (in the Freudian sense) and at the end of his investigation adds a point that could cause controversy. Lou, he notes, was marked by a double traumatism: by the delusion with regard to the image of her father who, in her eyes, was no longer as “great” as she had wished; and later by the shock of her separation from Nietzsche. “She became a moral monster with some traits of atonement and a secret remorse: a moral monstrosity” (p. 491). Thus Lou would seem to have been stricken with “autistic psychosis” in her childhood, with “hysteria” in adolescence and would have shown perversity (“moral monster”) after the Nietzsche episode throughout her life. This developing portrait, for someone who learns of it for the first time, is astonishing. Without discussing, in this article, accountability on the theoretical level or in psychiatric clinic of these components (Lucien Israel; C. and P. Geissmann) we must admit that the picture presented in *Frau Lou* is dark. Although the author of this work mentions the successes of Lou Andreas-Salomé, it is in this context and in this general tone that his interpretation finally joins the positions of Elisabeth Forster-Nietzsche, sister of the philosopher who, as we know, mounted cabals and calumnies against Lou throughout her lifetime. How did he arrive at such a conclusion? In short, two aspects must be considered regarding his biographical treatment of Lou: on one hand, the thesis of “autistic psychosis” and the sovereignty of the imaginary in the mental activity of Lou; on the other, the novelistic production he uses as proof, the former being treated as oniric material. Behind the romanesque characters he sees the figures of ghosts; he puts all the modalities and techniques used for dreams into play: the

manifested content versus the latent...life itself, revealed by excerpts from the diary—a copy of which he had—articulating this double movement, facilitated by his presuppositions.

Thus each of the registers is combined with the other in a self-supported process: the imaginary and fantastic production through the “primary processes” (thesis of the psychosis) and in turn these through the imaginary; the events of life transcribed in the diary, through fragments of stories and these fragments through events; real personages through characters in the novels to which the author looks for the keys and the double keys and these through fantasmagorical figures. The major objection appears of itself: this procedure, sometimes circular, sometimes diallele certainly cannot escape the impasse of reductionism to the “primary processes,” it brushes aside or minimizes the remarkably symbolic activity of Lou Andreas-Salomé, who was recognized during her lifetime by her contemporaries, her readers and in the last twenty-five years of her life by Freud himself and the psychoanalysis society of Vienna. Must we consider Freud wrong and Binion right, or the contrary? Was Freud completely mistaken in everything? We will call attention to this: the hypothesis of an infantile psychotic structure with a perverse component is still to be proved; it is not at all certain. This does not mean that there are not “psychotic traits”—which is something else. But we must not fall into the trap of reductionism that in this case risks transforming a biographical figure into a “moral monster” and the exercise of thought into machination.

That being so, if one of the two terms of the diallele collapses, the demonstration held in *Frau Lou* destroys itself. The proposed keys are not the same for this author and for E. Pfeiffer, for example. Any novelistic work—and sometimes essays—is located on a fringe at the edge of which the “primary processes” (activities of the subconscious, Lantéri-Laura, 1979) encroach upon the “secondary processes” (conscious instances of control). By marginalizing or minimalizing these latter is there not a shift into a prejudicial analysis of both the author of a text and his readers? Without going back to the fanciful literature of the 19th century reader, the modern reader has adapted to this current. But since this phenomenon exists, must one interpret any literary or philosophical text as a fragment of fantasy? Joyce was able to foil

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criticism of this type magnificently by simulating “the passage of fantasy” while controlling it with the greatest intelligence. “I will,” he said, “provide work for university students for three hundred years.” Excessive interpretation destroys its object.

OTHER DIMENSIONS?

Just the same, we must not consider that the life and work of Lou escape all difficulties in interpretation. Their multiplicity shows favorably the diversity of the facets of this “out-of-the-ordinary” personality (according to the current adage). Complex aspects appear here and there that can refer to other dimensions in Lou’s life, associated with empirical situations that she engendered or in which she took part. This working hypothesis seems illuminating to us for disengaging the stages of a destiny that differs from a “pathological” determination *stricto sensu*; on the contrary, it is related to a “counter-destiny.”

Lou Andreas-Salomé or the question of asymmetry: a magnificent counter-destiny

“Asymmetry succeeds in reversing the general current on rare, precise and decisive points.” Roger Caillois (1973) introduced, with R. Hertz, the reflection on asymmetry in human behavior. Lou often *astonished* the society around her. For this and other reasons: beginning with her psychic/somatic “destiny” she succeeded in gradually constructing a counter-destiny.

With inimitable art, she was able to detach from each stressful event a series of counter-events that finally gave her the “leading role”—in spite of tragic episodes she experienced. To clarify this unexpected result the apparently somewhat heuristic approach is that of “asymmetry”. In effect, it is a matter of meeting on her own ground the one who at moments asymmetrizes her relational life and by doing so rearranges the conditions of the “real” by making it acceptable in her eyes.

The “asymmetrical” art used by Lou A.-Salomé is based on two techniques. The first is to introduce a slight bias in the movement

of things, a very weak gag, a clinamen. This is what we have called in other studies a *symmetry of almost*—"everything is the same", and, on reflection, "nothing is the same." The second is nothing less than putting into play—like a new deal in a card game—more important gaps with regard to a so-called normalized situation.

At times these gaps seem at the limit of contradiction. In all likelihood, the result is the teeming multiplicity of the parermeneutic variants that we have given. However, what is perceived as contradictory by the observer apparently is not so perceived by her. In reading, it is rather a matter of contrasted aspects at the basis or appearance of which each can discern the "malady" of Lou, registered like a pathological destiny that through "the energy of her will, the originality of her mind, the coherence of character, her fine intelligence" (Nietzsche) she was able to transform into a magnificent counter-destiny.

Differently from a large number of persons who, accomodating themselves to their pathology, construct through her and for her a semi-morbid adaptive behavior. It must be stressed that Lou invented "counter-adaptive" behaviors that are better studied today (R. Fischer, 1987).

FINALE AND OVERTURE...

Lou's life story has thus seen modifications through each specific "reading." Who changes, Lou herself? The people around her? Or the one who today attempts an interpretation, indeed, an elucidation, of what has become a "story?" *Ex post* biography is a story, and the biographer a sort of demiurge. Thanks to archives and his personal investigations, he has in his hands the material of a life, dates, key events, milestones, turning points, crises and eventually denouements, when it is not death—as in the cases of P.Rée and V. Tausk—that precipitates the answers. The biographer is free to play with this material as though he were a theatrical director.

He thus has this "unheard-of chance" to receive a scenario that is ready for use. All that is necessary is to arrange the scenic effects. Better, to give definitive outlines to the movement itself of a "scenography" in whose adventures Lou has the "leading role,"

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which means that the scientific biographer gives us traces that are signs. The certitude of the archives does not overweigh that of the event nor do the interpretations explode into pieces.

Orientations

Nevertheless, some important orientations result from documentation that has come to light. We will provisionally conclude with these points:

First, Lou Salomé is seen as “object of investigation”: in the historical biographic approach; in the clinical approach; and the psychobiographical current. These types of investigations bring indispensable documentation in the absence of which any other research would be insufficient. Certainly, the “object” does not abolish the subject Lou, but it remains predominant. The observer’s viewpoint outweighs it.

Second, Lou is perceived as “subject.” She is the social being, writer, essayist and then therapist and theoretical analyst. In this perspective, the viewpoint of the “observed” restored as subject prevails, without abolishing Lou as “object” at the center of the investigation.

Third and last, Lou is perceived as “subject-object” of self-transformation from a somato-psychic destiny of pathogenous aspect since childhood and adolescence to an *exemplary counter-destiny* and a behavior model for many of her emulators.

Between the “sum” reserved for the biographers and the “remainder” that is at times legend, this last maintains the value and sequences of the first in man’s memory. “Mnemosyne is the fountain of immortality.” This gift of memory, who would not offer it to Lou to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of her death? *The finale is an overture.*

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