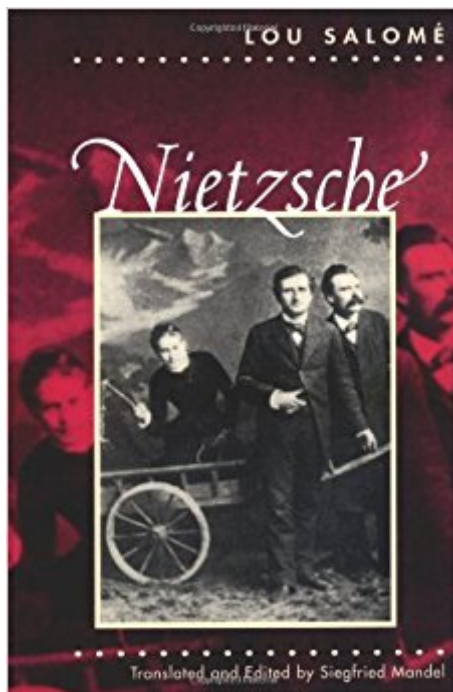


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Nietzsche



Synopsis

Presenting a portrait of Nietzsche the man, this book offers a study of the poetic, psychological, religious, and mystical aspects of his thought. Its introduction examines the circumstances that brought the author and Nietzsche together and the ideological conflicts that drove them apart.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Russian-born woman of letters Lou Salome (1861-1937) had a brief but tempestuous relationship with Nietzsche in 1882. In 1894, while Nietzsche languished in madness, Salome published *Friedrich Nietzsche in seinen Werken*, here translated for the first time into English. Salome attempts to show how Nietzsche's philosophy can be seen as a reflection of his psychology. She construes his philosophical development as driven by a series of illnesses and recoveries, his later philosophy as mystical, and his madness as the inevitable result of his philosophizing. The book will interest scholars as the first full-scale account of Nietzsche's thought; its claims and methods, however, must be treated with caution. Richard Hogan, Southeastern Massachusetts Univ., North Dartmouth
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Show[s] how Nietzsche's philosophy can be seen as a reflection of his psychology. . . . The first full-scale account of Nietzsche's thought. -- Library Journal
This translation of Salome's early portrait of Nietzsche . . . is long overdue. -- Choice

To scholars and admirers of Nietzsche, Lou Andreas-Salome has always been seen as his Irene Adler, the intellectual equal who got away or was driven away, depending on one's point of view. Although their affair lasted for only a few months, it left an indelible mark on both, for it came at a turning point in Nietzsche's life where he would leave the relatively safe nests of academia and the Wagners for a peripatetic life in the European Alps. Over the years we have heard from almost everyone who was anyone in Nietzsche's life, except Lou Salome. This makes the published reprint of her 1894 even more important for those involved in Nietzsche studies. To say that Salome brings a unique perspective to her work is a bit of an understatement, but those who simply expect this to be memoir of the man she knew will be, I think, somewhat joyfully disappointed. Instead she has written what well may be the first attempt to view the persona behind the works. After giving us an excellent analysis of Nietzsche's philosophy, she comes to the conclusion that perhaps Nietzsche's madness was the inevitable result of his philosophy. Was this, as Nietzsche's sister said, merely a fantasy of female revenge? Then simply compare the last page of her book with the events of Nietzsche's last days in Turin, events which she cannot have known. Hers is a provocative and illuminating look at Nietzsche, made more powerful by the fact that she was first to the gate and that the strength of her book is the analysis, not the memories. As with any book on Nietzsche that comes to us in a foreign language, translation is most important if we are to have not only a working understanding, but also a deeper understanding than we would ordinarily expect. That the translator should be the late Siegfried Mandel is only to the reader's advantage. His translation is crisp and clear. His excellent introduction makes it all the more clear to me that this man is, or should be at least considered, one of the foremost Nietzschean scholars of his time. (For further reference, see his excellent "Nietzsche and the Jews.") This is a book every serious student of Nietzsche should have in his or her library and a book that may contribute to a new vision of the tortured harbinger of the overman.

Having read much by and about Nietzsche, this new translation of Salome's book offers many fine insights on his philosophy and psychology. In particular, where other authors befuddle Nietzsche's concept of the "eternal return" Salome gets it right. Her explanation of Nietzsche's ethics is likewise better than most and certainly more succinct. Because Salome knew Nietzsche well, she is able to tie the development of his ideas to his changing psychology. Overall, her remarkably compact, yet appropriately complex and nuanced, exposition on Nietzsche is the wisest that I have read.

An incomparable woman who knew him better than anyone else. It will surprise you how much of

what she says in her writing influenced Nietzsche in his own. She anticipates his genealogy even.

you would not read this book to understand Nietzsche's philosophy. it is not even clear to me why anyone needs to understand Nietzsche's philosophy. but Lou Salome is this crazy incredible lady. while married she became lovers with Rilke and remained his intimate correspondent for all his life. she became intimate with Nietzsche. and later conquered Freud, so to speak. so to me this book is an interesting artifact of this incredible woman's mind -- you don't read this book except as a way of knowing Salome's mindfulness after Rilke and Nietzsche. that is, you read this book to learn something that you have to extrapolate from and fit into your life. it is not a passive reading. it is not school learning or becoming educated. it is trying to understand what sort of mind a woman would have that has done such gloriously free and courageous acts such as standing and lying toe-to-toe with three of the most visionary humanitarian thinkers -- it's an artifact. you read this to be your own archeologist into the human psyche. the content itself literally is of little interest if you want to become an expert in philosophical thinking in order to be a professional. this book isn't that at all. nobody would publish something like this today -- that is, without the hindsight of knowing who Nietzsche and Salome are now -- at the time this was published, that wasn't apparent, and without that apparentness, this book is no longer a kind of book our educated culture tolerates -- it is too subjective and does not follow any accepted rules of discourse that are recognized by our cultural canon. that is, you don't read this book for any of the reasons it was written or published. you read it because of who Nietzsche and Salome turned out to be in terms of our intellectual flowering. of course, he was destroyed by his sister, who allowed the fascists to make shameful use of him the same way they made ill-use of evolution to justify genocide. you take Nietzsche and Darwin and if you are powerful enough you get 70-100 million dead without anyone believing they were not morally justified in their actions. nowadays, people seem to once again need religion to justify such pain and suffering for personal advantage. so I think everyone should buy this book and try to make sense of its author -- this is after Rilke and N, but I think before Freud. a snapshot of a brilliant mindful woman articulating her extraordinary experiences ...

One of Nietzsche's friends wrote of this book: "Nothing better or more deeply experienced or perceived has ever been written about Nietzsche." I agree. I had put off reading Salome's biography for a long time, but I'm glad I finally read it. It offers a very unique perspective of Nietzsche from somebody who knew him intimately. Salome says that Nietzsche's philosophy was an expression of his psychology and that he went mad because of his philosophical ideas. It's a very controversial

thesis, but it's a fascinating one nonetheless. Readers of this biography may also like "Jenna's Flaw," a novel about Nietzsche, the death of God, the crumbling of Western civilization, and what the West can do to stop it.

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