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The Self-Portrait of Ricarda Huch as
Depicted in Her Autobiographical Writings

by

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Abstract

This thesis presents the self-portrait of Ricarda Huch as depicted in the collection of her autobiographical writings entitled "Autobiographische Schriften", which were published in the eleventh volume of her Collected Works in 1974.

A brief outline of the history and form of autobiography places the essays in this volume into an historical perspective. This outline also provides examples of representative autobiographies with which to compare Ricarda's "Autobiographische Schriften" and decipher their formal aspects. An in-depth examination and discussion of their content follows, delineating the changes and developments Ricarda undergoes.

In illustrating how and why these changes come about Ricarda's developing self-portrait is revealed, as well as the circular nature of her life. From a young child living in the realm of fantasy and daydreams she matures and seeks reality, only to return to a dream world in her old age.

This thesis furnishes the insight that Ricarda's written, poetic self-portrait develops in much the same way a person develops: in stages. Each stage portrays that individual's total life experience up to a particular point in time.

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A Brief Outline
of the
History and Form
of Autobiography

The following brief outline of the history and form of autobiography is meant to serve as an introduction and base to Ricarda Huch's own autobiographical writings. It will place these works into an historical perspective as well as provide a means for comparison. The main source of information used in the development of this chapter was Roy Pascal's book Design and Truth in Autobiography,¹ and the opinions regarding specific individuals and their works, the particular periods of history discussed, and many of the trends in autobiography mentioned here are his. This book was used extensively because of its thoroughness and organization regarding the subject. It was, therefore, also pragmatic to use it as a basis for approaching the second chapter on formal aspects of Ricarda Huch's "Autobiographische Schriften".

¹Roy Pascal, Design and Truth in Autobiography (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1960).

History

The creation of autobiography began in ancient times with Augustine's Confessions.¹ These were a unique and personal story of the events and feelings that he had experienced, and not merely an account of his activities. Through his creative expression of his life and all that affected it, Augustine had turned autobiography into an art.²

During the Middle Ages, life was chaotic, violent and unpredictable. Such an atmosphere was not conducive to the writing of true autobiographies because of a lack of the proper basis necessary to find and establish a meaningful coherence to life.³ The only autobiography written during this time that was comparable to the Confessions was Abelard's History of my Calamities, which he wrote primarily to demonstrate his deference to God. Its uniqueness lay in Abelard's attempt "to recapture the past, to see his life as a whole, to find within its vagaries its one rapture and the one indivisible personality."⁴ This was not only

¹Pascal, p. 21

²Pascal, p. 23

³Pascal, p. 25

⁴Pascal, p. 24

true autobiography but eventually became the basis of modern autobiography.

The Renaissance period brought with it a dramatic change in the style of autobiography, resulting from the fact that man's view of himself had also changed.¹ Petrarch's Letter to Posterity (1351) was an example of this and expressed a new direction of interest and self-confidence. He was mainly concerned with "displaying himself as a type, in an ideal form, too concerned with generalities [...] that often served to hide the actual truth."¹ His was not true autobiography--a soul searching for and trying to understand itself--but it did introduce a new theme:

the untroubled concern for the inward dimensions of the self, springing not from any external necessity, self-defence or whatever it might be, but from a compulsion to meditate upon oneself; and he released the self from the hegemony of faith: "he is less concerned for salvation than for the cult of his soul".²

Most of the autobiographies that had appeared before the sixteenth century had been limited to certain themes. In the sixteenth century, however, three autobiographies were written which fulfilled a new attitude. While they all still

¹Pascal, p. 26

²Pascal, p. 27

basically dealt with personal thoughts, feelings and experiences, their individual lives were also viewed in terms of their concrete achievements and fortunes.¹ Cellini's autobiography was one of these. He was almost sixty when he began writing it and did so out of a preoccupation with his identity, with his concern for the young man he once was and the old man he had become. This is "one of the decisive stimuli of modern autobiography."² Cellini's desire to see and present himself in a certain light may have distorted some of the facts in his work, and this raises doubts as to the validity of its truth. However, his intentions appear honest. "Cellini's life as well as his account comes from the heart".³ He saw his life as only he could see and express it, and as such it is true autobiography.

Cardano's Book of my Life, another one of these autobiographies, exhibited extraordinary psychological insight. Whereas Cellini had presented himself the way he believed he should be as a result of his experiences, Cardano sought "the truth of his personality, his feelings, impulses and ideas".⁴ He was more concerned with analyzing his

¹Pascal, p. 26 and footnote 2 on the same page

²Pascal, p. 27

³Pascal, p. 28

⁴Pascal, p. 29

inner self, both his good and bad qualities, and, although he "looked under the surface of his temperament and behaviour for the real man",¹ his confession "is a mere statement of fact."¹ This was also reflected in the general style of his autobiography, which was divided into chapters with such headings as "Friends", "Health" and "Sports". As a result, individual aspects of his life and personality appear to be in "pieces", separate from the whole being.²

Saint Teresa's Life (1563-65) was also confessional in style, but it related her inner experiences by weaving them with the concrete occurrences of everyday life. Its basic theme was

the peculiar religious experience to which she was subject, the levitations and visions, her probing into herself and testing of them, with the help of spiritual directors.²

The energy she displayed in her self-examinations, in which she was "as much concerned for the quality of her soul as for the actual character of" her visions,³ added another dimension to autobiography:

¹Pascal, p. 30

²Pascal, p. 31

³Pascal, p. 32

It is a woman speaking, not a "soul" as in so many religious autobiographies, aware of her need for guidance, often ill and puzzled, but shrewdly distinguishing between poor and good advice, persuasive even when she humbles herself, and always purposeful and energetic.¹

In general, the seventeenth century was the age of memoirists and diarists. The "mémoires scandaleuses", especially, were highly popular for their interesting scandals rather than for the personalities of their authors.¹ Their nature was more simplistic than that of previous autobiographies. Instead of analyzing or describing, they recorded the events, feelings and persons known to their authors. There was no display of psychological insight, spiritual development or depth of character.

However, in the eighteenth century a greater sense of the value of autobiography evolved. During this period a demand for confessional autobiographies of outstanding personalities had arisen. It therefore became necessary to begin classifying the more familiar works. From this assessment emerged the view that autobiographies had documentary value since they recorded knowledge gained by man about himself and the world. As well, their usefulness as a means of

¹Pascal, p. 33

self-improvement, whether through instruction or warning, was seen. No longer was their value only in the entertainment they provided.

Some of the most significant and unique autobiographers of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were Franklin, Gibbon, Rousseau, Wordsworth and Goethe.¹ Franklin's Life resembled a moral primer.¹ In it, he repeatedly recommended his mode of behaviour to others by noting only those incidents which illustrated a problem and its solution. He recounted his successes as well as his failures with a practical attitude, mentioning emotional problems only in passing since they were not a significant part of his life.² Gibbon, in writing about his historical and literary studies, included numerous types of experiences that he believed contributed to his development as an historian. His was the first autobiography which reviewed "a whole life as the shaping and fruition of a specific skill devoted to one absorbing enterprise."³

Rousseau, on the other hand, believed that a personality could not be measured only in terms of outward achievement but that it was much more important to be true to one-

¹Pascal, p. 36

²Pascal, p. 37

³Pascal, p. 38

self.¹ Thus, he viewed autobiography as being more than a mere recounting of accomplishments or knowledge. It was, rather, "a search for the true self, and a means to come to terms with it."¹ In his Confessions, he asserted that man's innermost nature--his true self--was of supreme importance, and that one's goal should be to discover and display it.²

It is this general insight into the nature of the personality, and not simply the [...] psychological observations, that makes this work the opening of a new era in autobiography.³

Wordsworth's The Prelude also dealt with and asserted the supremacy of the deeper self, but in poetic form. He was the first autobiographer to do this, using the form to express his realization that

each man constructs out of his world a unique framework of meaningful events, and that the deepest purpose of autobiography is the account of a life as a projection of the real self [...] on the world.⁴

The Prelude is not usually considered an autobiography because of its unconventional form but, since it relates the true story of the development of a soul and the shaping of a life by that soul, it is considered autobiographical.

Goethe went even further in his understanding of man.

¹Pascal, p. 39

²Pascal, p. 41

³Pascal, p. 43

⁴Pascal, p. 45

He realized that man was a being who underwent constant change and, therefore, would never be able to completely know himself. According to Goethe, "one is never oneself, one becomes oneself."¹ His Poetry and Truth, therefore, did not have an actual end but closed at a particular moment in his life. Thus, it is an autobiography with more description than analysis. He had written it sporadically during his life, and it wasn't until he arranged the works chronologically that they became a "conscientious and exhaustive literary history"¹, one that led to philosophical reflections and established a philosophical focus for the work.² In its preface, Goethe wrote:

"For this seems to be the chief task of biography, to depict a man in the circumstances of his times, and to show to what extent the whole stood in his way, to what extent it favoured him, how he shaped out of it an outlook on the world and on mankind, and, if he is an artist, poet, or writer, how he in turn reflects it . . . so that one may well say that each man, were he born a mere ten years earlier or later, would have become a quite different person, as far as his own inner development and his effect on the outer world are concerned."³

The period from Rosseau to Goethe (1782-1831) did much to influence the European middle class with respect to

¹Pascal, p. 47

²Pascal, p. 48

³Pascal, as cited on p. 48

greater understanding of the self.¹ Since it was realized that a man could only truly be known in terms of his entire and complex life, autobiography became a means for achieving new insights. As a result, it was not bound to a strict form. There were autobiographies of childhoods, of professions, of personal philosophies, and also some employing such unconventional methods as working backwards and forwards from given points in time, as writing biographies of others while actually writing of oneself, or as limiting the autobiography to a single significant relationship. None of these forms, however, took into consideration the entire being and his process of development.

Two evolving views affected both the scope and technique of autobiography. One was the realization that since the time being described was in the past, it could alter the memory of details. The other was the awareness that an individual's development represented a part of a general social process and was, therefore, a focal point of history. Many autobiographies of modern times which arose from this consciousness were not motivated by such former needs as confessing guilt, relating religious experience, reflecting on

¹Pascal, p. 50

philosophical matters, or teaching moral standards. They had, instead, a purely sociological interest--a new motivation of inner necessity, not of guilt but of memories and experience.¹ The modern view of autobiography is that it has become

the means to review one's life, to organise it in the imagination, and thus to bring the past experience and the present self into balance. The object is not so much to tell others about oneself as to come to terms with oneself, not necessarily explicitly and morally, but simply by grasping oneself as a whole.¹

¹Pascal, p. 59

Form

Autobiography, however, is not a simple concept. It encompasses a variety of styles, perspectives and motivations, as well as numerous other aspects which contribute to its form. A definition is only the beginning to understanding this complex idea. According to Webster's Third New International Dictionary,¹ autobiography is "the biography² of oneself narrated by oneself."³ This may be accomplished through such means as a diary, journal, memoir, reminiscence, self-portrait, and other forms of autobiography.

The diary, journal and memoir are similar in that all three record and focus on events, feelings, persons and thoughts in the writer's life. In the diary and journal the "moment" is important, that is, the events, thoughts and feelings that are most prominent at a particular moment. The memoir, on the other hand, is more factual and official.

¹Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language, Unabridged, ed. in chief, Philip Babcock Gove (Springfield, Massachusetts: G. & C. Merriam Company, 1981).

²Webster's, p. 218, definition #1: a biography is the "written history of a person's life".

³Webster's, p. 147

Its main purpose is to supply information.¹ It is less personal than the diary because of its emphasis on public events, but is just as significant in the autobiographical sense. The reminiscence is "an oral or written account of a memorable personal experience".² It concerns itself more with private relationships, recalling people and places for which the author cared. The portrait, or self-portrait, is not necessarily a pictorial representation of its subject, but can be "a graphic portrayal in words: a verbal description".³ It is a picture created by the writer of his own character and personality, surrounded and influenced by the people and events in his life.⁴

All these forms are at a writer's disposal, both directly and indirectly, in the development and writing of an autobiography. As well, there are different types of autobiographies which Roy Pascal feels bear special consideration.⁵ First, there is the autobiography of a childhood.

¹Georg Misch, A History of Autobiography in Antiquity, trans. E. W. Dickes (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1951), I, p. 7.

²Webster's, p. 1920, definition #3b

³Webster's, p. 1769, definition #4

⁴Webster's, p. 2061, definition #2

⁵In almost all cases, Pascal has devoted an entire chapter to each type.

Its basic theme is that of growing up, of the interaction between inner developments and outer events. Since memories directly affect an individual's personal development, as a result of the feelings associated with them, childhood is important to true autobiography. Here are found the beginnings of the experiences that helped shape the later individual and his achievements. Autobiographies of childhood

show the formation of a temperament, not a public or even a private character, and for this reason they can be taken as the purest form of autobiography.¹

There are also the religious and philosophical autobiographies. These relate not only the writer's lifestyle but, more importantly, the formulation of a philosophy. This philosophy or attitude "constitutes the main substance of their activity, and determines what in their experience they value and record."² The previously mentioned works of Augustine and Saint Teresa are good examples of this type. However, such autobiographies are only convincing if taken in the context of the experiences related and, therefore, they lose much of their objectivity:

The autobiographies themselves direct attention

¹Pascal, p. 85

²Pascal, p. 96

to the uniqueness of their personalities rather than the general validity of their ideas. The autobiography altogether is not an appropriate means to urge the objective truth of a doctrine-- though it may reveal more profound and general truths of life which the doctrine only partially formulates.¹

The autobiography of a poet² is important for what it reveals about the nature of the author:

Events and achievements of a public kind are not so decisive for him as the more intimate impressions and responses, and events become important for him not in themselves, but for what he puts into them. His life-story is the story of how his imagination is kindled by occurrences or personalities that may intrinsically be quite insignificant.³

Wordsworth's The Prelude, for example, is the story of the development of a soul and the shaping of a life by that soul. Wordsworth realized that "the deepest purpose of autobiography is the account of a life as a projection of the real self [...] on the world."⁴ In Goethe's Poetry and Truth, as well, one is never oneself but becomes oneself. For Goethe, the chief task of biography was to depict man in the circumstances of his times and to show how he shaped his out-

¹Pascal, p. 111

²On p. 133 in his book, Pascal defines "poets" as all imaginative writers.

³Pascal, pp. 133-34

⁴Pascal, p. 45

look on the world and how he reflected it.¹ Although these poets may have lived in the thick of events, they were primarily concerned with

the problem of how being a writer affected their specific attitude and behaviour. Their chief pre-occupation is their peculiar mode of experience, of response to the world, as poets.²

The autobiographical novel is a form best suited for a younger person who wants to reveal his future potential. It is not for the mature individual whose potential has already been realized and who has, therefore, a different reason for writing his life-story. The style of the autobiographical novel is much like that of the novel. A novel's writer is free to create characters, thoughts, emotions, motivations and situations, whether imaginary or not, to suit his perception of the final outcome. The protagonist is, therefore, described from an objective point of view and is a complete character within a complete story. The writer of an autobiography, on the other hand, must stick as closely as possible to the people and events as he remembers and perceives them. He is also the protagonist and, therefore, describes himself. This description is highly subjective and selective in order that it remain relevant to the future character in the work. The reader of an autobiography, as a result, will

¹Pascal, as cited on p. 48

²Pascal, p. 135

never know everything about the protagonist. This makes an autobiography a better means than a novel for delving into the truth of a personality.

Finally, there is the form that Pascal refers to as autobiographical writings. These

limit themselves to one particular experience or group of experiences that bare the core of the personality [...] To this category belong many books of travel, books of spiritual experience in war, and so on.¹

Pascal believes that all "good autobiographies are in some sense the story of a calling, [...] of the realisation of an urgent personal potentiality."² In some cases this calling merges into a profession, and the private personality becomes a public one.² Autobiographies of scientists, politicians and poets, for example, all have unique perspectives, purposes and treatments. Each one may have been primarily written for the public in order to satisfy its curiosity about the writer or to shed light on the achievements of that individual, but the most underlying drive was more likely the need for self-revelation.³ This need

is applicable not only to autobiographies of every sort, confessions, apologies, or simple narratives, but also to the works which a creative writer brings forth out of himself as some-

¹Pascal, p. 12

²Pascal, p. 112

³Misch, p. 9

thing objective, such as Shakespeare's sonnets, or the lyrics of Goethe [...] These works exist independently of the author's person and have no need of reference to his own life in order to be understood, and yet they are self-portrayals in the sense that in them the personality of the poet or thinker is preserved, that his "spirit" is "objectivated" in them.¹

By dividing autobiographies according to their authors' particular professions, Pascal demonstrated the different attitudes and various directions inherent in the writing of them. As another example, he offered the autobiographies of biologists to illustrate that these appear to be motivated instead by the need for self-assertion, "the instinct for self-preservation, and in general [...] the struggle for life".² Autobiography, therefore, "is not only a special kind of literature but is also an instrument of knowledge."² This, then, is the primary and all-encompassing motive of autobiography: self-knowledge.

True autobiography aims to give the truth about its writer,³ but this varies with each autobiographer because of individual memory, perspective, style and intention. The quality of this truth can, therefore, only genuinely be judged by its sincerity. An autobiography's value "depends

¹Misch, p. 9

²Misch, p. 10

³Pascal, p. 61

ultimately on the quality of the spirit of the writer."¹
This quality comes from the writer's success in creating in
readers the awareness of the driving force in his life.¹
Thus, the best autobiographies do not merely recollect
events, people and circumstances but become

the framework, in some sense the embodiment, of
the personality of the writer as a man pledged to
life, and one must be set free from them as his-
torical facts, and from the concern with their
accuracy as historical documents, in order to
savour the quality of the central person-
ality.²

Roy Pascal sums up well everything that a good auto-
biography is:

autobiography is a shaping of the past. It im-
poses a pattern on a life, constructs out of it a
coherent story. It establishes certain stages in
an individual life, makes links between them, and
defines, implicitly or explicitly, a certain con-
sistency of relationship between the self and the
outside world [...] This coherence implies that
the writer takes a particular standpoint, the
standpoint of the moment at which he reviews his
life, and interprets his life from it. The
standpoint may be the actual social position of
the writer, his acknowledged achievement in any
field, his present philosophy; in every case it
is his present position which enables him to see
his life as something of a unity, something that
may be reduced to order [...] this realisation of
a meaningful standpoint, the emergence from sha-

¹Pascal, p. 19

²Pascal, p. 20

dows into daylight, is a condition of autobiography altogether.¹

Ricarda Huch's "Autobiographische Schriften"² exemplify such an autobiography. In them she has created a picture of her own character and personality, surrounded and influenced by the events, people and feelings that she experienced during her lifetime. A closer examination of their form will demonstrate their similarities and differences, with the autobiographies and forms already mentioned, and also their own unique style. An examination of their contents will then demonstrate Ricarda Huch's self-portrait as depicted in her autobiographical writings.

¹Pascal, pp. 9-10

²Ricarda Huch, "Autobiographische Schriften," Ricarda Huch. Gesammelte Werke, Bd. 11, Ed. Wilhelm Emrich u. Bernd Balzer (Köln: Verlag Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1974).

Formal Aspects of
Ricarda Huch's
"Autobiographische Schriften"

Basic Form

Certain qualities and aspects of Ricarda's "Autobiographische Schriften" resemble those of some of the representative autobiographies in history. As with Augustine's Confessions, Ricarda's writings are in their own way "a poetic re-enactment and creation"¹--a unique and personal story artistically expressed. Both autobiographies deal with descriptions of significant events in the authors' lives. For Ricarda, some of these experiences were her move to Switzerland, special relationships, marriage and motherhood, and Ermanno Ceconi's death. Her autobiography also resembles that of Cellini. Events and feelings in both are of such a nature that only the authors themselves could have known, experienced and then duly expressed them. Ricarda's affair with her brother-in-law, for example, could only have been described by her. No one else knew of their secret nightly meetings and only she could have expressed her particular experience of passion: "Ich stand in Flammen, die Welt war verändert."²

In the eighteenth century autobiographies were viewed

¹Pascal, p. 23

²"Autobiographische Schriften", p. 154

as being a means of instruction, by using events in the author's life as examples to illustrate a certain point. This had never been Ricarda's intention in any of her autobiographical essays and, therefore, this aspect does not surface. However, the final essay, "Tag in Jena 1945", does express her view that she felt she could offer her companions comfort through her demeanor. She believed that by portraying an attitude of calmness during the horrendous experience of an air raid she would, in turn, be able to influence their reactions.

Franklin's and Gibbon's autobiographies centred not only on their personal histories but also on how each related to the world around him. Each presented himself as possessing some unique and innate quality and illustrated how it developed as a result of stimulation from the outside world. Ricarda could not consciously do this because she never purposefully set out to write her autobiography. Her individual essays did not lend themselves to the capacity of such a task. Instead, they illustrate a variety of skills that she possessed, probably the greatest of which was her talent for writing, but they do not concern themselves with delineating the development of any one particular quality. Also, they depict the development of an individual as seen from a variety of perspectives. Rousseau believed that a person had to be true to his inner nature since his personality could not be measured only in terms of his outer achievements. His

Confessions were, therefore, a search for his true self and a means of coming to terms with it. This is what Ricarda attempted throughout her life. She longed to acquire balance and harmony within herself, to bring all her complex polarities together, to grasp herself as a whole.

Finally, her writings also resemble Goethe's Poetry and Truth. Both works illustrate the development of the mature individuals they became, and also conclude in the same manner: neither one presents an actual ending to their story but closes at a particular moment in each life. With Ricarda this takes place on March 19, 1945, the day the entire inner city of Jena was bombed.

Comparisons, Perspectives and Motives

Because Ricarda's autobiographical essays were written at different times in her life and, hence, from varying perspectives, it is only natural that variances in style also occur. Some selections in the "Autobiographische Schriften" resemble a memoir, which focuses on events rather than on personal relationships, and on other persons rather than on the writer.¹ Basically it records events, feelings, thoughts and persons with which the writer is familiar. His relationship to the world around him, therefore, is passive. He is an observer, not an active participant. "Jugendbilder", "Braunschweig in meiner Kinderzeit", "Mein erstes Jahrzehnt" and "Harzbriefe" are examples of such a style. They do not dwell on Ricarda's inner feelings or delve into profound relationships but simply delineate these and other events of lasting significance in her life. In "Jugendbilder" she describes what she can remember of her childhood home and relatives, in a basically factual manner. Her physical and emotional development are not mentioned although some subjects close to her heart are, such as her attachment to animals, her love of the Harz region and her interest in

¹Pascal, p. 5

death. These topics are itemized under appropriate headings and, thus, supply only glimpses of her personality. No actual development is described. Ricarda has merely presented pictures of her childhood. These pictures do not illustrate how she changes but only show aspects which affect her development. They do not describe or explain how one thing led or developed into something else. "Braunschweig in meiner Kinderzeit" offers a closer look at life in Braunschweig as Ricarda remembers it during her childhood. She mentions such things as her favourite shops, holidays like Christmas and Easter, family acquaintances in Braunschweig, family traditions and customs, the theatre, etc. A better picture of her childhood emerges from this, but it is still only sketchy. "Mein erstes Jahrzehnt" continues in this same vein, providing some additional information on Ricarda's early life. Again, however, these are only glimpses. Here Ricarda admits that she has trouble remembering events of so long ago: "Ich kann Hokuspokus sagen, soviel ich will," she writes, "es taucht nichts auf als ungewisse Bildchen wie nach einem Traum, und niemand hätte mehr Ursache als ich [...] zu fragen: Hat mir mein Leben geträumt, oder ist es wahr?"¹ Perhaps this is the reason she did not elaborate on her childhood and why it lends itself so well to the memoir

¹"Autobiographische Schriften", p. 123

style. However, the examples stray from this form because they are not simply records and reports but are artistic writings. "Harzbriefe", which was written about a much later period in her life, also falls into this category. Rather than describing this stage of Ricarda's adulthood, however, it deals with reflections that are triggered in her by being in the Harz region. Even though it is as factual and unprofound as a memoir, it is an example of artistic writing, an example of her creative ability, that reveals another aspect of her personality. Whereas distortion of facts, resulting from the passing of time, may have hindered Ricarda in depicting a development during her childhood, "Harzbriefe" was written at the time she was actually living the experience. Although the time periods and perspectives of "Jugendbilder", "Braunschweig in meiner Kinderzeit", "Mein erstes Jahrzehnt" and "Harzbriefe" are different, they are alike in that they present a memoiristic approach to describing the author.

The three examples dealing with her childhood, especially, establish some fundamental aspects in her life, for experiences during this stage are relevant to later developments and achievements. For example, Ricarda had described an interest in the theatre, and this had manifested itself in her childhood through her participation in skits that would be presented on special family occasions. Her artistic interests and abilities were, thus, already present in her

youth and were encouraged by her family. Another quality, which Ricarda maintains was inborn, was her republican orientation. This caused her dislike for much of the politics in Germany during her life. Such an interaction between inner feelings and outer events resembles the autobiography of a childhood, which shows the beginnings of the formation of a temperament. The three examples dealing with Ricarda's childhood were written much later in her life, when she was able to see not only how she had developed but also those things that had influenced her development. Unfortunately, they fall short of being an autobiography of a childhood because they are simply too sketchy and do not show an actual development, but merely state facts. For this Ricarda almost seems to apologize when she writes: "es taucht nichts auf als ungewisse Bildchen wie nach einem Traume".¹ They do, however, remain autobiographical writings and provide information which is indispensable to the development of her personality.

Some of Ricarda's experiences were more memorable to her than others. Generally, she was more concerned with personal relationships, recalling people and places for which she cared, than with outside events. Even two world wars did not affect her as profoundly as, for example, her friendship

¹"Autobiographische Schriften", p. 123

with Anna Klie. This friendship affected her so deeply that she dedicated an entire essay to her friend entitled "Erinnerung an Anna Klie". It is a reminiscence of a very special person and relationship in Ricarda's life. As short as the essay is, Ricarda was successful in expressing the depth of her feelings. Two more examples are the essays entitled "Richard" and "Die Ehe mit Richard". Both of them concern themselves with her relationship with her cousin at two very different times in her life. In "Richard", Ricarda is a naive teenager, passionately involved with her handsome cousin and brother-in-law. All she knows is that she loves this man and that this love is, therefore, true and right. That she is hurting others by her behaviour does not enter her mind. This love is the only thing that exists for her. In "Die Ehe mit Richard", Ricarda is a mature woman in her forties, finally married to her true love. She is still in possession of her naive notion that the passion she once felt for him continues to exist. Indeed, it does, but Richard's love for her is based on her naiveté and on the subservience and submissiveness of her youth. Ricarda, however, has grown into an independent adult whose life no longer revolves around one single person. Richard is no longer the be-all and end-all of her existence. Ricarda wrote both these essays very closely together and at a time in her life when she was far removed from the experiences. Factual correctness is irrelevant, for the clarity of her emotions demonstrates all

she wishes to convey.

A diary, like a memoir, records events, feelings, persons and thoughts in the writer's life. What differentiates it, however, is that the moment is of utmost importance. The diary records whatever is prominent at a particular moment. "Mein Tagebuch" deals with a diary that Ricarda kept in her childhood and to which she refers. She has taken several entries from it and expanded on them. As a result, it no longer has the traditional form of a diary but has become a narrative. "Kunterbunt. Das Notizbuch zweier Weltbürger", however, possesses the traditional form. It is an actual diary kept by Ricarda and her daughter while on holiday. It begins with Ricarda's remark: "Eben hat Busi einen Vers gemacht".¹ This particular entry, inspired by the fact that Busi had just written a poem, then goes on to describe the thoughts, feelings and experiences that had transpired within the last day or so. This form continues throughout "Kunterbunt" and the duration of their holiday. The title, itself, points to the manner in which this diary was kept as well as to the disposition of its authors. The word "kunterbunt" means topsy-turvy² and suggests a kaleidoscopic

¹"Autobiographische Schriften", p. 401

²Schöffler/Weis. Wörterbuch der englischen und deutschen Sprache, II Deutsch-Englisch, Ed. Erwin Weis und Erich Weis, 5. Auflage (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1974), p. 562.

and helter-skelter collection of hurriedly made notations. Being on holiday, and merrily imagining themselves as world travellers, set the light-hearted tone of this diary.

In the autobiography of a poet, the writer's feelings and emotional responses to the world around him are more important than actual events or personal achievements. This is very true of Ricarda, who could physically live through a war yet remain largely disinterested in it. Her concern was more for the emotional and physical day to day needs of her daughter, grandson, close friends and especially herself. As well, the fact that she had some success as a writer was unimportant to her. She much rather preferred that people seek her company for her character rather than for her social achievements. In this type of autobiography, the development of the individual is of greatest importance and reveals how occurrences and people kindled his imagination.¹ "'Donna Diana' von Moreto" is a critique of a performance of that play put on by a literary circle to which Ricarda belonged at the age of seventeen. That she not only acted in and directed it, but also reviewed it, demonstrates the manner in which it kindled her imagination. Another and much better example is "Frühling in der Schweiz", which encompasses ten years of Ricarda's life. Here, Ricarda develops from a

¹Pascal, pp. 133-34

naive young student into a mature career woman. Her experiences along the way not only help her in discovering herself but also provide inspiration for more concrete achievements. A young chemistry student she met while in Switzerland often told her stories of his home and childhood. Coupled with his violin playing, Ricarda's imagination enabled her to write "Der Mondreigen von Schlaraffis". "Frühling in der Schweiz" was written while she was in her seventies. This mature perspective made it possible for her to see that time of her youth as a process, and enabled her to delineate her experiences and responses as developing in a particular direction. This development is carried over into "Bremen und Wien", where she finally realizes that her real desire in life is to write. "Unser Mannoche" illustrates another line of development in Ricarda: it follows her relationship with Ermanno Ceconi and how it affected her life. Her feelings for him, in fact, come full circle, beginning and ending with her realization that in him she had found her perfect mate. "Kurt Eisners Todestag" was written as a response to an event which she hadn't even witnessed. At this stage in her life Ricarda no longer required direct experiences to provide her with the inspiration and information to write. Second-hand reports of this event were now enough to provide her with a wealth of responses and, thus, writing material. "Tag in Jena 1945", although relating a first-hand experience by Ricarda, does not directly deal with

the historical occasion itself but, instead, with the effect it had on her. In fact, the event seemed to be taking place in another world, for by this time Ricarda was withdrawing more and more into herself, finding no satisfaction with the outside world or even a desire for it. With Goethe and Wordsworth, their chief preoccupation had been "their peculiar mode of experience, of response to the world, as poets."¹ This same poetic response manifested itself in Ricarda in the development and final embracing of the dream world she created.

In philosophical autobiographies, the individual's philosophy undergoes changes as a result of experiences. Ricarda's autobiography is not solely a philosophical work, but it does incorporate this quality. In her desire for self-knowledge, Ricarda would write. Her book on Romanticism, for example, was undertaken as a means of formulating and clarifying her personal philosophy. The essays in the "Autobiographische Schriften" were also a means of conceptualizing it. In autobiographies of this type, the writer's philosophy or attitude "constitutes the main substance of their activity, and determines what in their experience they value and record."² Ricarda had realized that it was im-

¹Pascal, p. 135

²Pascal, p. 96

portant for her to write, and this occupation was a vehicle for getting to know herself better. What she learned from this was that, instead of finding meaning in life by living it for a person or an ideal, her true purpose was to experience life to the fullest, to experience it through everything and everyone:¹

was ich an Weltanschauung hatte, war eine Richtung auf das Leben, ich könnte sagen auf das Schöne, das Grosse und Echte. Ich wollte vor allen Dingen leben und erleben.²

This philosophy modified itself in Ricarda's old age. In her youth she had actively sought these experiences, but with age she was content to sit back and concentrate on her inner self, on her responses to whatever entered her private sphere. Autobiographies which depict a personal philosophy naturally tend to be more subjective than objective. The manner or style of writing chosen often reveals as much about the author as does the information he gives. Thus, the subjectivity displayed by Ricarda in, for example, "Frühling in der Schweiz" is not only philosophical in style but also shows how subjective she was. Satisfying the needs of her being was of utmost importance to her. Indeed, this was true throughout her entire life. The story of her years of study

¹Elfriede Gottlieb, Ricarda Huch. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der deutschen Epik (Leipzig and Berlin: Druck und Verlag B.G. Teubner, 1914), p. 49.

²"Autobiographische Schriften", p. 228

and employment in Switzerland is a very personal account of her experiences, as well as one in which she sought to find herself and her purpose in life. Repeatedly, private relationships, feelings and emotions took precedence over achievements and outside events. She had become a librarian and teacher, but felt bored and unfulfilled in these professions. This caused her to give up a secure life in order to find something more fulfilling and exciting. For Ricarda it was important to feel that she was experiencing everything that life had to offer. Without this, there was simply no joy in living. Philosophical autobiographies focus their attention on the uniqueness of the author's personality,¹ and the uniqueness of Ricarda's personality is certainly the focus of "Studium und erste Berufsjahre" if not, indeed, the "Autobiographische Schriften" in general.

Ricarda's collected works in volume eleven of her Gesammelte Werke are truly autobiographical writings, for each one deals with particular experiences in her life. They are also a self-portrait, imprinting her visual image on the mind through words. Each stage of her development is accompanied by an image complete in itself, yet incomplete with regard to the final picture.

What provokes an individual to write his autobiography?

¹Pascal, p. 111

The reasons vary from person to person. Sometimes it is the desire, perhaps vain, to inform the public about himself and his achievements. Other times it is the need for self-revelation, self-assertion, or self-awareness. What all these needs have in common is the desire for self-knowledge, and this is the motive behind modern autobiographies. They are written from an inner necessity to unburden memories and experiences because of a feeling that these have not been grasped and absorbed into the system of one's life and properly utilized.¹ They have become

the means to review one's life, to organise it in the imagination, and thus to bring the past experience and the present self into balance. The object is not so much to tell others about oneself as to come to terms with oneself, not necessarily explicitly and morally, but simply by grasping oneself as a whole.¹

This wholeness is what Ricarda attempted to achieve in her life.

Ricarda's autobiographical writings do not adhere to any one particular form. This is due to the fact that each one was written at a different time and that, therefore, Ricarda's mood and perspective were also different. That these writings would eventually be assembled and published as a book of her life-story also may not have occurred to her as

¹Pascal, p. 59

she wrote the individual essays. Yet, they form a coherent, entertaining, original and thorough account of her life.

In each stage of her development, Ricarda has portrayed not only a unique picture of herself but also an on-going process. Each stage is a portrait in itself, but it is also only a part of the entire picture. The final portrait is not complete until the individual is complete. An examination of the contents of the "Autobiographische Schriften" will depict the process and completion of Ricarda's self-portrait.

The Self-Portrait

Methodological Introduction

Ricarda Huch's "Autobiographische Schriften" make up the major part of volume eleven of her Gesammelte Werke. A brief overview will provide a better understanding of the structural nature, as well as the content, of the autobiographical portion of this volume. The editors, in their compilation of this work, collected and chronologically arranged an assortment of published autobiographical essays and unpublished manuscripts and drafts with the intention of presenting "eine fast lückenlose eigenhändige Lebenschronik Ricarda Huchs".¹ Because Ricarda had never consciously set out to write her life story,² their undertaking of such a collection and organization of relevant material was difficult indeed. As a result, the various essays in the collection are an assortment of styles and moods, depending on the time and perspective from which Ricarda wrote them. Since they were individually written and published over the course of many years, each one illuminates certain experiences during a particular phase of her life and is an

¹"Autobiographische Schriften", editorial preface p. 11.

²"Autobiographische Schriften", as cited in the editorial preface p. 11.

excellent example of individual stages of her development.

The first chapter of the autobiographical writings in volume eleven, entitled "Kindheit und frühe Jugend", spans Ricarda's childhood and young adulthood in Braunschweig. The first subheading, "Jugendbilder", can be likened to a photo album. The pictures that one sees are of Ricarda's childhood--of the different subjects that were important to her: the garden, house and people where she lived; animals; the Harz region in Germany that she loved so much; and her attraction to graveyards. Further and more developed essays in chapter one expand on this period of her life and take into consideration special relationships with Anna Klie and Richard Huch, a diary she kept as a small child, and even a personal review of the reading of a play entitled "'Dona Diana' von Moreto".

Chapter two, "Studium und erste Berufsjahre", also contains a variety of entries, beginning with Ricarda's "Erzählung" entitled "Frühling in der Schweiz". This "Erzählung", which appeared in 1938 as an individually published work, spans approximately ten years of her young adulthood and life in Switzerland. "Vita", which follows, is merely one paragraph in length and is the curriculum vita that appeared in her dissertation in 1891. "Bremen und Wien" covers only approximately a year in Ricarda's life and is basically a transitional period for her. The outcome of these months, however, resulted in her marriage to Ermanno Ceconi.

Chapter three, entitled "Ermanno Ceconi", is the longest of the chapters in the "Autobiographische Schriften". Obviously, Ricarda's husband and the nine years during which she was married to him formed an extremely important part of her life. In fact, almost the entire chapter is devoted to "Unser Mannochen", with "Erinnerung" and "Schwabing" being basically a repetition and an addition respectively to this first essay in the chapter.

The fourth and final chapter, "Die zweite Lebenshälfte", spans the largest part of Ricarda's life and yet is also ironically the shortest chapter. During this period Ricarda became more deeply concerned with her inner self and the development of a lasting personal philosophy. This is reflected in and by the historical and theological works that she wrote during this time. Autobiographical material, per se, was scarce. As well, the entries in this chapter are quite short in length, averaging from six to thirteen pages each, with the exception of "Kunterbunt. Das Notizbuch zweier Weltbürger". This selection covers twenty pages in volume eleven and is a travel diary that Ricarda and her daughter kept while on a sojourn in Switzerland during World War I. The important role that Switzerland played in Ricarda's life was first evident in "Frühling in der Schweiz", and her attachment to this country is again given full expression through the diary. The last essay, "Tag in Jena 1945", though only six pages in length, is the picture of a mature

individual whose development is complete. Although Ricarda lived until 1947, there was nothing new that she could or wanted to experience. Thus, "Tag in Jena 1945" is an appropriate ending--the final brush stroke, so to speak, of Ricarda's self-portrait. Through the editors' collection and arrangement of her autobiographical writings her life is presented as a whole. The result is a coherent self-portrait with a definite sense of direction.

In dealing specifically with the content of the "Autobiographische Schriften", two approaches presented themselves. The first, and perhaps more analytical and investigative, approach would have dealt thoroughly with such individual aspects as fate, death, Romanticism, religion, etc. to illustrate the development and changes that Ricarda Huch underwent personally and professionally during her life. This course was not followed for a number of reasons. First of all, it would have entailed an enormous amount of skipping back and forth in time in order to depict the beginnings, developments and changes of the numerous aspects dealt with in the "Autobiographische Schriften". This in itself was not a problem. However, such an approach would also have necessitated a good deal of repetition of the events in the various stages of Ricarda's life in order to elucidate how the changes came about and why. Most importantly, though, it would have taken away from the idea of a developing self-

portrait, since a portrait does not take shape by dealing with one particular aspect from start to finish before beginning with the next one.

This thesis furnishes the insight that Ricarda's written, poetic self-portrait develops in much the same way a person develops: in stages. Each stage portrays that individual's total life experience up to a particular point in time. This next part of the thesis, therefore, follows very closely the form and chronology established in the "Autobiographische Schriften". This approach was the better of the two in terms of presenting Ricarda's self-portrait as depicted in this collection of her autobiographical works. Throughout, personal comments and opinions were included to bring attention to the changes and developments that were taking place within her and to discuss them more fully. As well, Else Hoppe's book Ricarda Huch. Weg, Persönlichkeit, Werk,¹ being the most thorough work to date on Ricarda, was used extensively in order to support, reinforce or add to personal observations and conclusions and to fill in occasional necessary background information regarding the "Autobiographische Schriften".

¹Else Hoppe, Ricarda Huch. Weg, Persönlichkeit, Werk (Stuttgart: Dr. Riederer-Verlag, 1951).

Young Ricarda: A Portrait of Youth and Innocence.

Development of a Consciousness

"Jugendbilder" is the title of the first essay that deals with Ricarda's childhood. In it she tells of the places and people that made a lasting impression on her. "Jugendbilder" begins with a description of the yard that surrounded her childhood home and which is the setting for the very first picture that she remembers of her life: her grandfather holding a tiny Ricarda by the hand. This picture is so clear in her mind that she can describe every branch, every flower in detail. For a long time this yard was her entire outside world and, thus, it played a significant role in her childhood. Many important influences find their origins here. Although the yard was paradise for Ricarda, the well and the outhouse represented horror and foreboding, feelings which become a constant part of her life and recurring themes in her works. The well was a dark and mysterious entity within the magnificent garden, and the outhouse, with its repulsive worms and bugs, represented horror and ugliness in Ricarda's beautiful world. In looking back on this innocent time in her life, she remarks: "Es war da und musste da sein, das Grausige musste in das tägliche Leben eingeordnet werden, nichts konnte davon befreien."¹ The

¹"Autobiographische Schriften", p. 21. All further references to this work will be indicated in the text by page numbers in parenthesis.

pleasant memories of this garden, however, are just as powerful as the unpleasant ones. The trees, whose "music" was the first sound that Ricarda recalls hearing, and the thunderstorms that enthralled her are positive influences and elements in her life. "Mit unzähligen Würzelchen" she writes, "senkten sich die Erlebnisse des Gartens in unsere Seele, wuchsen fort und trugen Früchte, zum Teil ohne dass uns ihr Ursprung zum Bewusstsein gekommen wäre" (p. 27). For Ricarda, and her brother and sister, this garden presented them with lifelong influences.

The house she lived in as a child also formed an important part of her life. Ricarda goes into great detail describing it, its many rooms, and who occupied which areas of the house. An especially lasting impression was made by a short dark hallway in this house, which filled Ricarda with terror. Anytime that she had to pass through it, she would hold her breath in anticipation. She could never explain the origins of this fear:

Die Furchtsamkeit, unter der ich mein Leben lang sehr gelitten habe, muss mir wohl angeboren gewesen sein, wenigstens erinnere ich mich nicht, dass mir in früher Kindheit Spukgeschichten erzählt worden waren, durch die sie hervorgerufen worden wären. (pp. 39-40)

In this house, too, Ricarda's disinterest in wars formed. Three walls of the dining room were hung with pictures of the heroes of the War of 1870. These pictures held no attraction for Ricarda at all: "Es waren Lithographien, kahl, flach, ganz reizlos und so ungeeignet wie möglich zum Schmuck eines

Raums" (p. 33). She believes that this effect had an influence on her with respect to the feeling of boredom she always associated with wars. Her father, a patriot who was especially fond of Bismarck, was of the opinion that every German should be grateful to Bismarck for being Germany's "Reichsgründer" (p. 126). This very strong opinion, seemingly shared by no one else in the family, caused an air of stress in the home. This stress Ricarda indirectly attributed to Bismarck himself. Naturally, these negative feelings carried over into her general attitude regarding wars, and yet she was extremely interested in family discussions dealing with this subject and in playing war games with toy soldiers. It was the historical aspect that attracted her. Her grandfather had sparked her interest in it, and her history teacher had enhanced it. Being a child, she naturally hated the evil tyrants and loved the good and heroic rebels of bygone battles.

The section entitled "Die Menschen" unfolds as a veritable family tree. In great detail Ricarda's relatives and ancestors are introduced, the jobs held by various family members are mentioned, an explanation is given as to how her father's business came to originate in Brazil, and even the ne'er-do-wells were important enough not to be forgotten--a very colourful picture indeed. In speaking of her father, Ricarda again mentions the deep honour and respect he had for Bismarck, and also the fact that the other members in the

household most likely did not share his enthusiasm. She uses this opportunity to state that she, herself, was a born republican (p. 55). This, mixed with her basic understanding of good and evil, carried over into her contemporary world.

Ricarda was about seventeen years old when she began to analyze human relationships and to become aware of the inequalities that existed between the classes in society and between men and women. She was furious, for example, when she learned that any woman who bore an illegitimate child was scandalized and had to atone heavily for it, while the man--to whom Ricarda attributed the greater part of the blame--was able to continue his life as before. In her mind, society and these men were tyrants, and she believed that any man who refused to marry the mother of his child should bear the penalty of death. Just as troubling to her was the realization that the well-to-do were able to take extended vacations, while the poor working class had to labour from morning 'til night almost every day of the year. These things bothered her even more when she found no understanding whatsoever for the people in these situations. Her discomfort with the status quo also took on a more personal note. Ricarda remembers two women who had been employed in her home while she was still quite young. Although these women were respected and loved by the family, and were practically part of it, Ricarda was distressed by the fact that they were treated as the mere servants they were. These

early experiences remained with her and influenced her in later life, especially with regard to the more compassionate understanding she had for the less fortunate than did others of her class.

Animals of all kinds, both toy and real, were special to Ricarda. Although she had particular favourites at various times, cats were her greatest love. What she especially admired in them was their independence, and this trait existed in Ricarda and was also to influence her life to a great extent.

A childhood trip to the Harz region, as described in "Der Harz", reinforces some of the basic traits already present in Ricarda. She expresses how she loved the beauty of this area but also how these feelings were always accompanied by an equally strong sense of danger. She possessed a fear of not only the real physical danger that existed but also of the more indirect danger represented by the poisonous spotted mushrooms. It is significant to note that Ricarda finds herself attracted to this danger, just as she was attracted to the horror and ugliness in her own back yard. This polarity, exemplified here by her love of both beauty and ugliness, lies at the core of her being and produces a struggle within her.

"Friedhöfe" expresses Ricarda's preoccupation with death, a subject which frequently and painfully troubled her. She relates how her grandfather's death, which occurred when

she was twelve years old, caused her to become withdrawn and moody. Although she didn't fully understand what death was, she remembers a period of dull sadness and bitterness associated with it: "Ich war nicht mehr das Bächlein, das plaudernd neben der Grossmama und der Mama einherlief" (p. 87). With her grandmother's death, Ricarda also becomes withdrawn. Perhaps this time it was partly due to her preoccupation with the passionate relationship that now existed between her and her brother-in-law. However, her withdrawal also strongly introduces her ability to remove herself from reality and to merely observe it from the safety of her own private world.

Ricarda writes:

Der Sarg stand in dem grossen Zimmer im Erdgeschoss, [...] ich sah wie aus einer weiten Ferne die vielen schwarzgekleideten Menschen zu beiden Seiten des Sarges stehen. (p. 97)

Her father died four years later in Hamburg, by which time Ricarda had already begun her studies in Zurich. She attends the funeral, but returns to Zurich the same day without even going to Braunschweig for a visit. It is clear that she feels no attachment to her remaining relatives there, except to her grandmother and brother. The feelings of alienation, caused by the affair with Richard, give her no reason or desire to return. Her life is now in Zurich, where she has begun to feel at home. The death of her grandmother had the greatest effect on her. By this time Ricarda was already married and a mother. Her grandmother had been the person to whom she had felt the closest, and her death came as a

terrible shock. The moment Ricarda read of it in a letter she burst out crying, and it took a great effort to stop. Even years later, whenever she thought of her or heard her name, she'd begin to cry. Once, on a return visit to Braunschweig after twenty-three years, she went to the cemetery to view the graves of her family. Upon seeing her grandmother's grave she remarks:

Das Herz zog sich mir zusammen--es war--als sei nun erst bewiesen, dass ich sie verloren hatte, dass ich sie nie mehr sehen würde. (p. 106)

This illustrates the great depth of feeling of which Ricarda is capable and to which she often refers in her autobiographical writings.

The portrait, which has developed of Ricarda so far, is one of polarities. The attraction the young girl feels equally towards beauty and ugliness, and her disinterest in war but love of rebels and revolutions, are but two examples of this essence of her being. She also felt a keen bond with nature. Her overwhelming attraction to trees was almost one of reverence. The rustling of leaves was bewitching and musical. Thunderstorms were also magical. Ricarda explains how everyone at home would gather in the hallway at night during thunderstorms and watch them through the open door. This description illustrates the close bond between the elements in nature and her senses:

Für mich war das jedesmal ein wundervolles Ereignis. Man sah durch die geöffnete Haustür die zuckenden Blitze, hörte die klangvolle Stimme des Donners und den niederrauschenden Regen, man

atmete den fruchtbaren Geruch der erfrischten Luft ein. (p. 30)

Books also played an important part in her early development. Ricarda's grandmother, who was the reigning spirit of the household, required Ricarda to read to her from a devotional book from time to time. This, no doubt, affected Ricarda's basic attitude toward religion. "Ich tat das sehr ungern," writes Ricarda, "denn für meinen Geschmack war das eine hohle, ölige Salbaderei, und ich kam mir heuchlerisch und ungeschickt vor, wenn ich das laut las" (p. 60).

"Braunschweig in meiner Kinderzeit" begins with a description of the street on which Ricarda lived, some of the people who lived on the same street, Ricarda's route to school, the shopping district, the shopkeepers, the toy store. Ricarda's world had expanded beyond that of her house and garden. She reiterates her love of animals and the attraction she felt to thunderstorms. Certain childhood memories, such as Christmas and a visit to the dentist, are also included.

"Mein erstes Jahrzehnt" is basically a repetition of what Ricarda has already written. What is important here is what she realizes about the manner in which she remembers Bismarck and the War of 1870. She didn't experience this war in any concrete way, but remembers an impression of boredom associated with it. Ricarda, who adored rebels and revolutions, realized that it was the official aspect of war which caused her boredom. She admits her arrogance in discussing

matters about which she knew very little, but also excuses herself because of her belief that an individual's lack of an experience is as influential in the formation of his character as is an actual experience. Thus, by not encountering that war, she was unaffected by it. However, it was also her nature to see and know only those things that she wanted to, and to ignore others. She, therefore, missed out on some of life's experiences and admits: "Aus [...] diesem könnte man den Schluss ziehen, ich hätte das Leben stets nur in seinem Abglanz geliebt, die Spiele der Phantasie der Wirklichkeit vorgezogen" (p. 127). The truth of this statement--seen in her creation of a dream world--is reinforced throughout her life.

As a young child, Ricarda kept a diary. "Mein Tagebuch" consists of various experiences and elements that she remembers as she reads through this diary. She mentions that its contents are unimportant and boring and that the diary is significant only in that it triggers her memory. She finds, for example, that she always wrote about the weather, especially the rain: "Der Regen sickert wie ein trüber Faden durch mein Tagebuch" (p. 130). As has already been noted, nature greatly affected her. Another recurring theme is that of the horror and ugliness in life. This motif was introduced in Ricarda's descriptions of, for example, her house and yard. Now, she mentions the time her sister Lilly got lost in the forest while berry-picking. For the young

Ricarda, the forest was "unendlich, undurchdringlich, voll unbekannter Schrecknisse" (p. 133). Her vast experiences with nature in the Harz made lasting impressions on her--not only the breathless beauty but, more especially, the horror and ugliness:

Überhaupt hat alles Schaurige eine gefährliche Anziehungskraft für mich, in der Art, dass es mich zugleich lockte und mit wilder Furcht erfüllte. (p. 135)

This example again demonstrates the polarity within Ricarda.

In reading through her diary, Ricarda notes the rather cursory nature of the entries. This she questions:

Ob man aus Tagebüchern von Kindern einen Einblick in ihr Leben gewinnen kann? Aus dem meinigen nur einen oberflächlichen in mein äusseres Leben, und ich glaube, dass das für die meisten gilt [...]. Die meisten Eindrücke, die ich empfang, drängen nicht sehr tief und liessen nur schwache Spuren zurück, oder sie wurden in den Traum einbezogen, der in der Tiefe spielte. Aus diesem Grunde gehen meine Erinnerungen nicht weit zurück und sind undeutlich wie Bilder, die aus Träumen bleiben. (pp. 134-35)

This dream that Ricarda mentions eventually developed into her private world and became an integral part of her being. She also admits: "ich war sehr lange in die Atmosphäre des Traums eingehüllt, der die Aussenwelt fernhält" (p. 135). In fact, this was the case almost her entire life for, whenever she felt the real world becoming intolerable, she could slip into the one she had created. This dream world was at times her only reality and existed throughout her life with varying frequency and intensity.

"Erinnerung an Anna Klie" is a very profound recollection of one of Ricarda's dearest friends. Although Anna was six years older than Ricarda, and was at first Lilly's friend, the two girls initially developed a bond because of their mutual feelings for the beauty of poetry. This essay also again reinforces that Ricarda was attracted not only to beauty but also to ugliness, and that this formed the only difference between the two friends. Of Anna, Ricarda writes: "Nur darin wichen wir voneinander ab, dass sie von den Untiefen des Lebens, von unversöhnbaren Gegensätze nichts wissen wollte" (p. 137). Ricarda, on the other hand, was very much interested in this aspect of life, for it affected her directly. The polarities within her own being confused her, and through poetry she hoped to be able to gain a better understanding of this force within her.

The next selection in the "Autobiographische Schriften" is entitled "'Donna Diana' von Moreto". It is a critic's review of a comedy in which Ricarda and her sister and brother-in-law took part. The critic, who is not identified here, reviews the performances of the individuals involved. However, it becomes apparent that this was not a play staged in a theatre but was, rather, an informal reading. Ricarda, as it turns out, belonged to a literary circle which would meet evenings and read various dramatical works. On these occasions, refreshments were served. Why is "Donna Diana", however, included in the "Autobiographische Schriften"? How

is it autobiographical, when it is written seemingly by someone else and reveals nothing personal about Ricarda? Since the answers are not found in the text, other sources had to be consulted. In Else Hoppe's book Ricarda Huch. Weg, Persönlichkeit, Werk, it is made clear that the critic is actually seventeen year old Ricarda herself.¹ This sheds a whole new light on the essay. Not only does Ricarda describe the social etiquette of her time but also the literary milieu in which she grew up. Since she had always been interested in reading, especially poetry, her creative ability was already quite sophisticated, as was her imaginative capacity. On the other hand, though, she was rather naive in matters dealing with the real world, such as her belief that a husband and wife could create a child merely through a kiss (p. 154). What is especially evident in this selection is her love of, and talent for, writing:

In dem sicheren Verständnis für alle formalen Seiten des Künstlerischen zeigt sich die dichterische Anlage; in der Fähigkeit auch, sich in die Rolle des Rezensenten zu versetzen und als solcher sich selber zu kritisieren. Denn Ricarda Huch nahm an den Lesungen aktiv teil, erhielt sogar die Regie übertragen und schloss sich von der Kritik, die sie schrieb, nicht aus. Der Wunsch, die Liebhaberkünstler nicht zu verletzen, tritt sympathisch hervor; die innere Nötigung, Kunst auch im Dilettantenkreise ernst zu nehmen, überwiegt diesen Zug; am kräftigsten zeigt sich die angeborene Lust am Schreiben, der unabweisbare Trieb, sich zu äussern und dem Reichtum

¹Hoppe, p. 39

der Gedanken selbstgenussvollen Ausdruck zu verleihen.¹

Her ability to separate herself from her surroundings, as evidenced by the fact that she was the objective critic of "'Donna Diana' von Moreto" as well as one of the subjective participants in this comedy, is reinforced when recalling that Ricarda lives in a dream world at times. Just as she can sit back and objectively review a play in which she had taken an active part, so, too, can she remove herself from real life and observe it from the sidelines.

The essay entitled "Richard" introduces the person who becomes one of the most important people in Ricarda's life. It is through her brother-in-law that Ricarda's world changes significantly, for it is Richard with whom she first experiences love. Up until now her experiences with men had been extremely innocent. She was interested in them only as friends, although the reverse may not always have been true. A young man named Lutterloh, for example, who once lived with her family, was only a friend to her. His feelings for her she discovered in a love-letter she received from him. Since Ricarda did not share his feelings, she stopped associating with him. This was the sensible thing to do she believed and, thus, she felt no guilt about it. Her ideas, regarding how men reacted when jilted, appear mature beyond her years and experience. Perhaps she developed these theories from

¹Hoppe, pp. 38-39

the relationships she had observed or from the many books she had read. "Liebeskummer", she believed,

gilt namentlich bei Männern nicht viel; bekommen sie die eine nicht, nehmen sie eine andere. Leiden sie wirklich eine Zeitlang, so geschieht das den Männern recht, die den Frauen so oft weit schwereres, nicht wiedergutzumachendes Leid zufügen. (p. 150)

Her reaction is understandable in light of her views on the social inequalities that existed between the sexes, especially with regard to unmarried pregnant women. Let men suffer from unrequited love! She believed they deserved it.

This rather tough side to Ricarda's nature is in direct contrast to her terribly romantic and passionate side, which sometimes caused her to imagine or read too much into a situation. For example, Ricarda had a particular liking for a certain young man in the literary circle to which she belonged. This feeling had developed as a result of her belief that he loved her. She rationalizes this belief from the slight innuendos of his body-language:

Trotzdem er nie ein Wort zu mir sagte, dass ich als Liebeserklärung hätte auslegen können, glaubte ich, er liebe mich. Ich schloss es aus der Art, wie er mich ansah, wie er mit mir sprach und aus lauter kleinen Anzeichen und hatte das sichere Gefühl, dass er meine Liebe erwiderte. (p. 151)

Ricarda was so sure of their mutual feelings of love that she believed they would eventually marry. Unfortunately, this was not the case, and this realization caused her great pain. Was this pain, however, a result of unrequited love? Evidently not, for Ricarda explains that it was the result of a

much more personal realization: "Ich hatte lange Zeit in dem Gefühl gelebt, und es tat weh, mich von dem lieben Bild loszureissen" (p. 153). She had suddenly been torn from her dream world and thrust into the pain of reality. The profound depth of this dream world made it difficult and painful for her to adjust to the real one. Her passionate nature is revealed in a number of other examples as well, such as when she writes of her feelings for her baby nephew Roderick: "ich fing bald an, es zärtlich zu lieben" (p. 151), "mein Herz wurde durch den hilflosen Schmerz mit überschwenglicher Liebe erfüllt" (p. 152), and "Bis zu seinem Tode hat trotz vieler Erschütterungen das Gefühl zärtlichen Einverständnisses zwischen ihm und mir bestanden" (p. 152). For her friend Anna Klie she also had strong feelings:

Meine Freundschaft zu Anna Klie war der Sonnenschein, der in diesen Jahren alle Wolken zerstreute. Der Tag, an dem ich sie nicht sah, schien mir verloren [...] Welches Glück, wenn sie kam! (pp. 152-53)

Ricarda also passionately loved beauty. Whenever she read, she would quickly find those places she felt were the most beautiful or exciting and then revel in them. This passion, however, is most evidently revealed in the relationship she developed with Richard. Feeling heartbroken over the fact that the young man she had loved didn't love her, Ricarda was comforted by Richard, who came often to visit her. It was on one of these occasions that they declared their love for each other, and which Ricarda describes:

Mein Schwager legte den Arm um mich und sah mich an. Von diesem Augenblick an liebte ich ihn. Es war ein Augenblick reinen, vollkommenen Glücks [...] Ich stand in Flammen, die Welt war verändert. (p. 154)

This love was like nothing Ricarda had ever known: "Dass sie wie ein verzehrend Feuer ist, immer wachsend, nie gesättigt," she soon discovered (p. 154).

Ricarda's ideas about love were still quite naive. She was unaware that a physical side existed, believing that love was purely spiritual. As a result, she felt that there was nothing wrong with her affair with her brother-in-law:

So wie ich war, konnte ich mir einbilden, eine Liebe könne wie ein schönes Licht überall ausgebreitet sein, es gäbe eigentlich in diesem Sinn gar keine verbotene Liebe. (p. 154)

Ricarda didn't feel guilty because she had genuinely not expected Richard's declarations of love, nor had she the desire to steal her sister's husband away from her. All she wanted was to give Richard her heart and soul--to belong to him. As their love progressed, they became more daring in their attempts to see each other. Ricarda's extreme passion is evident in her description of one of these episodes:

Ich stand in Flammen. Es gab nichts mehr als diese Leidenschaft. Ihr Recht war ihr Gewalt. . . . Machte sie andere unglücklich, so waren wir selbst noch unglücklicher. Wir konnten uns nicht besitzen, denn an Scheidung der Ehe meines Schwagers dachten wir nicht. Diesen Verzicht warf ich in die Waagschale. Die flüchtig geraubte Seligkeit musste uns dafür gewährt werden. Es gab keinen Kampf in meinem Inneren; denn jedes Gefühl wurde von diesem einzigen unterworfen. (p. 155)

Ricarda's desire had to be satisfied, regardless of what this might do to others or to herself and Richard. As far as she was concerned, she and Richard were doing nothing wrong. That their actions could hurt others naturally concerned her, but she was powerless to stop the flood of emotions.

Ricarda's love for Richard was significant not only because he was her first and most passionate love but also because, through this affair, she experienced for the first time the relationship between the sexes "in seiner naturhaft ursprünglichen Konstellation".¹ Richard's social position and age obviously made him superior to her and this, Ricarda believed, was how it was supposed to be: men were naturally superior physically and socially, while women were superior in spiritual matters and in the home. These positive experiences with Richard contributed to the fact that Ricarda never became an advocate of the male-hostile attitude prevalent in the women's movement of her time.² Instead, she developed and maintained a great understanding for, what she considered to be, the natural status of the sexes.² This love was not one-sided but mutual. Richard loved Ricarda just as passionately as she loved him. What was tragic about this relationship was that he was married and had a family.

¹Hoppe, p. 46

²Hoppe, p. 47

Yet, Ricarda could not bring herself to end it, and this reinforces the fact of her need to satisfy her desires. As Else Hoppe explains:

Man darf diese Haltung nicht bagatellisieren und nicht beschönigen; sie muss verstanden werden als symptomatische Wesensäußerung dieses Menschen, der in keinem anderen Grunde wurzelte als in seiner Persönlichkeit. Bei einer polaren Natur ist es oft nicht einfach, die eigentliche, dauernde Meinung, den letzten Kern zu erfassen. Der aber offenbart sich dennoch und unmissverständlich im Konfliktfall, wenn es darum geht, nicht nur Ansichten zu äußern, sondern Handlungen auszuführen. In allen solchen Fällen sind für Ricarda Huch die Bedürfnisse ihrer Persönlichkeit ausschlaggebend gewesen.¹

Eventually she came to realize that, for everyone's sake, this situation had to end and that she would have to instigate this change. Although wrapped up in her emotions, she could see the hopelessness of the situation and that she was the stronger of the two. One of her girlfriends had informed her that Swiss universities had begun to accept female students. Ricarda was not really interested in studying, but recognized that in order to end the relationship she would have to leave Braunschweig and become independent. She was encouraged to consider Switzerland by a professor she met at a "Polterabend", who was also interested in the "Frauenstudium". He was able to give Ricarda quite a bit of information concerning it. His positive attitude, and the fact that he gave her the address of a female acquaintance who was

¹Hoppe, p. 47

studying in Zurich, were added incentives in considering this alternative. Ricarda had no burning desire to go to university simply for the sake of learning. In fact, it was almost irrelevant to her what she studied. The most important consideration was simply to get out of Braunschweig and become financially independent, and a university degree was a means of accomplishing this. It was a practical solution to the problem, even though no one in her family was happy about the fact that she was going to do "etwas Auffallendes" (p. 160)-- a term that aptly describes Ricarda during the next years. With this decision, Ricarda embarks on a new phase in her life.

Basically, in this first part of the "Autobiographische Schriften" Ricarda has portrayed herself as a passionate young girl with many contradictions, and has presented reasons and influences behind such a portrayal. Initially, this picture may seem too sketchy to be considered properly autobiographical. The glimpses she has given of her childhood do not contain enough substance and, thus, have presented only the basic outline of the individual that will develop. Yet, this is exactly the way a portrait begins-- with a sketchy outline--and, therefore, such a beginning to Ricarda's self-portrayal is most definitely appropriate.

The Tumultuous Twenties: "Romantic" Ricarda

Ricarda arrived in Zurich on January 1, 1887. For a young woman of twenty-two, who was not only in a strange new country but was also on her own for the first time in her life, things were difficult. However, Ricarda loved the challenge. Being in new surroundings, and having undertaken the arduous task of preparing herself for university entrance exams, would occupy every moment of her time now and also perhaps make it easier for her to forget Richard.

The first person Ricarda met in Zurich was Frau Wanner, who managed the boarding house where she rented rooms. The two took an immediate liking to each other. Ricarda wrote:

Frau Wanner hatte ein rasches Wesen und ein lustiges Zwinkern in den Augen; ich war sofort überzeugt, dass wir uns verstehen würden. (p. 163)

Sie hatte einen guten Verstand und war nach Appenzeller Art immer mit witziger Rede bei der Hand. (p. 167)

It was the energy and spirit of this woman that attracted Ricarda and that were some of the qualities that endeared Ricarda to Switzerland as a whole. Another boarder at Frau Wanner's was a young law student, Oskar Kellenberg, who fell in love with Ricarda. Although Ricarda did not feel the same toward Oskar, and made this clear to him, she nevertheless enjoyed his company. Springtime, her youth, a broken love affair, and the attentions of this young man all made her passionate, romantic nature soar:

Die glücklichen Zwanzigjährigen! Ein magisches Rosenlicht umspielt sie und berückt die, die davon angehaucht werden. An diesem Frühlingszauber hatte ich damals teil und nahm als etwas Selbstverständliches, ja fast ohne es zu merken hin, dass man mir Liebe entgegenbrachte; war ja auch mein Herz empfänglich für alles, was ich sah und erlebte. (pp. 167-68)

It is obvious that Ricarda still lets her emotions guide her. To live, to experience, was essential to her being--as the Romantic "Kind der Elemente" she had to follow the dictates of her heart. The other side of Ricarda, however, worked hard to prepare herself for university, getting up no later than 7 a.m. and going to bed no earlier than midnight. This was not easy for Ricarda to do, since such conscious, deliberate actions were in direct contrast to the emotional and fatalistic being she was. It was truly an effort to prepare herself for the exams, but she knew she could accomplish this if she put her mind to it. Ironically enough, such deliberate actions actually revealed the Romantic side of her nature at times:

Für das Tatsächliche hatte ich überhaupt nicht viel Sinn. Bei dem mir angeborenen Hang für die Historie hatte ich ziemlich viel Geschichtswerke gelesen; aber ich liebte die Geschichte als den farbigen Strom des Geschehens, aus dem grosse Persönlichkeiten auftauchten, die ich kämpfen und siegen oder unterliegen sah, als den Stoff in den meine Phantasie hineingriff, um ihn dramatisch zu gestalten, und merkte mir nur, was mich in bezug darauf interessierte; viel zuverlässige Kenntnisse hatte ich nicht. (pp. 168-69)

It was the aesthetic appeal of history that interested Ricarda, the revolutions and the rebels. The actual factual material she found boring. However, she was determined to

master and accomplish everything that she had undertaken:

Ich war damals voller Arbeitslust und Arbeitskraft. Ich hatte seit meiner Schulzeit etwa acht Jahre lang nichts Ernstliches getan, nun war ein Drang in mir, grosse Aufgaben zu bewältigen. (pp. 169-70)

Whether following the dictates of her heart or striving to prepare herself for her entrance exams, Ricarda appears driven to seek and attain all that life has to offer.

Ricarda had always loved nature, and Switzerland gave her the opportunity to indulge this passion. Whenever it was warm enough, Ricarda enjoyed studying outdoors. She also loved to go on hikes and especially on long walks along the lake, to which she felt the same sinister attraction as to thunderstorms:

In dem ersten Winter, wo ich noch wenig Menschen kannte, ging ich oft weite Wege allein, besonders am See entlang, der dunkel unter wogenden Nebeln starrte, und das waren besonders glückliche Stunden ahnungsvoller Träumereien. (p. 170)

These "Träumereien" had been a part of Ricarda since the beginning of her childhood. They were as important to her being as was passion, for this is what constitutes the Romantic concept of the child of nature. True, Ricarda also displayed a side of herself that was driven to concrete actions and accomplishments, but this side was not the main force within her at this point. It was there mainly to assist her in living her life to the fullest.

Ricarda breezed through her "Maturitätsexamen" and began her university studies. During her first semester she

met Hans Müller, a student who introduced her to the ideologies of socialism. Although Ricarda didn't know much about its theories, she had always been interested in ways that would improve the lot of the poorest and lowest class of people. As well, she also possessed a natural interest in anything that had to do with rebels, revolutions and freedom. She, therefore, willingly attended a course on socialism. However, Ricarda discovered that she wasn't all that interested in the lectures and didn't understand many of them. What really attracted her were the people attending the class rather than the political theories that were discussed:

die Zusammensetzung der Zuhörerschaft interessierte und belustigte mich [...] Die Spur, die die Berührung mit den jungen Sozialdemokraten bei mir hinterliess, geriet poetisch und historisch! Ich schrieb eine Komödie, die ich zur Zeit der Dreissig Tyrannen in Athen spielen liess. (p. 175)

From these comments it is obvious that Ricarda is not a politically active individual. Instead, it was the aesthetic aspect of any and all experiences that appealed to her. She was simply being true to her nature whenever she began to daydream.

Ricarda continues her descriptions of her university life, especially of her professors, and in so doing she divulges some new, and reiterates already known, information about herself. For example, one professor she described as "äusserlich nicht gerade anziehend; aber er bezauberte mich" (p. 176). This illustrates her attraction to the unusual,

unique, even ugly. Another professor is described as "ein offener, liebenswerter Mensch" (p. 176). The professor who personally interested her the most, however, was Professor Salomon Vögelin:

In seinem sehr markanten Gesicht war etwas Schwermütiges, etwas Zweifelndes und Problematisches, das mich beschäftigte; dazu kam, dass mit einer gewissen Zurückhaltung von ihm gesprochen wurde, als sei etwas Anstössiges an ihm, was besser verschwiegen bleibe. (p. 177)

Ricarda found him disturbingly attractive. This attraction to the unattractive was a characteristic that Ricarda already possessed in her childhood. This may have aroused her interest in Vögelin, who always looked so melancholy. Perhaps she saw something of her own "Verzweiflung" in his face. These simple descriptions indirectly reveal more about the writer than about her subjects. This is important to note, for it is characteristic of Ricarda to write in this manner. Professor von Wyss, one of the examiners on her thesis committee, commented on this in a letter he wrote her regarding her dissertation. Ricarda refers to this letter:

In dem Brief, den er mir darüber schrieb, kam eine Bemerkung vor, die ich ausserordentlich fein fand, nämlich, ich bringe das Wesentliche gern in einem Nebensatz, anstatt es in den Hauptsatz zu setzen. Dies liegt mir erscheinlich so im Blut. (p. 193)

Such an approach in style naturally lends itself well to autobiography, in which the true subject isn't found in the written material anyway, but in the person who is doing the writing--the author.

Ricarda formed some very close friendships with women she met in her courses. One of these, Marianne Plehn, became her lifelong friend:

Marianne hatte eine entschiedene, knappe Art, sich auszudrücken, und hielt sich grade; der letzte Umstand war es wohl, der bewirkte, dass ich sie jahrelang für grösser als mich gehalten habe, während das Gegenteil durchaus der Fall ist. Überhaupt schenkte ich ihr unbedingtes Vertrauen; wenn uns auf dem See ein Wetter überraschte, war ich unbesorgt, wenn sich auch schon Schaumkrönchen auf den Wellen bildeten, solange ich Marianne unbekümmert sah, erst wenn ihr Gesicht sich in ernste Falten zu legen schien, glaubte ich, dass Gefahr im Anzuge sei; und legte mich nachdrücklich in die Ruder. (p. 179)

Ricarda admired the firm and concise manner in which Marianne expressed and handled herself. The description portrays her as being cool-headed and clear-thinking--a northern "Reflexionsmensch"--whereas Ricarda is emotional. This attraction between opposite poles is an element which is consistent in Ricarda's life and is an essential part of her being. Another friend, Hedwig Waser, "die sich immer mit Klugheit und Feuer äusserte" (p. 180), appears to be Marianne's opposite. Ricarda described Hedwig as:

ein flinkes, zierliches Persönchen [...] die mir durch ihre schönen sprechenden Augen und ihr schwarzlockiges Haar auffiel, was zusammen ihr ein feurig trotziges Aussehen gab. (p. 179)

Hedwig resembles the southern "Lebensmensch" of Romanticism. Her eyes and hair particularly stand out and lend her attractiveness a highly emotional quality which, no doubt, appealed to Ricarda. The same is true of Salomé Neunreiter, a friend who studied medicine:

Sie hatte ein unregelmässiges Gesicht, das dunkle Augen, in denen es oft heiss aufflammte, anziehend machten; sie war klug, tätig, tüchtig und sehr temperamentvoll. (p. 181)

Ricarda is attracted to Romantic qualities not only in people but also in nature. It was during her second semester at the university that she spent almost her entire summer holidays in Rütli ob Meiringen. The natural beauty of this area brought joy to Ricarda:

Besonders die letzten Wochen meines Aufenthalts, als es Herbst wurde, sind mir wie ein Traumgesicht, unsäglich schön und unvergesslich, in Erinnerung. In der durchsichtig werdenden Luft brannten die roten Beeren, aus dem Walde tönte nachts das seltsame, klagende Lachen der Eulen. Ich lag im Kraut und machte Verse, von denen manche wenigstens für mich den Zauber jener Tage eingefangen haben. (p. 188)

The dream-like atmosphere, the colours and the music of nature are also important Romantic elements. What especially stands out in the last few descriptions are Ricarda's repeated references to fire, which to her represented passion. She reacted passionately to almost everything around her, frequently living in a dream world. She is still the same person in this respect as she was during her childhood and early teen years, "a truly Romantic figure, [who] thinks only of the moment and is a slave to the dictates of her heart".¹ Although she is engrossed in her studies

¹Joan Sanders, "Development of the Woman in the Major Short Stories and Novels of Ricarda Huch" (University of British Columbia, 1962), p. 79 (Sanders applies this description to a character in one of Ricarda's literary works).

at the university, working hard to obtain a doctorate, she is also the eternal Romantic who lets fate and her emotions guide her.¹

Upon receiving her doctorate in 1891, Ricarda began looking for work. Having no money left, she was under pressure to find a job quickly. Teaching in Germany was out of the question for a number of reasons. However, a position was soon offered her at the Zurich city library. Since she now felt very much at home in Switzerland, she accepted the offer and was happy that she could stay in the country that she had grown to love. The history and politics of this land were more akin to her own idealism anyway. In explaining why she felt alienation toward her own country, Ricarda reveals an innate political consciousness:

Das neue Reich war, fand ich, etwas von Grund aus anderes, es schloss sich nicht an das Mittelalter, sondern an den Absolutismus. Den hasste ich; ich war Republikaner, ohne je, soviel mir bewusst ist, in dieser Richtung beeinflusst worden zu sein, es war mir angeboren. Im damaligen Deutschland konnte man nur entweder Beifall klatschen zu dem, was die jeweiligen Regierungen anordneten, oder schweigend und verärgert, von allen verketzert beiseite stehen; die Schweizer konnten mitwirken und gegenwirken nach der eigenen Überzeugung. In der Atmosphäre, die dadurch entstand, war mir leicht zu atmen. (pp. 198-99)

Despite her interest in the historical and political background of Switzerland, she lived very much in the present,

¹Sanders, p. 15

plunging head first into the new life that was opening up for her there.

Ricarda's position at the library was only part-time and, thus, not sufficient to support herself. As such, when she was offered a teaching job at a private school she accepted, although she didn't have much confidence in her ability to teach:

ich konnte eine Gelegenheit, Geld zu verdienen, mir nicht entgehen lassen und hatte ausserdem den Grundsatz, jede Handhabe zu ergreifen, die das Schicksal biete. (p. 201)

Naturally, any person in Ricarda's position would accept an opportunity to earn money. However, it is essential to note that Ricarda mentioned fate. Fate plays a strong part in her life--she allows herself to be guided by it rather than by her own volition. Her teaching job turns out to be more difficult than she expected. Her shortcomings, in explaining German grammar to her students, were one thing. Even more difficult for her was having to analyze and explain poetry to her class. According to the teachers' manual, she was expected to lecture on each poem for at least an hour. In this manual, however, the poems were "mit pedantischer Lust abgeschlachtet und kleingekaut, bis an die Stelle der nat^urlⁱchen Freude am Gedicht der Ekel davorgetreten sein muss" (p. 202). For Ricarda, who found beauty to be a spontaneous and personal matter, such an analysis of poetry was an odious and useless undertaking:

Das Studium dieses Buches bestärkte mich eher in meinem Widerwillen gegen das schulmässige Erklären von Gedichten, als dass es mich in eine brauchbare Methode einführte. Es gibt gewiss einen Weg, jungen Schülern die Bedeutung und Schönheit eines Gedichtes zugänglich zu machen, wobei man mehr Zeit verbrauchen kann, als ich zu tun pflegte; aber ich verfügte über diese Kunst nicht. Mir schien, entweder fühle man die Schönheit oder man fühle sie nicht, und den, der sie nicht fühle, solle man dabei lassen; mit Erklärungen könne man nur den Schmelz abstreifen. (p. 202)

Ricarda possessed "einen leidenschaftlichen Hang für das Schöne" (p. 199). Finding beauty in something was an emotional experience for her. Analyzing the hows and whys of beauty only spoiled the experience.

Gradually Ricarda became dissatisfied with her job at the library. The work was tedious and boring, and left her little time and energy for writing. Not being able to fulfill her writing plans depressed her. This situation changed when she was offered a position at the "Grossmünsterschule". Here she was required to do more teaching, and being busier made her feel better. She also moved into a new pension where she met Edouard Marmier, a chemistry student. His dark, almost negro-like face and mysterious black eyes attracted her. He never tired of describing the unique beauty and customs of his hometown, and his love for it, to Ricarda. So enchanted was she by his stories that she wrote about the town in a small "Märchen-novelle". Edouard Marmier not only represented the Romantic figure because of his physical appearance but also because he was musically inclined. In the

evenings he would sit in front of his open window and play his violin. On such occasions Ricarda, who lived one floor below him, also sat by her open window and listened to his playing: "es war dann, als ob die Nacht auf dem totenstillen Platze selber zu singen beginne" (p. 206).

Besides Marianne Plehn, Hedwig Waser and Salomé Neunreiter, another close friend was Marie Baum. In Marie, Ricarda recognized a variety of Romantic motifs. Her description of her friend mentions colours and emotions, and also alludes indirectly to music:

Mit ihrem blonden, lockigen Haar, ihren braunen Augen, ihrem raschen Wesen und dem Jugendglanz, der sie umgab, erschien mir Marie Baum, als ich sie zuerst sah, wie ein blühendes Apfelbäumchen, mit dem die Frühlingsluft spielt, und es kam mir von selbst auf die Lippen, dass ich sie Bäumchen nannte. (p. 206)

Marie, although resembling the cool-headed "Reflexionsmensch" in physical appearance, is effervescent and passionate, living through her senses. This is what attracted Ricarda to her. What stands out in the description is the association Ricarda makes between Marie and trees. True, Marie's last name is "Baum", but this is not the reason Ricarda gave her the nickname "Bäumchen". The first time Ricarda saw her, even before knowing her name, Marie gave her the impression of being a flowering apple tree enveloped by spring air. This reference to nature is very Romantic, but what is also important is that Ricarda specifically compares Marie to a tree. Trees represented music to Ricarda, the rustling of

leaves being one of the first sounds that she ever recalled hearing (p. 25). However, it wasn't simply because of these aesthetic qualities that Ricarda became such good friends with these women. In discerning the reasons for their strong friendship, she makes reference to religion:

Der katholische Katechismus beginnt mit der Feststellung, der Mensch lebe, um zu Gott zu kommen. Nun waren wir damals nicht bewusst religiös gerichtet; aber den Sinn unseres Lebens suchten wir doch, ohne darüber nachzudenken, jenseits der Welt. Wenn man Gotteskinder und Weltkinder unterscheidet und unter Gotteskindern im weitesten Sinne solche Menschen versteht, die, obwohl sie ihren irdischen und weltlichen Aufgaben mit voller Hingebung, ja Leidenschaft genügen, doch durch sie nicht ausgefüllt sind, sondern ein höheres Sein darüber ahnen, und die infolgedessen der Welt gegenüber durch eine gewisse Naivität und Unbekümmertheit charakterisiert sind, derzufolge sie in der Welt oft zurückstehen, so habe ich mich unwillkürlich zu solchen immer besonders hingezogen gefühlt. Es pflegen gütige Menschen und Menschen voll Humor zu sein. Schliesslich entscheidet bei so innigen, dauernden, das Persönliche. (p. 207)

Ricarda's attitude toward religion has not really changed. Although recognizing that there must be some greater meaning and purpose in life, religion as a whole was still a "hohle, ölige Salbaderei" (p. 60) to her. However, their feeling that there was some greater purpose to life drew them together, as well as some more personal reasons. One of these was the affinity they all shared for laughter:

Ein besonderer Reiz Bäumchens war ihr glockenhelles melodisches Lachen, das so oft, so oft in jener glücklichen Zeit ertönte [...] Zwar haben wir damals überhaupt viel gelacht; aber besonders leicht und grundlos erklang dieser Akkord zwischen Bäumchen und mir. (p. 207)

From this it appears that life was all happiness, music and laughter. Naturally, they were also affected by sad and serious matters, "aber das Dunkle nahm in der Freude des Zusammenseins leicht ihre lichte Farbe an" (p. 208). Nothing could spoil Ricarda's good spirits and lust for life. "Wir fühlten uns gesund und kraftvoll, und die Zukunft war unser", she wrote (p. 208).

At this time Ricarda became closely acquainted with a young couple, Hermann and Emmi Reiff, that was extremely well-off financially. Rather than display their wealth through dress and manner, they downplayed it and spent much of their time and energy on charity work. Their philosophy regarding money interested Ricarda:

der reiche Mann müsse sich als den Verwalter seines Reichtums zugunsten seines Volkes ansehen, seine Pflicht sei, sich persönlich im Genusse des Reichtums bis zu einem gewissen Grade zu beschränken, um den Bedürftigen in vernünftiger Weise davon zukommen zu lassen. Wohltätigkeit war eine Pflicht, die der Besitzende dem besitzlosen Teil des Volkes gegenüber auszuüben hatte. (p. 213)

Emmi's charity work consisted basically of advising poor women how to manage their households more economically, which Ricarda considered hypocritical because Emmi personally spent an enormous amount of money daily on the running of her own home. Hermann's charity was lending money to the poor, but only to those who could and would actually improve their existence. Ricarda also questioned this: "wenn alle so dächten, was sollte dann aus den Allerärmsten werden, die eine mangelhafte Anlage zum Aufstieg hinderte?" (p. 213).

Ricarda did not hide her feelings from the Reiffs, and often had long discussions with them. According to her way of thinking, charity should not have any strings attached:

Sollte einen nie das natürl^{ic}he Erbarmen hinreissen, das der Anblick des Elends im Herzen erregt? Sollte man nicht geben, wie der Christ gibt, weil Gott der Freund der Armen ist und geboten hat, sie zu lieben und ihnen mitzuteilen?
(p. 214)

Charity should either come naturally from the heart--an emotional response--or from the Christian teaching of love for one's fellow man and compassion for his sufferings. It is obvious that Ricarda is still thinking with her heart. Her initial lack of understanding for the Reiffs was due in large part to the fact that she could not put herself into their situation. Since organized religion was having no great success in narrowing the gap between the very rich and the very poor, Ricarda soon conceded that the world truly was a better place because of the Reiffs and others like them,

nicht nur, weil sie unabh^{än}gig sind oder weil sie die Kunst fördern könn^{en}, sondern auch, weil ihre Wohltätigkeit pers^{ön}lich und zufäll^{ig} und deshalb glücklicher verteilt und wirksamer ist als die des Staates. Reiffs haben vielen Armen in grossartiger Weise geholfen. (p. 214)

Organized religion was seen by Ricarda as being completely useless in this respect.

It was also during this period in Zurich that Ricarda became involved with a young man, Emanuel Zäslin. She found him so attractive that she was soon engaged to him. This was a passionate action. She had never intended this engagement to result in marriage and, thus, called it off a short time

later. Ricarda had simply been doing what she always wanted to do: experience life to the fullest. Although she was truly attracted to this young man, breaking the engagement was not only the sensible thing to do but was also even more exhilarating than becoming engaged had been. It taught her how much she valued her freedom. This situation revealed not only a rational and sensible side to Ricarda, but also her view with regard to male-female relationships. Men, she believed, recovered quickly from broken affairs because they easily found new love interests. Women, on the other hand, did not recover quickly or easily. They were destined to suffer from unrequited love. Although this female destiny did not apply to Ricarda's relationship with Zäslin, it had been the case with Richard. Ricarda was now at the height of her life, encountering many experiences, feeling alive, in control and happy, but, like the true Romantic figure, also feeling unfulfilled. The ultimate experience--true happiness and fulfillment in love--is denied her.

Two great concerns of Romanticism are music and the concept of "Vergehen". Music and its various forms--for example, the rustling of leaves, the sound of words in a poem--were consistent throughout Ricarda's life. The importance of music to her is seen in yet another example, in which she loves to hear Marianne play the "Polenlied". The bewitching qualities of the swaying and fanciful melody especially appealed to her emotional, passionate nature. Equally

important to her is the concept of "Vergehen". In many of her writings during this period words such as "Tod" and "Herbst" appear frequently, "und das bei einer Dichterin, die im Frühling des Lebens stand".¹ Ricarda's preoccupation with death was already evident earlier in the autobiographical writings. This preoccupation, although a prominent concern of the Romantics, was also an innate part of Ricarda's nature. More specifically, there was a deep sadness that was basic to her disposition, and which became more profound through her unfortunate love affair with Richard. This sadness is typical, too, of an individual who refuses to see the world as it is and, instead, prefers to live through her imagination and experience life as she sees it.¹

Closely connected to the theme of death is that of perishing or, as in Ricarda's case, impermanence. For ten years she had lived in Zurich. For ten years it had been her home. In fact, she felt more at home here than she ever had in Germany. This city, that she loved and knew so well, however, had changed. It was no longer the Zurich of old, but had become a more modern city over the past years, and Ricarda disliked this. Her teaching job had also begun to satisfy her less and less. Ricarda was in a rut. Her life was monotonous and boring. Even though she still loved Zurich, she was unhappy:

¹Hoppe, p. 94

In Zürich war ich in den Besitz meiner selbst gekommen, hier wurde mir zuerst das Bewusstsein der eigenen Persönlichkeit und der eigenen Kräfte, denn zu Hause wird man als Glied einer Familie ohne eigenes selbständiges Wesen in eine vorhandene Rubrik eingeordnet [...] Hier hatte ich Freunde, [...] hier hatte ich eine geachtete und gesicherte Stellung [...] Im Grunde war es aber gerade diese Stellung, dieser Schulberuf, der mich dazu brachte, so teure Bedingungen zu lösen, eine so grossmütige Heimat aufzugeben. Mein Beruf befriedigte mich immer weniger. (p. 227)

Although Ricarda has changed dramatically during her ten years in Switzerland, her passionate nature remains as strong as ever:

was ich an Weltanschauung hatte, war eine Richtung auf das Leben, ich könnte auch sagen auf das Schöne, das Grosse und Echte. Ich wollte vor allen Dingen leben und erleben, und darin schien mich die Schule zu hemmen. Es war mir zumute, als sei ich in eine Meeresstille geraten. (p. 228)

Realizing that she couldn't go on like this, she jumped at the opportunity to go to Bremen, where she had been offered a lecturing position. In this instance, the change Ricarda has undergone is quite evident. Whereas previously she let fate and her emotions guide her, she has now learned to direct her own destiny by not allowing herself to wallow in depression and self-pity and by taking action against the stagnation she feels. This is not an easy task for someone whose attitude toward fate is passive. Only once before had Ricarda taken the reins of her life into her own hands: when she had left Germany ten years earlier. Now she is again leaving the security of home and friends, but this time for a much different reason. Her passionate nature and creative drive, her

being, were suffering. There was nothing left in Zurich any-
more that could stimulate her and, thus, she decided on an
uncertain future in Bremen:

Kämpfe, Mühen und Erschütterungen aller Art
standen mir bevor, aber gewonnen hatte ich doch
das stürmische Leben, das ich vermisst hatte und
zu dem das Schicksal mich drängte. (p. 229)

At this point in the "Autobiographische Schriften"
Ricarda's vita, from her dissertation of 1891, appears. It
is an extremely brief autobiographical sketch, dealing pri-
marily with her educational background, to which she added a
sincere acknowledgement. The editors of Ricarda's "Auto-
biographische Schriften" were quite clever in inserting this
seemingly unimportant piece of writing immediately after
"Frühling in der Schweiz". In doing so, they provided the
perfect summation and closing to a particular phase in
Ricarda's life, which she immortalized in many of her
writings. Else Hoppe, in her book on Ricarda, elaborates on
some of those writings, thereby illustrating that even
Ricarda's creative works were autobiographical:

Gross wie das Glück, das ihr in der Schweiz
widerfuhr, ist der Dank, den Ricarda Huch der
Gastheimat in ihrem Werk zu vielen Malen abge-
stattet hat. Abgesehen von der Feier, die sie
der Hochgebirgslandschaft in einer ganzen Reihe
von Gedichten angedeihen lässt, spielt die
Schweiz als Land der Sehnsucht in dem Ursleuroman
eine bedeutsame Rolle und bildet in dem Roman
"Vita somnium breve" den Schauplatz der Ereig-
nisse. Den Helden des Romans, Michael Unger,
lässt die Dichterin erleben, was sie selbst
erlebt hat: ein Studium in Zürich, der "Stadt
der Jugend und der Hoffnung", und viele Episoden,

die ihr in der Wirklichkeit begegnet waren, sind in die Dichtung hineingewoben.¹

In the fall of 1896 Ricarda arrived in Bremen. Although she loved Zurich, she knew it was time for her to leave and that she needed a change. Her job in Bremen required fewer hours and less responsibility of her, since she would be lecturing to women instead of to children. This left her more time and energy for writing. The only drawback was that Bremen was close to Braunschweig, and thus would make it all the more tempting for Ricarda and Richard to want to see each other. But Ricarda's need for a change was too great to let this stop her:

Das Gefühl und die Notwendigkeit einer Änderung überwogen; was ich vor einigen Jahren für unmöglich gehalten hatte, ereignete sich, dass ich freiwillig meine Stellung aufgab und die Schweiz verliess. (p. 231)

Whereas a few years earlier she would never have imagined that she could leave Switzerland, she now sees this as a desirable and necessary undertaking.

Of the two women who founded the lyceum in Bremen where Ricarda was to teach, one embodied something of the same spirit toward life as Ricarda did:

Sie war blond, hell, fröhlich und offen, [...] sie strahlte Leben und Freude aus, schien . . . das Leben zu geniessen [...] Jeden Augenblick vollegfüllt zu erleben, darauf kam es ihr an. (pp. 232-33)

¹Hoppe, p. 78

And this is exactly what Ricarda wanted: to experience life to the utmost. As a result, her relationship with Richard resumed. Richard had finally decided to leave his family, and Ricarda's dream was about to come true. The man whom she had loved for so many years was about to be hers, and she his. At the last moment, however, Richard changed his mind again. He simply could not bring himself to make the final break with his family--he loved his children too much to cause them such pain. It is at this point that it dawns on Ricarda how painful the whole situation must have been for Richard. Up until now she had only been concerned with how she had felt and the suffering she was experiencing. Never had she given a moment's thought to what the affair might have been doing to Richard and his family. She is surprised that she had never realized this before. For once Ricarda is not wrapped up in herself. She realizes that there are other people involved who have also suffered greatly. This newly gained understanding reflects a Ricarda who was overcoming a selfish preoccupation with her own feelings. Another realization, and equally as important, also reflects a new person emerging. Ricarda saw this affair in a completely new light:

Diese Liebe war seit dreizehn Jahren der Kern
meines Lebens gewesen, ich hatte an sie geglaubt
. . . Ich hatte mein Gewissen einem Trugbild
geopfert. (p. 235)

Her love for Richard had been an illusion, a farce, part of her dream world. She had finally faced reality, but this

only increased her suffering. Instead of succumbing to her emotions, though, she once again roused herself to action: "Ich musste mich abfinden mit dem, was nicht zu ändern war. Es wurde mir klar, dass, wenn ich weiterleben wollte, ich mich ans Leben anpassen musste" (p. 235). Ricarda had such a vitality for life that she was determined to carry on:

Sie war unzerbrechlich, weil der Reichtum ihres Wesens und besonders die Verbundenheit mit dem Leben als solchem [...] ihr immer neue Ansatzpunkte zeigten, von denen aus es sich lohnte zu leben.¹

The negative experience with Richard not only made her stronger, but also made her aware of the sufferings of others. With the realization that she was vulnerable, she became more receptive to those around her. The rude awakening she had experienced caused her to see reality more clearly and to grasp life all the more intensely. Although she felt completely destroyed emotionally, she was able to see that her life would go on and that she had to make the best of it. She hung onto life just as the characters in her writings did, with all its pain, refusing to find comfort in the thought of life in the hereafter.² Most important had been, and still was, to live life to the fullest:

¹Hoppe, p. 201

²Gottlieb, p. 47

Wir sollen nicht für irgend etwas leben--sei es eine Pflicht, eine Idee, ein Gefühl, oder auch ein Mensch--sondern wir sollen durch alles leben. Das sei unser erstes und heiligstes Streben: zu leben.¹

Nothing lasts forever.

Das Leben ist überschwenglich schön [...] Aber das Leben ist auch nur ein kurzer Traum, vergänglich und schmerzlich in seiner Vergänglichkeit.²

These could well have been Ricarda's own words, describing the Romantic experience of "Vergehen", in which everything--even the truest and most loyal love--eventually dies and makes way for something new. Not even the most genuine emotion is steadfast and everlasting. Even the greatest passion eventually dies out.

Several weeks later Richard wrote to Ricarda declaring his love for her all over again. Ricarda's reaction to this was realistic, almost hard. Her pride had been greatly wounded. She found it impossible to start up a relationship again which had ended so abruptly and horribly. In her response to Richard's request, her determination to finally put an end to this impossible relationship is evident:

Ich hatte mit Aufbietung meiner Kräfte die Flamme, die Lüge, aus welcher mein Leben gewesen war, erstickt. Nun wollte ich nicht wieder daran rühren. (p. 236)

¹Gottlieb, p. 49

²Ricarda Huch. Persönlichkeit und Werk in Darstellung ihrer Freunde (Berlin: Atlantis-Verlag, 1934), p. 96.

In her decision not to get back together with Richard she took fate into her own hands rather than allow herself to be controlled by it. Spring had arrived and she felt renewed: "Wie die Bäume sich belaubten, fühlte ich auch wieder Lebensströme quellen, fühlte das Leben doppelt neu" (p. 236).

Ricarda's close bond with nature is again apparent. Just as a rainy day could depress her, so, too, could a beautiful spring day make her emotions soar. All Romantics felt such a bond with nature. For them, it was the embodiment of God, and close emotional and physical proximity with it was closeness to the Absolute. In this respect, earthly problems took on their proper insignificance.

Ricarda's highly agitated emotional state, resulting from her break with Richard and from the effects of spring, caused her to fall in love with a young Bremen man. She realized that her passion had not diminished as a result of her experience with Richard, but that it burned as strongly as ever and was the reason she so quickly became involved with another man: "das Feuer, das so lichterloh gebrannt hat, kann nicht plötzlich erlöschen, es flackert weiter und sucht irgendeine Nahrung" (p. 236). Although this newly found love made Ricarda feel happier, she was dissatisfied and bored with her job in Bremen. She needed something to make her feel more directly involved with life--someone whom she could truly love and not just use to mend her broken heart. Being a creative individual, she was able to utilize

her sufferings as inducements to write, finding some solace in this undertaking. Since there was nothing keeping her in Bremen, not even her new boyfriend, she returned to Zurich and devoted her time to writing. Ich "wollte mich nun der Tätigkeit ganz hingeben," she recollected, "zu der ich mich berufen fühlte" (p. 237). She understood that she must not allow love to dominate her life if she was to keep on living and, in her search for other values, she had turned her attention to writing. The book she was working on helped her to get to know herself. It dealt with Romanticism, and she saw the essential characteristic within herself to be the same as that of Romanticism--a "Zerspaltung menschlicher Einheit."¹ To her, Romanticism represented a constant pull between opposing forces, such as in nature's pull between the north and south poles:

Der Süden [ist] also alles, was gefährlich,
lockend und verderbend ist, das dunkle Reich der
Leidenschaften und der Sinne, des Rauschs, des
Traums, der Unbewusstheit. Der Norden aber
Wachheit, Klarheit und Bewusstheit.²

The southern force had been the stronger of the two so far in her life and in her affair with Richard. Her passions and her dreams had led her to an immoral relationship with her cousin, and she had ended up living a lie for many years.

¹Persönlichkeit und Werk, p. 90

²Persönlichkeit und Werk, p. 91

The northern force had just begun to gain a stronger foothold within her. This had shown her the lie she had been living and the need for values in life other than love. Love was still important, but not the passionate selfish kind that inevitably led to disaster. What she now wanted from love was the Romantic ideal, which acknowledges

'eine schöne' Synthese von Sinnlichkeit und Geistigkeit [...] die alles Körperliche als Ausdruck des Seelischen ansieht [...] wobei die Geliebte die Mittlerin zwischen dem Geliebten und dem Universum, der Gottheit wird.¹

This would be possible, she believed, by bringing her polarities into balance. Ricarda's view of love has changed. From an all-consuming, purely passionate, physical, selfish experience, she now sees it as an intensely spiritual one. But how was she supposed to bring her polarities into balance, how was she supposed to mend her own "Zerspaltung"? Only "durch äusserste Steigerung des Willens und der Empfindung".² Ricarda's highest goal was to achieve a blending of the self, to harmonize all the conflicting aspects of her personality. If she wanted to achieve this she would have to work very hard. Since writing was her

¹Eva Gillischewski, "Das Schicksalsproblem bei Ricarda Huch im Zusammenhang ihrer Weltanschauung," Germanische Studien, Heft 35 (Berlin 1925; Kraus Reprint Limited: Nendeln/Liechtenstein, 1967), pp. 38-39.

²Gillischewski, p. 31

chosen means, she devoted herself totally to it.

Ricarda's desire to forge ahead was due in part to the influence Caroline Schlegel had on her. Caroline Schlegel was regarded by Ricarda as a great Romantic figure. Ricarda no longer agreed with the Romantic concept of woman as a passive ideal and, therefore, lacked sympathy for the passive attitude toward life that these women displayed.¹ In Caroline, she found a kindred spirit. Although both she and Caroline possessed the passivity of the female Romantic in that they believed in fate, their lives were filled with action. Caroline's life, as Ricarda's, was one of turmoil and struggle but, unlike the passive Romantic stereotype, she

rouses herself to action and doggedly begins life again, thinking only of the problems of the moment. Although Ricarda [...] is in no way compromised as Caroline is, she is faced with the choice of either succumbing to her emotions or beginning life anew.²

Again, Ricarda has taken fate into her own hands. She realized that allowing herself to be controlled totally by her emotions was dangerous. If she wanted to press onward, she had to learn to temper her emotions with objectivity. She was wise enough to know that she neither could nor would completely cut off her emotions and that, therefore, she had

¹Sanders, p. 3

²Sanders, p. 8

to cultivate a more realistic approach to life:

She has cast aside considerations imposed upon her by her emotional life and determines to devote her life to a more worthy goal, where both the Romantic and the realist have a place.¹

The determination of both women goaded them to action, driving them to reconcile emotion and reality to the point that their lives became a "Kampf", a constant struggle to fuse the two extremes.

In her quest for inner harmony, Ricarda was also influenced by another Romantic figure. Rather than advocating the image of the ideal man and the ideal woman, Ricarda was inspired by Friedrich Schlegel into achieving the image of the undivided being:

"Was ist hässlicher als überladene Weiblichkeit; was ist so ekelhaft als übertriebene Männlichkeit, die in unseren Sitten, unseren Meinungen, ja auch in unserer besseren Kunst herrschen . . . Man muss den Charakter des Geschlechts keineswegs noch mehr übertreiben, sondern vielmehr durch starke Gegengewichte zu mildern suchen . . . Nur sanfte Männlichkeit, nur selbständige Weiblichkeit ist die echte, wahre und schöne . . ." ²

Above all, though, Ricarda's goal was simply to carry on as best she could. Rather than console herself with the Romantic quest for infinity, she hung onto life with all its pain, refusing to find comfort in the thought of a life in the

¹Sanders, pp. 32-33

²Thomas Mann, "Zum sechzigsten Geburtstag Ricarda Huchs," Thomas Mann. Gesammelte Werke in dreizehn Bänden, 2nd ed. (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer Verlag, 1974), X, pp. 430-31 (Friedrich Schlegel is quoted by Ricarda Huch).

hereafter, and believed that: "Wir sollen nicht für irgend etwas leben [...] sondern wir sollen durch alles leben."¹

Such an excessive passion for living was a direct result of a personal yearning for something which was unattainable to her¹--fulfillment in love.

Throughout her years in Zurich and Bremen, Ricarda had been concerned only with herself. Her studies and her relationship with Richard occupied her mind constantly. With the final break of this relationship, a different Ricarda started to emerge:

Die Erschütterung, die ihr Sein erfahren hatte, machte es aufnahmebereiter für die leidvollen Seiten des Lebens; an der eigenen Leiderfahrung wuchs ihr Verständnis für fremde Not [...] Letzte Schleier der Kindlichkeit waren ihr zwar unsanft von den Augen genommen, aber der Blick griff nun umfassender um sich und drang tiefer in die Dinge ein.²

The self-portrait now is that of a determined and independent young woman who sets goals for herself and then musters her courage and energy in order to attain them. She no longer allows fate to determine every move she makes. Little by little she learns to control her own life. Her desire to support herself and ease the tensions caused by an illicit affair led her to university and a career in

¹Gottlieb, p. 49

²Hoppe, pp. 201-02

Switzerland. Her desire to find herself caused her to quit her jobs and make a new life by devoting herself to writing.

From a passive, dreamy-eyed, emotional being, Ricarda has developed into an assertive woman who has decided what she wants out of life and has gone after it. Although still very much the Romantic figure, necessity has caused another side of her nature to come to the forefront. The self-portrait now reveals these two opposing natures. There is conflict in the image, as well as the struggle to achieve balance, or harmony. There is also, however, a newly formed strength that has become apparent. This strength proves to be invaluable as Ricarda continues through life.

Shortly after returning to Zurich in 1897, Ricarda decided to accompany Marie Baum on a trip to Vienna. This signalled the start of another phase in her life. Although Ricarda lived in Vienna for only a short while, it was there that she met her future husband, Ermanno Ceconi. This encounter was to bestow upon her "die folgenreichste Begegnung ihres Lebens".¹

¹Hoppe, p. 202

Passion, Fantasy and Reality

In the pension where she stayed while in Vienna, Ricarda met Ermanno Ceconi. Among the first things she noticed about him were the matronly sway of his walk, the fine shape of his head and face, his high wide forehead, bent nose, and beautiful mouth "der weniger für das materielle Geschäft des Essens und Trinkens als zum Sprechen, Lächeln geschaffen schien" (p. 245). Although physically not a particularly handsome man, Ricarda found individual traits and his regal bearing attractive. She could also not help but notice that there was something lonely about him. From what the other guests told her about him, she found out "dass er bald Entrüstung, bald Ärger, bald Bewunderung und Beifall erregte und dass er immer originell und eigenartig war" (p. 245). How could she not find such an interesting person attractive?

Unfortunately, Ricarda did not feel comfortable in this pension. Since she had become used to the atmosphere of physical and emotional steadiness and respectability in Switzerland, the pension in Vienna impressed her as being "ein wenig schlüpfzig [...] so dass ich zunächst ein leichtes Grausen nicht los wurde" (p. 246). Here, again, the ever-present horror in Ricarda's life makes an appearance. Another factor that disturbed her here was the treatment given a sickly and dying mother by her two daughters.

Ricarda, however, said nothing to them because she did not want to get involved in an unpleasant situation. It was important for her to keep her life and emotions on an even keel. "Ich war so wie jemand," she wrote, "der ein sauberes weisses Kleid trägt und immer in Sorge ist, es könne schmutzig werden" (p. 246). The best policy, she believed, was not to become involved in other people's affairs. If she kept to herself, her own life would run smoothly. At one point during her sojourn in Vienna, however, Ricarda found it necessary to see a dentist, something which she greatly feared. Ceconi came highly recommended by the other guests in the pension, and it was as a result of this that Ricarda paid him a visit. Unwittingly, a relationship developed between them and, little by little, her feelings of affection for him grew.

One evening some of the pension guests asked Ricarda to read Ceconi's palm--a talent she possessed--in order to determine whether or not he was a liar. Ceconi, it appears, had the habit of greatly embellishing his stories. What Ricarda was able to determine she couldn't remember, but the impression his hand made on her she would never forget:

das Erlebnis, das ich im Gedächtnis behalten habe, war, die braune Hand in meiner zu halten, die mir so lieb wurde und die mit keiner anderen vergleichbar war. An den Linien [...] fiel einem besonders auf, dass die Herzenslinie stark und gerade waagrecht durchging [...] und [...] eine Liebe bezeichnet, die das Geliebte beglücken will [...] Es ging mir durch den Sinn, dass es schön sein muss, so geliebt zu werden [...] Vielleicht waren es weniger die Linien als der allgemeine

Charakter der Hand, der mich bewegte. Sie war kräftig und männlich, mittelgross, schlank, fest; aber in der höchst persönlichen Form, die sie von allen anderen Händen unterschied, drückte sich Kindliches und Gütiges aus. Es war eine hilfsbereite Hand, bereit zu helfen, wie ein Vogel bereit ist, sein Nest zu bauen; ihre Natur war so. (pp. 250-51)

These impressions reveal glimpses of the romantic, passionate and especially sensual side of Ricarda's nature. Although she had not long ago decided to suppress these qualities, the fact that they still existed could not be denied. While reading the lines on Ceconi's palm, she also made reference to her own heart line and what it indicated:

Die meinige [...] deutet [...] auf Naturen, die den geliebten Gegenstand an sich reissen wollen, um ihn zu besitzen [...] ich war wirklich so, dass ein direkter Impuls, wenn ich liebte, war, den Geliebten an mich zu reissen. (p. 250)

Passionate, impulsive and possessive in matters of love, Ricarda always had to satisfy her own needs. This was also evident when she found she had to move to a room directly across the hall from the dying woman. Her first concern was not for the woman, but for how she could avoid coming into contact with her. Fortunately Manno, as she now called Ceconi, lived on the same floor in the pension and saw to it that he took care of the woman's needs. Ricarda, however, feared the time that he would not hear the woman's cries and when she, therefore, would have to help her. "Davor graute mir," Ricarda wrote, "abgesehen davon, dass ich unerfahren und unbeholfen in solchen Dingen war" (p. 252). Ricarda's lack of desire to help those in need might be interpreted as

callousness, but this is not so. She was merely being true to her nature, not wanting to become involved in other people's problems, so that her own life could remain happy, carefree and uncomplicated. She was still "the perennially youthful, gloriously uninvolved girl"¹ of her Zurich years. Her fear of death--of all the dark, negative, "grausige" forces--affected her too strongly to want to confront it. Thus, her avoidance of the dying woman could also be interpreted as an act of self-preservation. She did not want to become paralyzed by this fear and hoped that by ignoring it, it would not touch her life.

In direct contrast to her is Manno. Ricarda noticed how he was always ready to help, not only the old dying woman but also anyone who truly needed it. But she also noted that he was no saint:

Er war kein Heiliger, der alle Menschen liebte und für alle sein Blut vergiessen mochte; aber wenn er jemand leiden sah, musste er helfen und liebte ihn in dem Augenblicke, wo er half. (p. 251)

She saw Manno quite clearly. He did not love mankind but had compassion for those who suffered. Although he was repulsed by the sight of the old woman, he was always there when she needed him. As Ricarda learned more about him she discovered that he had suffered greatly both emotionally and physically during his childhood. His mother had died when he

¹Sanders, p. 15

was only eight, and his father had married a very beautiful but uneducated, lazy, greedy and unscrupulous young woman who treated Manno and his siblings like a wicked stepmother. Ricarda got very upset that Manno's father had allowed such treatment of his children. She saw him as a father "der seine Kinder nicht nur nicht verteidigte, sondern sogar im Banne einer blinden Leidenschaft misshandelte" (p. 253). She was also amazed that Manno did not hold this against his father but loved him all the more for it. Manno, even as a child, had understood his father's weakness, confusion and helplessness, and it was simply his nature to love those who suffered. Besides, he was not so perfect himself, as Ricarda soon discovered: "er konnte vulkanische Heftigkeitsausbrüche haben" (p. 254). Physically, Manno had suffered much. While still quite young he had burned his entire body. After some years this had caused a skin disease to develop, which lasted several more years and required his entire body to be covered with a foul-smelling salve and wrapped in bandages. Ricarda's heart went out to him as he told her of these things, and she discovered that she herself suffered as a result of this. Her reaction is noteworthy: she has become involved in the sufferings of another. Even more, she has fallen in love with him. This was not the passionate and physical love that she had felt for Richard, but an entirely different kind:

Ich liebte den einsamen Jungen mit den mandelförmig geschnittenen, opalig schimmernden Augen,

die so überirdisch und so schelmisch blicken konnten [...] Es war das erste Mal, dass ich an einem lebenden Menschen Augen sah, wie die Heiligen Giottos oder die Engel Fra Angelicos sie haben. Die Augen aber konnten auch gefährlich stechen, so wie dieser Kindermund auch spotten und höhnen konnte und wie in dieser Seele ebenso stark wie der Trieb, anzubeten und zu bewundern, der Trieb, selbst das Geliebte zu verletzen und zu entheiligen, war. (p. 255)

She was not blinded by passion, as she had been with Richard, but recognized Manno's negative points as well as his praiseworthy ones. What was unique about her love for Manno was that she almost seemed to worship him. She didn't see him as a saint, however, but as someone who had suffered and who, as a result, could not help but reach out and feel compassion for those who also suffered. Compassion was an emotion that was foreign to Ricarda. She had come from a family that had been passionate, frivolous, wasteful and unconcerned and that, whether rich or poor, had always felt itself to be on top of things (pp. 255-56). She realized that Manno also possessed some of these qualities but that he had also experienced the horrors in life and, therefore, saw matters in a different light. Through him she came to understand

dass die Anforderungen des täglichen Lebens zu schwer drücken können, als dass man nach dem Schönen verlangen könnte; die Sorge um das Notwendige zehrt alle Kräfte auf. (p. 257)

She noticed this, for example, on a visit to an art gallery, where she was astonished by Manno's perceptions and the remarks he made regarding the works they viewed.

Aber er war durch diesen Besuch mehr gereizt als angeregt; ich bemerkte, dass er sogar darunter litt. Die Atmosphäre der Ausstellung versetzte

ihn in eine Welt, die im schlimmsten Falle voll Schönrednerei, Aufgeblasenheit und Müßiggang war, die im besten über der düsteren Welt der entbehrenden, hoffnungslosen Menge stolz und gleichgültig thronte. Es kam der gequälte Ausdruck in sein Gesicht, der mir ins Herz schnitt. (p. 257)

When Ricarda saw Manno suffering she also suffered, even though she didn't quite understand his feelings. It was evident to Ricarda that they were two very different people. It was Manno's nature to be melancholy, and this became more profound whenever he saw beauty and happiness around him, whereas she thrived on all the good things life had to offer. Yet, outwardly, Manno rarely appeared sombre or sad and was constantly full of surprisingly witty observations. When he sang, his voice did not betray the melancholia nor "Zwiespältigkeit und Lebensfeindlichkeit seines Wesens: sie war männlich, metallisch und hatte einen freudigen, mitreissenden Klang" (p. 259). Manno could not carry a tune, but his own renditions were often more beautiful than the actual melodies of the songs. Ricarda attributed this to the fact that his creative powers were greater than his receptive ones. Ricarda loved this complex individual who was so unlike her, yet also quite like her. He was the dark, passionate southern "Lebensmensch" who, although inwardly often melancholy, wore a cheerful mask in public to conceal his disposition toward tenderness and his capacity for suffering. He was compassionate and always ready to help those who needed it. Ricarda, on the other hand, was the happy-go-lucky northern

"Reflexionsmensch" who loved beauty and a comfortable, unruffled life. Yet, she was also a complex and passionate individual, who constantly tried to achieve balance and harmony within herself. This had occupied her ever since the end of her affair with Richard. Passion, fantasy and reality comprised her and Manno's relationship. "Er lebte in seiner eigenen Welt;" Ricarda explained of Manno,

was aus der wirklichen in die seinige eindrang, störte und quälte ihn, ausser wenn es mit der seinigen so weit harmonisierte, dass er es sich aneignen konnte. (p. 259)

Ricarda also lived in a little world of her own, but she had experienced some rude awakenings as well and believed that, as a result of what she had learned, she would be able to lessen Manno's pain. She believed that his world and hers "einen Akkord gaben, der ihm wohltat, wenn auch im einzelnen Fremdes und Störendes zu überwinden war" (p. 259). Each could benefit from the other in a spiritual and revitalizing manner: she would try to bring happiness into his life and, in return, she could perhaps obtain some balance and harmony in hers. She realized the limitations of their relationship, but she loved him nonetheless: "Wenn er bezaubert war, wie sehr war ich es. Ich war gar nicht verliebt; aber ich war behext, und ich liebte ihn" (p. 259). Springtime brought out not only Ricarda's passionate Romantic nature but also Manno's, yet, neither of them was blinded by their emotions. Their attraction to each other was bewitching, an irrational

pull of their sensual urges that they were unable to resist.¹ However, both were realistic and aware that there were a lot of disadvantages to their relationship with respect to their different backgrounds, cultures, social customs and ways of thinking. It didn't bother Ricarda in the least that she still hadn't ended her engagement to a young man in Bremen. She would simply end that relationship, assured in her belief "dass Liebesenttäuschung einem Manne nicht das Herz bricht; er findet jederzeit leicht eine andere" (p. 260). Her fiancé in Bremen seemed much like Manno himself, and the effect he had on Ricarda was also similar. Obviously, though, there was nothing of the bewitching quality in this relationship that there was in the one with Manno. Ricarda's feelings for Manno bordered on the spiritual and this relationship, although inherent with many disadvantages, proved to be much stronger and more fulfilling.

Ricarda believed that their social and cultural differences could be worked out in time, but their personal differences did not lend themselves so easily to solutions. Ricarda was gregarious by nature and easily found people with whom she could share interesting conversations. Unfortunately, this was not possible with Manno, who, although

¹Sanders, p. 31 (Sanders applies this description to characters in one of Ricarda's literary works).

himself a sociable sort, found Ricarda to be pedantic and long-winded. Coupled with this was the fact that Manno believed that a woman's place was in the home, and that a wife should never go out without her husband. Naturally, Ricarda would never agree to this. These and many other such problems plagued their relationship. What, then, did Ricarda see in Manno? She saw a goodness, a holiness, in him that no one else in her life had possessed. It was only through Manno that she ever experienced "das Christliche und Göttliche in einem Menschen" (p. 261):

Er war weit davon entfernt, bewusst liebevoll zu sein, er dachte nicht daran, die Menschen zu lieben, er beteuerte oft, dass er sie hasste, und wenn man sah, wie er sie durchschaute, wie ihre Schwächen und Fehler ihm entgensprangen, [...] so glaubte man es ihm; aber sowie er jemand sah, der arm und leidend oder schwach und alt oder in irgendeiner Weise hilfsbedürftig war, riss es ihn hin, er liebte dann den Betreffenden, und wäre es sein ärgster Feind gewesen. Er dachte nie, wie ich zum Beispiel getan hätte: du musst hier zugreifen, helfen; er tat es von selbst, zart und sorgsam wie ein Vater oder eine Mutter. Er war gleichsam besessen von Gott, und das war es, glaube ich, was mir den Eindruck des Göttlichen so stark zum Bewusstsein brachte. (pp. 261-62)

It was his spiritual quality of unconditional compassion that drew Ricarda to him and that gave their relationship an "unearthly" value. Yet, eventually she became so convinced of the impossibility of a successful union with him that she returned to Zurich. At first, it seems that Ricarda has made a rational decision. A relationship between two such strong personalities would only be a constant battle for dominance. However, what appears to be an act based on a realistic

assessment of the situation simply demonstrates Ricarda's passionate nature: she ran away from the man she loved because she didn't want to become involved in what she considered a doomed relationship. She didn't want to dirty her beautiful white dress. There were too many problems in the relationship already, and she wanted so much for her life to run smoothly. She didn't want this relationship to do to her what the one with Richard had done. She had decided long ago to extinguish the flame of passion, and no longer wanted to rekindle it (p. 236). But the spark had ignited. A remarkable change had taken place in Ricarda. She was no longer the uninvolved, unaffected person she had once been, but found herself to be very miserable in Zurich. She was unable to feel the ecstasy and pride that usually resulted from having overcome a hurdle, or having accomplished a feat, and regained her freedom. She couldn't stop thinking about Manno or her feelings for him and, astonishingly, didn't want to be free of them. Through Manno she had learned to be receptive toward people once again, and this set the stage for opening herself up to their sufferings. Since Manno supported his family, Ricarda decided to pay them a visit to reassure them that they would in no way lack financially if she and Manno were to marry. This was not easy for Ricarda, for she knew that Manno's family was poor and that she would have to face their hardships and misery. Before arriving in Florence, where they lived, Ricarda spent a few days in Genoa with

some acquaintances. Here, in the climate, landscape and architecture of Italy, Ricarda felt at home:

Die rückhaltlos Licht und Wärme ausstrahlende Sonne, die Pracht der Architektur, die Fülle, das unberechnend Reichliche, verbunden mit einer vornehmen Strenge von Form und Gesetzlichkeit, die in der Schönheit liegt, schien mir [...] das Selbstverständlichste zu sein; hier, schien es mir, hatte ich meine eigentliche Heimat gefunden.
(pp. 262-63)

Ricarda saw herself and her relationship with Manno embodied and reflected here. It seemed to her that the best parts of the northern and southern influences were combined in this place. In Florence, however, these impressions vanished as she arrived in the poor section of the city and met Manno's impoverished family. Ricarda was deeply affected by the suffering she witnessed there. She finally understood why Manno was often so very disturbed whenever he encountered beauty. She saw how "wesenslos und stumpf" beauty could become in the face of human wretchedness. His entire life, Manno had struggled against such misery and failure himself. Because he had been physically weak and sickly ever since childhood, he had often found it impossible to maintain the energy he needed in his struggle. He feared failure so much that he had even tried to commit suicide once. Outwardly he had always appeared a picture of strength, but "er war im Gegenteil sehr verletzlich, am meisten durch alles innerlich oder äusserlich Hässliche, Gemeine, Kleinliche" (p. 266). Ricarda was convinced that she had the energy to make their relationship work, even though it would be easy to become discouraged

in the face of what seemed insurmountable odds. She was determined, though, to follow through with her decision, and on July 9, 1898 they were married in Vienna.

Ricarda and Manno rented a small summer cottage outside Vienna. It stood near the main house on a large piece of property owned by an elderly couple. The granddaughter of this couple was physically unattractive and, as a result, her grandmother had decided to at least teach her to become a good cook. Once, when this girl had inadvertently ruined a dish, the grandmother became so enraged that Ricarda simply couldn't just stand by but actually got involved in the argument, feeling pity for the poor girl. Ricarda really has changed. Just months before, while living in the pension where she met Manno, Ricarda had felt that it was none of her business to reprimand two women for the terrible treatment they gave their dying mother. Another change in Ricarda is evidenced by the fact that her life with Manno was a happy and fulfilling time for her, since her impressions of it were quite positive. She wrote: "Es ist mir so, als wäre in dem Garten in der Iglaseegasse immer sonniges Sommerwetter gewesen" (p. 270). The weather is a constant theme in Ricarda's works and life, and is closely connected to the way she feels. True, she had been happy to a certain extent before meeting Manno, but she had also felt unfulfilled. Now, with the realization of love, Ricarda believed that she finally had what she'd been missing.

The offer of a better paying dental position led Manno and Ricarda to move to the port city of Trieste. Ricarda's reaction upon their arrival was one of utter disappointment. Physically, the atmospheric pressure here caused her to experience some difficulty in breathing. Mentally, Trieste did not possess the attractive Italian style and beauty that she had expected but, instead, looked shabby and neglected. Even the ocean didn't have the power and strength, "das Elementarische", that she had hoped for (p. 270). The Scirocco made the summers intolerably hot and dry, but Ricarda loved the Bora:

Die Bora, den berüchtigten Nordwind von Trieste, liebte ich etwa so sehr, wie ich den Scirocco fürchtete. Dann erbebte diese brütende, verstaubte Stadt, der Sturm raste durch die faulig riechenden Gassen, und das träge Meer bäumte sich hoch auf in hohen zackigen Wellen, die schwarz und blank waren; es war ein dämonischer Jubel in der Luft. (p. 283)

Ricarda's emotions soared with the weather. She was and always would be a child of the elements. Even on the night of her daughter's birth the weather was in tune with her. While Ricarda was "halb rasend vor Schmerzen [...] rollte während der ganzen Zeit ein schweres Gewitter" (p. 279).

Trieste had come to play an important role in the changes that Ricarda was undergoing. For one thing, she had become pregnant and Manno, as a result, became much more attentive and patient. He was no longer passionately jealous of Ricarda's former boyfriends, because the prospect of a child made their relationship so completely different from

any previous affairs Ricarda had had. Her pregnancy made it necessary to look for a more permanent place of their own. Manno surprised her with a furnished apartment one day, and through Ricarda's reaction the change she has undergone becomes obvious:

Sehr viel Geld konnten wir nicht ausgeben, also waren die Möbel und die Gebrauchsgegenstände nicht so gut und geschmackvoll, wie ich sie gewählt haben würde; aber wenn die ganze Wohnung auch nah an das Armeleutehafte grenzte, so war es doch unsere Wohnung, und ich freute mich, und schon Mannos Freude über meine Freude hätte mich glücklich gemacht. (p. 272)

Financially they were not well-off. In fact, Ricarda felt that they were poor. Yet, she was happy with the little they had and was determined to make the best of things. Noteworthy is the joy Ricarda felt in being able to make Manno happy with her pregnancy and satisfaction with life. Manno had also arranged for a housekeeper, and it was through Giovanna that Ricarda came to know and understand what real poverty and suffering were and how transitory life was. While the two cooked together Giovanna would tell stories about her life, thereby opening Ricarda's eyes to situations she had never imagined:

Durch diese Frau erfuhr das bereits aufgelockerte soziale Gefühl der Dichterin eine starke Steigerung [...] Das Mitgefühl für das Elend der Masse wurde um so reger in ihr, als ihr Herz empfindlich geworden war durch den eigenen Existenzkampf. Gleichzeitig fühlte sie sich in steigendem Masse von der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft unterschieden, der sie entstammte.¹

¹Hoppe, p. 206

Not only had Ricarda become compassionate, but she had also gained a new perspective of her own social background. She was now critical of the bourgeoisie and its lack of understanding for the seriousness of life and work.¹ For Ricarda, earning money had become a necessity. Because she and Manno had to get by on a very small amount, her writings had become a source of income for the family and were not merely a hobby for her.

Ricarda had always been happy about her pregnancy because it had made Manno so happy. Not until shortly before the baby's birth, however, did she feel any joy for herself. When her daughter was finally born, Ricarda loved her with a passion that she described as having "eine Art Furor dabei, etwas vom Wahnsinn der Leidenschaft" (p. 279). She saw the realization of God in the creation of this child and, as a result, became more preoccupied with thoughts in this direction. She even undertook a sort of pilgrimage:

Bei Görz [...] gab es einen Heiligen Berg, von dem ich durch Giovanna wusste, dass man dorthin wallfahrte, um etwas von Gott und der Heiligen Jungfrau zu erbitten und für etwas zu danken. Nachdem ich viel davon gehört hatte, setzte sich bei mir der Gedanke fest, ich müsse auch eine solche Wallfahrt zugunsten der Gesundheit meines Kindes unternehmen. (p. 286)

Ricarda had never been a religious person but, through the birth of her child and her maternal concern for its well-being, she needed to believe in a merciful spiritual force

¹Hoppe, p. 206

that transcended the misery of human existence. This belief comforted her in her thoughts and prayers for her daughter, but not in other aspects of life. Her exposure to poverty, suffering and death in Triest overshadowed whatever mercy she saw this force as having. Rather than long for death to put an end to their misery, the sick and impoverished desperately clung to life. Because of personal experiences, Ricarda could understand this. Her desire to experience life, despite emotional and physical setbacks, was just as strong. What she didn't understand, however, was why some people were more fortunate than others. Was this transcendental power that governed divine or demonic? More often than not, she believed that it was irrational and ruled without regard to individual guilt or innocence, even though at the back of her mind she felt that there was some connection between the individual and what fate had in store for him.¹ Some people would always be less fortunate than others. This was life--fate. Ricarda had always been one of the fortunate ones, but her exposure to this other side of life had left its effect on her. However, her thoughts did not develop to the point of desiring a greater interest in traditional religion in order to help her understand fate. Ricarda was in harmony with nature, a child of the elements, and the Romantics found the Absolute in this nature.

¹Hoppe, p. 224

Ricarda had always prided herself on her good health. The birth of her daughter, however, which had been an extremely difficult one, weakened her physically to some extent. It was quite some time before Ricarda felt relatively well again. This weakened state had left her defenseless against an attack of measles and, not long afterwards, a virus. Health-wise she would never be the same as before, but this was not as important to her now as it once had been. Ricarda was no longer so very occupied with herself. She was now a mother, and this role was very satisfying to her. Her child had provided her with a bridge, a connection, to life which she had not possessed before. Having been concerned only with herself in the past, a sort of insulation against reality had formed around her. Her child had freed her from this form of isolation, but she had to make sacrifices as a result. As a mother, her responsibilities increased and time for herself decreased. She now had difficulty finding time to write, but through her experiences she discovered a joy that she had not known before--that of self-sacrifice:

Dass der Unterschied zwischen der verwöhnten Tochter des begüterten Hauses, die sie gewesen, und der verantwortlichen Hausfrau in beschränkten Verhältnissen, die sie geworden, ein schmerzhaft krasser war, wurde von ihr nicht beklagt. Weil die Aufgabe schwer war, lernte sie viel an ihr; weil sie Opfer bringen musste, wurde ihr der Wert, für den sie diese brachte, recht eigentlich erst teuer. Sie erfuhr an sich selber, dass die Familiengemeinschaft dem Ich Grenzen zieht, die es lehren, seine egoistischen Triebe zu überwinden, und dass die Einbusse an Freiheit, die es dadurch erleidet, aufgewogen wird durch die

Beglückung, die es im glückschaffenden Dienst für andere erfährt.¹

Ricarda derived happiness from her role as wife and mother. Because of the sacrifices she had to make, she valued her new role all the more. This was her new purpose in life, and she felt satisfied. Through the miracle of birth Ricarda had come to understand that there was a higher power that governed over all. It had provided her with a child that became a bridge connecting her to life more directly. In this way, she was able to draw herself out of her own little world and become more in touch with reality.

The Ceconis decided to move to Munich where Manno would be able to set up his own dental practice and Ricarda's business contacts with publishers would be much better. Life was not easy for them because of financial difficulties and the clashes of their personalities. Just as Manno could be full of compassion for a human being so, too, could he be filled with hate for that same person. Inevitably, he would take his feelings out on those closest to him. Ricarda was often his target, and one of these occasions is described by her:

Er kam mir dann vor wie eine Wespe, die langsam kreisend an den Punkt fliegt, wo ihr Stich am sichersten sitzen wird [...] Meistens gab Eifersucht den Anlass, nicht auf Gegenwärtiges, sondern auf Vergangenes, oder meine leidenschaftliche Liebe zu Busi, an der er für gewöhnlich seine Freude hatte, die ihn aber manchmal zum

¹Hoppe, p. 208

Zorn reizte. Einem solchen Anfall gegenüber war ich im Augenblick selbst erzürnt; aber wenn er vorübergebraust war, war ich beschämt. Ich sah dann ein, wodurch ich ihn gereizt haben konnte, und dass auch die peinigende Kälte, die ich seiner peinigenden Hitzigkeit entgegensetzte, geeignet war, ihn noch mehr zu erbittern. (p. 300)

The differences in their personalities, that is, the fact that they were opposites by nature, plus the fact that they were also both passionate, often caused friction in their relationship. Each one possessed qualities that the other loved and admired, but the basic opposition of the "northern" and "southern" personality precluded a peaceful relationship. Even when such conflicts arose, however, Ricarda could not overlook the constant love and helpfulness she received from Manno and the compassion he possessed. She was happy despite their differences, for, in truth, she felt much closer to life because of Manno. She also felt more peace within herself, for which Manno was also responsible. Ricarda had likened her life before meeting him to that of a volcano, her passions erupting and cooling like lava:

Die feurigen Zungen, die schrecklichen Narben zogen sich durch mein Leben, bald sichtbar, bald verschwunden, überwunden von unerschöpflichem Leben am Rande des Vulkans. Seit ich Manno kenne, lernte ich diese Nachbarschaft nicht ganz, aber doch fast vergessen. Die Tage in München und Grünwald kann ich als eine Zeit von Sonne der Jugend durchstrahlten Glücks betrachten und das unterirdische Rollen vergessen, das ich hie und da spürte, und die Flammen, die zuweilen aufzuckten. (pp. 311-12)

Since knowing Manno such turmoil had become rare. He had brought a good deal of peace and steady happiness to her

life. However, "das Grausige", which Ricarda had always regarded as a necessary evil in life, found its way even into this happy environment. At first it occurred in a purely objective way. During her childhood it had been the outhouse in her yard in Braunschweig. Now it again appeared as the outhouse, this time in Ricarda's home in Grünwald: "an diesem Tag begab es sich, dass von unten herauf in grossen Mengen ein kleines schleimiges Ungeziefer kroch, halb Wurm, halb Schnecke, die auf dem Sitz herumschlichen. Ich war vor Ekel wie gelähmt" (p. 305). It also occurred in her life in a very subjective way, first with Richard and then, as will be seen, with Manno. Initially, she only alluded to the deeper problems with Manno. Her life with him was still a "hübsche glatte Oberfläche" (p. 305). She didn't acknowledge the ripples that had begun to appear, preferring instead to believe that all was fine. This sounds very much like the Ricarda of old, who wanted her life to be uncomplicated and happy. Had her life with Manno, then, not really changed her that much at all? Not necessarily. It must be remembered that Ricarda has undergone changes as a result of marriage, motherhood and life in Triest. Her desire to feel closer to life had required her to make sacrifices, but she had done so gladly. She was much too satisfied with her life now to want it to change, and perhaps this was why she chose to ignore all the signs that pointed towards an impending dissolution of this world:

wir waren wie in einer glücklichen Insel im Weltall schwebend, umgrenzt von den schwarzen Zackenlinien der Tannenwälder, überwölbt von einem lichtblauen Himmel und reiner Hochland-schaft. Im Frühling blühten im Garten Kirschbäume, Apfel- und dann Birnbäume, es bauschte sich wolzig weiss in den Zweigen, ein Duftgewebe, das die Welt überirdisch verzauberte. Es entrückte das Leben und meine Seele aus der Wirklichkeit, ich empfand zuweilen nichts als das beglückende Stillestehn der Zeit. (p. 306)

For Ricarda this garden was full of the sights and smells, the memories, of her childhood. It transplanted her into a world that protected her, Manno and Busi from the real problems and pressures that existed around them. Here, time stood still. No wonder she didn't want to give it up. Ricarda is forever the Romantic, living in a world of her own creation because the real one was too painful.

Although Ricarda was happy in her role as wife and mother, she had suffered professionally while in Triest. In Munich she could more freely be herself and more fully realize her artistic potential. Here, it was easier for her to satisfy the needs of her mind as well as her heart. Being a gregarious individual, she quickly met people who shared her interests and with whom she and Manno could enjoy a social life. They also occasionally attended a literary group in Schwabing, just outside of Munich.¹ Ricarda, however, never really felt herself to be part of this group. She not

¹Heinrich Stefan George was the focus of this literary circle.

only disagreed with certain principles they considered important, but the pomp and ceremony with which they conducted their meetings she found to be eccentric and ridiculous. In fact, it seems that the only thing she had in common with them was their respect for individualism. In her opinion, though, they went about maintaining individualism in the wrong way:

Mir widerstand die Geheimnistuerei des Kreises, dei Absonderung von der Menge durch ein feierliches, weihevoll^ues Verhalten [...] Mir missfielen die jungen Leute, die sich durch geziertes, aufgeblasenes Betragen als Georgejünger auswiesen, und es missfiel mir sehr, dass George sich auf geschmacklose Art wie ein Hohepriester oder Halbgott huldigen liess. (p. 372)

Ricarda had become a practical, straightforward individual who never considered herself to be above anyone or any group of people. This was basically due to her innate sense of equality, which had been enhanced in Triest. As well, she had always been a leader instead of a follower, but remained open to new ideas and trends. Because she was one of the few women in Germany to have studied at the university level and to have a career, Ricarda was a trail blazer. By some she may have also been viewed as being an advocate of the women's liberation movement, but she stated that this was not the case:

Auch als ich studierte, hatte mich die Frauenfrage nicht tief berührt; ich war durch persönliche Verhältnisse zum Studium gekommen, freute mich, dass auch andere studierten, und genoss den Geist des Aufschwungs, der die studierenden Mädchen beseelte; aber ein sehr tiefes Interesse für die Frauenfrage im allgemeinen hatte ich nicht. Wenn ich um ein allgemeines Geschick besorgt war, so war es das Geschick der Arbeiter;

das zu verbessern, hätte ich gern beigetragen.
(pp. 371-72)

Ricarda was only interested in developing her intellectual and creative potential and in helping other women to do the same. Writing and lecturing were her means of achieving this. In one of the papers¹ she wrote during this period she expressed her views concerning the positive effects that a higher education and a career could have on women. These views were a direct result of her personal experiences. University life had made it possible for her to more fully develop intellectually and socially, through contact with new people and unfamiliar ways of life. It had been responsible in part for creating a complete, unique individual out of a young woman who had formerly only been an extension of a family group. A university education had helped her cultivate strength of mind. However, the special attraction of the entire university experience had been that it had given her the means to enjoy life to the fullest.² Careers had become possible as a result, although some of them had repressed her rather than expanded her horizons. Nonetheless, the positive aspects had far outweighed the negative ones. She hoped that by sharing her knowledge and experiences other women would also be encouraged to strive for intellectual and creative satisfaction in their lives.

¹Ricarda Huch, "Über den Einfluss vom Studium und Beruf auf die Persönlichkeit der Frau," Ricarda Huch. Gesammelte Werke (Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1974), V.

²Über den Einfluss, p. 749

Ricarda had always been slightly superstitious, but as she grew older, and especially after Busi's birth, it seemed to play an increasingly important role in her life. For example, they had not bought a baby carriage until after Busi's birth because it would have brought bad luck to do otherwise. Also, after the birth, Ricarda decided to go on a pilgrimage to Görz to pray to God and the Virgin Mary for the health and well-being of her daughter. In Grünwald the nauseating episode in the outhouse was seen by Ricarda as a foreshadowing. She and Manno had been awaiting a certain amount of money that Manno had inherited. On the day that it was to be paid out the bank crashed, and this was the same day that the traumatic outhouse incident took place. Ricarda saw this coincidence as a sign that their marriage was failing:

Mir war zumute, da es grad an dem Tage war, wo der Bankkrach bekannt wurde, durch den der Verlust des erwarteten Geldes drohte, als wären Risse in die hübsche glatte Oberfläche des Lebens gekommen und ich sähe mit Schaudern in das Innere, das Eigentliche, voll Gewürm und Abscheulichkeit. (p. 305)

There were also other incidents that pointed in this direction. On one of the upper floors of the house that they had rented in Grünwald, there lived a sick elderly woman. Her only wish had been to live out the remaining days of her life in her apartment. Since Ricarda and Manno did not want to deny a dying woman her last request, they had agreed to let her stay. When the woman became well, and it was apparent that she would continue to live for a long while to come, they asked her to

leave. Shortly thereafter she died. This caused Ricarda to question whether she and Manno had done the right thing, and her superstition is again revealed:

Nachher fragte ich mich oft, wie es möglich war, dass Manno und ich etwas so Grausames taten. Es lassen sich Entschuldigungsgründe finden, aber sie haben mein Gewissen nie entlastet; es war ein Zeichen des Unheils über unserem Einzug in das Haus. (p. 308)

Ricarda's superstition was in part related to her fatalistic nature. Although she had learned to take control of her life, there were things which she realized she couldn't or perhaps didn't want to change. She had sensed the impending failure of her marriage but had chosen to pretend all was well. Her limited knowledge and understanding of religion were contributing to this dilemma. Ricarda believed that there was a higher power that governed over all. She had experienced this in Triest. However, she was not clear about how this force worked. As a result, she felt unable to do much about her coming divorce except pretend that it wasn't happening. If it was meant to be, as all the signs seemed to suggest, she couldn't do much about it anyway.

There were also some very concrete signals that indicated that their marriage was coming to an end. The opposition of their natures had been a drawback from the very start, but Ricarda had been determined to make their marriage work. When it failed she placed the blame entirely upon herself. She had seen herself as the stronger of the two natures and thus responsible for the relationship's outcome. However, instead of

acting logically and rationally, she reacted passionately. Her feelings about this time in her life are expressed in truly Romantic terms. Gottfried Keller had been a great influence, and she often thought of his poem: "Ich kenne dich, o Unglück, ganz und gar" (as cited on p. 312). Ricarda had truly suffered to the depths of her being. Her analogy of the end of their marriage is full of Romantic elements:

Einmal fiel [...] ein Blitz aus der Wolke und
zerriss den heiligen Bund, verwüstete den Garten
mit den rosigen Frühlingsblumen, verschüttete die
rauschende Lebensquelle: Nicht mehr Mannos warme
Stimme, nicht mehr Busis lachende Augen. (p. 312)

Nature was important to the Romantics and Ricarda, being a "Kind der Elemente", made liberal use of it with her references to a thunderstorm, flowers, springtime and a garden. Her passion is evident through the verbs "zerriss" and "verwüstete" and the adjective "rosigen". The colour red actually represented passion to Ricarda. The Romantics lived through their senses, and the words "rauschende", "warme" and "lachende", which Ricarda used in her description, bear witness to this. Thus, even though Ricarda had felt satisfied with her marriage to Manno, she did not feel fulfilled enough to continue it.

One day, after Ricarda and Manno had already separated, Manno came to Grünwald to ask her if she would change her mind and decide to stay with him after all. Ricarda, although deeply affected, remained steadfast. She knew that her constant, yet often unconscious, inconsiderateness toward him had been one of the major causes of their problems and that she probably would not be able to change herself:

[es] kam mir [...] meine Genusssucht und meine Gewalttätigkeit zum Bewusstsein, in einem solchen Grade, dass ich mich vor mir selbst entsetzte. Es ist merkwürdig, dass ich noch viel Schlimmeres getan habe, ohne dass mir der Gedanke daran dauernd gequält hätte, wenn ich auch meine Schuld einsah. Es mag sein, dass grad bei diesen kleinen alltäglichen Vorfällen, die nicht das Gewicht einer Leidenschaft mit entschuldigt, das Unbändige meiner Selbstsucht mir erschreckend auffiel. (p. 313)

Ricarda was constantly striving to satisfy her own desires. One particular incident stands out. Ricarda loved the opera and, to please her, Manno had accompanied her one evening even though he had not been feeling well. Ricarda had been so involved in the music that she had attributed Manno's worsening condition to the fact that he was simply in a bad mood. After the concert, as they were leaving, he nearly collapsed, and she suddenly realized that he had endured and suffered the entire evening because he had only wanted to make her happy. Although she felt guilty about this and other such events, and could never forget nor forgive herself for them, Ricarda could not change. True, she had learned to sacrifice as a wife and mother, but this had also been in order to fulfill a need within herself. She had hoped to find harmony and a purpose in her life, to grasp the real meaning of life through Manno. For a while she had felt successful and happy, but this was not to last.

Two other factors also contributed to Manno's and Ricarda's decision to divorce. Richard's daughter Käte had arrived in Munich to visit some acquaintances, and Manno took

it upon himself to show her around. Ricarda did not see much of either of them because she was in Grünwald with Busi, but it gradually became clear to her that Manno's infatuation with Käte was a sign that their marriage had weakened. Käte was very attractive and much younger than Ricarda, and this age factor troubled Ricarda:

Immer hatte es mich bedrückt, dass ich um sechs Jahre älter war als Manno, gerade als wäre das eine Schuld von mir. Ich hatte, trotzdem ich wusste, dass Manno kaum volles Genügen in unserer Ehe fand, doch das sichere Gefühl einer unlösbaren Verbundenheit mit ihm gehabt; diese Überzeugung war nun erschüttert. Da diese Verbundenheit nicht bestand, hielt ich eine Scheidung für das Gebotene. Ich war zu stolz, um einem Manne lästig fallen zu wollen, der nach einer jungen Frau verlangte. (pp. 377-78)

Moving back to Germany had perhaps been the best thing that Ricarda could have done for her mind. Marriage to Manno and motherhood, however, had only partly satisfied the needs of her heart. Thus, when Richard once again wrote to her that he was now divorced and free to marry, she instantly reverted to the passionate and spontaneous woman of her Zurich days:

So wollte mir dieses höchste Glück, auf das ich hatte verzichten müssen, an das ich nicht mehr gedacht hatte, von selbst als ein Geschenk unversehens in den Schoss fallen. Dieses Geschenk zurückzuweisen kam nicht in die Frage. Diese Liebe war inmitten einer unsicheren Welt das Gewisse. Es handelte sich nicht darum, zu wählen, was ich tun wollte, alles war schon getan, meine Liebe hatte immer bestanden und bestand, und es handelte sich nur darum, das, was sie so verschüttet hatte, zu entfernen, damit ihre Flammen sich frei entfalten könnten. (p. 378)

Ricarda's love for Richard had never died. How could she have ever stopped loving him? He had been her first love, and the harmony she had once felt with him and within herself had never been duplicated in another relationship. At last, the Romantic Ricarda was to be fulfilled: she was to be united with her one true love. No longer would she feel the isolation that resulted from being unable to fulfill a union that brought such harmony to her life and being. No one, not even Manno, had ever been able to replace Richard and the relationship she had had with him--an absolute love:

indem der Geliebte einen nicht auswechselbaren und nicht wiederholbaren, einen einmaligen und absoluten Wert für sie darstellte, fühlte sie sich durch ihn und mit ihm in die metaphysische Region erhoben, hingerissen zu dem Grenzenlosen und Unendlichen, das zu erreichen ihre tiefste Sehnsucht war.¹

The need to satisfy this most important desire of her heart ended her marriage to Manno.

In her youth Ricarda had lived in a dream world, letting fate and her emotions guide her. Through Richard she had experienced love "in seiner naturhaft ursprünglichen Konstellation".² For years it was to be her whole life, the reason for her existence. When it ended because of Richard's decision to stay with his family, Ricarda had been

¹Hoppe, pp. 588-89

²Hoppe, p. 46

crushed, but her desire to experience life had roused her to action. Determined to get to know herself better and to find another purpose, another reason, for her existence she had turned to her writing. No matter what tragedies were to befall her in life, now or in the future, she would be able to maintain a positive outlook because of her belief that she would always find something to make her life worth living. She was determined "to continue seeking positive values in life even at the darkest hour".¹

Ricarda's greatest desire became to recapture the harmony, both physical and spiritual, that she had experienced with Richard. It was not until Manno, however, that the possibility of achieving this presented itself. Although she did not find this harmony with him, her emotions did experience a steady peace which they had not known before. Through her marriage to him and the birth of a child, Ricarda also discovered the purpose of sacrifice. As a wife and mother she encountered experiences which put restrictions on her, but these served to make her realize how truly valuable her sacrifices were. Her child also became a bridge, a means of connecting Ricarda to life and, at last, to reality. Her love for her child had made it possible for her to recapture the joy of living.²

¹Sanders, p. 71

²Sanders, p. 85

In the autobiographical writings so far, two sides to Ricarda's nature have been presented: the Romantic and the Skeptic. Through her disastrous affair with Richard she had become the Skeptic, having lost touch with the world and her emotions. Unable and unwilling to bear such pain again, she never once became honestly involved with a man during her years in Switzerland. She had built a shell around her emotions and created her own world as a means of protecting herself from reality. However, her eventual desire to regain contact with life led her to attach herself to Romantic types who were filled with "Lebenskraft".¹ With Manno's help she was able to develop into "der lebensgläubige und lebenskräftige Typus"² that was the Romantic side to her nature. Through Manno she again experienced love, although quite different from the one she had known with Richard. It was love, nonetheless, which she needed in order to feel alive and, when her marriage with Manno did not provide her with the harmony, the true love, that she required she was only too ready to recapture it with Richard.

This polarity within Ricarda "macht die Struktur ihrer Persönlichkeit aus."³ Although she suffered greatly as a result of being unable to unite these two poles, this dualism

¹Hoppe, p. 304

²Hoppe, p. 306

³Hoppe, p. 312

was also "die Geburtsstätte ihres Schöpfertums"¹, providing her with the inspiration for many of her writings. However, through all the changes that the portrait has undergone, Ricarda's image has remained egocentric and a "Kind der Elemente".

¹Hoppe, p. 312

Shattered Illusions: The Never-Ending
Search for Harmony

Fate had always played an important role in how Ricarda perceived her life and the world. Basically, she believed that fate was fickle--that it governed without regard to what an individual did or did not deserve. However, she did admit that her failed marriage to Manno had in large part been her fault:

Ungesehen folgen Engel oder Furien unseren
Gängen, je nach unseren guten oder bösen Taten.
Wie sich ein Glied folgerichtig ins andere
schliesst, fällt uns nicht auf, aber plötzlich
halten die Rachegöttinnen uns höhnisch ihre
Rechte hin, die uns erdrosseln soll. (p. 377)

It was this same fate that now gave her and Richard the opportunity to actually fulfill their true love. Her time with Manno she now saw as simply having been a warm and happy interlude--a world that had been his reality, but not her own. Her reality, her purpose in life, was to love Richard. She had been snatched out of her world into another's, but now she was back where she belonged.

Richard and Ricarda moved to Braunschweig, but without Busi for the first little while. Understandably, Richard would want this period to be alone with Ricarda but, although he was prepared to acknowledge Busi as a part of Ricarda and to love her as such, he was jealous that he would not have Ricarda's attentions entirely to himself. Ricarda was

convinced, however, that after the three of them had lived together for a little while Richard and Busi would grow accustomed to each other.

Ricarda was forty-three years old and Richard fifty-seven when they married. Not having to concern herself with housework or Busi for the first while, Ricarda had plenty of time for herself. This change in routine made her feel an emptiness, which Richard's love alone could not fill. Submerging herself in her writing, therefore, helped to fill a part of this void. It fulfilled not only her need for creative expression, but was also a vehicle for keeping in touch with her feelings, especially those that she had for Richard. To all outward appearances, Ricarda's new life seemed ideal. Not only had she married the man she had longed for most of her life, but she also had the opportunity and the time she needed to devote herself to her own creative endeavors. Unfortunately, complications arose. Although Ricarda was satisfied in matters of love and work, there was still that emptiness inside her. Ricarda missed Busi so much that Richard finally agreed to have her come live with them much earlier than had originally been planned. In Braunschweig Busi had lots of cousins and friends her own age and was heartily welcomed by all. Even Richard made efforts to show her some affection. Although he was not overjoyed with this arrangement, he tried not to let Ricarda see that it upset him.

Ricarda had always loved Busi passionately and showed her feelings toward her daughter openly. Now, however, this tenderness was considered to be excessive by Richard, and so Ricarda tried to hide it. Richard was of the opinion that Ricarda was only spoiling her daughter by such a display of affection. Manno had always enjoyed seeing this love between a mother and her child, but with Richard it was the opposite. Ricarda couldn't even kiss Busi without generating disapproval. Therefore, whenever there were other people around, Ricarda would try not to show any tenderness toward her child, but this caused Busi to cling to her all the more. Ricarda resented the fact that she, a mother, was made to feel guilty about giving affection to her child. Richard's displeasure manifested itself in another way as well. It was his custom to play piano after the evening meal. However, since the piano was close to Busi's room, Richard's playing prevented her from falling asleep. It became obvious to Ricarda that she would have to approach him about this, but this was not an easy thing to do knowing how sensitive he was about her feelings for her daughter. In her turmoil over this situation and Richard's jealousy of Busi, Ricarda believed that fate had given her what she deserved:

nun lähmte mich das Bewusstsein dessen, wie dieses Kind nun durch uns Schaden gelitten hatte und noch litt. Meine Schuld war es, dass sich die Menschen, die sich am meisten liebten . . . auseinanderreissen, und dass ich das Unfassbare und Abenteuerliche zum Alltäglichen und Richtigen machen musste. (p. 384)

Not only did Ricarda's love for Richard require her to deny her love for her daughter, but her love for her daughter would be interpreted as a denial of her love for Richard. It became increasingly apparent that Richard wished to be rid of Busi, and Ricarda was forced to make a choice. Since she believed that she had found her purpose in life in loving Richard, she sent Busi back to live with Manno and his second wife. Ricarda suffered as a result of this, though:

in mir war es, als ob mein Herz zerrissen wäre.
Ich war gegangen, mein Kind fortzugeben, weil
mein Mann seine Eifersucht nicht überwinden
konnte. Er hatte mich wählen lassen zwischen ihm
und meinem Kinde . . . (p. 385)

Naturally, this made her feel extremely angry and bitter not only with Richard but also with herself. She had been made to feel that she was responsible for Richard's unhappiness, but she wasn't strong enough to fight against the manipulation she was experiencing--and a shocking realization came over her:

Ein entsetzliches Gefühl beschlich mich, dass
das, was ich für etwas Vorübergehendes gehalten
hatte, die Liebe zu Manno, die eigentliche, die
glückselige war, die mir beschieden gewesen war
. . . (p. 386)

Yet, she couldn't belie her love for Richard. She had made a decision she believed to be the right one.

Richard's jealousy of Busi was not the only problem. He was also jealous of Ricarda's devotion to her writing, at which she spent a great deal of time and during which it was necessary for her to be alone. This she could not change.

Für den schöpferischen Menschen ist in Zeiten der Produktion er selbst unvermeidlich das Wichtigste, weil er nur aus sich selbst schaffen kann. Sich in Stimmung zu erhalten oder zu versetzen, ist nicht Egoismus, sondern die Voraussetzung für sein Werte erzeugendes Schaffen; er muss Verständnis dafür von seiner Umgebung erwarten.¹

Richard had no understanding for this situation. In fact, he resented it. As a man of his time, he had expected his wife's lifestyle to adjust to his, and her love for him to be the centre of her existence. Ricarda's devotion to her writing and her daughter did not allow for this. Her work also made her somewhat financially independent, and she would not give this up. It was Richard, therefore, who had to adjust his life to suit Ricarda's schedule. Ricarda was no longer the young girl whose love and life he could have molded to suit himself. Her maturity and independence now made this impossible.

After having sent Busi back to Manno, Ricarda was faced with dealing with the fact that she was a mother who had deliberately chosen her husband over her child. The bitterness and guilt she experienced as a result of this was naturally carried over in her demeanor toward Richard. This, coupled with the fact that she was no longer the ideal that Richard had expected, resulted in his becoming interested in a much younger woman, someone over whom he had a great deal more influence. Ricarda still loved Richard, however, for he

¹Hoppe, p. 572

continued to represent the true love that she had experienced with him. Yet, she couldn't ignore her daughter either. To say that Ricarda suffered because of this arrangement would be an understatement. During the return journey from a holiday that she and Busi had taken together, Ricarda had a nervous breakdown. While recuperating, she had time to take stock of all that had happened to her, and believed that once again she had gotten what she deserved:

Gescheitert war ich. Auf was ich gebaut hatte, war zusammengebrochen, was ich besessen, hatte ich verloren, verscherzt. Ich hatte das Glück in den Händen und erkannte es nicht, gab es hin für ein Irrlicht, das mich ins Verderben lockte. Ich sah es allein ein, sah ein, dass ich erntete, was ich gesät hatte; das machte mich nicht weniger elend. Es machte mich auch nicht gerechter gegen Richard. (p. 387)

Ricarda had finally won what she had so long hoped for-- Richard and his love--but instead of nurturing this, by being devoted to Richard rather than to her work, she had ignored the warning signs of failure perhaps in much the same way as she had done during her marriage to Manno. For this, she believed, fate was now punishing her. Ricarda had wanted to be so many things: a loving wife and mother, dedicated to her work as well as to a happy and successful marriage. When this was impossible, she suffered physically as well as emotionally.

It was toward the end of that summer in 1910 that Ricarda fully realized how much Richard wished to be rid of her. Whether this was the outcome of her nervous breakdown

or his jealousy of Busi, Ricarda was certain of only one thing: he was more interested in the young woman than in his own wife. Being a proud individual, she moved out of Richard's home. She did not want to create an ugly scene between herself and the man whom she had loved so deeply and for so long. Since Richard no longer seemed to love her and she wasn't able to change this, her love for him also came to an end:

Das war das Ende meiner Liebe, deren Allgewalt mich vor Schuld entlastete, zu der sie mich getrieben hatte. Wenn das mich entlasten konnte, was ich an Qualen gelitten habe: ich habe diese Liebe als Höllenfeuer gefühlt. (p. 387)

What is noteworthy of Ricarda's reaction here is that she not once considers that she may have directly contributed to the demise of their relationship. Whatever problems arose in their marriage, therefore, were always the fault of something over which she had no control, such as Richard's jealousy. According to Else Hoppe, this attitude is typical for someone like Ricarda:

Niemals aber, und das ist charakteristisch für die stark subjektive, von sich selbst erfüllte Persönlichkeit, machte sie sich Gedanken darüber, wie ihr Wesen auf den anderen gewirkt haben könnte.¹

Richard had expected Ricarda to adjust her lifestyle to suit his, and vice versa. Neither was too willing to undertake such a sacrifice, although they may have had good intentions.

¹Hoppe, p. 570

Even though this was not a comfortable situation, Ricarda apparently had not wanted the marriage to end:

der Wunsch, das langersehnte Glück möge nicht trügerisch sein, war in Ricarda Huch viel zu gewaltig, als dass sie nicht mit der gewissen Ernüchterung fertig geworden wäre, die sich einstellte, als ihr Leben mit dem geliebten Mann nicht mehr in leidenschaftlichen Augenblicksbegegnungen bestand, sondern in das Gleichmass des Alltags überging. So war es denn auch nicht sie, von der der Wunsch ausging, die Ehe aufzugeben, zumal nicht, nachdem ein Punkt, der ernstliche Schwierigkeiten gemacht hatte, zu ihrer völligen Zufriedenheit geordnet war [...] dass Mariette Ceconi ein halbes Jahr beim Vater in München, das andere halbe Jahr bei der Mutter in Braunschweig sein sollte, und damit war Ricarda Huch durchaus zufrieden.¹

It seems that Ricarda possessed a rather naive and romantic notion that true love would always retain its passion. When this initial passion faded and day-to-day living took its place, Ricarda became disenchanted. She had been content with this during her marriage to Manno because at that time she had believed that this was love. With Richard, however, she found it hard to accept, for she had believed their passion would last forever. As well, Ricarda did not want to accept that she couldn't be a successful mother, career woman and wife all at the same time, and her failure to keep such control over her life caused her to experience great turmoil. If she wanted to fulfill her emotional needs through Richard, she would have to give up writing and if, instead, she decided to fulfill her creative needs, she would have to give

¹Hoppe, p. 569

up Richard. This was complicated by the fact that because Richard could not tolerate Busi, Ricarda would also eventually have to give up her daughter if she wanted to be happy in her marriage. This last option was reinforced by a friend who had written and advised her that Busi would have a happy life of her own with her father and his second wife and that Ricarda should, therefore, and without guilt, think of making herself happy by sharing her life with Richard.¹ Ricarda's maternal instinct was too strong, though, to give up her daughter in this way, and she realized that her creative drive could also not simply be suppressed. Ricarda, therefore, left Richard and moved to Munich. The three short years that their marriage had lasted ended in divorce in 1911.

In Munich Ricarda once again delved into her writing body and soul in an attempt to overcome her pain. Here she began writing historical works such as Der grosse Krieg in Deutschland. If wars bored her, why did this one capture her attention? In this war, she explained, she saw parallels to her own life, especially in the element of tragedy. To overcome this tragedy within herself she had to express it in writing. It was a form of therapy for her. If she could become objective about her pain, she would be able to deal with it much better. During the years 1910 to 1912 Ricarda

¹Hoppe, p. 573

also regularly corresponded with her childhood friend Anna Klie. In her letters to Anna, the full depth of her pain is illustrated by the fact that she appears to have totally become the skeptical character type of her writings, who suffers from and fears life:

In dem leisen, beherrschten Ton der Briefe [...] vibriert ein geheimes Beben und verrät die vollkommene Erschütterung der Seele [...] Die Berührung mit Menschen wird geflohen, weil sie zu schmerzhaft ist für das verwundete Gemüt und die gereizten Nerven; nur in der Einsamkeit kann der Schmerz bekämpft werden, den zu ertragen die ganze Kraft aufgeboren werden muss.¹

Just as she required solitude in order to work, so too did she now require it to come to terms with the pain she was experiencing. Being human, though, she also welcomed the emotional support offered by her girlfriends, but this did not lessen her suffering. She knew that she had to overcome it in her own way. Rather than actively searching for a new value to give her life meaning, as she had always done in the past, she now chose to use those qualities within her "die dem geistigen Menschen im Lebenskampf zur Verfügung stehen: Stolz und Humor, und keiner von beiden versagt auch nur einen Augenblick und sei es der denkbar dunkelste."² These were her weapons now. Because of her pride, Ricarda was determined not to let Richard know how badly she had been hurt. She would hold her head high, for she wanted it to appear as

¹Hoppe, p. 575

²Hoppe, p. 579

though the decision to end the marriage had been hers. This would make it easier for her to deal with people. As well, her ability to continually see the positive aspects of her life also helped her to carry on.

This new approach to dealing with her life was not the only change that she underwent at this time. In the letters she wrote to Anna, one trait appears again and again: "ein ausgesprochener Hang zum Aberglauben, ein Wunsch zur Schicksalsergründung, eine leicht zu weckende Angst vor Unglück und Tod."¹ Ricarda had always been fearful and superstitious, but became even more so now. She had also become more conscious of the fact that she was growing older and that she was no longer the active participant in life that she had once been.² In her depressed state, her wish was to retreat from life so that no one could witness the pain she was feeling. As such, her view of life also underwent a change. In the past it had been her desire to live life to the fullest, usually by living it through an ideal or person, especially Richard. When this finally failed and caused her utter emotional turmoil, she realized that it was up to her alone to regain harmony in her life, not through active physical contact with life but through active mental and

¹Hoppe, p. 577

²Hoppe, p. 578

spiritual participation.¹ Writing, therefore, became more important to her than ever. It was now not only a vehicle for regaining her perspective on the world but, in her view, the means through which she would live her life. In the past, her writings had always been either directly or indirectly influenced by her feelings for Richard. With him gone, so too were these writings that had been connected to the physical aspect of her love for him.¹ From now on no person would ever be more important to her than herself, not even those who were closest to her. These people were for her now only companions,

denn in den Mittelpunkt ihrer Existenz rückt [...] sie selber, ihre eigene schöpferische Persönlichkeit. Das heisst: es wurde ihr bewusst [...] dass sie dazu berufen sei, ihr Leben im schöpferischen Werk aufgehen zu lassen, und dass sie für diese Auszeichnung den unerlässlichen Tribut zu zahlen hatte.²

She was to live her life creatively, but in a different vein from the one she had followed previously:

Menschen ihrer Art müssen sich vor einem Zuviel der Eindrücke und Einwirkungen schützen. Der schöpferische Mensch ist von gesteigerte Erlebnisfähigkeit. Er muss das Mass, was er aufnimmt, beschränken, um den entgegengesetzten Strom, der aus seiner Innerlichkeit der Welt entgegendrängt, nicht zu hemmen. Nur im jugendlichen Stadium überwiegt das rezeptive Verhalten. Im Stadium tätiger Wirksamkeit dagegen stört die Berührung mit der Umwelt leicht mehr, als dass sie anregte. Wichtiger erscheint die einfach naturhafte Beziehung zum Leben, wie sie Ricarda

¹Hoppe, p. 589

²Hoppe, p. 591

Huch in dieser Spanne ihres Daseins durch ihr Kind und durch die schlichte Ordnung ihrer Häuslichkeit hergestellt sah. Um so intensiver aber wird der seltene Eindruck ausgeschöpft, den der schöpferische Mensch an sich heranlässt.¹

Peace and solitude, not direct experiences, were now prerequisites in order for her to live and express her life creatively. Harmony, she believed, would come through objectivity, and this possibility had presented itself through her historical writings.² These writings embodied Ricarda's own constant internal struggles. Through these struggles she had learned that diversity and conflict in the world were necessary in order for a society to develop. An ideal example of such a development had occurred in Germany in the Middle Ages, and Ricarda's entire historical works illustrated this society.³

After having completed the first volume of Der grosse Krieg in Deutschland in 1912, Ricarda had written to Anna Klie informing her of this accomplishment.⁴ In this letter she again expressed her belief that fate wasn't always fair or right. Her experience with Richard had confirmed this

¹Hoppe, p. 583

²Paul Fechter, "Ricarda Huch," The Gate, 2, no. 1, (March-May 1948), 10-11.

³Reinhard Buchwald, Bekennende Dichtung. Zwei Dichterbildnisse. Ricarda Huch und Hermann Hesse (Stuttgart: S. Hirzel Verlag, 1949), p. 25.

⁴Hoppe, p. 585

and, despite her efforts at tempering her subjectivity with objectivity, she had also been unsuccessful at achieving the harmony she longed for through her historical writings. Her historical view, fortunately, was not limited to only a passionate subjective interest in the events but also made room for a theological interpretation of them, even though this interpretation was often outweighed by her intellectual reasoning.¹ She was not a religious person who believed in the teachings of the Church, but she did believe what she read in the Bible:

Sie findet, dass sich die Kirche auf das Gegenteil von dem gründet, was die Bibel lehrt: überall in der heiligen Schrift erkennt sie die versöhnende Umfassung [...] von Natur und Geist, während die Kirche beide auseinanderreißt und die Natur als gottfeindlich verdammt.¹

This "versöhnende Umfassung [...] von Natur und Geist" was precisely in tune with Ricarda's own ideas and desires for harmony within herself and her life. Although she did not possess this within herself at that time, these beliefs helped her regain a more positive outlook on life. True, she was growing older and death was inevitable, but she eventually shook this fear in the realization that she was alive and could still enjoy life.² Ricarda was only able to feel this way when she fully accepted the existence of a higher compassionate power. The end of her marriage to Richard had

¹Gillischewski, p. 95

²Hoppe, p. 586

not, therefore, been the end of her life but the start of a new period of development in it:

Man müsste wohl alles durchgemacht haben, was ich durchgemacht habe, um mein Glück ganz fühlen zu können. Nach jahrelanger Zerrissenheit war ich ganz frei. Der Unglücksfaden, der eine unheilvolle Leidenschaft begonnen hatte, war ganz und gar abgesponnen, ein Stück Leben ausgelebt, das wie ein Felsblock auf meinem Wege gelegen hatte. Das Leben fing für mich frisch, morgenhell, voll von ungeduldigen Kräften noch einmal an. Ich hatte nur sehr wenig Geld, war jetzt ganz auf mich angewiesen; aber ich hatte die Zuversicht, dass es gehen würde, und es ging. (p. 315)

Ricarda had gained a new outlook on life, and when World War I broke out she wanted to share it. She wanted to give back to the people their lost faith and hoped to approach this in her book Luthers Glaube (1916), in which she illustrated her personal dictum: "Mut machen, Spiegel sein, Wegweiser sein."¹ This book, and other personal philosophical writings that followed, were much more than lectures and personal confessions. They were her philosophy about humanity and nature, based on an acknowledgement of God, and were directed at the entire society and nation.² Yet, Ricarda was not a deeply religious person, for during the happiest times of her life she held a reserved attitude toward Christianity and the Church: "Persönliche Freiheit, nicht Straffreiheit, sondern Verantwortlichkeit und Schaffenskraft, das ist [...] das Wesen des Christentums."³

¹Buchwald, p. 19

²Buchwald, p. 24

³Gillischewski, as cited on p. 94

When war was declared Ricarda, true to form, had not been the least bit interested in this political development. She believed it would be over in a short time and that Germany would be victorious. These expectations, although commendable in their loyalty, were naive. Ricarda had absolutely no interest in politics and could, therefore, make no reasonably factual or intelligent deductions about the outcome of this war. This situation merely serves to stress that Ricarda still lived in a world all her own, where the problems and pressures of the reality around her had no place. She was happy again in her existence and wanted it to remain so. Her happiness was augmented by the fact that in 1915 she had finally been able to have Busi live with her permanently, since Manno and his wife had moved out of Germany. What more could Ricarda ask for? Having with her the person she most dearly cared for in the world made her feel like the happiest person alive.

Although Manno was married and now lived in Italy, he and Ricarda kept in touch. They had a special relationship that could not be affected by distance or other people. It embodied the most genuine love between a man and herself that Ricarda had, or would, ever come across, and her description bore witness to this:

Manno betreffend hatte ich nur den einen Wunsch, dass er lebte, dass er da war, es war nicht nötig, dass er bei mir war. Dass er mich liebte, wusste ich, und wenn er selbst mir gesagt hätte, er liebte mich nicht mehr, hätte ich es nicht

geglaubt. Das, was uns verband, sass so fest in uns, wie die Persönlichkeit in einem sitzt; dies Bewusstsein allerdings hätte ich nicht missen können. (p. 324)

Noteworthy is that Ricarda refers only to the fact that Manno loved her, and not vice versa. This was typical for her, though. Being the type of person she was, it had always been necessary for others to adjust themselves to her, not she to them. Ricarda needed to live in an atmosphere in which she felt loved in order to live and work, and in which she didn't need to declare her love for others constantly. This was what she had with Manno, and the reason they didn't need to be together physically. Each was secure in the knowledge of that love--a love which transcended not only physical but also temporal limitations. This particular aspect is expanded upon as Ricarda continues her description of their relationship:

Mir ist manchmal der Vers von Goethe eingefallen:
"Ach du warst in Zeiten die vergangen--Meine Schwester oder meine Frau"; denn, so hätte ich mir denken können, wir wären in verflossenen Jahrhunderten in anderer Daseinsform und -art verschwistert gewesen, dass wir überall wie ein Zusammengehöriges uns immer wieder finden müssten. (p. 324)

Although this takes into consideration the idea of reincarnation, Ricarda's intention was only to illustrate that they were inseparable, that they belonged together naturally and unquestionably. That she loved Manno as much as he loved her cannot be disputed. It must be remembered, though, that the most important person in her life was herself, and that other people--even Manno and Busi--were merely companions and

not her reason for living, although she loved them both very much. This attitude is obvious in her description of a small trip she and Busi took to celebrate her fiftieth birthday:

Busi war damals, wenn auch den Jahren nach fast noch ein Kind, noch nicht ganz fünfzehn Jahre alt, reif genug, um ein Gefährte zu sein; wir waren wie zwei Freundinnen, die dem Gefängnis entsprungen sind und nun wieder ein Abenteuerleben beginnen. (p. 321)

It may be that Ricarda used the words "Gefährte" and "Freundinnen" loosely, with no intention of indicating that this described her feelings for and relationship with her daughter. However, no matter how much she loved someone, their main purpose in Ricarda's life was to be a companion. This is reinforced when Ricarda and Busi set out for Switzerland, where they planned to live during the war: "Wir waren nicht wie Mutter und Tochter, mehr wie zwei Abenteurer, die in ein Gefängnis geraten waren und eben die Freiheit wiedererlangt haben" (p. 326). Another noteworthy point in these last two quotations is Ricarda's reference to prison and freedom. She does not use these terms lightly. They are, in actuality, symbolic and representative of her emotional state of the last several years. The passion and emotional turmoil in her relationship with Richard had been an "Unglücksfaden", a "Felsblock". Finally she had become free of this "prison", and with this freedom she had gained a new life full of happiness and adventure. This freedom, however, is quite different from the "wiedergewonnene Freiheit" (p. 216) that she had felt, for example, upon ending her

engagement to a young man she had known many years earlier in Switzerland. The freedom she now felt was the result of finally coming to terms with herself and with a way of life that suited her emotionally and creatively. This freedom gave her happiness, the pursuit of which was as important to her now as her need to pursue experiences in life had been many years ago.

There were two main reasons for Ricarda and Busi moving to Switzerland. First, the war made it extremely difficult for them to exchange letters with Manno. In Switzerland they wouldn't have this problem, and it would also be possible for Manno to visit them. Secondly, Ricarda would be able to look after herself much better there than she could in Germany. Ever since Busi's birth she had had problems with her health. In 1916 she obtained her doctor's permission to go to Switzerland for health reasons. One of their first major stops was in Winterthur and, in a diary that she and Busi kept, Ricarda mentioned how happy she was not to hear German spoken: "das ist aber etwas rein Phonetisches, nichts Politisches", she wrote (p. 405). As a Romantic she found the Swiss language to be much more musical and pleasant to hear. The natural beauty of the area--the rolling hills and many trees--also captured her nature-loving spirit. Using Winterthur as their base, they made a couple of trips to smaller towns nearby. These were Heustrich-Bad and Oeschinensee and, from the descriptions in their "Notizbuch",

these trips seemed rather unexciting. About Heustrich-Bad Ricarda wrote:

es sitzen alte Leute und Kinder herum und essen andauernd oder warten aufs Essen. [...] Ich werde auch essen und verdauen und mich besinnen und träumen. (p. 406)

Busi's description of their activities in Oeschinensee also appears boring, such as borrowing a book from a woman at the hotel, making sandwiches for a picnic lunch, drinking tea. It seems from these descriptions that there is nothing more exciting than this to do. Perhaps the purpose of these excursions was simply to relax, and nothing else. After her divorce from Richard, Ricarda's only desire had been to be left alone so that she could have the peace she needed to heal emotionally and to write. She no longer sought experiences to supply material for her projects for she had a wealth of material within herself:

Selbst wenn Ricarda Huch nur durch Hörensagen von Ereignissen erfährt, die sie interessieren, so knüpft sich eine Fülle von Assoziationen für sie daran, und überraschend wird das scheinbar Kleinste zum Anlass allgemeiner Betrachtungen.¹

The trip to Switzerland was, therefore, ideal for Ricarda. Experiences, per se, were not important, but gaining new impressions were. Ricarda also seemed to believe more in God and less in superstition, according to Busi:

M[ima] sagte, sie sei nicht mehr abergläubisch, und ich erklärte das damit, dass sie jetzt allen Aberglauben und alles auf den lieben Gott

¹Hoppe, p. 583

geworfen hat. Ach, ich wollte, sie hätte ihren lieben Aberglauben wieder, denn was für eine Plage dieser ewige liebe Gott für einen vernünftigen Menschen wie mich ist, kann man gar nicht beschreiben. (pp. 406-07)

Busi found Ricarda's philosophy of relating everything to God to be extreme. However, Ricarda had not stopped being superstitious but had become even more so. The morning that they had planned a trip to Oeschinensee, Busi had found a spider. This was a bad omen for Ricarda. Upon meeting their traveling companions, they discovered that their trip would have to be shortened. "Mima war etwas enttäuscht," Busi wrote, "aber gar nicht überrascht, dass etwas passiert war wegen der Spinne" (p. 407). Ricarda had expected a disappointment because of the omen of that morning.

From Winterthur they continued their trip by train, and Ricarda mentioned every little place they stopped, had their lunch, changed trains, and so on. Even thunderstorms and rain are mentioned. This account may appear tedious but every detail, even the smallest, conjured up a wealth of impressions and images for Ricarda. Their next stop was Aeschi, where they had the good fortune of finding lodgings that suited them perfectly. Ricarda was totally satisfied:

Wie glücklich wir waren, das lässt sich nicht schildern. Ich war zusammen, mit dem Menschen, der mir am liebsten auf der Welt war, dem Kinde, das mir viel mehr als Kind war, mir innigst verwandt und doch fremd und neu, ein Ton, der mit mir wohl lautend zusammenklang. Und uns umgaben die geliebten Berge, die Blümlisalp schimmernd am Horizont wie ein breiter, silberner Schild; zwischen den grünen Matten lagen die einzelnen kleinen Häuser verstreut, wir waren weitab von

Krieg, Menschenhandeln und Menschenwirrsal.
(p. 326)

In her description of their happiness, the Romantic elements of music, nature, colour and movement are sharply evident. This is the context in which Ricarda feels herself at her best, both physically and emotionally. She and Busi would spend hours reading here, especially biographies and autobiographies to which Ricarda could relate: "Der Mensch in immer neuer Gestalt fesselt sie, und am Menschen dies, wie er den Kampf des Lebens und die besonderen Aufgaben, die es ihm stellt, besteht."¹ From behind the house which they occupied, Ricarda could see the Blümlisalp and an old small church with a graveyard and towering linden-trees. "Als ich das alles sah," she wrote in her "Notizbuch", "bekam ich ein Gefühl, wie wenn ich nun endlich in der Heimat wäre. Ich war vollkommen glücklich" (p. 414). She was also completely at peace, living a fairy tale existence with Busi, far removed from reality. Life in the outside world now hardly interested her at all. As far as she was concerned, the war did not exist.

One Sunday, as she sat watching people going to the church, she felt a sudden urge to do likewise: "Ich hatte mir ausgedacht, der Text dieser Predigt sollte mir ein Omen sein" (p. 415). However, because Busi considered going to church for this reason to be sacreligious, Ricarda absconded.

¹Hoppe, p. 582

Besides, she wasn't religious in the general sense of the word. In her comments about the minister and religion as a whole, she stated that she disliked the dogmas and rigid organization of Christianity. What she had found most appealing that Sunday morning had been the beautiful natural setting of the church, the luxurious parsonage, the wonderfully situated village--in short, everything but religion itself.

Toward the end of their stay in Aeschi, a variety evening was put on by a group of French prisoners of war. A small detail arose during the course of this evening that once again stressed Ricarda's utter apathy for the war and politics:

Als am Schlusse die Marseillaise gesungen wurde, stimmte ich unwillkürlich mit ein, bis ein Herr [...] mir zuflüsterte, ich möchte das lieber unterlassen, es könne mir von anwesenden Deutschen verdacht werden und ich könnte Unannehmlichkeiten haben. Das war mir nicht in den Sinn gekommen. Ich war ganz in meinem Glückstraum befangen, fühlte mich weit fort von Kriegsverwicklung, ja ich hatte den Krieg eigentlich vergessen [...] Mit Politik hatte ich mich nie beschäftigt, und zwar hauptsächlich deshalb, weil ich wohl Liebe für das deutsche Volk, aber keine Sympathie und kein Interesse für den deutschen Staat hatte. (p. 327)

This disinterest made it possible for her to remove herself physically and emotionally from the realities of the war and to continue living in a dream world. Controlling her environment in this way was now necessary in order for her to be able to create. Ricarda was genuinely happy and fulfilled. In Switzerland, she had the physical advantages of not

suffering the ravages of war and of being able to better care for her health, as well as the emotional environment of peace and Busi's love that she needed to write. This was her life for a little more than two years, years which were, for her, "Jahre des Glücks [...] ein Geschenk" (pp. 328-29).

A great part of Ricarda's and Busi's stay in Switzerland had also been spent in Bern, which had occasioned Ricarda to become reacquainted with the works of Jeremias Gotthelf. She had disliked him very much during her Zurich period (1887-96) but now found a sort of soul mate in him. She delivered a lecture on him in Bern during the winter of 1916/17 entitled "Jeremias Gotthelfs Weltanschauung". In him she saw her own philosophy confirmed: "er ist ihr eine Persönlichkeit, in der die Weltanschauung der Bibel noch einmal packenden Ausdruck gefunden hat."¹ The basic element common to both Ricarda's and Gotthelf's works and philosophies was that of struggle. "Nur im Kampfe," Ricarda stated in her lecture, "nur in freier Wirksamkeit und Betätigung erwirbt sich die Persönlichkeit ihren Charakter."² Both had illustrated this struggle in their writings by contrasting the roles of husband and wife as set down by Divine Ordinance. The husband, who was the repre-

¹Hoppe, p. 705

²Ricarda Huch, "Jeremias Gotthelfs Weltanschauung," Ricarda Huch. Gesammelte Werke (Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1974), V, p. 758.

sentative of the world, was superior because of his social and legal status. The wife, on the other hand, was God's representative on Earth. Her role was as mediator between God and man. Since she did not enjoy the same independence as men, she relied on her husband to provide her with a home and security. In return for this she would serve him, although God was her true master. Her piousness would become obvious only when the situation demanded it, and at these times she exemplified what Gotthelf referred to as Christian: "Bei jeder Sache, die man tut, mit ganzem Herzen und ganzer Seele dabeisein, das ist nach Gotthelfs Auffassung christlich."¹ This opposition between men and women had to exist, Ricarda stated, for this was what inspired life.²

Although the status of women had improved socially and legally by Ricarda's time, she was of the opinion that this had occurred only because women had become more "masculine" by developing their intellect through an education and by working outside the home to help support the family. Ideally and naturally, according to Divine Ordinance, the man was meant to be head of the family unit because of his gender and superiority in age and social status. This had been Ricarda's first experience with a man (Richard) and had been extremely positive for her. This was, therefore, the

¹Über den Einfluss, pp. 762-63

²Über den Einfluss, p. 766

perspective from which she had always viewed male-female relationships, and which she now again found reiterated by Gotthelf. However, she believed that Gotthelf had been unsuccessful in illustrating the superiority and wisdom of Divine Ordinance over mankind's independence from God. This independence, Ricarda now suspected, would bring about the destruction of the individual as well as the group, and would necessitate humanity to again search for a higher value in life. Ricarda hoped that through her own writings she would be able to illustrate that this higher value already existed and was to be found in Divine Ordinance and the nature of things. Not only is the change in Ricarda since her Zurich period obvious in the fact that her "Weltanschauung" has changed but also in her reason for writing now: she is concerned with proclaiming her personal philosophy.

Since her marriage to Richard, Ricarda had experienced three periods of harmony in her life. The first period occurred during the early part of this marriage. With Richard, she experienced the physical and emotional harmony of "perfect love", which in turn enabled her to fulfill her creative needs as well. This harmony lasted only a short time, and the marriage soon ended in divorce. After overcoming the upheaval that this loss created in her life, Ricarda eventually found another type of harmony in Munich: a calm, emotionally peaceful day-to-day existence with her daughter.

This led the way to even greater harmony when she moved to Switzerland, where physical comfort and the inspiration of nature added to the feelings of emotional happiness and creative fulfillment.

These three periods make the changes Ricarda has undergone quite clear. Her physical love for Richard had become transplanted by a scheduled orderliness in her Munich environment and, later, physical comforts in Switzerland, which she so much appreciated and needed. In the area of emotional development, Ricarda no longer required an ideal or person in order to give her life meaning. She was able to find fulfillment within herself. Although the object of her affections was now mainly Busi, people had become only companions to her in life. Perhaps the greatest change occurred in the area of creative expression. In the beginning, she had always needed experiences to provide her with material for her writings. Her love for Richard had provided a great deal of inspiration for the most part of her life. However, emotional turmoil caused her to seek solitude, for direct contact with life and people had become too painful. As a result, impressions rather than experiences became enough to bring forth a multitude of creative ideas. The writings that evolved as a result of this change were proclamations of a new personal philosophy.

It is the third type of harmony, in the achievement of emotional well-being and creative fulfillment through her own

self, that Ricarda found lasting happiness. All the changes and developments she had undergone only served to make her stronger personally and creatively, but especially in her reassertion of her "self".

Religion versus Superstition: The Struggle with Fate

Toward the end of the war Ricarda and Busi returned to Munich, totally unprepared for what awaited them. Not only was the general condition of Germany in a very bad state but Ricarda had suffered some personal, albeit relatively minor, losses. A number of irreplaceable items had been stolen from her apartment during her absence, her rent had skyrocketed, a less expensive apartment was impossible to find, and food was scarce. Undaunted, Ricarda carried on, determined to make the best of things. Instead of wallowing in self-pity and feeling frustrated over the fact that she had very little control over her physical environment, she concentrated on the positive moments. After what she had already been through in her life, she was not ready to give up. It was these positive moments, "die schönen Augenblicke" (p. 330), which made life bearable despite the tragedy that surrounded them. Concentrating on these moments helped protect her from realities that didn't fit into her own little world. However, one cold rainy day she saw the beaten German troops march into Munich. This sight, combined with the effect the weather undoubtedly had on her, jolted her into a reaction. She could no longer pretend the war didn't exist. The fact that Germany had been defeated didn't concern her as much as did the contempt with which the German people were now being

treated. She had viewed the German nation as "ein Volk von Heiligen [...] und die übrigen wie Heuchler und Teufel" (p. 331). Considering that Ricarda had never been interested in the politics of any war, including this one, her reaction is a purely emotional one. One would expect such a reaction to affect a change in her, perhaps bring her back to reality, but it did not alter her stance. She had merely become aware of the human element of this war, an element that she had never associated with it in the past.

On a particularly beautiful February morning Ricarda and Busi had gone for a walk. Ricarda had the intention of running some errands, but also she wanted to find out what was going on in Munich, "die Stimmung des Volkes belauschen" (p. 421). From her description of the events that had led to Kurt Eisner's assassination that day, an event which she had not directly experienced, it is obvious that she is not actually involved with life around her. She did not, for example, feel in any way associated with the crowds that day, with the people and their reasons for demonstrating. She had no desire for any such experiences. She derived enough stimulation from hearing others tell her of the events that had occurred. She was completely detached emotionally and physically from what was going on. True, she had considered various possible political reasons for the assassination, but her interest in it was purely philosophical. Fate entered into her rationalization as to why such things occurred when

all seemed to be going so well:

Merkwürdig ist es, wenn man die Geschichte einer Revolution liest, [...] wo es scheint, als sei jetzt das Gleichgewicht hergestellt und die grosse Katastrophe könne vermieden werden. Dann aber geschieht irgend etwas Unvorhergesehenes: eine unbedachte Äusserung wird verbreitet, eine Zeitungsnachricht aufgegriffen, ein Beispiel in einem anderen Lande reizt, eine Kugel fällt, man weiss nicht auf welcher Seite, und zerreisst die trügerische Stille. Da spürt man die Gewalt des Schicksals. Die bewusste Umsicht der beteiligten Menschen wird durch etwas Unberechenbares, vielleicht Törichtes oder Abseitsliegendes über den Haufen geworfen. (p. 423)

Ricarda had experienced this same aspect of fate in her personal life many times, and its irrationality applied equally well to the world as a whole. Since fate was as much within one's control as it was outside of it, she believed that one should surrender to it as well as fight against it. Whether right or wrong, the important thing was to stand up for one's beliefs: "Unsinn und Irrtum wirken und verbreiten sich ebenso mächtig wie die Wahrheit. Kämpfe jeder für seinen Glauben" (p. 425). Life, after all, was a struggle.

Since the war was now over and Manno was divorced from his second wife, it was easier for Ricarda and Manno to visit each other. This resulted in Ricarda's adopting a unique lifestyle in order to compensate the diverse needs created by her polarities. As an artist and intellectual she required creative solitude, and as an emotional human being she longed for loving companionship. To fulfill these needs she decided to spend half the year in Munich and the other half visiting Manno in Italy. She thus had the freedom and peace needed to

write, without the total isolation that would normally be the cost of creativity. In addition to this fulfillment was the joy of reinstating the Father-Mother-Child bond that made them inseparable, a bond which, for Ricarda, was "die erste und natürliche Ganzheit, in der die Einzelpersönlichkeit wurzelt."¹ This lifestyle suited Ricarda perfectly and illustrated "das die Pole sich leichter im Nacheinander auswirken, als in der Gleichgewichtsspannung des Nebeneinanders".² The harmony that she had been unable to attain through simultaneous declaration of her polarities she now found was possible by allowing them to be expressed consecutively.

On their first trip to Padova after the war, Manno had been unable to pick Ricarda and Busi up at the train station because he was ill. Ricarda's impression upon arriving on the street where he lived was one of gloom, a reflection perhaps of Manno's condition as well as of the general state of affairs just after the war. Nonetheless, she concentrated on the positive aspects about her, such as the warmth with which they were received by Manno's family, and her happiness with simple everyday activities. Life in Padova was quite different from that in Germany. Socially, men and women rarely mixed in Italy. After a day at work the men would

¹Hoppe, p. 884

²Hoppe, p. 573

gather in cafés. The women, on the other hand, visited each other in their homes or travelled for entertainment. The Italians also generally viewed life in much clearer and simpler terms than the Germans, according to Ricarda:

Die Italiener beobachten gut und sind mediokrisch, im Café belustigen sie sich damit, Witze über das Publikum zu machen; ist das, was sie erleben, zu philosophisch, fällt ihnen nichts ein. (pp. 337-38)

This was unfortunate for Ricarda, for she really enjoyed involved and stimulating conversations. It was not easy for her to adjust, but she did begin to feel more at home here when she decided to accept the principles of their social norms. As the saying goes: when in Rome do as the Romans do.

Die Frauen sassen daheim und betrieben mit den Mägden das Hausgeschäft, oder wenn es sich um grosse Damen handelte, waren sie auch wohl auf Reisen, in Paris; die Männer sassen über Tag in Büros und am Nachmittag im Café. Im Sommer sammelte sich nachts das Leben auf einem Platze [...] auch die Kinder waren dann dort, man schlürfte ein bibita oder ein Eiss. (p. 338)

All of this was quite contrary to that with which Ricarda was familiar, and was mediocre compared to her lifestyle in Munich. What was important, however, was that she and Busi were together with Manno. Eventually, she learned to sit back and enjoy what Padova had to offer: "die sanfte Luft, das im Freien sich entfaltende Leben" (p. 339). Here she was surrounded by peace and nature.

From time to time Manno also visited Ricarda and Busi in Munich, and Ricarda remembered these as being especially

festive and happy occasions. "Es war alles gut, der Riss geheilt, der natürl^{ic}he Zustand wiederhergestellt" (p. 340). Ricarda's life was supremely harmonious at these times. Manno, too, enjoyed these visits very much, especially when they were in Grünwald where he truly felt at home. However, he only stayed a few days whenever he came, for his work was his life. When he wasn't working he became depressed. Work was his "Lebensatem" (p. 341) as much as it was Ricarda's. Despite the fact that their individual lifestyles kept them apart most of the time, however, Ricarda and Manno belonged together. They were one soul. Even the fact that they lived in different countries couldn't change this. As Ricarda explained it: "wir hatten eine Kette des Schicksals, die uns band, geknüpft, aber sie wieder aufzulösen konnten wir nicht" (pp. 340-41). Fate had destined them to meet, fall in love, marry and have a child. Although divorced, this bond could not be broken. Fate intended them to maintain this close bond, and, indeed, none of them could have done or even desired otherwise. Ricarda and Manno had finally reached a stage in their lives in which each felt fulfilled and complete. Both had found a great deal of fulfillment in their respective careers, and the ensuing feelings of personal worth enhanced their emotional relationship. They had reached a stage of harmony and success in their individual and mutual developments. Once, Manno was injured in an automobile accident in Italy and, although anyone wishing to

travel outside of Germany was required to pay a large sum of money, Ricarda rushed to his side. Nothing would have prevented her from doing so. Of utmost importance at that moment was to be with Manno. Their close bond is again illustrated in another example. Since Manno's hip injury required him to remain immobile, an open carriage had been rented so that he could get outdoors into the fresh air and sunshine. Ricarda remembered these excursions as having "einen unvergesslichen Reiz" (p. 342). Most of the time they merely read to each other and watched the scenery go by. What made this time especially happy for Ricarda was that she was at harmony and peace with herself and was with one of the two people she most dearly loved in the world. She no longer required the adventures of youth to make her feel stimulated and fulfilled. The simple activities she undertook with Manno at this time took care of all her needs:

Dazu fuhr der Wagen durch die immer gleiche sommerliche Wärme; durch die immer gleiche Ebene, und mir war zuweilen zumute, als sei ich in ein verzaubertes Land geraten, und es war mir ungewiss, ob wir eine Stunde oder 1000 Jahre so durch die Nachmittagshitze fahren. Wie schnell ging in Wirklichkeit diese glückliche Zeit vorüber. (pp. 342-43)

When Ricarda was with Manno, they were again in a world of their own, far removed from the realities around them. Time stood still, enabling them to savour the moment. Not only was the time they spent together natural and comfortable in all its aspects, but so was their relationship, which was reflected and enhanced by these excursions. Their relation-

ship, their bond, was meant to be and would have existed at any point in time. This was what Ricarda meant with her reference to "eine Stunde oder 1000 Jahre". They belonged together, not in the physical sense that she and Richard had but in the fact that their spirits were one, inseparable through time:

Das Gefühl--er, der mich liebt und kennt, dieses tief beseligende Gefühl--hat mir nur Manno einge-
flösst, obwohl doch auch andere mich liebgehabt haben und vielleicht mehr von mir wussten. Manno spürte meine Nähe, wusste, was ich dachte, half, wenn ich Hilfe brauchte, nicht wie ein Freund, sondern wie ein Zwilling meiner Seele [...]. Das ganz Unmittelbare unserer Zuneigung, das sich auf keinerlei gemeinsame Interessen stützte und also ganz ungesichert gewesen wäre, wenn es nicht auf den tiefsten Tiefen der Persön-
lichkeit beruht hätte, war etwas unvergleichlich Schönes. (p. 344)

She felt so safe and secure with Manno that the mere thought of him made her lose her fear of death:

Er wusste immer Rat. Wenn ich an Manno dachte, verlor ich sogar die Angst vor dem Tode. Ich war entschlossen, wenn ich sterben müsste, Manno zu rufen, wenn wir etwa zusammen wären; und wenn er neben mir säße und mich in seinen Armen hielte, war ich überzeugt, das Sterben würde leicht sein. (p. 345)

This fear, however, often prevented her from seeing the obvious. From time to time Manno had made references to the fact that he would not live much longer. He had done this for as long as Ricarda could remember and, therefore, his remarks created no great cause for concern. She simply attributed them to his melancholy nature. After Busi's marriage, these references to death increased, but Ricarda did not take them seriously even then. For her Manno had always

been "wie die Luft oder das Licht, er war da und würde immer dasein" (p. 347). To Ricarda he represented life, not death. Even the fact that he was frequently ill didn't cause her to suspect anything. Or, perhaps, she didn't want to suspect that there was something wrong, just as she hadn't wanted to see the problems that had developed in their marriage. Ricarda was afraid of death and, therefore, didn't want to face it. She could not imagine her life without Manno. It was not necessary for him to be with her in body, but to simply be alive so that she could feel his presence. To lose this security would have been intolerable. Her misunderstanding of Manno's increased references to death is doubly surprising in light of the fact that Ricarda felt that she and Manno were soul twins. That Manno believed he would die in the near future, and Ricarda not realizing the seriousness of his remarks, illustrated her great fear. If she didn't think about death, then it wouldn't exist for her. She even took offense to seeing coffins in a display window of a shop in Padova. Soon thereafter Ricarda did have to face death. Her friend Emmi Reiff was dying of cancer, and Ricarda decided to visit her in Zurich. Shortly before this visit, however, Ricarda had received some Brazilian good luck charms. These charms, Ricarda believed, would be helpful to her in Zurich. Unfortunately, they did not make the visit any easier to bear. She feared death, but now that it was about to become a reality and she could do nothing to prevent

it she was prepared to face it, for only in this way would she ever be able to deal with it. She had decided long ago in her youth to face life head on, no matter how difficult it would be. This she did so now, "vorwärts treibend mit den Worten: du musst" (p. 353). The few days she spent with Emmi were very sad and agonizing ones, for Emmi did not suspect the seriousness of her condition. Ricarda, as had become usual for her during times of stress, tried to act as naturally as possible although she was deeply upset.

From Zurich she travelled to Padova, to see Manno once more before moving to Berlin to live with Busi and her new son-in-law Franz Böhm. Manno, who awaited her at the train station, was in a bad mood. This seemed odd to Ricarda. True, Manno had a bad temper but she had never known him to be moody. Upon questioning him, he explained that he had had some business problems, but Ricarda did not believe that he was telling her the truth. She attributed his disposition to the fact that he had had a nagging cough for quite some time and that this contributed to his ill-being. True to form Ricarda either didn't, or didn't want to, see the obvious. "Mir schien sein Husten nichts schlimmes zu sein" (p. 353), she remarked about her impression of his health. Perhaps it was easier for Ricarda to feel this way, since Manno didn't make much of it himself. Nonetheless, Ricarda could not ignore it a short time later. She and Manno had been invited to the home of a couple who displayed an interest in the

occult. During the course of this evening the woman read Ricarda's fortune and predicted the occurrence of fear and death in her life. Ricarda stated that she did not believe in the occult, but the predictions did disturb her. A short time thereafter the first of these came true: Manno coughed up blood. Characteristically, Ricarda had not been willing to believe the obvious, that is, that Manno was ill, but was only too willing to believe in superstition when the first prediction came to pass. No matter how often she stated that she wasn't superstitious, the contrary was true. This was due to her conception of fate as being unpredictable and not always fair. Without a more solid and steady belief on which to base her reflections, a different approach to life's discrepancies was, therefore, not possible for her. Manno, however, despite his coughing fits, was the picture of health. This gave Ricarda the hope that his illness was not all that serious:

Es musste ja nicht so sein, das letzte Wort war noch nicht gesprochen. Manno war da, lebendig, ganz so aussehend wie sonst, unerschöpflich an Einfällen, so konnte kein Todgeweihter sein.
(p. 356)

This was a natural reaction. Anyone faced with the possibility of losing a loved one would cling to the slightest shred of hope, and this is exactly what Ricarda did, even after Manno's condition worsened. As well, even under all the emotional strain, Ricarda tried to appear cool and collected. "Ich gab mir Mühe," she wrote, "unbefangen zu sein,

nicht merken zu lassen, wie trostlos mir zumute war" (p. 359). Whether she did this for Manno's benefit or her own is unclear at this point. This did not mean, however, that Ricarda didn't experience the event as untraumatic. In fact, she was so devastated by it that she did something quite out of character: "Zuweilen ging ich in die offenstehende kühle Kirche und betete, verzweifelt, um den Himmel zu zwingen; aber ich glaubte nicht daran" (p. 359). Knowing Ricarda's views on organized religion, her action was one of desperation. The only other time that she had done anything like this was when Busi was born and she had undertaken a pilgrimage for her daughter's well-being. Her reasons for doing so back then had been based on superstition. Now, however, she did so out of confusion. She was unable to accept fate's decree and hoped to be able to alter the outcome through prayer, even though she didn't believe in the validity of this Christian practice. She also refused to be present when, from time to time, an old German missionary who visited Manno undertook certain religious practices with him. Her absence was never discussed, for Manno understood how she felt. Perhaps Ricarda's rejection of religion was due in part to its uselessness for her. Prayer did not help Manno get better and neither did the religious ministrings of the missionary. Religion didn't offer her any comfort, either. This hopelessness resulted in bitterness toward religion and, therefore, she would have nothing to do with it. However,

she noted that Manno did derive some sort of benefit from it all. Whereas in the past he had been more rigid, he now held a relaxed attitude toward religion; in fact, he seemed to enjoy "die kirchlichen Gebräuche" of the hospital which he eventually entered (p. 360). Ricarda still placed more hope on superstition, for she remembered to mention an incident that occurred while Manno had been en route to the hospital. Angelina, his sister, had accompanied him on this trip and later told Ricarda what had transpired: "sie erzählte mir nachher, ihr Wagen sei unterwegs einem Buckligen begegnet, was als glückliches Omen galt" (p. 361). This ray of hope was more than religion had given Ricarda and was the reason she now, as previously, placed so much importance on superstition.

Although Ricarda tried to maintain a natural and positive attitude whenever she was with Manno, she knew that she wasn't very successful. Her despair was something she couldn't hide easily. Even her reaction to the news that Manno would not live much longer caused her to avoid him, so that he would not be able to see the utter depth of her despair. This characteristic of Ricarda's, of trying to hold her emotions in check, outwardly made her appear not only distant but also emotionally cold. The cool northern "Reflexionsmensch", however, longed to break out of her shell and give full reign to her passions and emotions. Instead of immediately rushing to be with Manno as Busi did when

given the bad news, Ricarda wanted to be alone so that she could come to terms with her feelings. She had found this method of dealing with her pain and sorrow extremely helpful ever since divorcing Richard. It helped her now, too, although she longed to be able to express her emotions. She loved Manno as much as her daughter did, but was sad that she was unable to be as spontaneous and expressive about her feelings as Busi was. Just because her misery wasn't obvious didn't mean that she didn't feel miserable. In fact, Manno's impending death was taking so much out of her, draining her emotionally and physically, that she wished it would soon all be over. The night that Manno hemorrhaged Ricarda's only desire had been "laut zu weinen und zu rufen: 'Manno, Manno, verlass mich nicht!'" (p. 364). On the one occasion since her youth that she would have reacted spontaneously and emotionally she was prevented from doing so by Angelina, in order that Manno not become aware that he was on the verge of death. Hours later he died. Ricarda, physically exhausted and emotionally numb, went home to sleep.

After divorcing Richard, Ricarda had been successful in achieving harmony in her life in the areas of emotional well-being and creative fulfillment. In order to accomplish this, she had had to create her own little world of peace and happiness and to exclude anything negative that tried to impose itself from the real world. Although she continued to

develop and find harmony in her life, some aspects remained unresolved. One of the major conflicts during these years was presented by her view of fate. With her theological works of this period--such as Luthers Glaube (1916) and Der Sinn der Heiligen Schrift (1919-22)--she had hoped to restore to the masses their lost faith. She believed that there was nothing more necessary for mankind than "Seelsorge"¹ to get them back on the right track. Ricarda herself was a believer, yet she did not accept the Christian practices and rituals. They had been of no help or comfort to her in her life. Superstition was occasionally still more powerful than religious faith in influencing how she viewed life. Manno's impending death had done nothing to resolve this conflict within her, and thus she maintained an ambiguous and ambivalent attitude toward religion.

Another major unresolved conflict in her life was the fact that total harmony of all the polarities within her was impossible. Yet, she continued her search for a workable solution. Eventually, she discovered a way that allowed all her discordant aspects full expression, but without the desired total harmony: she simply arranged to express them in turn rather than exhaust herself in her efforts to have them coexist. Ironically, this did give her life an added

¹Wilhelm Grenzmann, Deutsche Dichtung der Gegenwart (Frankfurt am Main: Hans F. Menck Verlag, 1953), as cited on p. 147.

dimension of harmony. Emotionally she became even more enriched through the close bond that had again developed between her and Manno. In truth, she didn't really feel "whole" without him. The two, although very different from each other in their way of thinking, were very similar in their innermost feelings, so much so that they instinctively knew what the other thought or felt. When everything finally seemed to be working out for Ricarda, in every possible respect, a good part of it was taken away from her with Manno's death.

"Tag in Jena 1945": The Completion of an Individuality

After Manno died in 1927, Ricarda went to live with her daughter and son-in-law in Berlin, and later also lived in Heidelberg, Freiburg and Jena--wherever Franz Böhm's work took him. During these years Ricarda maintained the dual lifestyle that she had established for herself. The two directions, however, no longer followed a parallel course but, according to Else Hoppe, began steadily diverging so that there was now

eine Bewegung von der Zeit weg und eine Bewegung auf die Zeit zu. Der Gegensatz, den Ricarda Huch zwischen ihrer Weltanschauung und der modernen Zivilisation empfand, bewirkte, dass sie sich in steigendem Masse von der Gegenwart entfernte; gleichzeitig aber wuchs ihr Ruhm und zog sie allmählich in eine repräsentative Rolle hinein, die sie zum Exponenten eben dieser befehdeten Zeit machte.¹

As a public figure in Munich, for example, her sixtieth birthday was grandly celebrated and she was honoured by the city's University. This honour was repeated every five years even though Ricarda was highly against this. In 1931 she became the first female member of the Preussische Akademie für Dichtkunst and also the first woman ever to receive the Goethepreis. In 1933 she brought attention to herself when she left the Akademie because she did not share in its

¹Hoppe, p. 886

support of the nationalsocialist government or in its duties toward it. She made her political feelings known in a letter to Max von Schillings, president of the Akademie, in which she officially resigned, an excerpt of which follows:

"Dass ein Deutscher deutsch empfindet, möchte ich fast für selbstverständlich halten; aber was deutsch ist, und wie Deutschtum sich betätigen soll, darüber gibt es verschiedene Meinungen. Was die jetzige Regierung als nationale Gesinnung vorschreibt, ist nicht mein Deutschtum. Die Zentralisierung, den Zwang, die brutalen Methoden, die Diffamierung Andersdenkender, das prahlerische Selbstlob halte ich für undeutsch und unheilvoll. Bei einer so sehr von der staatlich vorgeschriebenen abweichenden Auffassung halte ich es für unmöglich, in einer staatlichen Akademie zu bleiben."¹

It is obvious that the policies of nationalsocialism deeply disturbed Ricarda. Was her resignation from the Akademie, therefore, an indication that she took an active interest in politics? Ricarda had always maintained that she was a born republican. Added to this were her experiences of diversity and freedom of individuality that she had come to know during her years in Switzerland. These elements had once also existed in Germany during the Middle Ages and were what Ricarda considered to be her "Deutschtum". Since the policies of the Akademie were no longer independent of the government and, therefore, did not represent Ricarda's views of the Akademie's purpose, she found it necessary to resign. Ever since she had become a member in 1931 she had energeti-

¹Hoppe, as cited on p. 892

cally advocated that the only conclusive deciding factor in voting members into the Akademie should be artistic achievements.¹ After all,

Für den schöpferischen Menschen sind die Lebenswunden, die er empfängt, oft die stärksten Antriebe, die Selbstheilung durch objektive Leistungen vorzunehmen.²

As such, Ricarda believed that politics had no place in the function and operation of the Akademie. She would not compromise her principles. Her experiences with fate had taught her that life was fickle and that the only constant in one's life was one's beliefs. Her resignation, however, was only the beginning of her resistance against an ideology she didn't accept. She also undertook the writing of a three-volume work entitled Deutsche Geschichte (1937), in which she expressed her beliefs. This outspokenness caused her various emotional and financial hardships, for she found it increasingly difficult to get her works published. Yet, she refused to compromise. Her resistance was, therefore, not an actual political act against the government but, instead, a way of standing up for her principles.

Ricarda's private life, on the other hand, revolved more and more around her daughter and grandson. Without them, life would not have meant much to her. Although her last autobiographical work was conceived during the Second

¹Hoppe, p. 891

²Hoppe, p. 892

World War, it concentrated more on the people in her immediate circle than on the actual events around them. "Tag in Jena 1945" begins with Ricarda mentioning the sirens forewarning an air raid, and the necessity of taking shelter in a neighbour's basement. After this opening sentence, Ricarda's attention turned to the beautiful spring weather. This was more natural for her, the Romantic, to do than concerning herself with the seriousness of their situation. The beautiful spring day caused everyone in the group to feel strangely happy and optimistic that things would now begin to improve. Spring, after all, was the reaffirmation and renewal of life in nature. Ricarda's description of the puppy, Struppi, and his unrestrained frolicking reflected not only her own spontaneity and reaction to influences around her when she was young, but also symbolised the renewal of life and the hope for a better future. In contrast, the white cat, old and experienced, "machte nicht viel Wesens, sondern strich mit langen, behutsamen Schritten abseits auf Abenteuer" (p. 428). The cat symbolised the mature Ricarda. Older and more experienced, neither was as affected by the world around them as they had once been in their youth. Both had reached a stage where they were able to attain excitement and adventure through less direct means and contact with life. Ricarda had also come to accept whatever fate had decided to throw across her path. She had especially found that contact with people was comforting to her, whereas at one point in her life it

had only caused her pain. This is particularly evident in her description of the realization that the basement they had been using as a shelter was not even underground but was built into the side of a small hill. They were as safe in this basement during the bombings as they would have been in their own homes, where they were probably also more comfortable. Aber "zu Hause waren wir unter uns," Ricarda wrote, "bei Frau von Haller war immer ein Häufchen Menschen versammelt, und die gesellschaftliche Haltung, die das mit sich brachte, war wohltätig" (p. 429).

The human companionship during the air raids was important to Ricarda. Just as necessary, however, was the observation of social etiquette at these gatherings, which helped maintain some semblance of control and sanity while insanity raged about them. Ricarda and Dr. Horstmar, another member of the group, tried to remain as calm as possible, preferring to perceive the deadly noise outside simply as much too loud dinner music. In such a situation, Ricarda is in her element:

Die gesellschaftliche Haltung vor allem, in der geistvolle Konversation gemacht wird, als sei das Geräusch der Todesmaschinen nichts als begleitende Tafelmusik, charakterisiert zugleich die Dame, als welche Richard Huch sich im Umgang mit anderen stets erwies, wie auch die starke Persönlichkeit, die weiss, dass sie mit solcher Haltung den Schwächeren eine Hilfe bedeutet.¹

¹Hoppe, p. 905

That Ricarda viewed herself as someone responsible for setting an example for others is especially significant, for it illustrates part of her philosophy that appeared in Luthers Glaube: "Mut machen, Spiegel sein, Wegweiser sein."¹ This belief, and her practice of it, reinforces that she was still very much a part of this world and that her consideration of others reflected her desire, as well as need, for companionship. What did not interest her, however, was whatever occurred in the world outside of this realm.

Ricarda and her family and friends had experienced several severe bombings, but none as terrible as the one on March 19 that destroyed the entire inner core of Jena. At eleven o'clock that morning the warning sirens sounded. Ricarda and her daughter made their way to Frau von Haller's basement, while her grandson made his way to the first-aid station where he was on duty. On this particular day Ricarda's description of her parting with her grandson is especially poignant: "Mir schnürte sich die Kehle zusammen, ich wagte nicht, meine Tochter anzusehen" (p. 430). This description is reminiscent of several others in which she described her feelings regarding certain people she had deeply cared for in her life. However, it also reinforces an especially strong characteristic of Ricarda. Outwardly, she never seemed to be affected by people or events, belying her

¹Buchwald, p. 19

tendency toward profound and passionate feelings. Not even to those people who were closest to her could she show certain emotions. Only through writing could she express them. In writing, Ricarda had found an activity that took into consideration her entire being. Not only did she derive great pleasure and satisfaction from it, but it was also extremely therapeutic for her, so much so that she preferred to live in her creative world rather than in the real one:

Aus jener Welt des schöpferischen Traums [...] brachte sie eine Atmosphäre, einen Duft, einen Klang mit, der sich selten nur ganz verlor und sich wie ein leichter Schleier zwischen sie und die Umwelt legte, ihr gleichsam eine Spanne schuf, die jederzeit die schleunige Flucht in die inneren Bezirke ermöglichte, so dass sie, obwohl sie ganz da zu sein schien, doch wieder nicht völlig da war.¹

Because she could never completely express herself to people in the real world, but could do so creatively, she found her imaginative world much more preferable to live in. Her personality, her experiences, her age all contributed to her withdrawing from reality, from life.

The weather on that disastrous day of March 19 had again turned cold and wintry. As the small group gathered in the basement as usual, Ricarda was especially glad that Dr. Horstmar was with them. He had a calming effect on everyone, including Ricarda, and was a good conversationalist. He was also an excellent story-teller and began to relate how he had

¹Hoppe, pp. 881-82

learned to emulate the call of the cuckoo. As the planes drew nearer all conversation stopped, and in the next moment the bombs dropped mercilessly. The noise was deafening and became louder still. Throughout the terror Ricarda's thoughts revolved around how they would all escape from the basement if it caved in, and that she would have been much happier had she sought shelter "draussen in freier Luft, im Walde" (p. 432). As a "Kind der Elemente" she would have felt safer in the midst of nature than in the questionable protection provided by the basement. Although calm on the outside, she was undergoing enormous stress. "Wenn nur das fürchterliche, an den Nerven zerrende Getöse der Flieger eine Minute, einen Augenblick aufhörte" (p. 432), she thought to herself. When the noise finally did weaken, Ricarda, as calm and composed as ever, asked Dr. Horstmar to continue his story, as if the horror of the bombing had only been a minor interruption! Shortly thereafter the bombing began again, yet, everyone remained relatively calm. Busi's fright brought back memories to Ricarda of a happier time when Busi had been small and scared of thunderstorms. Back then Ricarda had been able to comfort her, but now she could think of nothing that would help:

War ich denn ganz ausgeliefert an diese unwürdige, entnervende, entmenschende Angst? Ich bin alt, dachte ich, ich müsste ein Gebet sprechen oder etwas Erhebendes sagen; aber mir fiel nichts ein, was mir natürlich und angemessen vorgekommen wäre. Anstatt dessen bat ich Dr. Horstmar, der sich schon räusperte, denn das

Fliegergeräusch wurde schwächer, seinen Bericht zu vollenden. (p. 433)

Ricarda, because of her age, wisdom and experience, had hoped to think of something calming to say not only to Busi but to the group as a whole. She could think of nothing but remained calm outwardly, perhaps as an example to the others to do the same and maybe find some comfort through her display of calmness. Fortunately, Dr. Horstmar was also a model for the group and together he and Ricarda were able to maintain the appearance of sanity. Surprisingly, Ricarda mentioned that normally she would have been able to think of a suitable prayer. Years before she had not placed any value on prayer or other Christian practices. Perhaps with her advancing years she had altered her philosophy. In view of Dr. Horstmar's story this is quite possible. Obviously he had told a tall tale about a giant cuckoo, but it had reminded Ricarda of a time in her childhood when she had become lost in the forest and encountered a frog the size of a calf. Naturally, no one had believed her then, but the enormous frog had been quite real to her.

Dr. Horstmar nickte verständnisvoll. 'Wohl möglich', sagte er, 'Reptilien können ein hohes Alter erreichen. Die Menschen sind zu einseitig, sie glauben nur, was sie selbst gesehen haben.'
(p. 434)

Perhaps for the same reason Ricarda had shown reluctance toward religion practically all her life. Although a believer in her own interpretation of fate and God, her personal experiences had never led her to a more traditional view of

religion and an acceptance of it. With age she became more tolerant, as well as open to viewpoints which would have normally been contrary to her own. Her increased understanding, resulting no doubt from new inner perspectives and rationalizations, led to the development of a personal philosophy that embraced the Divine, and perhaps also some of the more traditional religious practices such as prayer. Ricarda may not have come face to face with the Divine, but the Romantics believed that nature embodied it and, as such, it became very real to her. Ricarda had not always held this belief, or perhaps wasn't conscious that she did, but she had now reached a stage where she embraced it. With death being a possibility at any moment, an individual's thoughts are automatically drawn to his own beliefs regarding life and death. Ricarda's preference for being outdoors in the forest during the bombings, where ironically she would have felt safer, illustrates the connection she saw existing between God and nature. Her advanced years also influenced her in considering ideas and practices of religion.

As the planes retreated, the group's thoughts once again turned to everyday things, such as a dinner that had been left on a stove. Ricarda's house had withstood the bombings, sustaining only minor damage and, therefore, giving her a feeling of "vertrauter Geborgenheit" (p. 434). She remarked: "Es war wie sonst, nur dass mir alles weit weg zu sein schien und eine feierliche Unwirklichkeit hatte"

(p. 434). Four short sentences follow, ending the "Autobiographische Schriften". They are void of emotion, simply stating facts. Ricarda no longer felt herself part of this world. She seemed to be withdrawing even more, becoming all the more unaffected by her surroundings. As an observer of life she was now viewing it from behind a transparent curtain. This feeling remained with her until her death in November of 1947. She was eighty-three years old.

In this last essay in the "Autobiographische Schriften", Ricarda's personality becomes complete. Not only does she no longer have the desire and energy to experience anything new, but her development has also reached a natural closing point--like a circle that has been completed. This circle began with the dream world of her youth. When this world was shattered, Ricarda reacted by throwing caution to the wind and living every moment as if it were the last. Eventually a new life opened up for her--one in which she believed she had found reality. When this, too, came to an end she was once again shattered, but her reaction this time was the opposite: she gradually withdrew from life until once more she lived in a dream world. This was not the same dream world of her youth but was, nonetheless, a world she created for her needs and in which she preferred to live. Although Ricarda is detached from life in this final stage of the portrait, she viewed this as a natural progression for

she believed "dass man im hohen Alter immer dazu neigt, den mythischen Mächten nachzuforschen" (p. 447). Her life had been full and it was now complete. She now felt the way she imagined every person over the age of fifty felt:

[Sie] kann nichts Neues mehr erleben, da [ihre] Entwicklung abgeschlossen ist und etwas anderes als diese [ihr] nicht zum inneren Erlebnis wird, [sie] kann nur noch anderen helfen, ihre Entwicklung zu vollenden, indem [sie ihre] eigene Entwicklung als ein Beispiel aufrichtet, das die übrigen befolgen, mit dem sie sich messen, an dem sie ihr Anderssein klären können.¹

Her entire being was now there for the sole purpose of helping others, whether through acting as a physical example or through her writings:

Es bezog sich auf das Ganze, war Ausdruck der Liebe des vollendeten Menschen zu "Gott und Natur, das ist aber alles", und das Einzelne war davon zwar umfassen, wurde aber nicht mehr mit der Leidenschaft ergriffen, die es zuvor erregt hatte.¹

Ricarda enjoyed the companionship of her daughter, grandson and a few neighbours, but her dream world, which was quite separate from them, remained more important than reality. Her detachment from the real world, her tendency to see it through veiled eyes, her close bond with "den mythischen Mächten" not only indicated the extent of her withdrawal from reality but also the extent of her acceptance of a life hereafter.

¹Hoppe, p. 879

Conclusion

The picture that has emerged in the "Autobiographische Schriften" reveals Ricarda's development from a small and innocent child to a mature and emotionally complete adult. This process was a long and often painful one for her but, in the end, she triumphed and attained what she had been searching for all her life. Being a Romantic at heart, her fondest wish had been to reconcile all the opposing forces within her in order to achieve inner peace and harmony. This, she believed, was only possible "durch äusserste Steigerung des Willens und der Empfindung"¹ through the Romantic idea of "Liebeserleben", "die sich [...] zu einer schönen Synthese von Sinnlichkeit und Geistigkeit bekennt, die alles Körperliche als Ausdruck des Seelischen ansieht".²

Many books and articles have been written about Ricarda Huch. The "Autobiographische Schriften", however, are unique in that they portray the influences and changes in her life by Ricarda herself. Apart from Else Hoppe's thorough biography, Gunter H. Hertling's book Wandlung der Werte im dichterischen Werke der Ricarda Huch³ proved to be an excellent work with which to compare the outcome of this

¹Gillischewski, p. 31

²Gillischewski, p. 38

³Gunter H. Hertling, Wandlung der Werte im dichterischen Werke der Ricarda Huch (Bonn: H. Bouvier u. Co., 1966).

thesis. Hertling's treatment of Ricarda's development involved the use of her poetic, historical and theoretical works to illustrate her changing values, whereas this thesis used the "Autobiographische Schriften" exclusively in order to do likewise. It was a pleasant surprise, therefore, to discover that the views in both the book and thesis coincided frequently. Because of the sheer number of examples that can be given to support this claim, only three choice, substantial ones will be presented. These comparisons may, thus, provide an appropriate conclusion to this thesis on the "Autobiographische Schriften".

The first example refers to the time between Ricarda's childhood and her first marriage, during which she lived in a dream world. Through her life with Manno and her experiences in Triest she confronted certain realities. This made her aware of true suffering as well as sensitive to the needs of others, but it also emphasized her realization of the fickleness of fate. Her desire to control it, yet failure to do so totally, had often made her bitter, but through her experiences in Triest she eventually accepted that there were things in life that she couldn't change. Hertling used Ricarda's novel Triumphgasse to mirror these same experiences and changes in her, and expressed the same conclusion regarding the outcome of her opinion of fate at this time in her life:

Das Schicksal, das zwar wie in Ricarda's Züricher und novellistischem Triestiner Werk immer noch

unbarmherzig und dämonisch über seinem Mensch-
enopfer lugte, wird auch jetzt bitter ange-
fochten, schliesslich aber anerkannt und als
unwandelbar hingenommen.¹

The importance of fate in Ricarda's life cannot be stressed enough. Therefore, a second comparison with Hertling's book will take this aspect especially into consideration. When her marriage to Richard ended, Ricarda had to re-evaluate her personal philosophy. Still searching for harmony, she hoped she could achieve it through writing objective historical works, for they required 'merkliche Straffung in Stil und zunehmende Ausdruckskraft'.² She hoped she could attain similar control over her emotions by taking charge of fate. This same opinion is held by Gunter Hertling:

Geschichtliche Tatmenschen wie Garibaldi, Confalonieri, Gestalten aus der Reformation und Gegenreformation wie Friedrich Spee, Wallenstein und Gustav Adolf in Ricardas dreibändiger Darstellung des dreissigjährigen Krieges, auch der Mörder Lju in ihrer Briefnovelle Der letzte Sommer, sie alle widersetzen sich erstarrter Staats- und Lebensformen. Sie alle greifen das Überlieferte an, das der organischen Entwicklung des Menschen innerhalb seiner Gesellschaft im Wege steht. Die Welt der geschichtlichen Vergangenheit wird der Dichterin immer interessanter, denn wenn die romantische Ferne ihr letzten Endes keine Lösung bot zu den dringenden Fragen nach den Gründen menschlicher Leiden, so glaubte sie

¹Hertling, p. 98

²Hertling, p. 177

sie im Leben und in den Handlungen historischer Gestalten zu entdecken.¹

The third and final example chosen for comparison with Hertling deals with Ricarda's acceptance of God. True love, she believed, could only occur through a bond that incorporated one's physical nature with spirituality. This she had achieved in her relationship with Manno. Her acceptance of God also made it possible to see the necessity of using her talents as a writer, mother and companion to help those who also searched for answers to their questions, by inspiring them, guiding them and acting as an example herself. These views are also expressed by Hertling in reference to Ricarda's book on Martin Luther:

In ihrem Luther sowie in ihrer Kritik am modernen Menschen gelangt Ricarda zur festen Überzeugung, dass die wahre Liebe nur im Glauben an Gott reifen, sich nur in religiöser Zuversicht auf die Gerechtigkeit Gottes stärken kann. Religiosität aber wird dem Menschen nur dann zuteil, wenn er sich als Werkzeug Gottes für den Mitmenschen einsetzt, und auf sein Herz, auf seine Phantasie und seine Gefühle horcht.²

The reasons for writing one's autobiography were discussed earlier in this thesis. These reasons, especially the need for self-revelation, do not reveal themselves only through

¹Hertling, pp. 178-79

²Hertling, pp. 196-97

autobiographies of every sort, confessions, apologias, or simple narratives, but also [through] the works which a creative writer brings forth out of himself as something objective, such as Shakespeare's sonnets, or the lyrics of Goethe, or even Dante's Divina Commedia. These works exist independently of the author's person and have no need of reference to his own life in order to be understood, and yet they are self-portrayals in the sense that in them the personality of the poet or thinker is preserved, that his "spirit" is "objectivated" in them.¹

Thus, all of Ricarda's works--including those that are poetic, historical and theological--are, in a sense, autobiographical. After all, "Welcher Künstler schüfe im Grunde jemals etwas anderes als sein Ebenbild, wenn auch in unendlich vielen, immer neuen Gestaltungen."²

¹Misch, p. 9

²Hoppe, as expressed by Ricarda Huch on p. 1

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