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ESSAY - FAMILY TIES & DIFFICULTY TO PART FROM HOME 1955
Family ties and difficulties to part from home.

In the 19th century, science and philosophy had advanced. Combined with underprivileged religious tradition in many educated families, particularly there was a strong tendency at that time to break away from the old beliefs. This was particularly true as Jewish and young people linked. The new freedom of thinking and progress, away from religious prejudices, which had been the cause of discrimination and hatred in every sphere of life, seemed to be emerging. My parents were Jewish, and their parents had still observed traditional customs and religious holidays, which had been as important a factor in keeping up the Jewish religion through many centuries as the other hand strengthening the tendency for assimilation from non-Jewish people long after the great thrusts of assimilation from non-Jewish people long after the great

All that was now considered useless by the young generation! Life should become

less by the young generation! Life should become

enlightened at last, and the idea of a free thinking, progressive society of all creeds and nations.

This was the vision to strive for. Their ideal

With this hope for a better future in mind, our parents' thought not yet having a complete break with the Jewish religion. For themselves, and their children, being Christianized in the Russian Orthodox Church, which was then the Church of the state of Russia, in which we lived. Though our parents never went to a religious service, they had us pray grace at dinner and pray at night, and sometimes said grace before dinner and gray at night, praying the right way. The text of the little prayers we recited, a little to differ. The text of the little prayers we recited, a little to differ. In the Russian Orthodox Church, our father sent us to Church by ourselves, my brother and I.
and myself, before I was big enough to understand, what was going on. All this religious instruction failed to establish my inner relationship to God enough to give me a sense of security, as might have been the case if our parents had had the same religion, which we were supposed to embrace. As it was, it came from someone without wisdom and had not enough sympathy from home to make me really feel part of the group which I was supposed to belong to.

Dr. Nelson was my father. A very able, good-looking man, idolized by his sisters and jokingly called "The First Man." He became my hero from my very early childhood and it must have been him whom I subconsciously set up as "God-Father," to whom I was looking for all my happiness in life, my source of knowledge and guarantee for security on this earth. Instead of looking to the "Heavenly Father" for guidance and security, I looked to my earthly father instead.

This may also explain the very great importance which our home took in my emotional life, which went so far that even the moving of a piece of furniture from one place to another was felt as a tragedy.

When my mother had been mentally ill for years and there was no hope of recovery, my father got the permission for divorce to which her knowledge and married my stepmother, who was nearer in age to me than to him and we were very fond of each other, more like friends or sisters than mother and daughter. I accepted her readily as one of the family and was pleased with all my heart to have this little sister after a few years but the setting of the house still seemed to me continuous and the stepmother, in my eyes, should not change it more than two absolutely.

It was necessary to accommodate herself and her two little girls who were new to the family, but should not interfere with the "stage-setting" part of the family, but should not interfere with the "stage-setting" which played such an important part to satisfy my longing for a home.
my birth of super-earthly importance. It had been there before me and to my mind it seemed to be a place where I had belonged even before I was born to this earth, related to God and giving heavenly security. This explains why the death of my father came as a sudden shock to me though I was nearly 26 years old at the time.

Not. May 1955
for Gretel von Sasi.