

# Invisibly Revolving— —Inaudibly Revolving:

The Riddle of the Double Gedankenstrich

by Rainer J. Hanshe

*I still have the right to say of myself, cogito, ergo sum, but not vivo, ergo cogito. Empty 'being' is granted me, but not full and green 'life'; the **feeling** that tells me I exist warrants to me only that I am a thinking creature, not that I am a living one, not that I am an animal but at most a cogital. Only give me life; then I will create a culture for you out of it!—Nietzsche, UM: II.10; KSA 1, 329*

*He who knows how to keep silent discovers an alphabet that has just as many letters as the ordinary one . . .—Kierkegaard, Repetition*

*Whoever will have much to proclaim one day, must long remain silent unto himself: whoever intends to ignite lightning one day, must long be—a cloud.—Nietzsche, KSB 8, 597*

The world, Zarathustra first declares, revolves not only around inverse auditory events, but also around inverse *visual* events: “Around the inventors of new values the world revolves—invisibly it revolves” (Z: I.12; KSA 4, 65).<sup>1</sup> What the Stillest Hour, who Zarathustra calls his “angry mistress,” speaks *without voice* to Zarathustra correlates to the inverse auditory and visual events that he proclaims drive the world, too: “Then it spoke to me again like a whispering: ‘It is the stillest words that bring on the storm. Thoughts that come on doves’ feet direct the world’ ” (Z: II.22; KSA 4, 189). To articulate thoughts in a voice that, inexplicably, though inaudible is still somehow discernible, Nietzsche illustrates that there are certain thoughts which he wants to communicate but cannot, or refuses to convey through explicit modes of transmission. While still expressed linguistically the thoughts that “direct the world” in *Also sprach Zarathustra* are often textually performed as inaudible. To animate Zarathustra’s experience, it is necessary to imagine the reality that Nietzsche creates. If the words in the text are clearly legible to the reader, to

<sup>1</sup> This line is repeated with two alterations when Zarathustra announces that, “Not around the inventors of new noise, but around the inventors of new values does the world revolve; *inaudibly* it revolves” (Z: II.18; KSA 4, 169). In the first utterance, a colon and a *Gedankenstrich* precede “invisibly” (Parkes omits the colon) whereas in the second, a semicolon precedes “inaudibly,” which Nietzsche italicizes, perhaps to signal the alteration from inverse visual events to inverse auditory events. All English passages of *Also sprach Zarathustra* are from Graham Parkes’ translation (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

Zarathustra certain passages are spoken “without voice.” To hear the utterances of the Stillest Hour even though its speech is silent—perhaps Zarathustra hears it with a different organ of perception, or with his *third* eye (D §509; KSA 3, 297) or *third* ear (BGE §246; KSA 5, 189)—is to experience something uncanny. The voiceless voice of *die stillste Stunde* so frightens Zarathustra that he screams in terror at its whispering, which drains the blood from his face. If it may then not be surprising that he is able to hear such a voice, his ability to hear it is the result of a unique perceptual capacity. *Zarathustra* is rife with *unheimlich* experiences and the reader must struggle to register them, as the reader must struggle to hear the eerie silent voice of the Stillest Hour. To hear that voice ‘with one’s eyes’ is to hear the inaudible wisdom that is not proclaimed through speech but which, though mute, still rises over the roaring sea *speaking* revelations (Z: III.4; KSA 4, 207).

It is not however only the world that revolves around what is invisible and inaudible—*texts* are correspondingly driven just as they may be compelled by thoughts that come on doves’ feet. Zarathustra’s edict to hear with the organ of sight is not only an order given to his abyss-deep thought: it is a furtive clue for the bold searchers, tempters, and experimenters who engage with Nietzsche’s texts. In particular, it is a clue about *Zarathustra* and some of the texts published subsequent to it, if not perhaps all of them. They contain something that cannot be pronounced, something inaudible that one can hear only with one’s eyes, something nearly invisible around which the world is to revolve. If the world revolves not only around what is inaudible but also, as Zarathustra *first* announces, around what is invisible, it is crucial to observe and interpret what in the book is “invisible.” One of the reader’s tasks is to achieve the challenging synaesthetic aspiration Nietzsche advances; without accomplishing it, we will remain unknown to ourselves due to lacking knowledge of the rich value our senses have as equally important organs of knowledge. For the philosopher who proclaimed, and seriously, that his genius was in his nostrils, knowing is not the result of cognition alone; as Kofman emphasizes, in stressing rumination “as the imperative for any serious reading, he reintroduces intelligence into animality, just as he reinscribes the meaning of a text and its clarity into the senses: hearing, smell, sight, taste, without privileging any single one as a model of knowledge.”<sup>2</sup> In the sublime state of intelligent animality we unify our senses, cleanse the doors of perception, learn to see eternity in an hour or even shorter duration of time. It is then that we are stung in the heart and “suddenly, with unspeakable certainty and subtlety” (EH, “Zarathustra” 3; KSA 6, 340), the invisible becomes visible, the inaudible becomes audible, and something shakes and overturns us to the very depths—

### Nietzsche’s Avowal: Contesting Heidegger

In the *Nachlaß*, Nietzsche makes the striking revelation that what he loves in his books more than what is expressed with words is the dashes; they are superior he proclaims to his communicated thoughts (KSA 11, 34 [65; 147]). In 1884, shortly after “finding” the third book of *Zarathustra* “under the halcyon sky of Nizza” (EH, “Zarathustra” 4), Nietzsche also vowed that everything he had written hitherto

<sup>2</sup> Sarah Kofman, “Nietzsche and the Obscurity of Heraclitus” in *Diacritics*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (Autumn, 1987): 39-55. See 49-50.

was foreground, an utterance to which, as is well known, Heidegger lent particular interpretive force and made enduringly if not blindingly famous.<sup>3</sup> Nietzsche's avowal is one of the primary textual sources Heidegger uses to substantiate the *Nachlaß* over and against the published work as the "background" of Nietzsche's thought, where he might say its foundation or unconcealed "truth" is contained. Yet, Nietzsche says everything that he has written hitherto, which would include the notes, "is foreground." He does not say that only what he has published is foreground. If Heidegger interprets "writing" as published writing, then what destabilizes this possibility is that he ignores the rest of Nietzsche's avowal. The statement on foreground is only the prelude; the denouement follows, and it is crucial to observe. It is a truly revelatory conclusion:

"Everything I have written hitherto is foreground;  
for me the real thing begins only with the dashes."<sup>4</sup>

Nietzsche's declaration is explicit—it is *only* with the dashes that "the real thing" begins! This compelling formulation demands vigilant attention yet, as far as I am aware, no scholar has heeded it, nor has any scholar interrogating Heidegger's use of it noted that Heidegger omits its most illuminating aspect. Of the numerous books and articles that quote Nietzsche's letter, they cite only the first half of the sentence as if the concluding statement about the dashes was too stupefying or absurd to consider with the slightest degree of seriousness.<sup>5</sup> Surprisingly, even Kofman, who is

3 See Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, tr. by David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper Collins, 1991). Heidegger's paraphrase of Nietzsche's avowal: "What Nietzsche himself published during his creative life was always foreground" (8-9). Heidegger's direct paraphrase of Nietzsche's letter contains no reference.

4 Venice, 20 May 1885. Letter to Elisabeth Nietzsche. *Selected Letters of Friedrich Nietzsche*, tr. by Christopher Middleton (New York: Hackett, 1996): 241. KSB III.3, 53, letter 602. Middleton mistakenly lists this date as 1884.

5 Oddly, Krell, who is sensitive to such textual abuses, makes no mention of the omission of the latter half of Nietzsche's avowal in his introduction or in the notes to his translation of Heidegger's *Nietzsche*. See also Keith Ansell-Pearson, *Viroid Life* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1997): 109; *The Nietzsche Reader*, ed. by Keith Ansell-Pearson, Duncan Large (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005): 306; *Companion to Nietzsche*, ed. by Keith Ansell-Pearson (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006): 20; Wayne Klein, *Nietzsche and the Promise of Philosophy* (New York: SUNY Press, 1997): 41-42; Sarah Kofman, *Explosion I: Of Nietzsche's Ecce Homo*, tr. by Duncan Large, *Diacritics*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (1994): 57; Bernd Magnus, "Nietzsche's Philosophy in 1888: 'The Will to Power' and the 'Übermensch' " in *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, Vol. 24, No. 1, January (1986): 82; *Cambridge Companion to Nietzsche*, ed. by Bernd Magnus, Kathleen Marie Higgins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996): 67; William Müller-Lauter, *Nietzsche: His Philosophy of Contradictions and the Contradictions of His Philosophy*, tr. by David Parent (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1999): 125; Alexander Nehamas, *Nietzsche: Life as Literature* (Cambridge; London: Harvard University Press, 1985): 16; Rose Pfeffer, *Nietzsche: Disciple of Dionysus* (Pennsylvania: Bucknell University Press, 1972): 20; Alan Schrift, *Nietzsche & the Question of Interpretation* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1990): 15; Gary Shapiro, *Nietzschean Narratives* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1989): 3, 34; Douglas Thomas, *Reading Nietzsche Rhetorically* (New York: Guilford Press, 1999): 9, 71, 114; Linda L. Williams, *Nietzsche's Mirror* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001): 69; and Linda L. Williams, "Will to Power in Nietzsche's Published Works & *Nachlass*" in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 57, No. 3 (July, 1996): 455. For a more recent example: Max Whyte, "The Uses and Abuses of Nietzsche in the Third Reich: Alfred Baeumler's 'Heroic Realism' " in *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 43, No. 2 (2008): 180. Not one of these authors records this significant omission or includes Nietzsche's sentence in its entirety.

one of Nietzsche's most careful readers, neglects to include Nietzsche's conclusion about the dash in her *Explosion I*. Ellipses follow the word "foreground" in her footnote and Nietzsche's avowal is left unheard, relegated to textual oblivion, where it has languished until today. If, as Kofman declared, the dialogue between Heidegger and Nietzsche was a dialogue between deaf ears,<sup>6</sup> even she was deaf to certain tonalities and visions, as all of us can be. The fact of our not perceiving what is directly before us, or of seeing and hearing only what we choose to, is an intriguing phenomenon, illustrative of a failure of perception, a simple refusal to perceive, or a failure due specifically to our refusal to reintroduce animality into intelligence.<sup>7</sup> It is logical to think this in terms of the predominant refusal of the body in modern post-Cartesian/post-Christian culture, an instrumental aspect of Nietzsche's larger critique of the philosophical trajectory from Platonism to modernity. What Nietzsche thereby forces us to ask is, do we wish to persist as purely *cogital* figures, or will we struggle to grant ourselves full and green lives by truly wrestling with the tasks of his philosophy?

Although it is well known that Nietzsche's use of dashes is astonishingly manifold, they are still largely ignored,<sup>8</sup> that is, rarely read or interpreted, and it is clear how negligible this has been and remains. It is careless philology, a neglectful act we are not free to commit. As Klein emphasized, when refusing to read Nietzsche's dashes, there is "much that is potentially misread and misunderstood."<sup>9</sup> Further, it

6 Kofman 1987, 51. For other passages on deafness: 48, 49, 54. It is all too easy to distort texts through ignoring context or selective quoting, or to be completely blind to the rich abundance of certain motifs, such as the sea, which figures throughout Nietzsche's oeuvre despite Irigaray's odd insistence against that fact. Let us recall the *soothlaugher's* own words: "And if Zarathustra's words were even a hundred times right, by my words you would always—do wrong!" (Z: III.7; KSA 4, 225)

7 On the animal in Nietzsche's philosophy, see: Vanessa Lemm, *Nietzsche's Animal Philosophy: Culture, Politics, and the Animality of the Human Being* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2009).

8 There is but scant material on Nietzsche's use of dashes. While the following brief chronologically ordered list may seem extensive for an *apparently* insignificant element of Nietzsche's philosophy, his use of dashes is not the focus of any of these works; they make only cursory comments on them, generally no more than a sentence, though a few are lengthier. Karl Löwith, *Nietzsche's Philosophy of the Eternal Recurrence of the Same* (California: University of California Press, 1935; 1997): 87, 262; Wolfgang Müller-Lauter, *Nietzsche: His Philosophy of Contradictions and the Contradictions of His Philosophy* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1971; 1999): 118, 221; Mazzino Montinari, *Nietzsche Lesen* (Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1982): S.81; Richard Roos, "Rules to a Philological Reading of Nietzsche" in Rudolph Berlinger/Wiebke Schrader (Hg.), *Nietzsche: Controversial VI* (Wuerzberg, 1987): 7-42; Peter Newmark, "Paragraphs on the Translation of Nietzsche" in *German Life and Letters*, Vol. 43, No. 4 (July 1990): 327, 331; Eric Blondel, *Nietzsche: The Body and Culture - Philosophy as a Philological Genealogy* (London; New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 1991): 19, 86, 263, 269; Gary Shapiro, *Alcyone* (New York: SUNY Press, 1991): 92; Rudolf Fietz, *Medienphilosophie: Musik, Sprache und Schrift bei Friedrich Nietzsche* (Königshausen & Neumann, 1992): 380-381; William Klein, *Nietzsche & the Promise of Philosophy* (New York: SUNY Press, 1997): 63, 64, 214; Paul van Tongeren, *Reinterpreting Modern Culture* (Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2000): 94-95, 144, 216; Laurence Lampert, *Nietzsche's Task: An Interpretation of Beyond Good and Evil* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001): 84; Gary Shapiro, *Archaeologies of Vision* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003): 190; Georges Liebert, *Nietzsche and Music*, tr. by David Pellauer and Graham Parkes (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2004): 4. The most extensive examination of Nietzsche's use of syntax has been done by Blondel, Newmark, Roos, and van Tongeren. My gratitude to Keith Ansell-Pearson, Arno Böhler, Horst Hutter, and Mattia Riccardi for a few of these references.

9 Klein, 63. While the focus herein concerns Nietzsche's use of *Gedakenstriche*, in particular the *Gedankenstriche* as emblem, his punctuation in general should be confronted with particular sensitivity.

is necessary to distinguish between the hyphen (*Bindestrich*), which Nietzsche uses to form compound words, and the dash (*Gedankenstrich*), which has a completely different function.<sup>10</sup> At the close of the first chapter of *Explosion I*, Kofman implores that we must read Nietzsche differently than Heidegger, which requires going “beyond all metaphysical reappropriations and return[ing] to the actual literality of the text.”<sup>11</sup> If we are to seek what is “unthought” in Nietzsche then it is not necessarily in the *Nachlaß* as Heidegger claims, obscuring Nietzsche’s explicit avowal, certainly not in the *Nachlaß* alone, but it is also in the *Gedankenstriche*, where Nietzsche himself confesses “the real thing begins.”

## Interpreting Nietzsche’s Dashes

To a *Gedankenstrich*, there is far more than meets the eye-ear; it is no mere sign, not in Nietzsche’s supple blade, certainly not a sign with a single meaning. It is not only employed to conceal certain thoughts and to keep others silent, but to refrain from pronouncing some thoughts for either they can’t be pronounced, should be sung instead of spoken (Z: III.16; KSA 4, 291), or words are insufficient for communicating them (BGE §296, KSA 5, 239; GS §383, KSA 3, 638). It also functions as a caesura with different musical effects. Löwith interprets one use of a dash as the announcement of a break in Nietzsche’s thought, but Müller-Lauter contests that interpretation and asserts that the dash is actually a transition.<sup>12</sup> In his examination of Nietzsche’s use of a dash in “On Truth and Lies,” Wayne Klein concurs, “the dash signifies the distinction between the figurative (the “poetic”) and the literal (the “philosophical”) parts of the essay.”<sup>13</sup> He argues further that it functions also as a transitional device, a marker of difference and a bridge from sphere to sphere, that is from the figurative to the philosophical spheres of “On Truth and Lies.” Van Tongeren posits that the dash functions as an indication of the presence of an unexpressed thought, the signal of new ground opening, an aporia, a textual division, or more simply as a breath or the marking of an interjected clause.<sup>14</sup> More recently, Loeb proposed that a dash could indicate a deduction from a general to a specific claim.<sup>15</sup> These varied interpretations of Nietzsche’s use of the *Gedankenstrich* demonstrate the significantly variable quality a single dash can alone embody.

10 For an illuminating analysis of one instance of Nietzsche’s use of a *Bindestrich*, see Shapiro, 2001. Part of that essay is included in “High Noon: Hyphenating the Augen-Blick,” a subchapter of Shapiro’s elegant and sophisticated text, *Archaeologies of Vision: Foucault and Nietzsche on Seeing and Saying* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003): 187-192. For another analysis, albeit brief, see Keith Ansell-Pearson’s comment on the *Bindestrich* in human-superhuman in his article “The Transfiguration of Existence and Sovereign Life: Sloterdijk and Nietzsche on Posthuman and Superhuman Futures” in *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (2009): 139-156.

11 Sarah Kofman, “*Explosion I: Of Nietzsche’s Ecce Homo*,” tr. Duncan Large, *Diacritics*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (Winter, 1994): 51-70. See 68-69.

12 Löwith, 87. Müller-Lauter, 118. The passage in question: “My doctrine says: to live in such a way that you must wish to live again is the task—you will in any case!” As cited in M-L: *Nachlass*, XII, pp. 64f.

13 Klein, 63.

14 Van Tongeren, 94-95.

15 Paul S. Loeb, “Identity and Eternal Recurrence” in Ansell-Pearson 2006, 171-188. See 174. While the context of this interpretation is specific to the demon’s deduction in GS §341 (KSA 3, 570), it may be applicable to other usages of the dash.

However, in many translations, Nietzsche’s punctuation is frequently dishonored, whether by being eliminated entirely, or altered—this can create considerable distortion of its subtleties and borders on being an abuse of the texts.<sup>16</sup> If Nietzsche’s use of dashes is of such extraordinary significance that they are more admirable to him than what is linguistically expressed in his texts, and that, as he confessed, they are where the “real thing” begins it is incumbent upon us to attend to them with the greatest care. While the words before, between, or after those manifold signs are of unquestionable import, it is through the abyss sustaining the tension between two dashes or thought-strikes (*Gedanken-striche*) that we will aurally perceive something with our eyes that since the publication of *Zarathustra* has remained invisible. What that exceedingly pregnant abyss symbolizes is of paramount importance, and it will enable us to hear Nietzsche’s use of dashes anew and to attempt to decipher his visual riddle, a riddle that for over 100 years has remained an unheard and unseen enigma. It is time to smash our ears in order to hear with our eyes . . .

### The Riddle of the Double *Gedankenstrich*

When translating *Also sprach Zarathustra* into English from the text of the third edition published by C. G. Naumann (Leipzig, 1894), Graham Parkes faithfully reproduced “its paragraph structure and—in most cases—its punctuation, as well as repetitions of words, phrases, and sentences” (xxxv). In the near exact replication of Nietzsche’s punctuation, Parkes restored a fundamental element of the text not found in any other English edition: Nietzsche’s use of two long dashes (*Gedankenstriche*) with a strong space between them.<sup>17</sup> I refer to this configuration as Nietzsche’s

16 What is this but an empty disregard for *der kleinen Dinge*—they are *just* dashes, *just* ellipses, and not of any real significance thus, they can be eliminated or altered in translation, or simply ignored. To alter the dashes and ellipses in Nietzsche’s texts however is like altering the major and minor signs of the notes of a symphony, or eliminating its rests. If Nietzsche’s texts are works of music as he proclaims they are and if *Zarathustra* is a symphony as he declares it is, in not honoring the punctuation of those texts, translators have altered their key and tempo and thus how they are heard. If some of us as readers cannot hear the music of Nietzsche’s texts, clearly our ears are not as acute as Mahler’s and it would therefore be wise not to mistake our own interpretive failures for a “failure” on Nietzsche’s part, as is too often done. To alter Nietzsche’s syntax is to deform it, that is, to distort the form of his texts and thus their content, an abuse we are not free to make. To those with insensate nerves who still balk at this and think the case overstated, Nietzsche has the best retort. If in *Beyond Good and Evil* he castigates Germans in particular for lacking the ability to listen to what is art and purpose in language, it is not they alone that suffer from that deficiency of refined senses. “In the end,” Nietzsche continues, “one simply does not have ‘the ear for that’; and thus the strongest contrasts of style go unheard, and the subtlest artistry is *squandered* as on the deaf” (BGE §246; KSA 5, 189). To hear what is inaudible and to see what is invisible requires the most superior perceptual abilities; if we lack those abilities, that is hardly cause for marring Nietzsche’s texts. To “have weaned ourselves from the sound-effects of rhetoric” (HH §218; KSA 3, 193-194) is our loss. To develop the ears to hear the music of Nietzsche’s texts, which is a task that every Nietzsche reader must wrestle with, we must accustom ourselves to those sound effects once again. We have to *earn* the right to the “*grand period*” (BGE §247; KSA 5, 190). The delivery of such a period as Nietzsche points out, and thus of reading it, is rare and difficult. The same is to be said of the *Gedankenstrich*.

17 I examined facsimiles of the original hand written manuscripts of *Also sprach Zarathustra* (located in the New York Public Library) and the emblems are present *in Nietzsche’s own gestures* just as they are in the collected works, and even in cheap German editions of Z. In their corrected (digital) version of the *Kritischen Gesamtausgabe Werke*, Nietzsche Source Organisation retains the emblems as they are in all of Nietzsche’s texts: <http://nietzschesource.org>.

“emblem.” The translations of *Also sprach Zarathustra* by Tille, Common, Kaufmann, Hollingdale, Martin, and, surprisingly, Del Caro do not contain a single emblem.<sup>18</sup>

In his introduction to the book, Parkes does not make note of his recuperation of the dashes, nor of Nietzsche’s significant and striking use of them within the text though in a private correspondence he stated that, “sensitive to Nietzsche’s sensitivity about the dash, I always included them as published.”<sup>19</sup> The emblem occurs a total of 39 times in *Also sprach Zarathustra* and every usage of it is unequivocally intentional. It is the result of design, of an architecture of thought, something that makes Nietzsche feel “from his arm down to his toes the dangerous delight of the quivering, ever-sharp blade that desires to bite, hiss, cut” (BGE §246; KSA 5, 189). There are 19 uses of it in part three and 20 in part four.<sup>20</sup> Significantly, the first occurrence of the emblem is in “Vom Gesicht und Räthsel,” the greatest number occurs in “Der Genesende” and in “Von alten und neuen Tafeln,” and the last usage of it is in “Das Zeichen,” on the final page of the book.

18 Del Caro expresses particular concern for faithfully observing Nietzsche’s use of punctuation in his review of Marion Faber’s translation of *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches*, which he rightfully criticizes her for abusing, and emphasizes that “he prefers N.’s style, dashes and all” (507). See Adrian Del Caro, *The German Quarterly*, Vol. 59, No. 3 (Summer, 1986): 506-509. Klein is also sensitive to the abuse some translators have exercised against Nietzsche’s texts through predetermining what is and is not of importance (63). The translation of *Also sprach Zarathustra* into Turkish by Mustafa Tuzel contains some emblems but not all of them; unfortunately, he omits some of the most significant usages of the emblem, such as in “On the Vision and Riddle.” See *Böyle Buyurdu Zerdüst: Herkes ve Hiçkimse için Bir Kitap* (Istanbul: Türkiye İs Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2004). Kaufmann and other translators ignore dashes, change paragraph structure, and virtually every translation in English of all of Nietzsche’s texts eliminates his deft use of ellipses—these are real abominations!

19 Despite this exceptional sensitivity, and considering the abuses Nietzsche’s texts have suffered it truly is exceptional, at least in English translation, Parkes neglected to include at least one very important use of a *Bindestrich*. He does not retain the *Bindestrich* in the word *Augen-Blick* in Z: IV.10; KSA 4, 343. On the hyphenation of this word, see Shapiro, 2001. Parkes also neglects to include the second emblem at the end of “On the Vision and Riddle.” It should read: “Oh, my brothers, I heard a laughter that was no human laughter— —and now a thirst gnaws at me, a yearning, that will never be stilled” (Z: III.2 §2; KSA 4, 197). He also neglects to include an emblem at the end of the second section of “Von alten und neuen Tafeln,” and an emblem in the first section of “Die Zauberer.” The first should read: “Must there not exist, for the sake of the light and the lightest, moles and heavy dwarves?— —” (Z: III.12 §2; KSA 4, 248), and the second, “To me—*yourself!*— —” (Z: IV.5 §1; KSA 4, 316).

20 There are no emblems in Books I and II. The sections (with page numbers to the Parkes edition) where the emblem occurs in Part III: (III: Vision and Riddle 2, 136) [2x]; (III: Passing By, 153); (III: Spirit of Heaviness 1, 166); (III: Old and New Tablets 3, 172) [2x]; (III: Tablets 8, 175); (III: Tablets 27, 186); (III: Tablets 30, 188); (III: Convalescent 1, 189) [4x]; (III: Convalescent 2, 192); (III: Convalescent 2, 193); (III: Yearning, 195); (III: Yearning, 196); (III: Second Dance Song 2, 198). The emblem occurs 6 times in Convalescent, which is the most of any chapter in the book. It occurs five times in Tablets.

The sections where the emblem occurs in Part IV: (IV: Honey Sacrifice, 209); (IV: Cry of Need, 212); (IV: Kings 2, 216); (IV: Leech, 217); (IV: Sorcerer 1): 221; (IV: Sorcerer 2, 224); (IV: Sorcerer 2, 225); (IV: Retired from Service, 227); (IV: Retired from Service, 228); (IV: Ugliest Man, 233) [2x]; (IV: Shadow, 240); (IV: Midday, 242); (IV: Superior Human 4, 251); (IV: Superior Human 6, 252); (IV: Song of Melancholy 3, 262); (IV: Song of Melancholy 3, 263); (IV: Drunken Song 1, 278); (IV: The Sign, 287).

The bracketed number indicates the number of times an emblem occurs on that page, except for in “Vom Gesicht und Räthsel”—see note 18 about the missing emblem in that chapter. In “Der Genesende” there is an emblem with *three* dashes with a space following the first and second dashes—representing two deaths, two returns? It is the only occurrence of this in the book as far as I am aware. Nietzsche uses the exact same emblem in a variant of “Aus hohen Bergen: Nachgesang,” the poem concluding BGE, and in many notes as well as in his letters.

Undoubtedly, Nietzsche's dashes are not to be ignored nor are they to be thoughtlessly excised from translations, let alone mutated into parentheses as Faber did in her translation of *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches*. It is our obligation as readers to treat them conscientiously. In particular, Nietzsche may be using the emblem as a silent code to communicate with select readers for a properly esoteric teaching cannot be communicated directly.<sup>21</sup> Far from being a stable signifier, the emblem is a kind of "divine lizard" (EH, "Daybreak" 1; KSA 6, 330) that needs to be interpreted anew whenever one encounters it. As illustrated earlier, a single dash can alone embody significantly different functions. I propose that Nietzsche's emblem generally functions as a *graphic illustration* of the Moment or *Augenblick*, the Eternal Return, and the Great Midday while it may also be an illustration of summit, abyss, and summit if not other triads.<sup>22</sup> It is probable that Nietzsche also uses the emblem in the books published subsequent to *Zarathustra* as an invisible and inaudible code alerting astute readers to his allusions to the Eternal Return and the Overhuman.<sup>23</sup> A large number of the passages in other works that contain emblems concern one or the other if not both concepts, as do the poems in *Dionysos-Dithyramben*, Nietzsche's final work.<sup>24</sup> For those who still continue to assert that Nietzsche abandons the

21 On the notion of the *complot* or conspiracy in Nietzsche, see Pierre Klossowski, *Nietzsche and the Vicious Circle* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1997), and Geoff Waite, *Nietzsche's Corps/e* (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1996). For Waite on Klossowski: 273-275.

22 In regards to reading Nietzsche's dashes graphically, Klein is one of the few commentators to do so. Shapiro also reads Nietzsche graphically. I will only pursue the first two propositions listed above.

23 Hollingdale's translation of *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) contains emblems in §§ 5, 6 of the preface (1886) to the second edition but in the German they are in §§ 2, 7 of the preface. His translation of *Morgenröthe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) contains the emblems as they are in §§ 1, 4 of the preface (1886) as in the German. Kaufmann's translation of *Jenseits von Gut und Böse* (New York: Vintage, 1966; 1989) contains one emblem in the German version of "Aus hohen Bergen: Nachgesang," but it is not retained in his translation of the poem (song) that concludes the book. Other emblems in the book have been replaced with closed double dashes, which Kaufmann sometimes uses in place of ellipses, or eliminates entirely, as he does in his edition of GM (New York: Vintage, 1967; 1989). In her translation of *Zur Genealogie der Moral: Eine Streitschrift* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996; 2006), Carol Diethe retains the four emblems that are in that book. Hollingdale's translation of *Ecce Homo* (New York: Penguin, 1979; 1992) contains emblems in Clever §§ 8, 9 though not in "Thus Spoke Zarathustra" 6, "Twilight of the Idols" 2, and "Destiny" 8 as in the German. Large's more recent translation of *Ecce Homo* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) contains the emblems as they are in the German. What follows is a list of the other texts in which Nietzsche uses the emblem: HH: II, AOM §98, HH: II, WS §259; D Preface §§ 1, 4, and §§ 201, 207, 538; GS §§ 60, 335; BGE §§ 22, 29, 30, 51, 56, 278, 280, 296, "Aus hohen Bergen: Nachgesang"; GM: I §§ 8, 17, III §24; FWag §§ 1, 3, 4, 5, 7; TI, "The Hammer Speaks"; AC §§ 7, 10, 13, 19, 34, 36, 37, 38, 44, 46, 50, 53, and 59; KSA 1, 666, 671. In Nietzsche's final text, *Dionysos-Dithyramben*, there are emblems in the poems "Das Feuerzeichen" [Firesign] and "Ruhm und Ewigkeit" § 4 [Glory and Eternity]. Hollingdale's translation (Connecticut: Black Swan Books, 1984) retains the emblems as in the German. James Luchte and Eva Leadon transcribe the emblem only in "Firesign" yet because of the typeface employed it is not so legible. See their translation of Nietzsche's poems, *The Peacock and the Buffalo* (Llanybydder: Fire and Ice, 2003): 91, 96-99. Turkish poet Oruç Aruoba's translations of *Der Antichrist* and *Dionysos-Dithyramben* contain the emblems as they are in the German. For the latter, see Friedrich Nietzsche, *Dionysos Dithyramboslari* (Istanbul: Kabalcı Yayınevi, 1988; 1993).—There are also emblems in other poems and in numerous letters during the time of the composition of *Zarathustra* and up until one of Nietzsche's final letters.

24 Hollingdale 1984, 47; 61-67. For instance, the section on the Eternal Return in BGE (§56; KSA 5, 75) contains an emblem.



thought of the Eternal Return and the figure of the Overhuman in his later works, the inaudible though not entirely invisible emblem should eradicate such claims once and for all.<sup>25</sup>

### “Emblem” as *Augenblick*

When functioning as a graphic illustration of the *Augenblick*, the first dash may signify the past, the second the future, and the abyss between them, *that which is invisible*, the moment. The abyss separating but holding together the *Gedankenstriche* is no mere empty space devoid of sense but “eighteen months pregnant.” It is the “invisible” and the “inaudible” around which the world revolves, the instant where two ways “confront one another head on . . . and where they come together” (Z: III.2 §1; KSA 4, 199). It is an ingenious representation of something seemingly beyond representation, something that perhaps is more visible in the East, the land from where Zarathustra hails and where emptiness is not predominantly seen as negative, or not seen at all as in the West, but is seen as a nothing that *is* which demands interpretation. That ever so pregnant abyss is not a strict absence but something we may interpret as what Deleuze and Guattari refer to as the “no longer time that exists between two instants; it is the event that is *un entre-temps*: *un entre-temps* is not part of the eternal, but neither is it part of time—it belongs to becoming.” It is a dead time “where nothing takes place, an infinite awaiting that is already infinitely past, awaiting and reserve.”<sup>26</sup> When experiencing the *Augenblick*, Zarathustra speaks of the world becoming “Still! Still!” (Z: IV.10; KSA 4, 342) and that unique temporal moment, that *entre— —temps*, seems akin to what Deleuze and Guattari refer to as “dead time”—it is not of eternity or time, but is the moment *in between*, a profound interstice. Zarathustra refers to this *Augenblick* as the becoming perfect of the world, which Stambaugh interprets as the world becoming totally or completely real.<sup>27</sup> In that moment, the distinction between the past and the present dissolves—it is a *dimensional* shift and a transition to another level or realm. During that experience, for Stambaugh, there is nothing for the will to do except to participate in the perfection of the world.<sup>28</sup>

25 To Babich, “Nietzsche’s doctrine is not only difficult to grasp but properly said *esoteric*” (1994): 350. For explicit passages by Nietzsche on the esoteric, see: GM III §10 (KSA 5, 359), BGE §§ 30, 40, 194, 270, 278, 289 (KSA 5, 48, 57, 115, 225, 229, 233), TI, “Improvers” §5 (KSA 6, 102). For different explorations of the esoteric in Nietzsche: Babette E. Babich, *Nietzsche’s Philosophy of Science: Reflecting Science on the Ground of Art and Life* (New York: SUNY Press, 1994): 23, 27, 56, 71, 102-105, 203, 210, 212-214, 243, 249, 261, 268, 278, 284, 341, 350; Laurence Lampert, *Nietzsche & Modern Times: A Study of Bacon, Descartes, and Nietzsche* (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1995): 276-277, 306-310; Laurence Lampert, *Leo Strauss & Nietzsche* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996): 29-30, 38, 44-45, 124; Geoff Waite, *Nietzsche’s Corps/e: Aesthetics, Politics, Prophecy, Or, The Spectacular Technoculture of Everyday Life* (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1996): 30-34, 64-66, 155-156, 160-161, 198-242, 298-300; Daniel W. Conway, Peter S. Groff, *Nietzsche* (New York: Routledge, 1998): 139-141, 147; Babette E. Babich, Robert Sonné Cohen, *Nietzsche and the Sciences* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999): 3, 134, 255, 257; and Adrian Del Caro, *Grounding the Nietzsche Rhetoric of Earth* (Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2004): 35-36, 175, 177, 182, 196, 198, 252, 332, 337. These texts are representative of different and conflicting interpretations of the esoteric in Nietzsche.

26 Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996): 158.

27 Joan Stambaugh, *The Other Nietzsche* (New York: SUNY Press, 1994): 141-146.

28 *Ibid.*, 26-27.



# BECOMING LOYAL TO THE EARTH: Nietzsche's Teachings as a Therapy for Political Culture Monday March 29-Wednesday March 31

## Willkommen zum Eselsfest!

This three-day conference on the works of Friedrich Nietzsche will offer students and members of the public the opportunity to attend lectures and interactive workshops led by world-renowned Nietzsche scholars.

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## Speakers:

**Dr. Keith Ansell-Pearson**, Warwick University, England. **Dr. Babette Babich**, Fordham University, New York. **Dr. Lawrence Hatab**, Old Dominion University, Virginia. **Dr. Graham Parkes**, Cork University, Ireland. **Dr. Horst Hutter**, Concordia University. **Dr. Bela Egyed**, Concordia University. **Dr. Natalie Lachance**, McGill University. **Mr. Denis Madore**, Carleton University, Ottawa. **Mr. Eli Friedland**, McGill University. **Ms. Willow Verkerk**, Catholic University of Leuven, Holland. **Rainer J. Hanshe**, Nietzsche Circle, New York.

## Details:

Workshops and Lectures will be held in rooms H-1220 and room H-767, Hall Building, 1455 De Maisonneuve Ouest.

*Monday: 9:30-12:30, 14:00-18:00*

*Tuesday: 9:30-12:30, 14:00-18:00*

*Wednesday: 9:30-12:30*

The complete program is available at: <http://www.pssa.com> and on Facebook. For more information, or to register for a workshop, email [internal.pssa@gmail.com](mailto:internal.pssa@gmail.com).

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## “Emblem” as Eternal Return

When functioning as the Eternal Return, the emblem may be a graphic illustration of how the past, the future, and the moment, though they contradict themselves, are all knotted together or entangled (*Ineinander*) and exist as a single entity. It is not possible to separate them. If one element is eliminated, the emblem ceases to function or collapses, which is to say the future does not exist without the past, the past does not exist without the future, and the moment does not exist apart from the past and the future. Both past and future hinge upon the moment, which is the gateway from where both shoot like arrows stretching backwards and forwards eternally only to return to the abyss from where they were originally jettisoned. Yet, for Nietzsche, there is no single past or single future, nor is there a single origin. Infinite recurrence entails endless causes. It is the complete and definitive victory of atheism in particular that will aid the severing of our ties to any single origin or first cause (GM: II §20; KSA 5, 330), and the Eternal Return is the ultimate and most powerful concept for severing any remaining tie to those origins. What differentiates the emblem as Eternal Return versus as *Augenblick* is that the former is the ecstatic *experience* of the *Augenblick*, which, as is evident from the narrative, the dwarf does not undergo. Instead of being actively involved in the *Augenblick*, he perceives it from a myopic perspective and therefore never falls into the well of eternity. For him, time is just one single circle instead of an infinite array of entwining circles, like fractals spinning out of one another, multiplying beyond our comprehension and grasp.

## Thinking Nietzsche’s Typography

“Only the strongest can bend its bow so taut— —” (BGE, “FHM: A”; KSA 5, 242).

These seemingly speculative interpretations will gain greater force through a close examination, which must in part be visual, of other moments in the narrative when Nietzsche uses each emblem. If the different interpretive suggestions offered above destabilize the plausibility of each single interpretation, these hypotheses should at very least generate receptivity to more ludic engagements with Nietzsche’s typography. As stated above though, Nietzsche does not use the *Gedankenstrich* as a stable signifier. Let us however permit a friendly but firm oppositional voice to enter and protest: *Isn’t it possible to read any triad into this emblem?* Answer: The emblem is distinctly characteristic of Nietzsche’s thought due precisely to its protean and metamorphic qualities. It isn’t reducible to a predetermined interpretive schema but forces us to read punctuation like gesture and feint, to remain vigilant readers who struggle to capture the divine lizard anew. Thus, each time we encounter it, we face a necessary interpretive anxiety that destabilizes us, plunging us into the groundless abyss between the *Gedankenstriche*. At that moment, our identity is fractured, and we become abyssal figures struggling to celebrate our way to evening, for that is our highest hope and the way to the new morning. Compelled to enter into a state of deep rumination, the inscrutable lizard, whose eyes are able to rotate in multiple directions, forces us to remain awake, to struggle to also hear with our eyes instead of continuing to read only with our ears as if we’ve clearly understood and incorporated

the event of the text with such ease. This isn't a matter of simple cognition.—

To propose one other interpretation, or alignment, it is probable that the emblem is to some degree analogous to Hölderlin's notion of *Innigkeit*. As that which unites things through holding them at a distance, *Innigkeit* seems related to the experience of the Eternal Return wherein the past and the future are brought together in the lightning flash of the *Augenblick* but remain separate, oscillating like two poles in tension around a magnetic center. Ansell-Pearson's characterization of the *Augenblick* as the situation "where time *qua* transience is conceived as the moment that both gathers and splits up the past and future,"<sup>29</sup> is reminiscent of *Innigkeit*, too. The — — is the direct confrontation of the separate eternities of the past and the future, which abut one another at the gateway yet are held apart, like wrestlers in agonistic engagement in a ring. One might call it *intimate estrangement*. It is a moment of perfection, an ecstatic unity wherein the entirety of the past and the already occurred future intimately flow together. "*Innigkeit* is not absorption of the external into the internal, but rather the indirect intimacy that, within limits, allows the poet a glimpse into life and grants the poet the joy of that glimpse, as well as the mourning of its loss."<sup>30</sup> This harmonization of all dissonances is the instantaneous moment of death,<sup>31</sup> a lightning flash wherein life ends and returns again without us ever noticing it, like the death of Zarathustra that has escaped the notice of so many commentators. It is the becoming perfect of the world, a tragic moment wherein joy and suffering are experienced as inextricable.

### The Emblem and the Eternal Return Redux

Significantly, Nietzsche first uses the emblem in "Vom Gesicht und Räthsel," the presentation of the *vision* of the Eternal Return. It occurs in the second section of the chapter, during the confrontation at the gateway with the dwarf, which while dramatized as an actual encounter is in fact an *inner experience* or vision that erupts in Zarathustra's soul. As Shapiro has noted, "the term *Augenblick* often has a specifically visual sense or dimension" (2001, 20) and Nietzsche plays upon this in a myriad of ways not only throughout the entire book but also specifically in "Vom Gesicht und Räthsel."<sup>32</sup> The initial presentation of the Eternal Return is recounted as a visual riddle to Zarathustra's fellow passengers on board the ship that recently departed the Isles of the Blest but, in keeping with its esoteric character, Zarathustra

29 Keith Ansell-Pearson, "The Eternal Return of the Overhuman: The Weightiest Knowledge and the Abyss of Light" in *The Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, 30 (Autumn, 2005): 1-21. See 13.

30 Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei, *Heidegger, Hölderlin, and the Subject of Poetic Language* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2004): 139.

31 Deleuze outlines a similar movement of Eros to Thanatos in the progression from the second synthesis of time to the third. See "Repetition for itself" in *Difference and Repetition* (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2004): 90-163.

32 The word eye (*Auge*) for instance is figured in many different ways and occurs in Parkes' translation over 160 times. There is however no listing for it in the index to his edition of the book. The word glance (*Blick*), which is also not listed in the index, occurs 21 times in his edition. In the original German edition, *Auge* and or cognates of it occur over 100 times and *Blick* and or cognates of it occur nearly 200 times. There are of course other more complex figurations of the visual throughout the text.

never once refers to it in name as the Eternal Return or Eternal Recurrence.<sup>33</sup> The task that Zarathustra sets for those “bold searchers, tempters, [and] experimenters . . . who are drunk with riddles” (Z: III.2 §2; KSA 4, 197) is to guess and interpret his visual riddle. It is, as Zarathustra says, a vision and a premonition, thus both inaudible and in a sense invisible, for visions are singular events and only perceptible to those who witness them. When transmitted orally as in the narrative and linguistically to us as readers, the vision loses some of its force as a vision if it is merely read as text, thus, it is all the more imperative to recall that it is a vision, which some if not many commentators ignore. *How* the concept is communicated is essential to the concept itself and our understanding of it. If riddles intoxicate, to wrestle with them is to engage with an ecstatic mode of knowing, and that demands the greatest perceptual effort, the introduction of intelligence into animality. Within the vision itself, the dwarf is challenged by Zarathustra to exert great perceptual effort in order to guess and interpret the gateway, an object he doesn’t seem to see but to which Zarathustra has to direct his vision. Perception as Nietzsche observes isn’t natural but an art that one must learn: “seeing needs practice and preschooling, and he who is fortunate enough will also find at the proper time a teacher of pure seeing” (D §497; KSA 3, 293).

Once aware of the gateway, the Spirit of Heaviness interprets it from his dwarfish perspective, reducing the sublime vision of the *Augenblick* to his circumscribing “evil” eye, which does not glance, but gazes in hegemonic imperialism as if its perspective were the only one. His is the leveling eye that blinks, the cold and dry eye of the scholar that strips every bird of its feathers (Z: IV.13 §9; KSA 4, 361). As Zarathustra implies however, the past and the future do not contradict themselves eternally: “ ‘But whoever shall walk farther on one of them—on and on, farther and farther: do you believe, dwarf, that these ways contradict themselves eternally?’—” In the gateway Moment, there is no contradiction of eternities or *Gesichter* as Nietzsche names them, employing a word that means both faces and visions. These visions or ways *do* come together at the gateway; it is just that no one has ever taken them to their end, which, since they are visions, is a *visual task*. One has to take them to the points at which they terminate *with one’s eyes*, as does Zarathustra, whose eye is able to flee “from now to the past” (Z: II.20; KSA 4, 178) and to roam or to be cast into distances (Z: III.11 §2, KSA 4, 245; Z: IV.1, KSA 4, 298-99).<sup>34</sup> When he turns his eye inward, Zarathustra is said to resemble a person “looking into far distances” (Z: II.17; KSA 4, 165). Thus, Nietzsche indicates in several different ways that it is *the eye itself* that must traverse vast expanses of space, expanses that comprise eternities. This journey, as the latter passage denotes, is an inner perceptual journey. In the *Nachlaß*, Nietzsche seems to confirm this view when describing the alteration

33 Zarathustra’s animals state that he is the teacher of the Eternal Recurrence (Z: III.13 §2; KSA 4, 275). “Der Genesende” is the first and only chapter where the phrase “eternal recurrence” appears in the book. “Eternal” and “recurrence” appear separately, but nowhere else together. The only other places where the phrase Eternal Recurrence occurs in the works published subsequent to Z are: TI, “Ancients” §§ 4, 5 (KSA 6, 159, 160) and EH, “Wise” 3 (KSA 6, 268), “The Birth of Tragedy” 3 (KSA 6, 313), and “Thus Spoke Zarathustra” §§ 1, 6 (KSA 6, 335, 345). In “Ancients” 4 (KSA 6, 159), Nietzsche uses “ewige Wiederkehr” whereas he uses “ewigen Wiederkunft” in the other sections. In GS §341 (KSA 3, 570), when first presenting the concept, Nietzsche does not use the phrase eternal return or eternal recurrence either.

34 Another version of this might perhaps be the act of what is in our century referred to as “remote viewing.” For one source, see Russell Targ, Jane Katra, *Miracles of Mind: Exploring Nonlocal Consciousness & Spiritual Healing* (California: New World Library, 1999).

of the sensations of space and time. When that occurs, “tremendous distances are surveyed and, as it were, for the first time apprehended; the extension of vision over greater masses and expanses; the refinement of the organs for the apprehension of much that is extremely small and fleeting; *divination*, the power of understanding with only the least assistance, at the slightest suggestion: ‘intelligent’ *sensuality*—” (WP §800; KSA 13, 295). It is only with the strength of the most high-spirited, alive, and world-affirming human being’s *spiritual eye* and insight that distance and space grows around man; at that moment, the “world becomes more profound” and “ever new stars, ever new riddles and *images*” at last become visible (BGE §57; KSA 5, 75).

The transmission of the teaching of the Overhuman may be predominantly perceptual, too. In the prologue, after attempting to present the teaching of the Overhuman to the people of the Motley Cow and failing, Zarathustra laments that he is not the mouth for those *specific ears*, then inquires to himself though it sounds more like a proclamation: “ ‘Must one first smash their ears before they learn to hear with their eyes?’ ” (Z: P §5; KSA 4, 18) This presages the climactic moment in “Der Genesende” when after summoning his abyss-deep thought from out of his depths Zarathustra commands it to hear with its eyes. Once that thought grasps his hand and refuses to let go, Zarathustra collapses and lies for seven days like a dead man.

Hail to me! Come! Give me your hand— —ha! let go! Haha— —

Disgust, disgust, disgust!— — —woe is me! (Z: III.13 §1; KSA 4, 271)

In his synaesthetic command, Zarathustra clearly indicates that the teaching of the Overhuman and the Eternal Return is something that is not accessible through any standard mode of consciousness, single sense, or “reason.” Instead, it must also be *sensed* as opposed to strictly cogitated over; it must be apprehended synaesthetically, through Nietzsche’s new mode of *sensus communis*, in a way wholly alien to our usual mode of sensing. When Zarathustra reveals that his sense does not speak *to the senses* of the people of the Motley Cow, it is clear that one’s senses must be calibrated differently in order to receive his teaching. It is not that Zarathustra is a failure as a teacher as many protest, but that those who receive his teaching try to comprehend it via reason alone instead of thinking *and* sensing it. Now, let us glance at the illustration of the *Innigkeit* of the two eternities in “Vom Gesicht und Räthsel.”

Here, in the very first presentation of the emblem in the book it functions as a dramatic visual or pictorial symbol of the gateway Moment and the two visions, “faces,” or “paths”:

“And are not all things knotted together so tightly that this moment draws after it *all* things that are to come? *Thus*— —itself as well?” (Z: III.2 §2; KSA 4, 200)

It is evident from the placement of the emblem within this sentence that it is a

graphic or pictorial illustration of the *Augenblick*, something inaudible that cannot be pronounced and is to be heard only with the eyes. The first dash signifies a past, the second a future, and the abyss between them a moment, which is the propulsive force drawing itself and everything else after it.

### The Invisible & the Inaudible: Zarathustra's Dialogue with his Soul

Another instance of Nietzsche's use of the emblem occurs in "Von der grossen Sehnsucht," a conversation that Zarathustra has with his soul directly after recovering from the experience of the Eternal Return in "Der Genesende." The emblem occurs twice in this chapter and the first usage of it is the most revealing if not dramatic. What must be emphasized about "Von der grossen Sehnsucht" is that, as a conversation between Zarathustra and his soul, it occurs *within* Zarathustra and is not visible or audible to the outside world. While as Parkes comments in his notes Nietzsche may be alluding to Plato's *Sophist* and the soul's silent conversation with itself, it seems more specifically that he is depicting the act of incubation. It is not that Zarathustra is merely sleeping when the serpent and the eagle discreetly steal away from him, but that he is in an incubatory state and free from rational control as he lies on the ground in perfect stillness. In "Mittags," Zarathustra also lies on the ground in secret in perfect stillness and though he falls asleep *his eyes remain open*. He reveals that sleep does not press his eyes closed and that it leaves his soul awake. In that sleeping but still wakened state he speaks to his heart in stillness and silence, outside the confines of rational discourse. It is during this particular *Augenblick* that Zarathustra experiences the flying away of time and falls into the well of eternity:

'Precisely the least, the softest, the lightest, a lizard's rustling, a breath, an instant, **a flickering eye-glance**—a *little* makes for the *best* happiness. Still!

'—What happened to me: hearken! Did time just fly away? Am I not falling? Did I not fall—hearken! into the well of eternity?

'—What is happening to me? Still! I am stung—woe—in the heart? In the heart! O shatter, shatter, heart, after such happiness, after such a sting!

'—What? Did the world not just become perfect? Round and ripe? Oh the golden round hoop—whither does it fly? Do I run after it! Quick!

'Still— — (and here Zarathustra stretched himself and felt that he was sleeping). (Z: IV.10; KSA 4, 343, translation augmented)

As Zarathustra knows, "The greatest events—those are not our loudest but our stillest hours" (Z: II.18; KSA 4, 169): the softest, the lightest, a lizard's rustling, a breath, etc. It is around what is inaudible and invisible that the world revolves, not around the bluster made or worshipped by the flies of the marketplace.— Again, this is not a matter of quotidian cognition. To confront the lizard is to confront a wholly

different kind of thinking and sensing.

After being instructed in the previous chapter by his animals to speak no further but instead to fashion a lyre and to sing and foam over in order to heal his soul, Zarathustra ceases speaking and does not speak again until the fourth book. His conversation with his soul is an inaudible inner dialogue as the final chapters that close the third book are both *songs sung in silence*. Zarathustra himself states that singing is the comfort that he has devised for himself and the making of the Eternal Recurrence into a hurdy-gurdy song by his animals his convalescence (Z: III.13 §2; KSA 4, 275).<sup>35</sup> “Das andere Tanzlied” is sung to Life and “Die sieben Siegel” is sung to Eternity. It is therefore highly probable that the last three chapters of the book occur in complete silence while Zarathustra is incubating. If as Loeb proposes the fourth book takes place *within* the third,<sup>36</sup> then the narrative of *Zarathustra* ends with a series of dithyrambic songs that are sung in silence within Zarathustra’s soul as he is in an incubatory state. Further weight is lent to this possibility by the fact that there is no indication in the narrative that Zarathustra ever ended the state of wide-awake sleep that his animals left him in.<sup>37</sup> In that state, he informs his soul that he has given it new names, including ‘Fate,’ ‘Circumference of Circumferences,’ ‘Umbilical Cord of Time,’ and ‘Azure Bell.’ He also informs his soul “there is nowhere a soul that would be more loving and more comprehensive and encompassing! Where,” he asks, “would future and past be closer together than in you?” To state this is to proclaim that the future and the past exist within us, or that the soul is the place where they are more closely entangled than anywhere else. The soul, which is equal to the body for Nietzsche (Z: I.4; KSA 4, 39), is then where time is experienced and or where we can gain power over it.<sup>38</sup>

If that is the case, how are the past and the future to be *experienced* in the soul-body? What is it that releases the future and the past from their quotidian contradictoriness and draws them together in tension while simultaneously holding

35 In referring to his animals as pranksters and smiling at them, Zarathustra responds to them differently than he does to the dwarf. He also says that they *know well* what comforts he devised during his inner journey, which further indicates that his judgment of their interpretation is not negative. Prankster is I believe a positive figuration. Zarathustra never refers to the superior humans as pranksters but as jesters when they misunderstand his teaching, thus aligning them with the character of the jester. The only other use of the word pranksters is in “Das Honig-Opfer” and it has a positive valence. It is used to refer to the animals after they claim that Zarathustra is “lying in a sky-blue lake of happiness.” “ ‘You pranksters,’ Zarathustra replied and laughed. ‘How well you chose that image!’” (Z: IV.1; KSA 4, 298-299) See footnote 44 below for another proposal on the animals.

36 See Paul S. Loeb, “The Conclusion of Nietzsche’s *Zarathustra*” in *International Studies in Philosophy*, 32/3 (2000): 137-152.

37 Sleep and wakefulness are important motifs in *Zarathustra* but they have not received sufficient analysis and I am at work on a paper concerning them. “On the Professorial Chairs of Virtue” is a key chapter regarding this and it resounds in multivalent ways throughout the book. How Zarathustra sleeps is different from how all others sleep: his is a wide-awake form of “sleep” (he often talks to himself in his sleep, receives visions in his sleep, etc.), lucid dreaming perhaps, and his wisdom and virtue is of the kind that *keeps him from sleeping comfortably*. Zarathustra sleeps on a hard pallet in his cave, a place of incubation, and is in an almost continuous state of vigilance throughout the book. For a recent philosophical examination of sleep, see Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Fall of Sleep* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2009). Unfortunately, if not oddly, Nietzsche does not figure in this work.

38 For an astute and thorough exploration of gaining power over time, see Paul S. Loeb, “Finding the Übermensch in Nietzsche’s *Genealogy of Morality*” in *The Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, 30 (Autumn 2005): 70-101.



them apart in intimate estrangement?

—your great releaser, O my soul, the nameless— —for whom  
only future songs will find names! And verily, your breath is already  
fragrant with future songs—

—already you glow and dream, already you drink thirstily from all  
deep resounding comfort-wells, already your heavy heart reposes in  
the blissfulness of future songs!— —

It is the nameless — — that is the “great releaser” or “vintner, who waits with his diamond vintner’s knife” to *cut* the soul-body, which Zarathustra compares to a vine, and *release* it so that the past and the future can dance together within it. As Alenka Zupančič notes, “Nietzsche’s eternity refers not to the endless circling of time, but to those rare moments when this circularity *appears*, becomes tangible for us in the encounter of two temporalities—the encounter that distinguishes the event as such.”<sup>39</sup> This is the becoming perfect of the world or *Innigkeit*, an ecstatic event wherein the soul is *released* like wine shooting forth from grapevines in an ecstatic explosion. And it is the act of being released (*Löser* or *Herauslasse*) that Nietzsche sets over and against the act of *Erlösung* (redemption). Nietzsche uses the word *Erlösung* (redemption) nine times within *Zarathustra* while he uses *Löser*, a coinage that in German is not common, only in the chapter “Von der grossen Sehnsucht” (KSA 4, 280).<sup>40</sup> Intriguingly, this is also the single appearance of the word *Löser* in his entire published corpus. Similarly, *Löser*, which essentially means ‘absolver’ or ‘freedom giver,’ occurs in at least one note in the *Nachlaß*. “*Herauslasse*,” which Parkes also translates as “release,” is used in “Auf dem Ölberge” to refer to the releasing of the “Heavens.” This is the only appearance of the word *Herauslasse* in Nietzsche’s entire published corpus—these specific unique word usages have not been pointed out until now.<sup>41</sup> If a philosopher’s frequent use of a word can indicate its degree of importance to the thinker, the rare and very specific usage of a word can indicate an equal if not even greater degree of importance. Finally, in “Von alten und neuen Tafeln,” Nietzsche uses the word “*los*” (“und die Welt los-”) to refer to the release and “unrestrained and fleeing back” of the world to itself. It is when describing “the nameless — —” as the “great releaser” of the soul that Nietzsche uses the coinage *Löser*. And in the *Nachlaß*, Nietzsche declares, “I teach you release from the eternal flow, the stream that flows back into itself again and again, and you enter the same stream again and again, as the Same” (*Nachlaß*, Winter 1882, KSA 10, 205, 5 [1] 160). What might we make of this notion of release?

After Zarathustra cultivates his soul with sun, night, silence, and yearning, it grows so ripe that it is ready to perish. While playing on his new lyre, Zarathustra

39 Alenka Zupančič, *The Shortest Shadow* (Boston: MIT Press, 2003): 21.

40 It is possible that Nietzsche bases the coinage of *Löser* on *ho lysios*, the cult name of Dionysus, as a way of invoking Dionysus. See footnote 42.

41 Nietzsche does use *Herauslassen* in D §337 and in GM: III §7, but he uses the word in both passages in its common sense whereas the use of *Herauslasse* in Z is conceptual and rather distinct.

sings to his soul: “You grape-vine! Why do you praise me? *I have cut you after all!* I am cruel, you are bleeding—what means your praise of my drunken cruelty? ‘What has become perfect, all that is ripe—wants to die!’ thus you speak. Blessed, blessed be the vintner’s knife! But all that is unripe wants to live: woe!” (Z: IV.19 §9, emphasis added) The cutting of the soul-body by the nameless — — is an ecstatic Dionysian event that cannot be reduced to words. To undergo this passionate incision is to be released from the eternal flow and to be thrust back into it again and again.<sup>42</sup> It is not *Erlösung* that humanity needs, or which Zarathustra offers, but *Löser*, and Dionysus is the god who offers release. For Nietzsche, “the *infinitely small moment* is the highest reality and truth, a lightning-image that emerges from the eternal river” (KSA 9, 11 [156]), and that highest reality and truth is reached through Dionysian experiences. As Marsden characterizes it, in soaring from self-presence, Zarathustra “voraciously lusts for the ring of recurrence and in his rapture it is the body that is undone,” or, *cut*. “Yet this is not a flight from the body, rather a re-encountering of corporeality at a physiological frequency different to that of the day and its regular pulse of the ‘clock in the head.’”<sup>43</sup> It is in the incubatory state of stillness that Zarathustra experiences precisely such physiological frequencies, which are completely different than those experienced during his regular waking hours—they are the frequencies of his new *sensus communis*, the frequencies of a synaesthetic epistemology. “‘Inexpressible and nameless,’” declares Zarathustra, “is that which is torment and delight to my soul and is even the hunger of my entrails, too.’ May your virtue be too lofty for the familiarity of names’ ” (Z: I.5). Due to the extraordinary intensity of this sublime incident, which is the most exalted and superior event one can experience, signifying it with speech would only be reductive. Instead, it is graphically represented by the nameless — —, which is perhaps symbolic of the very cut vine that releases the past and the present within the body. When experiencing the release of the light-abyss of the Heavens, which makes Zarathustra “shudder with godlike desires” (Z: III.4; KSA 4, 207), he does not speak for he knows too many things. He as well as the Heaven he beholds is mutually silent; instead of speaking they “smile their knowing to one another.” The cleverest of the silent are also “those who are clear, and upright, and transparent . . . for their ground is so *deep* that even the clearest water does not—betray them—” (Z: III.6; KSA 4, 218), as the nameless — —, despite its striking clarity, did not betray itself until today.

## Conclusion: On Listening

When whispering into Life’s ear, it now seems necessary to ask, is Zarathustra whispering into her ear, or is he whispering into her eye? If Zarathustra also

42 In “Die dionysische Weltanschauung” Nietzsche speaks of Dionysus with his cult name, ο λυσιος [*ho lysios*], which means ‘he who gives release’: “The god *ho lysios* has transformed everything, redeemed and released everything from itself” [“Der Gott ο λυσιος [*ho lysios*] hat alles von sich erlöst, alles verwandelt”] (DW 1). Friedrich Nietzsche, “The Dionysiac World-view” in *The Birth of Tragedy And Other Writings*, tr. Ronald Spiers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004): 123.

43 Jill Marsden, “Lunar Rapture: Nietzsche’s Religion of the Night Sun” in *Nietzsche and the Divine*, eds. Jim Urpeth, John Lippitt (Manchester: Clinamen Press, 2000): 252-268. See 258.

commands his soul to listen to time flying away as well as to him falling into the well of eternity, it can only listen to those events with its eyes. The issue of which organ one actually hears with throws into question everything that is heard in the book. If writing and print have “reduced the oral-aural world to a world of visualized pages,”<sup>44</sup> then by imploring us to hear with our eyes Nietzsche is, in both senses of the word, amplifying a logos that has been confined to print through a sight that hears. Through his gesture, he seeks to recuperate the auditory dimension of logos. For if sight isolates and sound incorporates,<sup>45</sup> then in imbuing his text with auditory qualities, in compelling us to hear it with our eyes as if we were reading sheet music, Nietzsche constructs his text so that it is not something that one just reads but *incorporates* specifically through hearing. His text possesses the immediacy of performed music, and he wants it to be digested, embodied, and taken into our very *physis* as only music can.

From now on it is necessary to ask whether each passage that is spoken in the book is heard not only with the ear but also with the eye. Further, when Nietzsche asks if we have heard him, is it not the eye that he wants to be heard with, too? If we have misunderstood him, is it not in part because of our lack of training, of our refusal to learn from the teacher of pure seeing or immaculate perception? When Zarathustra and the Last Pope converse, the latter says that they speak in confidence, *under their three eyes only* (Z: IV.6; KSA 4, 323). If Being wants to become word and Becoming wants to learn from Zarathustra how to speak, down there, in the abyss of solitude, where all is still and silent in the act of incubation, “all talking is in vain!” (Z: III.9; KSA 4, 232). Are not words made for those who are heavy? Do they not lie for those who are light? (Z: III.16 §7; KSA 4, 291) Words are not heard, but spoken without voice and seen—does that not recall Nietzsche’s “moral code for deaf-mutes and other philosophers” (TI, “Skirmishes” §26; KSA 6, 128)? If, as Nietzsche believed, music liberates the spirit and gives wings to thought, if “one becomes more of a philosopher the more one becomes a musician” (FWag §1; KSA 6, 14), must he not sing and speak no more, at least when communicating profound experiences? Yet, when the world becomes perfect, singing too is to be refrained from, even if the songs one sings are sung within oneself in silence— —“Verily, *with different eyes*, my brothers, shall I then seek my lost ones; with a different love shall I then love you” (Z: I.22 §3, emphasis added; KSA 4, 101-102).<sup>46</sup>

44 Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy* (London; New York: Routledge, 2006): 73.

45 *Ibid.*, 71. Ong posits that while “sight situates the observer outside what he views, at a distance, sound pours into the hearer.” Vision, he asserts, quoting Merleau-Ponty, dissects. If this is true of hegemonic sight, or the gazing eye, Nietzsche’s glancing eye is perspectival and certainly makes for a less distant observer. While sight for Nietzsche is not a cold dissecting sight, sight remains sight and Nietzsche imbues his texts with auditory or musical qualities too, for, to him, logos is also musical. As should be clear though, Nietzsche is not an ocularcentric thinker for vision is not the only paradigm of knowledge that is of value to him—*all* the senses are for him paradigms of knowledge. Heidegger further pursues the overcoming of the metaphysics of vision, but we still seem to be mired in Cyclopean epistemologies.

46 Nietzsche emphasizes the importance of this line through making it the epigraph to the second part of the book. In his footnotes, Parkes includes an excerpt from a letter Nietzsche sent to Peter Gast wherein he states that “from this motto there emerge—it is almost unseemly to say this to a musician—different harmonies and modulations from those of Part One. The main thing was to *swing oneself up to the second level*—in order from there to reach the *third*’ (B 13 July 1883). In the epigraph to the third book, Nietzsche speaks of a figure who, after reaching an extraordinarily sublime height is able to laugh at the tragic, at all tragic plays and tragic wakes, which may be the third level he mentions to Gast. Is that to become a comedian of the ascetic ideal? To become Hanswurst? Or to become pranksters like Zarathustra’s

It is reasonable to assume that, although Nietzsche wanted to be understood—evident in part through his oft-repeated question, *Hat man mich verstanden?*—he was equally wary of any too immediate accommodation of his thought. To other ‘*edle Geister*,’ Nietzsche communicates through less explicit and indirect modes of writing as well as through his new mode of *sensus communis*. It is in this way too that one may interpret *Also sprach Zarathustra* as a book for “nobody.” After all, not all are bridges to the *Übermensch*, to an altogether different “everyone” of the future, and not all have trained themselves to become synaesthetic epistemologists. Nietzsche’s book is addressed to those whose virtue is too lofty for any familiar names, for those whose torment and delight are inexpressible and evade conceptualization. The synaesthesia demanded of words that speak through silence relates to Nietzsche’s strategic employment of *Gedankenstriche*, especially of the double configuration of the tensely spaced dashes as an emblem. In the abyssal silence of the *Augenblick*, emblemized by the dashes, lies the invisible and inaudible revolution or *Umwertung* of the world. It is through that moment that we unite with eternity in intimate estrangement; that moment is the becoming perfect of the world in which we take creative part. To hear that silence is, then, to learn that there is more “reason” in our bodies than in our finest wisdom. To hear that silence is to seek with the eyes of the senses and to listen with the ears of the spirit, to experience what Nietzsche calls “true ecstasies of learning” (EH, “Books” 3).

Dedication: To the Laughing One