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NIETZSCHE'S PRESENCE IN RILKE

ABSTRACT

Rilke's relationship to Nietzsche is still nowhere near fully explored. This is due to the poet's peculiar silence regarding the inescapably influential philosopher, as well as to a frequently acknowledged lack of evidence regarding that influence, the existence of which remains heatedly debated and, at best, speculatively assumed within scholarship. The recent discovery, however, of two copies of Nietzsche's *Also sprach Zarathustra* amongst Rilke's possessions has changed the *status quo*, as both contain reading traces identified as Rilke's in one case, and (most probably) Lou Andreas-Salomé's in the other. This unprecedented find not only proves for the first time Rilke's familiarity with that book, but also makes visible which particular Nietzschean themes were of special interest to the poet. It is this study's aim to trace Nietzsche's presence, rendered tangible by those themes, in Rilke's work and enquire whether, where and how he transformed it poetically.

In the first part, potential arguments against this objective are addressed. An investigation of the legitimacy of a comparison of a *Dichter* and a *Denker* is followed by a thorough record of the state of research on 'Rilke and Nietzsche' so far, whilst an alternative methodological approach, a 'reader-response-poetics' (rather than -theory) drawing on both Nietzsche and Rilke themselves, is offered. Then, following the documentation of the new findings, the resulting scholarly *desiderata* this study sets out to meet are defined.

The second part completes the theoretical framework by uniting all remaining evidence such as Rilke's own statements and those of his contemporaries regarding his reading of Nietzsche. The role of Lou Andreas-Salomé in both men's lives, along with Rilke's 'Marginalien zu Nietzsche' found in her estate, will also be discussed. Moreover, *Zarathustra* is introduced in two chapters, taking into account the circumstances of both Nietzsche's writing, and Rilke's reading, of it.

The third and last part – structured in analogy to the first three *Zarathustra* books – consists of in-depth textual analysis of representative Nietzsche passages marked by Rilke, along with interpretations of Rilkean works found to be relevant in their respective contexts. This process, during which the main topics Rilke apparently found most arresting in Nietzsche crystallized almost automatically, has ultimately also brought to light the continuity of Rilke's reception of Nietzsche throughout his literary career.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface 5

Introduction 6

1 Setting the Scene

1.1 *Dichten* and *Denken* – contradiction or complement? 12

1.2 State of research on 'Rilke and Nietzsche' 22

1.3 Questions of methodology: reader-response poetics, or 'ein Gesang von Satz-Gedanken' 30

1.4 New evidence

1.4.1 Rilke as reader of *Zarathustra* and *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft* 37

1.4.2 Documentation of the reading traces in both *Zarathustra* copies found in Rilke's estate 42

1.5 Resulting *desiderata* for research 44

2 Reading Rilke Reading Nietzsche

2.1 Matters of correspondence: miscellaneous evidence 47

2.2 Lou Andreas-Salomé as Rilke's educator 58

2.3 Reading *Zarathustra*: Rilke's reasons and the 'Marginalien zu Nietzsche' 68

2.4 Writing *Zarathustra*: unholy trinities. Salomé, Rée and Nietzsche 77

3 Interpretation of the Z.2 Findings

3.1 Book I: 'Von der Entmenschlichung der Natur'. 'Von der Nächstenliebe' and the ghostly spectre of the *Übermensch* 87

3.1.1 Inhuman acts of sublimation 88

3.1.2 Friendship as 'Fernsten-Liebe' 95

3.1.3 'Von Kind und Ehe': the art of marriage 99

3.1.4 A 'Requiem' for possession 104

3.1.5 Love's lesson learnt 110

3.2 Book II: 'Von der Einverleibung der Erfahrungen'. Creative cognizance 'Auf den glückseligen Inseln'

3.2.1 Preliminaries: Nietzsche, Rilke and religion 113
3.2.2 The void created by the death of God 117
3.2.3 The eroticization of the religious 120
3.2.4 A new innocence: cognizance and the will to create 124
3.2.5 Does God make sense? Of spite and humility 129
3.2.6 Consequences: sculpting the earth's meaning 136
3.3 Book III: 'Vom letzten Glück des Einsamen'. *Amor fati* and the loneliness of the creative individual 143
3.3.1 The matter of heaven 'Vor Sonnen-Aufgang' 150
3.3.2 The number of fate: blessed chance and spiders' webs 154
3.3.3 Vertigo at the crossroads: heights and abysses 165
3.3.4 Salomé as heavenly companion: the deification of the beloved 169
3.3.5 Epilogue: from 'Einsiedlers Sehnsucht' to 'Ausgesetzt auf den Bergen des Herzens'. Silence and the cognitive value of art 175

Conclusion 195

Appendix

Salomé's *Zarathustra* copy, Z.1 201
Rilke's *Zarathustra* copy, Z.2 210

Bibliography 218

PREFACE

This study is a slightly altered version of my Ph.D. thesis which was accepted by Queen Mary, University of London, on 30 September 2005.

While Wayne Dworetzky's eccentric intercollegiate Nietzsche seminar at the University of London caused my infatuation with the anti-philosopher, with his sensitive readings, Leonard Olschner – invaluable as ever-patient supervisor, constant source of support and *Mensch* – brought about a serious Rilke infection in his QMUL poetry class. With his encouragement, the idea for a comparative study was born, its realization aided generously by Queen Mary's Westfield Trust. At Queen Mary, Michael Moriarty's admirable and exemplary clarity of expression also proved beneficial to my project. I owe Rüdiger Görner, who took over from him as second supervisor, important impulses during the last stages of writing; in his thoughtful and knowledgeable criticism, he showed engagement beyond the call of duty. Elsewhere in London, Irina Frowen's wisdom of the heart helped my focus, both on life in general and on the work in hand, on numerous occasions. Rilke's *Zarathustra* copies at Gernsbach would of course not have been unearthed, or their marginal notes deciphered, without Christoph and Hella Sieber-Rilke's kind hospitality, patience and, not least, enthusiasm: my heartfelt gratitude is due to them both; and I thank them specifically for their permission to include facsimiles of the findings we made at their archive. In Germany, where I was able to work thanks to grants from WIGS, the IGS and the DAAD, Manfred Engel (Saarbrücken) and Erich Kleinschmidt (Köln) also provided both constructive criticism and specialist knowledge. Additionally, Professor Kleinschmidt suggested I publish at Iudicium, in the case of the latter); and at the DLA Marbach, the last weeks' feverishness was shared by the lovely Daniela Zimmermann (as were embarrassing amounts of croissants).

Last but by no means least, I am indebted to my family (Nils, Jörg and Susanne Brunkhorst as well as Christel and Jürgen Hartmann and Klaus Lindemer) and friends (Esther Bartmann, Dominic Heffer, Bernd Heinisch, Ludi Hesky, Camilla Lojacono, Dave McCartney, Kati Medkour, James Neville, Marc Schammo, Ed Sonsino, Marek Steven and Eva Werner), be it for tolerating mood swings, easing financial hardship, housing me when homeless or ferrying crates of books across Europe – mostly, however, for large supplies of laughter, love and encouragement.

Thank you for being there.

K. B., Cologne, January 2006

INTRODUCTION

Die ich ersehnte,
Die ich mir selbst verwandt-verwandelt wähnte –
Daß *alt* sie wurden, hat sie weggebannt:
Nur wer sich wandelt, bleibt mit mir verwandt![1]

Ich ruhe nicht, bis ich das eine erreicht:
Bilder zu finden für meine Verwandlungen.[2]

Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926) had been, until very recently, 'so "out" wie kaum ein anderer Dichter – zumindest was die deutsche Germanistik und das deutsche Feuilleton anbelangt'.[3] Whilst still widely read and very much present in popular culture, his work is only slowly beginning to experience a phase of renewed interest in the German-speaking academic community: even the very latest publications on him still tend to commence on an apologetic note, this study being no exception. In fact, from the 1960s (when the high point of the once ubiquitous Rilke reception had passed) to this day, Rilke scholars, it would seem, have felt obliged both to justify themselves and defend their subject against accusations of conservatism or irrelevance. The most recent instance will suffice: in his 2004 monograph on the poet, Rüdiger Görner concedes to have read, as a student, Rilke as a synonym for 'blau gefärbtes Blut, für Hortensien und Frauen am Klavier vor offenen Terrassenflügeltüren an gewissen Spätsommernachmittagen'[4] – until he read *Die Aufzeichnungen des Malte Laurids Brigge*, or, as he specifies, 'wirklich las. Als Wirklichkeit las.'

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[1] This is from a poem by Nietzsche known to Rilke as 'Einsiedlers Sehnsucht' from the Insel-Almanach 1912 (pp. 83-86). All quotations from Nietzsche's work, unless stated otherwise, are from the *Sämtliche Werke. Kritische Studienausgabe in 15 Bänden*, eds. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari (Berlin: de Gruyter, and Munich: dtv, 1980), henceforth: 'KSA 1-15'; whilst all quotations from Nietzsche's letters, unless stated otherwise, are from the *Sämtliche Briefe. Kritische Studienausgabe*, eds. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari (Berlin: de Gruyter, and Munich: dtv, 1986), henceforth: 'KSB'; or their edition of *Nietzsche's Briefwechsel. Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (Berlin/New York 1975 ff.), henceforth: 'KGB'.

[2] The poem 'Alles Gefühl, in Gestalten und Handlungen' (SW III, p. 699), from which these lines are taken, was found in Rilke's estate. It was written on 27 September 1900 in Worpswede and first published in 1931. Unless stated otherwise, all quotations from Rilke's work are from the *Sämtliche Werke in sechs Bänden* (ed. by Ernst Zinn, first edition: Frankfurt/M.: Insel, 1955), henceforth: 'SW I-VI'.

[3] In the preface to the *Rilke-Handbuch* (p. xi), the editor Manfred Engel further exempts other nations, such as the USA and France, from his verdict, stating that Rilke tends to be regarded as the best-known German poet of his generation – outside of Germany. He also defends Rilke against typical prejudices, which see the poet as merely conservative and reactionary, by stressing his modernity in both his unconventionality and in his constant challenging of thought in binary structures.

[4] *Rainer Maria Rilke. Im Herzwerk der Sprache*, Vienna: Zsolnay, 2004, p. 305. Although this quotation is from the acknowledgements page concluding the book, Görner also explicitly calls his introductory chapter 'Dichter in bedürftiger Zeit: Warum Rilke?' and asks provocatively whether that name does not merely sound like a rumour from another world.

To *really* read Rilke's writing, then, is to read it *as* reality, as opposed to viewing it as unworldly, '[gefälligen] Schmelz'[5] like 'Leute, die der Nachtigall ewig vorwerfen, daß sie kein Adler ist'.[6] Herein, in fact, lies the key to the relevance of the Rilkean œuvre to the present. Rilke was of course very much a poet bound to the demands of form, constantly in search of, as quoted above, 'Bilder [...] für meine Verwandlungen'; and without doubt, in some of them he was given to pathos and 'gespreizte, […] selbstgefällig gurrende Schöngeisterei'.[7] Yet, from within that picture-frame of poetic form, or precisely through it, he also never ceased to ask questions of an existential urgency, above all in his mature work, the *Duineser Elegien* and the *Sonette an Orpheus*. He explored the human condition by sounding out the depths of his own, fragile psyche rather than seeking therapeutical help, thereby constantly increasing the cognitive value of his art:[8] poetry *rather than* psychoanalysis, or as Engel defines it, borrowing from Käte Hamburger, 'Dichtung *statt* einer Philosophie [...]. Eben darin liegt die Modernität von Rilkes Dichtung und ihre Aktualität' (xii). Similarly, Görner warns of celebrating Rilke by candlelight and regrets 'wie wenige Rilke-Leser [...] das Radikale an seiner Kunst wahrhaben [wollen]' (12).

It is precisely the radicality of his philosophizing self-questioning, though, which would render Rilke a, if not *the*, legitimate successor of the artist-metaphysician and anti-philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), whose name today stands for, above all else, 'einen riskanten *Selbstversuch mit dem menschlichen Denken*.'[9] Indeed, speaking of Nietzsche's 'Radikalität im Denken' and Rilke's 'rücksichtsloser Suche nach der immanenten [...] Fundierung der Lebenserfahrung', Alberto Destro explicitly establishes their natural relatedness, 'diese gemeinsame angeborene Tendenz zur Kompromißlosigkeit', as the most essential line of connection between the two. Hence,

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[5] Bruno Hillebrand, *Nietzsche. Wie ihn die Dichter sahen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2000), p. 80.

[6] Hans Carossa, in: Heinz Ludwig Arnold (ed.), *Rilke? Kleine Hommage zum 100. Geburtstag*, Munich 1975, p. 40.

Referring to Rilke as 'dem als versponnenen Weltfremdling verpönten Dichter', Adam Wierzejewski already stated in 1979 that 'er wurde zum abgeschmackten Sonderling verketzert' ('Die Auflösung einer Legende. Rilke in seiner Beziehung zu Kassner und Hofmannsthal', in: *Literatur und Kritik* 138, 1979, pp. 491-495; here: pp. 494 and 491, respectively).

[7] Christoph Meckel, in: Arnold, p. 79.

[8] Only 'wenn der merkwürdige Hintergedanke, *nicht mehr zu schreiben*, [ihm] wirklich ernst wäre' would he consider analysis (from a letter to Lou Andreas-Salomé, 24 January 1912; in: *Briefe in zwei Bänden, Erster Band: 1896 bis 1919*; Frankfurt/M.: Insel, 1991; henceforth: B I, p. 390).

[9] Volker Gerhardt, 'Die Erfindung eines Weisen. Zur Einleitung in Nietzsches *Zarathustra*', in: Volker Gerhardt (ed.), *Friedrich Nietzsche. Also sprach Zarathustra*, Berlin: Akademie, 2000, pp. 1-15; here: p. 6.

that 'Verwandschaft' is the basis or precondition for the productive, or transformative, meeting of their spirits, 'nicht Folge des Kontaktes'.[10]

Unlike Rilke, Nietzsche[11] is still enjoying unbroken scholarly attention. Similar to the situation within Rilke scholarship, but for entirely different reasons, 'introductions to new collections of essays feel compelled to explain the need for presenting yet *another* Nietzsche anthology.'[12] However, it is mostly in his postmodern appropriation by Heidegger, Derrida and Foucault – or more precisely, in 'the hermeneutical/philosophical strain that followed from Heidegger's destructive hermeneutics, the deconstructive strain inspired by Derrida, and the archaeological or genealogical strain informed by Foucault', respectively – that his influence can still be justifiably called omnipresent.[13] According to Carol Diethe, deconstructionist theory all too often manipulates, silences or even falsifies Nietzsche, for example by leaning all too heavily on *Der Wille zur Macht* 'as though it were a legitimate Nietzschean text, rather than a posthumous compilation of Nietzsche's scribbled notes' manipulated by his anti-Semitic sister.[14]

Whatever one's ideological position on that particular (and rather dominant) strain of it, the fact remains that Nietzsche reception in general has tended to give the aphoristic

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[10] 'Nietzsche beim späten Rilke', in: Gertrude Cepl-Kaufmann and Ariane Neuhaus-Koch (eds.), *Literarische Fundstücke: Wiederentdeckungen und Neuentdeckungen: Festschrift für Manfred Windfuhr*, Heidelberg 2002, pp. 199-313; here: p. 205.

[11] I consciously chose to refer to Nietzsche himself, rather than to his work, as 'Nietzsche wurde zur Kultfigur. Nach ihm sucht man noch heute' (Gerhardt 2000, p. 5).

[12] This does not stop the editor, Alan D. Schrift, from calling his collection *Why Nietzsche Still? Reflections on Drama, Culture, and Politics* (University of California Press, 2000). He provides the answer to the question posed by the book's title in its introduction: 'there are important perspectives to draw from Nietzsche as we struggle to frame these critical issues [at the aesthetic, cultural, psychological, or political level] for a new millennium' (p. 3).

[13] See: Schrift, p. 1; as well as Carol Diethe in Matthias Konzett (ed.), *Encyclopedia of German Literature*, Chicago and London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2000: 'The underlying theme of *Zarathustra*, the will to power, is never again dealt with as cogently. Admirers of *Der Wille zur Macht*, the work that Nietzsche's sister compiled from her brother's unpublished notes after his death, are unlikely to agree with this assessment, since this particular book has been a mainstay of authors engaged in poststructuralist theory (such as Michel Foucault)' (p. 766); and Volker Gerhardt's 'Nietzsche, Goethe und die Humanität', in: Rüdiger Görner and Duncan Large (eds.), *Ecce Opus. Nietzsche-Revisionen im 20. Jahrhundert*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003; pp. 11-24: '[Es] gab und gibt [...] besonders Gewitzte, die Nietzsche lediglich als 'Vorkämpfer' jener Revolution ansehen, die sie selber zu vollziehen glauben. Die Epigonen deuten sich selbst in eine Avantgarde um. So ist Heidegger verfahren, und ihm sind nicht nur Levinas, Derrida und Foucault gefolgt: Nietzsches Rezeptions-Karriere nach 1968 hängt auch damit zusammen, daß man im Wechsel von Marx zu ihm weiterhin glauben konnte, 'revolutionär' zu sein. Es ist längst an der Zeit, mit dieser Geschichtskonstruktion nach dem Auktionsmodell (wo der jeweils Letzte den Zuschlag erhält) Schluß zu machen. Das vergangene Jahrhundert hat sich umso stärker mit Revolutionen und Paradigmen, *turns* und Kehren geschmückt, je weniger es in der Sache zu bieten hatte' (p. 16f.). See further chapter 1.3 of this study for a thorough discussion of the applicability of poststructuralist methodology to the topic in hand.

[14] See 'Nietzsche Emasculated: Postmodern Readings', in: Rüdiger Görner and Duncan Large (eds.), *Ecce Opus. Nietzsche-Revisionen im 20. Jahrhundert*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003, pp. 51-64; here: p. 52. Only now that Colli and Montinari have included those notes into the KSA under the heading of 'Nachlaß' (rather than *Der Wille zur Macht*) has their true place in the hierarchy of Nietzsche's writings been rendered visible, and an informed re-assessment can take place.

writings, such as, mostly, *Die Genealogie der Moral* and *Jenseits von Gut und Böse*, preference over the artist-philosopher's only work written 'comme poète-prophète' (KSB 7, 21): 'In der mitunter exzessiven Beschäftigung mit dem Werk Friedrich Nietzsches ist *Also Sprach Zarathustra* vergleichsweise wenig Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt worden' (Gerhardt 2000, 13). Whilst that book, having been his most popular around the *fin de siècle*, remains Nietzsche's best-known, it is still his most obscure and thus, perhaps, his least-read; as its subtitle suggests, it truly is 'ein Buch für Alle und Keinen'. This is no mere coincidence, but a sign of the times: like much of the Rilkean text, *Zarathustra* is today clearly out of scholarly fashion, even suspicious, due to our postmodern fear of pathos.[15] Zarathustra and, with him, Nietzsche's artist-persona deserve yet more critical attention.[16]

It is, however, of course not merely that *desideratum* which calls for a new investigation into the precise nature of the 'and' between Rilke and Nietzsche. The recent discovery of two *Zarathustra* copies, inclusive of reading traces, in the Rilke archive in Gernsbach has now rendered such an undertaking, with special attention to that particular book, not only desirable, but essential. Moreover, as stated by Ronald Perlwitz in 2004, 'die breit erforschte Beziehung zwischen Rilke und Nietzsche [ist] noch nicht zureichend geklärt.'[17] This is without doubt due to the facts that Rilke, like Sigmund Freud (1856-1939),[18] was less than talkative, and at times even in outright denial, with regard to his reading of Nietzsche, and that material indicating such an influence, until now, was virtually non-existent. In consequence, scholarship examining their relationship has largely been based on purely interpretative or even speculative efforts: while *Zarathustra*, in particular, has often been rather carelessly assumed by critics to have 'influenced' Rilke, and the 'Engel' of the *Elegien* and the Zarathustrian *Übermensch* have frequently been found to be closely related, empirical evidence has so far not been provided.

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[15] As diagnosed, most recently, by Görner (2004): 'Wir im Geist negativer Dialektik Erzogenen, wir Eleven der kritischen Theorie, wir postmodern unverbindlichen Spielernaturen, mit solchen Versen haben wir Mühe' (p. 301); and Engel (2004): 'für eine Ästhetik der Negativität und Dekonstruktion wird sich Rilke kaum vereinnahmen lassen; er ist, horribile dictu, ein Dichter, der an die Macht der Dichtung [...] glaubt' (p. xi).

[16] As Gerhardt further notes, Nietzsche 'interessiert [...] kaum noch als Künstler' (2000, p. 5).

[17] In the *Rilke-Handbuch*, p. 163.

[18] Nietzsche's influence on Rilke's, and his own, contemporary, Freud, and Freud's denial of it has been thoroughly documented only relatively recently, namely, by Reinhard Gasser, in his excellent *Nietzsche und Freud* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1996); and by Ronald Lehrer, in *Nietzsche's Presence in Freud's Life and Thought. On the Origins of a Psychology of Dynamic Unconscious Mental Functioning* (1995).

As far as the method of such a project is concerned, it is understood that 'the move toward origin is one that can never be completed'.[19] Hence, the question of influence is itself partly the object of this study, and its guiding spirit the 'Antichrist's very own definition of philology, in his eponymous work, as 'die Kunst, gut zu lesen […], Thatsachen ablesen können, […] *ohne* im Verlangen nach Verständniss die Vorsicht, die Geduld, die Feinheit zu verlieren' (KSA 6, 233). It is equally understood that Rilke was bound to ask questions similar to Nietzsche's – in the sense of Wittgenstein's 'Familienähnlichkeit' effected by the *Zeitgeist* of their shared epochal context – 'über alle nachweisbaren Lektüren hinaus' (see Engel 2004 513). This is evident further in numerous well-known cases of Nietzsche reception parallel to Rilke's, be it in other thinkers such as Freud or in fellow poets like Hugo von Hofmannsthal (1874-1929).[20] Also undisputed is the fact that Rilke was influenced by a great number of other writers.[21] Moreover, rather than direct and unfiltered, his Nietzsche reception was often mediated,[22] mainly by Lou Andreas-Salomé (1861-1937), who wrote the first ever monograph on Nietzsche,[23] having met the philosopher in 1882. The most obvious, flesh-and-blood line of connection between the two men, she was not only an author in her own right, but also Rilke's most formative educator and, importantly in our context, muse to both him and Nietzsche.

In the light of those facts, and with its subjects' literary output far too prodigious, this study cannot aspire to completeness, nor does it wish to. Limitation must therefore be one of the distinguishing methodological features of this project, its need for a life-

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[19] See: Joseph Childers and Gary Hentzi (eds.), *Columbia Dictionary of Modern Literary and Cultural Criticism*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1995, p. 281.

[20] In a letter to Schnitzler of 13 July 1891, he remarked: 'En attendant les' ich Nietzsche und freu mich wie in seiner kalten Klarheit [...] meine eigenen Gedanken schön crystallisieren', in: *Briefwechsel*, eds. Therese Nickl and Heinrich Schnitzler, Frankfurt/M.: Fischer, 1964. See further: H. Jürgen Meyer-Wendt, *Der frühe Hofmannsthal und die Gedankenwelt Nietzsches*, Heidelberg: Quelle & Meyer, 1973; and Görner, 'Das zeitlos Gewesene – zum Verhältnis von Geschichte und Kunst bei Hofmannsthal und Rilke', in: Joachim Storck, ed., *Rainer Maria Rilke und Österreich. Symposion*, Linz: VGmbH, 1986, pp. 158-165.

[21] With regard to the Nietzsche nexus, most notably by the Danish theistic existentialist Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) and by the poet Johann Christian Friedrich Hölderlin (1770-1843; 'jenem deutschen Dichter […], dem er gefühlsmäßig und in poetologisch-ästhetischer Hinsicht am nächsten stand'; Görner in the *Rilke-Handbuch*, p. 52), whose most important nineteenth-century reader, in turn, was Friedrich Nietzsche. See further Werner Kohlschmidt's article 'Rilke und Kierkegaard' in his book *Die entzweite Welt. Studien zum Menschenbild in der neueren Dichtung*, Gladbeck: Freizeiten, 1953; and Friedrich Würzbach, 'Vom Ende der Neuzeit bis zu den Brücken der Zukunft: dargestellt an Hölderlin – Nietzsche – Rilke', in: Friedrich Würzbach, *Zwei unveröffentliche Manuskripte aus dem Nachlaß*, Essen: Die blaue Eule, 1984, pp. 67-119.

[22] Georg Brandes (1842-1927), whose *Gesammelte Schriften III. Skandinavische Persönlichkeiten* Rilke owned (also in the Gernsbach archive) and Rudolf Kassner (1873-1959), who also mediated Kierkegaard, as well as countless other writers, to the poet, are important examples here. See further: Klaus E. Bohnenkamp (ed.), *Rainer Maria Rilke und Rudolf Kassner. Freunde im Gespräch*, Frankfurt/M.: Insel, 1997.

[23] *Friedrich Nietzsche in seinen Werken* (Frankfurt/M.: Insel, 2000, p. 186), first published in 1894 in Vienna, was owned by Rilke.

giving horizon in the Nietzschean sense[24] too great to accomodate analyses of all the other influences on Rilke, or comment in detail on the Nietzsche reception of Rilke's countless literary contemporaries.[25] Rather, the aim here is to provide, very specifically, much-needed fresh impulses for the perception of Rilke's relationship to Nietzsche as, according to Destro writing in 2002, the poet 'hat die Rezeption seiner Schriften wissentlich gelenkt [...] die Frage nach Rilkes Verhältnis zu Nietzsche [wird] innerhalb der Forschung immer noch so behandelt [...], wie Rilke es gewollt hat' (199f.). Now, a focussed re-assessment can take place, taking into account Rilke's reading traces in his *Zarathustra* copies and enquiring into the transformations they have undergone in his poetry. During this process, the Nietzschean themes which preoccupied the poet the most emerge almost automatically, and his 'Wahlverwandschaft' with the philosopher in its continuity throughout his literary career is brought to light. Thereby, this study hopes to make a contribution not only to the assumption of the continuity of the Rilkean œuvre still debated within scholarship,[26] but also to the re-discovery of Rilke's philosophical radicality which, along with that of Nietzsche's artistic depth as represented by *Zarathustra*, is particularly pertinent 'in einer Zeit, die sich immer entschiedener der exakten Wissenschaft verschreibt, weil diese allein Fortschritt in der materiellen und geistigen Beherrschbarkeit der Welt zu garantieren scheint'.[27]

[24] See the second *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtung*: 'dies ist ein allgemeines Gesetz: jedes Lebendige kann nur innerhalb eines Horizontes gesund, stark und fruchtbar werden; ist es unvermögend einen Horizont um sich zu ziehen [...], so siecht es matt oder überhastig zu zeitigem Untergange dahin' (KSA 1, p. 251).

[25] 'Die Geschichte von Nietzsches Einfluß würde eine Bibliothek anfüllen', as stated by Hans Eichner in 'Nietzsches Philosophie im Spiegel der Dichtung', in: Manfred Riedel (ed.), *Nietzsche und Kessler: drei Vorträge*, Weimar: Ettersburger Hefte 2, 1994, pp. 58-87.

[26] As opposed to the traditional subdivision into three, or five, phases, Otto Lorenz also argues 'für die in der Forschung noch umstrittene Annahme einer nahezu bruchlosen Werkkontinuität' in *Schweigen in der Dichtung. Hölderlin – Rilke – Celan: Studien zur Poetik deiktisch-elliptischer Schreibweisen*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989, p. 130. 'Einerseits braucht man diese biographischen und werkgeschichtlichen Periodisierungen als schiere Orientierungshilfe', Görner comments the reasons for that 'Umstrittenheit', 'andererseits kann man ihrer nie ganz froh werden. Sie begünstigen einen Schematismus, der mit dichterischen Schaffensprozessen nur entfernt etwas gemein hat' (2004, p. 68).

[27] Friedrich, p. 7. To *really* read Rilke again, 'in seiner Parallelität *und* Differenz zu unserer Zeit [...] – als jemanden der unsere Probleme weitgehend teilt, aber sehr andere Lösungen für sie formuliert hat als die uns heute naheliegenden' (Engel 2004, xi), thus 'wird für uns umso zwingender, je stärker die Indizien dafür sprechen, daß [Nietzsches] Ausgangslage auch noch die unsere ist' (Gerhardt 2000, p. 8).

1 Setting the Scene

1.1 *Dichten* and *Denken* – contradiction or complement?

> *Gedanken.* — Gedanken sind die Schatten unserer Empfindungen, — immer dunkler, leerer, einfacher, als diese.[28]

Is a comparative study of the works of a philosopher and those of a lyric poet legitimate? Do the two genres of writing down thoughts and writing down poems intersect and overlap, or are they to be kept entirely separate?

Although such questions would seem rhetorical since the days of early Romanticism,[29] their popularity amongst scholars having peaked again in the first half of the last century,[30] it has to be noted that they still indicate the first obvious problem area which arises from my topic. Indeed, Erich Heller uses his very scruples, 'den *Dichter* Rilke zu dem *Denker* Nietzsche in Beziehung zu bringen', as point of departure for his highly illuminating comparison of the two, 'Rilke und Nietzsche', first published in 1952 and still definitive.[31] He quotes as source of those scruples both Goethe's advice, which states that poetry at its best should merely 'ergötzen, rühren und erheben'; and T. S. Eliot's belief that 'der Dichter, der "denkt", nur der Dichter ist, der das emotionale Äquivalent des Gedankens auszudrücken versteht. Aber er ist nicht notwendigerweise am Gedanken selbst interessiert'.[32] Heller summarizes the deplorable *status quo* within scholarship as follows: 'Demnach also scheint der Kritiker, der sich anschickt, Nietzsche, den Denker, mit Rilke, dem Dichter, zu vergleichen, im Begriffe zu sein, eine Todsünde der Literaturkritik zu begehen' (75).

The majority of scholars investigating Rilke's relationship to Nietzsche fail to address this important area of contention. When looking at the handful who do address it, one finds that critical opinion is divided. Contrary to Heller, most actually brush off

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[28] *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft* 179 (KSA 3, p. 502).

[29] See, for example, the 19th-century-positivist Buckle, who argued in favour of an organic relationship between poetry and 'science', or cognition, simply because 'the emotions are a part of the mind', in the article 'Science and Poetry', in: Alex Preminger and T. V. F. Brogan (eds.), *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* (Princeton: University Press, 1993), pp. 1120-1127; or, for a more thorough discussion, Ansgar Maria Hoff's recent dissertation, *Das Poetische der Philosophie. Friedrich Schlegel, Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, Jacques Derrida*, Bonn: DenkMal, 2002.

[30] Joachim W. Storck notes in 'Rilke und Heidegger. Über eine "Zwiesprache" von Dichten und Denken' (in: BlRG 4, 1976, pp. 35-71; here: p. 67): 'Die Fragestellung der vorliegenden Arbeit ist bereits in den Dreissiger- und Vierzigerjahren verschiedentlich [...] berührt worden'; he then provides numerous examples.

[31] Erich Heller, 'Rilke und Nietzsche', in: *Nirgends Wird Welt Sein als Innen* (Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp, 1975), pp. 73-120, quotation on p. 94. Heller's emphasis. The content of his essay is addressed below in this chapter.

[32] Ibid. Heller uses his own translations when quoting from T. S. Eliot's *Selected Essays* (London 1948), in this case, from p. 134.

the possibility of an analogy between the two disciplines altogether. Peter Por, to give an example, writes that 'Rilke war kein Denker […], aus seinem Lebenswerk läßt sich keine […] Lehre extrahieren'[33]. Such a narrow definition of a thinker is of course refutable, for it would certainly exclude Nietzsche, too. His famously unsystematic, ever-flexible philosophy does not allow for the legitimate extraction of a uniform doctrine of any kind – Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche's unsavoury editorial practices notwithstanding.

One can only begin to understand Nietzsche if one is prepared to acknowledge, and even embrace, the intrinsic contradictions in his works. In *Götzen-Dämmerung*, for example, he writes: 'Ich misstraue allen Systematikern und gehe ihnen aus dem Weg. Der Wille zum System ist ein Mangel an Rechtschaffenheit' (KSA 6, 63). Very much in the same vein, and already indicative of the degree at which he was a kindred spirit of Nietzsches's, in a letter elsewhere also extolling that particular philosopher's virtues Rilke wrote to Alexander N. Benois on 28 July 1901 about philosophers in general: 'Wo aus der philosophischen Entwicklung eines einzelnen ein System erwächst, da habe ich das fast betrübende Gefühl einer Beschränkung, einer Absichtlichkeit und versuche jedesmal den Menschen *dort* zu finden, wo die Fülle seiner Erfahrungen noch unzusammengefasst und gesondert sich auslebt' (B I 89).

'Die Forschung zu Rilke und der Philosophie', Ronald Perlwitz writes, 'laboriert vor allem an vier Problemen'.[34] As one of those problems is defined as a 'Heidegger-Lastigkeit vor allem der älteren Forschung [...], die Rilke unbedingt zum Seins-Dichter stilisieren will' (ibid.), it is advisable to engage briefly with its origin, namely, that particular philosopher's perspective on the relationship of thought and poetry, as propounded in his essay 'Wozu Dichter?', now. Displaying a 'separatist' view regarding the two disciplines in question similar to Por's, Martin Heidegger states that 'ein heutiger Dichter [wird] heute oft und eilig in die Nähe des Denkens gezerrt und mit viel halbgedachter Philosophie zugedeckt'[35]. In arguing that a poet needs to be *dragged* into the proximity of thought, he seems to imply that the writing or reading of poetry is not inherently a cognitive activity. In the same essay, originally a talk given in 1946 on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of Rilke's death, Heidegger actually avoids an

[33] Peter Por, 'Nietzsche und Rilke. Die Verwandlung des Orpheus. Für Erich Heller, en hommage', in: *Sprache im technischen Zeitalter* 99 (1986), pp. 217-227; here: pp. 222f.
[34] In the *Rilke-Handbuch*, p. 163.
[35] 'Wozu Dichter?', in: *Holzwege* (Frankfurt/M.: Klostermann, 1980), pp. 265-316, quotation on p. 270. All following Heidegger quotations in this chapter refer to this essay.

interpretation of what he calls 'das gültige Gedicht Rilkes', attempting the following justification:

> Zu einer Auslegung der Elegien und Sonette sind wir nicht nur nicht vorbereitet, sondern auch nicht berechtigt, weil der Wesensbereich der Zwiesprache zwischen dem Dichten und dem Denken nur langsam erkundet, erreicht und durchdacht werden kann. Wer möchte sich heute anmaßen, im Wesen der Dichtung so gut wie auch im Wesen des Denkens einheimisch zu sein und dann noch stark genug, um das Wesen beider in die äußerste Zwietracht zu bringen und so ihre Einheit zu stiften? (272)

He argues that an interpretation of the *Duineser Elegien* and the *Sonette an Orpheus*, in his view the only valid poetry composed by Rilke, would be presumptuous, as 'Dichten', the activity of the poet, and 'Denken', the activity of the philosopher or interpreter, differ in their essence. What is needed for those disparate activities to come together is a person who is not only equally at home in both, but also strong enough to bear them entering into a dialogue.[36]

However, Heidegger then suggests that this separation must be overcome: 'Daß freilich Dichten auch die Sache eines Denkens sei, müssen wir in diesem Weltaugenblick erst lernen' (273). Perhaps this is, particularly in accordance with Heidegger's reading, to be regarded in the context of the anti-modernism of that which is – wrongly, actually – termed 'Modernism': The times are in a state of 'Weltnacht', because everything which happens originates from man. Yet the reader cannot help but also think of the change which the essence of poetry must have undergone 'in diesem Weltaugenblick' – at the time of his talk the war had only been over for a year and a half. What exactly needed to undergo change was perhaps mainly the perception of the subjectivity often ascribed to lyric poetry. After 'that which happened' to humanity and language during the Nazi regime, of course it is not the subjectivity inherent in the 'metaphysical havens of interiority and timelessness' that could prove Adorno's famous dictum about the impossibility of poetry after Auschwitz wrong: rather, what is really needed to this day is constructive introspection to make a poetry that is responsible towards history.[37] In contrast, in 1946, Heidegger still wrote: 'Dürftig ist die Zeit, weil ihr die Unverborgenheit des Wesens von Schmerz, Tod und Liebe fehlt.' ('Wozu Dichter?', 271). Not only does this remind one of four lines from Rilke's *Orpheus-Sonett* I/19,

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[36] He seems to imply that such a human being cannot exist anymore in the 'Zeit der Weltnacht' which appears to lack the shimmer of the divine (p. 265) – incidentally, one is reminded strongly of Nietzsche here, who said in *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft* of 'die alte Menschheit': 'Alle Erlebnisse leuchteten anders, denn ein Gott glänzte aus ihnen' (KSA 3, p. 495).

[37] These considerations are credited to Leonard Olschner.

Nicht sind die Leiden erkannt,
nicht ist die Liebe gelernt,
und was im Tod uns entfernt,
ist nicht entschleiert (SW I 743),

it also makes one wonder just how well hidden Heidegger considered the suffering of the fifty million dead claimed by World War II – a war which was brought on by the party he had joined in 1933, and which he never left.[38]

Heidegger implies that, although we should, we have not yet learnt that poetry is also a form of thought. Herman Rapaport helps to refute this claim when he argues convincingly that the philosopher's thought was repeatedly influenced by Rilke's poetry. According to Rapaport, the eighth *Duineser Elegie* in particular – although, according to himself, disregarded by Heidegger – actually 'guides Heidegger's thinking, once more, in "Wozu Dichter?"'[39] The philosopher then proceeds to discuss in some detail a late poem which obviously Rilke himself did not consider 'gültig' as he never intended it for publication, calling it 'improvisierte Verse'.[40] I include it here for the reader's convenience but will refrain from giving my own interpretation:

Wie die Natur die Wesen überläßt
dem Wagnis ihrer dumpfen Lust und keins
besonders schützt in Scholle und Geäst:
so sind auch wir dem Urgrund unseres Seins
nicht weiter lieb; *er wagt uns*. Nur daß wir,
mehr noch als Pflanze oder Tier,
mit diesem Wagnis gehn; es wollen; manchmal auch
wagender sind (und nicht aus Eigennutz)
als selbst das Leben ist –, um einen Hauch

[38] See: Victor Farias, *Heidegger und der Nationalsozialismus*, Frankfurt/M.: Fischer, 1989, p. 41: 'Die im Archiv der NSDAP (Document Center in Berlin) aufbewahrten Unterlagen beweisen unter anderem, daß er bis zum Kriegsende Parteimitglied blieb, seine Beiträge zahlte, keinerlei Verwarnungen erhielt und niemals innerparteilich gerügt wurde.'

[39] Herman Rapaport, *Is There Truth in Art?* (New York: Cornell UP, 1997), p. 77. See also Otto Friedrich Bollnow (*Rilke*, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1956), who, according to Görner, 'schälte Rilkes Existenzfragen aus seinem Werk heraus und konnte zeigen, wie der Dichter den Philosophen, Heidegger in diesem Fall, wieder einmal vorweggenommen hatte' (in: Rüdiger Görner, ed., *Rainer Maria Rilke*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1987, p. 6); and Storck, who asks rhetorically with regard to 'Wozu Dichter': 'Kann man rechtens vermuten, dass der Denker [Heidegger] zu den bildhaften Vorstellungen, deren sich sein späteres "dichtendes Denken" bedient, gerade durch die Symbolik dieses Dichters [Rilke] angeregt worden ist?' His verdict is: 'Damit aber wäre auch ein Anteil Rilkes, vermittelt durch den Umgang Heideggers mit dessen Spätwerk, an der vielberufenen "Kehre" des Denkers nachgewiesen' (1976, p. 67).

[40] It was a dedication to 'Hellmuth Freiherrn Lucius von Stoedten', found in a copy of Rilke's *Malte* and dated 'Anfang Juny 1924' (SW II, p. 777). In *Holzwege*, Heidegger quotes his slightly different rendering from the letters from Muzot (p. 255).

wagender . . . . Dies schafft uns, außerhalb von Schutz,
ein Sichersein, dort wo die Schwerkraft wirkt
der reinen Kräfte; was uns schließlich birgt
ist unser Schutzlossein und daß wir's so
in's Offne wandten, da wir's drohen sahen,
um es, im weitesten Umkreis, irgendwo,
wo das Gesetz uns anrührt, zu bejahen (SW II 261).

As stated above, according to Heidegger, it is legitimate to think through, or interpret, only 'invalid' poetry, as classified by the thinking interpreter, or philosopher (272). Reminiscent of the way in which he – in contrast to both Rilke and Nietzsche himself – attempts to press Nietzsche's philosophy into a system in 'Wer ist Nietzsches Zarathustra?',[41] he sees this particular poem as a kind of training ground for thinkers, 'eine Einübung des dichterischen Sichbesinnens' (273). Which leaves the following question: if, as a philosopher, Heidegger is 'im Wesen des Denkens einheimisch', and in his view it would be presumptuous for him to be equally at home in the essence of poetry, how can he possibly be the judge of what is valid poetry and what is not? In any case, this 'invalid' poem expresses itself much more clearly than the philosopher's sometimes unnecessarily contorted interpretation, or 'translation' of it into (his) thought.[42] As such, it is the best proof of poetry's cognitive qualities. Indeed, whenever Heidegger's text is clearest, it happens to be quoting directly from Rilke's letters and poems. This leaves the reader wondering whether, in this particular essay, the philosopher has at times not actually ignored his own advice – and 'blanketed' Rilke with his own thought.

Contrary to the Heidegger of 'Wozu Dichter?', Erich Heller believed that 'Dichten' is already and has always been a form of 'Denken', and that the two are far from being mutually exclusive. He further states in the aforementioned pioneering essay on 'Rilke und Nietzsche' that their shared

[41] See Ernst Behler's assessment in '"Wer ist Nietzsches Zarathustra?". Eine Auseinandersetzung mit Martin Heidegger', in: Gerhardt (2000), pp. 351-385: 'Der von Heidegger mit Nachdruck verfolgte Systemgedanke löst sich [...] in ein Geschiebe von Vorbedingungen auf und ließe sich nur vertreten, wenn von der Art der Mitteilung Nietzsches völlig abgesehen würde, was Heidegger bei diesem Text aber keineswegs tut' (p. 382).

[42] In *Wink und Wandlung. Komposition und Poetik in Rilkes 'Sonette an Orpheus'* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1996), Annette Gerok-Reiter writes: 'Der Erkenntnisgehalt der Form ist ernst zu nehmen [...] es ist der Preis der wissenschaftlichen Analyse, dasjenige diachron aufsplittern zu müssen, was sich synchron im Gedicht entfaltet. Insofern hinkt jede Analyse hinter der Sinnvielfalt ihrer Vorlage hinterher' (p. 8f.).

> wirkliche[s] Thema [ist die] radikale Revision aller Grenzen der menschlichen Erfahrung […]. Nietzsches und Rilkes Fühlen […] zielt auf eine radikale Verneinung des Prinzips der Trennung selber ab, auf eine Ablehnung des *principium individuationis*, […] das unserer intellektuellen Erkenntnis durch die Jahrhunderte zugrunde lag (92f).

The strict borderline between two disciplines of writing could be regarded as such a limit to human experience, and Nietzsche, at all events, certainly believed in going beyond it. His concept of the artist-philosopher is evidence of this, as is his famous claim in chapter 5 of *Die Geburt der Tragödie* that 'nur als *aesthetisches* Phänomen ist das Dasein und die Welt ewig *gerechtfertigt*' (KSA 1, 47). An inherent poetics imbues his entire philosophy. Furthermore, *Die Geburt der Tragödie*, read and commented on by Rilke in his 'Marginalien zu Nietzsche', sets itself – or 'unsre[r] Aesthetik', as Nietzsche terms his book – as one of its tasks to solve the problem of the subjective lyric poet. Nietzsche asks 'wie der "Lyriker" als Künstler möglich ist: er, der, nach der Erfahrung aller Zeiten, immer "ich" sagt und die ganze chromatische Tonleiter seiner Leidenschaften und Begehrungen vor uns absingt' (43). Nietzsche then proceeds to meet his task by explaining the phenomenon of the lyric poet as 'der Singende [, der] sich seiner bewusst [wird] als Subjects des reinen, willenlosen Erkennens'. By thus quoting Schopenhauer[43], he shows how the poet transcends the limitations of his own consciousness and subjectivity by being 'völlig losgelöst von der Gier des Willens' (51). Here, Nietzsche not only effects an 'Aufsprengung der hegelianischen Gattungssystematik',[44] but also shows (by equating the lyric poet with the subject of pure cognition) that he sees *Dichten* very much in the vicinity of *Denken*.

The subject of a need to challenge boundaries still prevails when Heller then establishes as Rilke's and Nietzsche's shared deepest problem, 'wie dem Bewußtsein der reinsten Immanenz ein der Transzendenz ebenbürtiger Gedanke abgewonnen werden kann' (108). In this context, what Nietzsche most admired in Lou Salomé, namely that she was able to effortlessly draw objective insights from personal experience,[45] was also what his contemporaries saw in him: the artistic ability to transform personal immanence into thoughts transcending just that. His friend Heinrich von Stein wrote to Nietzsche on 7 December 1884: 'Kürzlich nannten wir das

[43] *Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* I, p. 295, in: KSA 1, p. 43.
[44] 'Lyrik als Ausdruck der subjektiven Innerlichkeit, Epos als Darstellung des objektiven Weltzustands'; as paraphrased by Peter Sprengel, in: *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur von der Reichsgründung bis zur Jahrhundertwende*, vol. 9 (Munich: C.H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1998), p. 635.
[45] From a letter to the Overbecks: 'Ich habe noch Niemanden kennen gelernt, der seinen Erfahrungen eine solche Menge objektiver Einsichten zu entnehmen wußte, Niemanden, der aus allem Gelernten so viel zu ziehn verstünde' (KSB 6, p. 255).

Künstlerische die Ueberleitung aus der Fülle der Persönlichkeit zum Ueberpersönlichen. Hierbei gedachte ich Ihrer, und meinte, Sie würden an diesem Gespräch Freude gehabt haben' (KGB III/2, 484). Similarly, Rilke achieves this transition from immanence to transcendence by transforming the personal more and more, so that the processes of thought become ever more complex, until at last phenomena speak from his work – phenomena which conjoin and transcend the physical (the thing) as well as the metaphysical (the thing in itself) and create something new.[46] It is in its progression that Rilke's work thus shows how *Dichten* truly is a cognitive activity, after all, and that 'präzise Emotion [ist] eine Kategorie der Empfindung, ja der Erkenntnis, die dem Denken nahe verwandt ist' (Heller 94). In turn, one of Nietzsche's achievements is the unmasking of language, thought and, with it, truth itself, as metaphorical, and therefore poetic, in *Über Wahrheit und Lüge im außermoralischen Sinn*.[47]

It is possible then – and legitimate – to compare thought to poetry, provided one is talking about a philosopher who is equally at home in poetry as Nietzsche clearly was, and a poet whose depth of questioning touches on the most existential problems as Rilke's did. Without wishing to ignore all differences between the two fields – for poetry is of course not only thought – one must still insist that they often touch on common ground. Heidegger's almost tautological statement on the discourse of 'Dichten' and 'Denken' notes that 'ein Vergleich setzt das Verschiedene ins Gleiche, um den Unterschied sichtbar zu machen' ('Wozu Dichter?', 274). However, I do not need to drag Rilke 'in die Nähe des Denkens' – to remain within Heidegger's terminology – as he is already indubitably at home in it. Clearly, the critique of the 'gedeutete Welt' in the *Elegien*, to give but one example, has an intrinsic philosophy, for one cannot read or write about meaning without reflecting on it. As Keith M. May

[46] Unlike Käte Hamburger, who (in *Philosophie der Dichter. Novalis, Schiller, Rilke*, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1966) argues in favour of an analogy, Wolfgang G. Müller merely sees an affinity between Rilke's poetry and Husserl's phenomenological philosophy, 'gerade nicht in dem Konzept der phänomenologischen Reduktion und der reinen Wesensschau. Eine Entsprechung zwischen dem Zugang des Dichters und dem des Philosophen zu den Dingen zeigt sich vielmehr in der Parallele zwischen den "unvollkommenen" Gegenstandswahrnehmungen, den Ansichten oder Abschattungen der Gegenstände, von denen Husserl in *Ding und Raum* spricht, und der individuellen, die subjektive Perspektive des Wahrnehmenden betonenden Gegenstandswiedergabe der *Neuen Gedichte*'. See his article on 'Rilke, Husserl und die Dinglyrik der Moderne', in: Manfred Engel and Dieter Lamping, eds, *Rilke und die Weltliteratur*, Düsseldorf and Zurich: Artemis & Winkler, 1999, pp. 214-235; here: p. 226f..

[47] In this short essay Nietzsche claims that our language, which is supposed to convey the truth, is actually a web of lies because it is made of dead metaphors which have lost their original creative spirit. To call a leaf a leaf, according to this essay, would already be a lie because it would be saying that X equals Y.

Hoff even credits Nietzsche's 'Neuverortung der Grenzen von Philosophie und Poesie' as effecting 'eine Ausbalancierung des Machtverhältnisses zwischen den Diskursen' (p. 332), and 'die Anhebung der Poesie auf das Niveau einer ernstgenommenen Diskursschwester der Philosophie' (p. 333).

says, 'Rilke is the most philosophic of poets in the sense that no one else […] has focused his attention so immediately and candidly upon the human situation itself.'[48]

Analogously, Nietzsche's texts can be, and have been, classed as literature. 'Es geschah in seiner Schule', Thomas Mann wrote about him, 'daß man sich gewöhnte, den Begriff des Künstlers mit dem des Erkennenden zusammenfließen zu lassen, so daß die Grenzen von Kunst und Kritik sich verwischten.'[49] Particularly, it is often noted in Nietzsche scholarship that *Also sprach Zarathustra* was the work of a poet, rather than that of a philosopher. To the author himself, this book was both, and more: 'Es enthält in der größten Schärfe ein Bild meines Wesens […] Es ist eine Dichtung' (KSB 6, 326); and yet: 'hinter all den schlichten und seltsamen Worten steht […] meine *ganze Philosophie*' (386). Accordingly, Heller calls that book 'the truest child of [Nietzsche's] poetic-philosophical genius.'[50]

Nietzsche himself, to whom art, as opposed to morality, was 'die eigentlich *metaphysische* Thätigkeit des Menschen' (KSA 1, 17), clearly believed he had been a poet all along. In a letter to Rohde, who had 'als der Einzige […] eine Freude an meiner Sprache ausgedrückt',[51] he states in connection with his 'philosophische Dichtung'[52], *Zarathustra*: 'Übrigens bin ich *Dichter* bis zu jeder Grenze dieses Begriffs geblieben' (KSB 6, 479f). Incidentally, that letter, and with it this self-assessment by Nietzsche, was familiar to Rilke, as it is included in the *Insel-Almanach auf das Jahr 1912*; which the poet perused frequently.[53]

In turn, ten years previously, Rilke had already written of the philosopher's creative nature and his responsibility toward the future shared by the poet when he described his approach to philosophy as follows: 'Ich bin ohne jegliche philosophische Vorbildung und Erfahrung, habe jede Philosophie, wo sie mir begegnete, wie eine Dichtung behandelt […] Man vergisst immer, daß der Philosoph, wie der Dichter, die Träger von

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[48] 'Rilke's Angels and the *Übermensch*', in: Keith M. May, *Nietzsche and Modern Literature. Themes in Yeats, Rilke, Mann and Lawrence* (London: Macmillan, 1988), p. 48.
[49] Thomas Mann, *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen* (in *Gesammelte Werke* XII, Frankfurt/M.: 1974), p. 87.
[50] Erich Heller, 'Nietzsche in the Waste Land', in: *The Poet's Self and the Poem* (London: Athlone Press, 1976), p. 28.
[51] From a letter of 22 February 1884, in: KSB 6, p. 479f.. Görner notes, understandably adding an exclamation mark: 'Rohde hat auf diesen Brief nicht geantwortet!', in: Rüdiger Görner, *Nietzsches Kunst. Annäherung an einen Denkartisten* (Frankfurt/M.: Insel, 2000), p. 337n.. Görner's book, as its title anticipates, very much places Nietzsche's way of thinking in the vicinity of art, examining '[i]nwiefern [Nietzsches Werke] selbst als Kunstwerk und weniger als philosophisch-wissenschaftliche Werke adäquat beschreibbar [sind]'.
[52] Görner (2000), p. 234
[53] As stated in a letter to Katharina Kippenberg from 31 October 1911 (*Briefwechsel*, p. 32f.).

Zukünften sind unter uns'.[54] In that same year, 1902, in his treatise on Maurice Maeterlinck, he rhetorically asks whether truth is not the domain of philosophy, with beauty that of poetry, teasingly employing the verb 'scheinen' as well as the subjunctive:

> Das Suchen nach Wahrheit. Scheint das nicht vor allem und ganz besonders die Pflicht des Philosophen zu sein, war das nicht das treue und tägliche Streben aller Weisen von Plato bis [...] Nietzsche? Und wenn man dem gegenüber die Tätigkeit des Dichters kurz bezeichnen wollte, müßte man sie nicht vielmehr ein Suchen nach Schönheit nennen [...]? (SW V 530f.)

Rilke provides the answer himself, repeating the verb which stands for appearance: 'Fast scheint es so.' Crucially, he then suggests looking a little more closely at recent developments in both areas and states

> die eigentümliche Erkenntnis, daß, ähnlich wie in den Tagen der griechischen Welt der Schönheitsbegriff mit dem Moralbegriff zusammenfiel, heute zwischen Schön und Wahr Annäherungen geschehen sind, die noch keine frühere Zeit zu verzeichnen hat (531).

The poet is referring to realism here, arguing that it attempted to elevate truth to beauty, but failed due to its exclusive focus on small and unimportant daily realities. However, its noble intention, 'die eine Wahrheit unseres Lebens zu suchen' must, according to the young Rilke, who was no stranger to pathos, remain the poets' task from now on, even if that means being 'Dichter des Unbekannten' for some time to come; for the one, sublime truth 'hinter allen Dingen' is elusive.[55]

By highlighting his intellectual and artistic proximity to Nietzsche, I shall attempt to understand selected writings by Rilke not 'better', but differently. That proximity, or 'die Präsenz von Nietzsches Gedanken bei Rilke', is indeed 'eine Frage, die für das Verständnis des Dichters entscheidend sein kann' (Destro, 199). Although, as will be shown, Rilke's *Wahlverwandtschaft* with Nietzsche was at times a rather subconscious, or even secret one, the attentive reader will find 'Beweise [für die Gemeinsamkeiten mit

[54] In: Konstantin Asadowski (ed.), *Rilke und Rußland. Briefe Erinnerungen Gedichte*, Frankfurt/M.: Insel, 1986, p. 293; and: B I, p. 88f..

[55] Ibid. Given the fact that only two years earlier Rilke had produced his 'Marginalien' on Nietzsche's *Geburt der Tragödie*, both the nod towards ancient Greece and the notion of a truth behind all things would be potentially treacherous with regard to the artist-philosopher's influence on the 'most philosophic of all poets' in this instance; had that influence not already been granted its presence in the direct mention of Nietzsche's name.

Nietzsche], wiewohl zerstreut', time and again in Rilke.[56] During the course of this study, such evidence will make the main reason why Nietzsche and Rilke truly were 'verwandt' and at home in each other's domains increasingly visible. It is their shared '*legitime* […] Abneigung gegen die eine ungültige Unterscheidung […], an die sich ihr Zeitalter mit religiöser Zähigkeit klammerte: die Unterscheidung zwischen Denken und Fühlen.'[57]

[56] See: László V. Szabó, *"Hiersein ist herrlich". Der Nachhall Nietzsche'scher Themen bei Rilke*, available on the web only: http://www.c3.hu/~prophil/profi004/NACHHALL.html, as found on 24 January 2002.
[57] Heller (1975), p. 94. Heller's emphasis.

1.2 State of research on 'Rilke and Nietzsche'

After having argued in favour of the interdisciplinarity of a comparative study on Rilke and Nietzsche, the state of research on their connections needs to be examined. Perlwitz assesses 'die Forschung zu Rilke und der Philosophie' in general as labouring

> vor allem an vier Problemen: (1) an unzureichender Reflexion des grundlegenden Unterschiedes zwischen Philosophie und Dichtung; (2) an ungenügender Unterscheidung zwischen Einflußbeziehungen, die es vor allem wohl im Frühwerk gibt, und den Anverwandlungen oder auch nur Parallelismen im späteren Werk, bei denen es eher um typologische Bezüge geht, die sich aus einer analogen Reaktion auf gemeinsame bewußtseinsgeschichtliche Konstellationen ergeben; (3) an einer Heidegger-Lastigkeit vor allem der älteren Forschung (Fleischer, Heftrich), die Rilke unbedingt zum Seins-Dichter stilisieren will; (4) an fehlender Koordination der Arbeiten zu Rilkes Rezeption der einzelnen Philosophen. Wegen dieser Mängel ist selbst die breit erforschte Beziehung zwischen Rilke und Nietzsche noch nicht zureichend geklärt.[58]

Whilst item four is virtually negligible in our specific context, in order to do justice to Perlwitz's expectation,[59] points one and three have been addressed in the preceding chapter, with item two the subject of the next chapter below.

However, Perlwitz's statement regarding the *quantity* of criticism on Rilke's relationship to Nietzsche demands closer inspection. Indeed, misconceptions abound about the actual amount of work on this topic. Many critics consider the writings of both Nietzsche and Rilke too extensively explored for either to yield the possibility of a genuinely new approach to them. To engage in a discourse on Rilke *and* Nietzsche, and the similarities and differences in their writing, seems similarly destined for failure, as the majority of critical opinion holds that this area, too, has been more than sufficiently covered.

It is true that numerous scholars have written about the two in context with each other. Without claiming completeness for my compilation, or further specifying the nature of their contributions for now, I have so far been able to identify more than forty contributors to my subject. Although this sounds like rather too large a number to engage with the topic at first, such a first impression is misleading, as the dates of publication of the contributions stretch over the last seven decades. This means that only one critic has written about 'Rilke and Nietzsche' every other year since Fritz

[58] In the *Rilke-Handbuch*, p. 163.
[59] He adds: 'Hier verspricht K. Brunkhorsts Arbeit Abhilfe, die reflektierter ist als ihre Vorgänger und erstmals auch unveröffentlichtes Material aus dem Rilke-Archiv Gernsbach auswertet' (ibid.).

Dehn became the first to do so in 1936. The crucial point here is that such an important overview and evaluation of scholarly writing on the subject has never been given before. This has led to the aforementioned misconceptions and, in turn, to a certain complacency within the academic community regarding the subject.[60]

This leads us to another element which I have so far neglected to consider: the relevance of the various contributions, and indeed their very availability. Firstly, we may neglect three more or less unavailable doctoral theses:[61] Butscher (1994) and Kiss (1996) appear on none of the worldwide databases or library catalogues I have consulted, whereas Powell Lundgren (1988) is on microfilm in the Swiss National Archive exclusively and therefore neither easily available nor widely circulated. Similarly, the journal article by Toshio Matsui is not held anywhere, either (with the exception of a copy in Chinese in Cambridge University Library).

However, none of those four elusive works are concerned with a direct comparative approach to my subjects, anyway. Rather, it can be gathered from their abstracts that they, like many of the remaining works, merely briefly mention one when discussing the other, or both in parallel, as opposed to discussing them in context. Again, our number of relevant critics becomes smaller yet when those whose work is in a different context or does not make many more than one or two mentions of either of the two are not counted: von Salis (1936), Albert-Lasard (1952), Hamburger (1966), Pütz (1967), Webb (1975), Jacobs (1978), Faber (1979), Olzien (1984), and Dischner (1999), for example, are not directly relevant for my purposes for those reasons.

However, the majority of the remaining works unfortunately merely quote each other and are thus largely negligible, too. This means that since Rilke's death an average of little more than one relevant study on him and Nietzsche in context has been written per decade. This is not a high ratio considering the continuing popularity and obvious intellectual kindredness of the two writers. If we then address the length of the contributions, all of which, with the exception of Detsch (2003), are journal articles or sub-chapters in books and count an approximate fifteen pages on average, scholarly output on the topic suddenly seems decidedly meagre.

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[60] Currently, the interest in Rilke's reading of and relationship to Nietzsche appears to be in decline. For the nineteen-thirties, fifties and sixties I have found three additions to my list of relevant critics, respectively, whereas in the forties there were only two. The seventies saw an upsurge in interest with seven contributions, and scholarly activity with regard to my topic was at an all-time high during the eighties with eleven relevant publications, but declined again in the nineties with a mere six occurances, not counting three unpublished American Ph.D. dissertations which are, according to their abstracts, only marginally relevant within our context.

[61] My attempts to get copies of these dissertations or to correspond with their authors were unsuccessful.

One may view four possible scholarly approaches regarding Rilke's relationship to Nietzsche as paradigmatic. Claude David represents one extreme end of the scale.[62] He argues almost polemically that there are no real points of contact whatsoever between the two writers, although the young Rilke tried to emulate Nietzsche in vain. In his essay from 1993, David therefore concentrates on Rilke's early period. Firstly, he criticizes Rilke's 'naive Sehnsucht' in 'Böhmische Schlendertage' as non-identical with Nietzsche's thought, and then refers to the 'volkstümlicher Nietzscheismus' in *Der Apostel* (161). Moving on to Rilke's 'Marginalien zu Friedrich Nietzsche. "Die Geburt der Tragödie"' from 1900, at first David seems to see the 'Hintergrund' as their only shared concern, but then concludes that actually Rilke merely misunderstood Nietzsche. He purports that to Nietzsche 'der "Hintergrund" [war] ein titanischer Tanz', whilst to Rilke, it was 'ganz anderer Natur: ein trostloses, graues, Überdruß erregendes Einerlei' (168). He makes one small concession to a relatedness in spirit of the two by admitting to the *Erste Duineser Elegie* mirroring the terror of the Dionysian in *Die Geburt der Tragödie*. However, David then proclaims that the Nietzsche of the *Geburt* and the Rilke of 'Früher Apollo' (from the *Neue Gedichte*) shared 'eine datierte Auffassung', in that they viewed 'die Kunst gleichzeitig als Erfüllung und als Schutz' (167). Having thus almost completely ignored Rilke's middle and late periods, David's inference is: 'Rilke ist an Nietzsche vorbeigegegangen; die beiden haben sich den Rücken gekehrt' (166). Although some of David's criticism is indeed valid, this is surely an overly ambitious statement given that it is not sufficiently substantiated in an article of a mere seven pages. Equally bold in relation to the length of the piece, and therefore equally refutable, is the assertion that 'Rainer Maria Rilke hat sich um Nietzsche bemüht, er hat versucht, aber immer ohne Erfolg, in sein Denken einzutreten' (161). No other critic is as extreme as David in his virtual denial of an intellectual relationship between Rilke and Nietzsche save perhaps Bernhard Taureck in his 'Bestimmung und Bewertung einiger Stellen aus Rilkes "Duineser Elegien"', which is, without doubt, an overly confident project given that it is executed on a mere page and a half.[63] Indeed, not only due to its unsubstantiated, and therefore incomprehensible, implication of the intention to be Nietzsche's successor on Rilke's part, Taureck's verdict ('Rilkes Berufung auf die Erde bleibt leer', 'Rilke kann […] nicht beanspruchen, Nietzsches Ästhetik bereichernd

[62] 'Eine verfehlte Begegnung: Rilke und Nietzsche', in: Heinz Gockel, Michael Neumann and Ruprecht Wimmer (eds.), *Wagner-Nietzsche-Thomas Mann* (Frankfurt/M.: Vittorio Klostermann, 1993), pp. 161-168.

[63] 'Nietzsches Einfluß auf die Lyrik: ein Beitrag zur philosophischen Ästhetik', in: *Nietzsche-Studien* 10/11, 1982, pp. 565-588; here: p. 583. The transcript of the ensuing discussion is included.

fortgeführt zu haben', 584) is negligible, as is his interpretation in general, as he fails to approach Rilke's poetry *as poetry*, concentrating exclusively on its content instead, thereby contributing merely to a 'Verarmen des Gesprächs zwischen Philosophie und Lyrik', as one of his opponents remarks (586).

After this example of the minority of critical opinion on the subject, which holds that little or no kindredness existed between the two writers, the second possible scholarly perspective must be examined. It assumes some Nietzsche reception in Rilke's early period and little or none in the poet's late phase. As in most other cases, the middle period is largely ignored here, too. A proponent of this position is Walter Seifert, who claims in his article from 1989 that the monk in Rilke's *Stunden-Buch* was intended as 'Gegen-Zarathustra'.[64] Seifert argues this was due to the fact that the second part of the *Stunden-Buch* was written just after Rilke had lost Lou Andreas-Salomé as a lover, while the first part of *Zarathustra* was written by Nietzsche while losing her. Thematically, the essay focuses on the loss of identity allegedly experienced frequently by both Rilke and Nietzsche. Seifert examines the paradigmatic changes in the compensation of that loss in both writers. He then links the two men by showing first how the early Rilke subjected his 'Wirklichkeitsanordnung' and scheme of compensation to Salomé's perspective which she, in turn, had learned from Nietzsche. Subsequently, Seifert argues, Rilke turned Nietzsche's declaration of the death of God on its head and declared that death is God, or, at least, absolute. His death-bearer was a new *Übermensch*. In this, he apparently approximated Nietzsche's paradigm again, distancing himself from Salomé's. However, a third means of compensation was mediated again by Salomé, who had, again, allegedly learned it from Nietzsche: writing. This new view of reality and the corresponding re-evaluation of all values finally formed the basis of a modernisation of the ego and its 'Wirklichkeitsbezug'. All this, according to Seifert, took place in Rilke's early period, leading up to and culminating in the *Stunden-Buch*. Nietzsche's influence in Rilke's middle or late period remains undiscussed. Another shortcoming of this and similar pieces is their at times reductionist 'psychological' approach, which tends to assume a privileged access to Rilke's mind.

The third branch of criticism on the subject holds that there is a notable Nietzsche reception in Rilke's late period, with negligible evidence in his early phase, and (mostly) none in the middle years. With Heller discrediting the quality, but not denying

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[64] Walter Seifert, 'Der Ich-Zerfall und seine Kompensationen bei Nietzsche und Rilke', in: *Die Modernisierung des Ich: Studien zur Subjektkonstitution in der Vor- und Frühmoderne*, ed. Manfred Pfister (Passau: Rothe, 1989), pp. 229-239.

the existence of such an early reception, the most prominent exponent of this critical branch is Bruno Hillebrand, who firmly holds that 'im Frühwerk [Rilkes] ist Nietzsches Denken kaum aufspürbar.' He entirely disregards the evidence against such a statement, i.e. the existence of *Der Apostel*, *Ewald Tragy* and *Christus / Elf Visionen*, and calls the *Stunden-Buch* 'eine unerträgliche Verflechtung von künstlerischem Anspruch einerseits und religiöser Einholgebärde andererseits'.[65] Whilst admitting to his inability to unearth tenable traces of Rilke's Nietzsche reception, and explicitly refusing altogether even to consider the Salomé-connection, Hillebrand does little indeed in 2000 to remedy the almost complete omission of Rilke from *Nietzsche und die deutsche Literatur*, which he edited in 1978.[66] He mainly focuses on the problematics of art and creating, viewing 'Kunst als Steigerungsphänomen' in both the *Elegien* and *Zarathustra*, whilst remaining on the surface throughout. This is understandable, given this is a brief study altogether. Yet, Hillebrand's expansive style at times carries him away, leading to rather careless statements such as the following: 'Die etwas ruppigen Worte Zarathustras haben [in den Elegien] jenen spezifisch Rilke'schen Schmelz dazu gewonnen, der sie gefällig macht' (2000, 80). As the textual analysis in part three of this study will show, unlike some of the poet's early work, the *Duineser Elegien* are anything but 'gefällig', and certainly far from 'Schmelz'. Furthermore, statements such as this unfortunately place Hillebrand firmly among those scholars who insist on the realms of philosophy and poetry being neatly separated, with truth, or 'Ideen',[67] the domain of the former and beauty, or 'Schmelz' even, that of the latter.

Alberto Destro technically belongs in Hillebrand's group, arguing in favour of the late Rilke's Nietzsche reception. However, his view is rather different from Hillebrand's, and his assessment of the situation Rilke scholarship finds itself in in 2002 is quite harsh:

> Nietzsches Spuren, so lautet im Allgemeinen die Antwort [auf die Frage nach Rilkes Verhältnis zu Nietzsche], sind in Rilkes Werk nicht zu erkennen. Dieser verbreiteten Ansicht möchte ich entgegensetzen, daß Nietzsches Gedanken in Rilkes Werk sehr wohl erkennbar sind, ja erkannt werden müssen, und zwar ganz besonders dort, wo man sie wegen der zeitlichen Distanz von der belegbaren Kenntnisnahme von Nietzsches Schriften am wenigsten erwarten könnte, nämlich in Rilkes Spätwerk (200).

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[65] Bruno Hillebrand, *Nietzsche. Wie ihn die Dichter sahen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2000), pp. 78-84.
[66] *Nietzsche und die Deutsche Literatur. Vol. I* (Tübingen 1978). Rilke is mentioned fleetingly on pp. 31 and 131f..
[67] See also: Hillebrand (2000), p. 80f.

As Destro mainly places the weight of his interpretative efforts on Rilke's mature work, but clearly acknowledges the influence as continuous throughout the poet's life, his contribution should be included in the fourth, and last, variant of scholarly opinion, as the one which this study wishes to be considered a part of, whilst hoping to expand its boundaries. Its exponents further include Detsch, Engel, Fleischer, Frowen, Görner, Hawes, Kaufmann, Mason, K. May, Meyer and Szabó to varying degrees, and most notably, Heller, who is without doubt the most sensitive and thorough reader of the Rilke-Nietzsche nexus. Having set the standards in this area to this day, he also stands out by means of his clear style in an area which is otherwise largely dominated by a pseudo-Rilkean, verbose prose. The arguments of those thirteen scholars are mostly based on textual analysis, as evidence of Rilke's reading of Nietzsche was largely unavailable until very recently; and they tend to be unified in the assumption of a more or less continuous Nietzsche reception throughout Rilke's lifetime. Most of them regard *Die Geburt der Tragödie*, 'Vom Nutzen und Nachtheil der Historie für das Leben' and *Zarathustra*, amongst other Nietzschean writings such as *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*, as present in Rilke's work, and therefore – if rather often tacitly – assume the poet's familiarity with those works.[68] Naturally, each of those critics structures his or her articles around different issues, and they will all reappear in the textual analysis below if and when their respective special focus happens to coincide with that of the present chapter or section. Let it suffice at this point to emphasize with Irina Frowen 'die Kontinuität von Rilkes Kunstauffassung […] und wie weit diese von seiner frühen Beschäftigung mit Nietzsche beeinflußt ist'; and agree with her rejection of the division of Rilke's life and work into three distinct phases.[69]

Different critical approaches and allegiances aside for now, it is indeed most remarkable that only one, and very slim, volume on 'Rilke and Nietzsche' exists worldwide. Unfortunately, the quality of Richard Detsch's *Rilke's Connections to Nietzsche*, first published in 2003, does not reach that of Heller's 1952 essay, due to the virtual absence of new material and deplorable shortage of fresh perspectives.[70] This sparsity regarding valuable scholarly efforts concerning our topic seems particularly odd when considering that both Rilke and Nietzsche are written about extensively in

[68] Their work will feature in greater detail in my textual analysis in part three of this study. I will, however, combine their findings with the evaluation of my new evidence for the first time and, therefore, produce a slightly different focus on the texts analysed.
[69] 'Nietzsches Bedeutung für Rilkes frühe Kunstauffassung', in: BlRG 14 (1987), pp. 21-34; here: p. 32.
[70] Although it is the only book-length study on the subject so far and very recent, it is actually rather a collection of essays in which the comparative lack of evidence discredits many of Detsch's sweeping statements.

relation to many of their other respective contemporaries, precursors or successors. As Theodore Fiedler has noted as recently as 1999, 'eine umfassende Arbeit über Rilkes Nietzsche-Rezeption existiert nicht,'[71] with Destro echoing him in 2002: 'Natürlich fehlen verstreute Verweise auf Nietzsche in der Rilke-Literatur nicht, aber bisher liegt meines Wissens keine umfassende Darstellung dieses Problems vor' (199n.). In the process of confronting the myth of the topic being sufficiently covered, one must ask why there has not been more research of a higher academic standard on it. The two conceivable reasons for this, which also happen to be very much connected, are: a distinct lack of published or even accessible evidence of Rilke's reading of Nietzsche; and Rilke's often quoted 'strange silence' regarding the philosopher, indicating a possible problem with the latter's priority. Before focussing more closely on these problems, however, the question of influence in general ought to be examined first.

[71] Theodore Fiedler, 'Zarathustras Kind. Zu Nietzsche, Lou und Rainer im *Florenzer Tagebuch*', in: Rudi Schweikert and Sabine Schmidt (eds.), *Korrespondenzen. Festschrift für Joachim W. Storck aus Anlaß seines 75. Geburtstages* (St. Ingbert: Röhrig, 1999), p. 318n.. This statement almost appears like a shameful admission on Fiedler's part, as it is virtually hidden away in the very last footnote of the text, which is, after all, mainly *about* 'Rainer', as Fiedler chooses to refer to Rilke, and Nietzsche.

1.3.2 Questions of methodology: reader-resonse poetics, or 'ein Gesang von Satz-Gedanken'

Although known to have frequently practised it himself, in theory, Nietzsche did not look upon criticism too favourably.[72] It was particularly its perceived lack of performativity he disapproved of: 'Nirgends kommt es zu einer Wirkung, sondern immer nur wieder zu einer 'Kritik'; und die Kritik selbst macht wieder keine Wirkung, sondern erfährt nur wieder Kritik' (KSA 1, 284).

In a very similar vein, Rilke believed conscience to be the only standard by which art could be judged; to him, criticism was none, as stated in 1907.[73] He not only refused to read criticism of his work, but was also more consistent than Nietzsche, as he also refrained from criticizing the work of others, even when explicitly asked to. In 1903, it was 'ein junger Dichter', Franz Xaver Kappus, whose request for Rilke's comment of his latest verses the latter denied, as he held that 'mit nichts kann man ein Kunst-Werk so wenig berühren als mit kritischen Worten.'[74] Lastly, the continuity of Rilke's negative attitude towards criticism is highlighted by the following statement from 1924:

> es scheint mir ein für allemal, daß das dichterische Bild eine solche Festlegung und Bindung an bestimmte Vorstellungen des in ihm vorgeschlagenen Inhalts nicht ohne Schaden vertrüge; ein solches Bild will nicht beim Wort genommen sein, es lebt von seiner Schwebe und erneut sich aus ihr. Nicht als ob es ungenau sei und so bleiben wolle: aber es liegt in dem Geheimnis seiner Natur, in jedem Auffassenden einen anderen Rand seiner Präzision abzuzeichnen.[75]

In the context of the question of the comparability of *Dichten* and *Denken* asked in chapter 1.1, this definition of the 'dichterische Bild' could have conclusively differentiated it from the philosophical word – if, that is, the image of the 'Schwebe' so vital for art, which suffers from being tied down to meanings, had not already been used by Rilke to describe a philosopher, namely, Nietzsche, more than two decades before in a letter to Alexander Benois from 28 July 1901.[76] Here, in 1924, the poet combats attempts at 'Systematisierung' and deadening rational explication yet again; he claims –

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[72] Ironically, as Gerhardt states, Nietzsche today 'interessiert […] kaum noch als Künstler, auch nicht als Symbolfigur einer anderen Lebensform. Aufmerksamkeit fordert er primär als *Kritiker* und *Theoretiker*, der zwar den Versuch macht, die überlieferten Formen der Theorie und der Kritik zu überwinden, dabei aber von *Kritik* und *Theorie* nicht ablassen kann' (2000, p. 5f.).
[73] 21 October 1907 to Reinhold von Walter; in: B I, p. 283.
[74] 17 February 1903; in: B I, p. 143.
[75] To Elle Asmussen on 3 September 1924; in: B II, p. 344f.
[76] B I, p. 85; see chapter 2.1.

proto-Celan-like, it would seem – that a poetic image does not want to be taken literally, whilst simultaneously anticipating reader-response theory.

In contrast to what has actually become of reader-response-theory, however, 'literature should be treated as a dialectical process of production and reception' (Holub, 57). As *Rezeptionsästhetik* assumes the possibility of interaction between author and reader, it embraces a struggle for meaning which is fought in the 'battle space' between reader and text. On either side of it, two extremes exist, which I shall briefly summarize again in order to make visible why neither is helpful in the very particular case of 'Rilke and Nietzsche', before suggesting a viable alternative.

One the one hand, poststructuralism claims the absence of stable meaning and denies the existence of the author, resulting in the nearly total ambiguity of 'texts', which in turn designate anything written, from lyric poems to vacuum cleaner instruction manuals.[77] This approach, besides its obvious merits, also runs contrary to the 'Interesse am Menschen, das dem Menschen eingeboren ist und vielleicht ein höheres, unserm Wissen noch unzugängliches Ziel verfolgt'.[78] Emil Staiger had thus criticized the exclusion of biographical information by German scholars – which was then grimly 'fashionable' due, undoubtedly, to some critics' biographies including (Nazi-) elements they wanted to remain hidden – already by 1950. According to Staiger, the inborn interest in the human should be a vital component of criticism, as it 'erhält [die Literaturwissenschaft] lebendig' (28). On the other hand, Harold Bloom's theory of the anxiety of influence removes any (by all means desirable) critical and aesthetic plurality by tracing virtually every aspect of a 'poem' back to the anxiety of influence within its author.[79] Again, the new term for 'literature' – now it happens to be 'poem', rather than 'writing' or 'text' – indiscriminately includes anything that is written or even merely thought, and particularly criticism.

As the lyric poetry of Rilke and the poetic philosophy of Nietzsche tend to defy categorization and can be equated neither with an inhuman, arbitrary 'text', nor with a limited and limiting doctrine-'poem' by a critic such as Bloom, I propose for this study a different methodological approach. It will aim at a truly Nietzschean, and *almost*

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[77] Here I have in mind Foucault's 'Qui est l'auteur', which first appeared in the *Bulletin de la Societé Française de Philosophie*, 63, no. 3 (1969), pp. 73-104, as well as Barthes's 'Mort de l'auteur' (1968). It was first published in English in the volume *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*, ed. Donald F. Bouchard (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1977); Barthes's 'The Death of the Author', in *Image, Music, Text* (New York: Noonday, 1989), p. 148.

[78] Emil Staiger, *Die Kunst der Interpretation. Studien zur deutschen Literaturgeschichte* (Munich: dtv, 1972), p. 28.

[79] See further: Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence. A Theory of Poetry*, London: Oxford University Press, 1971.

poststructuralist, 'interpretive pluralism' which refuses to 'choose between the dogmatic assertion of one meaning and the relativistic acceptance of any meaning' as observed in the critical methods discussed above.[80] Simultaneously, however, it will take into account the author along with the reader, and biography along with the text, as indivisible unities.[81] Thereby, it will aim to be adding to, rather than diminishing, the desired multiplicity of perspectives on a text, since 'jedes künstlerische Werk hat in unteilbarer Einheit einen doppelten Charakter: es ist Ausdruck von Wirklichkeit, aber es bildet auch die Wirklichkeit, die nicht neben dem Werk und vor dem Werk, sondern gerade nur im Werk existiert.'[82] The very existence of Lou Andreas-Salomé, for example, renders the selective and disciplined use of biographical information within this particular project unavoidable. As the aim is not to write a new Nietzsche or Rilke biography, I shall restrict myself to exploring relevant glimpses of their lives as and when it is appropriate to the texts discussed.

Authors of course often decide what they want us to think they think. Providing an example with particular relevance to this study's topic, this is argued convincingly by Alberto Destro regarding Rilke's 'Selbstinszenierung' in the context of his reading of Nietzsche. According to Destro, the poet 'hat die Rezeption seiner Schriften wissentlich gelenkt [...] die Frage nach Rilkes Verhältnis zu Nietzsche [wird] innerhalb der Forschung immer noch so behandelt [...], wie Rilke es gewollt hat' (199f.). One must therefore distinguish vigilantly between what was conceivably real in the poet's relationship to others and what he or she might have merely fantasised into it. Hence, I will not 'imply a privileged access to [the author's] mind' (Moriarty, 3), but rather a redefiniton of the term 'the author', as it is often misleadingly believed to be a monolithic concept when, in fact, it is a composition of many voices, masks, and perhaps even selves – a composite, then, but nonetheless with delimiting, human, and therefore guiding, boundaries.

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[80] See: Alan D. Schrift, 'Interpretive Pluralism', in *Nietzsche and the Question of Interpretation. Between Hermeneutics and Deconstruction* (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 194.

[81] A paradigm change away from, broadly speaking, too much theory, and towards, or back to, storytelling is slowly making itself felt at the moment. See further *Kursbuch* 148, *Rückkehr der Biographien* and *Literaturen* 7/8, 2001; as well as Christian Klein (ed.), *Grundlagen der Biographik. Theorie und Praxis des biographischen Schreibens*, Stuttgart and Weimar: Metzler, 2002, a collection which thematizes the recent 'Einstellungswandel' within criticism in favour of 'die Rückkehr des Individuums' (Ulrich Raulff, p. 67) and heralds the rediscovery of 'die lang unterdrückte Liebe für die einzelne Geschichte' (Sander Gilman, p. 215); highlighting the necessity of a 'Verknüpfung' of, and 'einen reflektierten Umgang mit', terms such as 'Autorschaft', 'Leben' and 'Werk' (Peter-André Alt, p. 24f.).

[82] K. Kosík, *Die Dialektik des Konkreten*, Frankfurt 1967 (*Theorie 2*), p. 123. Quoted in: Jauß (1970), p. 162.

In this context, let us turn to Rilke himself, and in particular to two poems from *Neue Gedichte*, for his very own 'reader-response poetics'. In contrast to 'Der Lesende' from *Das Buch der Bilder* (SW I, 457f.), which was written in 1901, the year in which Rilke read Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*, and thus seven years earlier, 'Der Leser' thematizes the alienation of the reader from his or her surroundings by virtue of the sheer power of reading. In the earlier poem, Rilke still wrote almost joyfully about the unity of the life outside and that within him: 'Dort draußen ist, was ich hier drinnen lebe'; and of his confidence in the world and himself remaining familiar and unestranged by his *Lektüre*: 'Und wenn ich jetzt vom Buch die Augen hebe,/ wird nichts befremdlich sein und alles groß.' The latter sentence, however, implies that in the process of reading, 'der Lesende' has known and perhaps had in fact almost expected such alienation, which makes his joy at its absence all the greater. Thus, this earlier poem already foreshadows the changes Rilke's attitude to the experience of reading was to undergo. As the different title – a noun, almost expressing proficiency in the activity of reading, as opposed to the participal noun in the earlier poem, implying a process – emphasizes, 'Der Leser' is clearly the more accomplished poem of the two:

Der Leser

Wer kennt ihn, diesen, welcher sein Gesicht
wegsenkte aus dem Sein zu einem zweiten,
das nur das schnelle Wenden voller Seiten
manchmal gewaltsam unterbricht?

Selbst seine Mutter wäre nicht gewiß,
ob *er* es ist, der da mit seinem Schatten
Getränktes liest. Und wir, die Stunden hatten,
was wissen wir, wieviel ihm hinschwand, bis

er mühsam aufsah: alles auf sich hebend,
was unten in dem Buche sich verhielt,
mit Augen, welche, statt zu nehmen, gebend
anstießen an die fertig-volle Welt:
wie stille Kinder, die allein gespielt,
auf einmal das Vorhandene erfahren;
doch seine Züge, die geordnet waren,
blieben für immer umgestellt (SW I, 636-7).

As Stefan Schank suggests, 'Der Gedanke eines Wechsels des Seins durch den Akt des Lesens fehlt im früheren Gedicht.'[83] 'Der Lesende', as one of the 'vollgültigen Identifikationsbilder des Dichters',[84] still was the testimony of a narcissist at one with his surroundings, yet sure of his own identity. Conversely, the experience of an uncomfortable transgression of borders is described here, in that the relationship between the reader and the text is a very fluid and mutually influential one. The reader is changed by the experience of reading. This is suggested four times: he suddenly exists in another dimension as he sinks his face, or glance, away from his being to another, deeper one; even his mother would not recognize him anymore; he is 'alles auf sich hebend,/ was unten in dem Buche sich verhielt'; and lastly, his once well-ordered features will remain forever re-arranged by that which he has lifted unto himself from the book below – directly mirroring what Nietzsche predicted for his *Zarathustra*, 'wer einmal darin gelebt hat, der kommt mit einem andern Gesichte wieder zur Welt zurück';[85] with the difference that Nietzsche, typically rather more sure of himself than Rilke, also implies that whoever reads his book will not only be a different person, but also reborn as such, having died in the counter-world of *Zarathustra*. As Görner suggests with regard to 'Der Leser', 'am Beispiel von Rilkes Leseverhalten […] ließe sich somit eine Rezeptionstheorie entwerfen, die das Thema Anverwandlung als Form positiv verstandener Selbstentfremdung zum Mittelpunkt hätte.'[86]

At the same time, what is read is changed by the reader, too: it is 'mit seinem Schatten Getränktes'. Considering the connotations of the German, the text is overshadowed, saturated, and yet also fed by the reader's shadow. He is absorbed in it, as the saying goes. This additional notion of the text feeding off the 'Leser' almost like a parasite is emphasized by the implication of him waning and being weakened: 'was wissen wir, wieviel ihm hinschwand, bis/ er mühsam aufsah'. This is again suggested by his eyes not taking in, but adding to the finished and full world which he abuts. At any rate, both perspectives are evocative of the reader first diving into, and then coming up from a body of water. The surface of the water seems to divide what is down below in the book from the air of consciousness. In 'Der Leser', Rilke seems to apply the rules of that process to the activity of reading in much the same manner: the boundary

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[83] Stefan Schank, *Kindheitserfahrungen im Werk Rainer Maria Rilkes. Eine biographisch-literaturwissenschaftliche Studie* (St. Ingbert: Röhrig, 1995), p. 167.
[84] See Jutta Heinz's article on *Das Buch der Bilder* in the *Rilke-Handbuch*, pp. 290-296; here: p. 293.
[85] This is preceded by: 'Mein "Zarathustra" ist fertig geworden, in seinen drei Akten [...]. Es ist eine Art Abgrund der Zukunft, etwas Schauerliches, namentlich in seiner Glückseligkeit. Es ist alles drin mein Eigen, ohne Vorbild, Vergleich, Vorgänger'; from a letter to Erwin Rohde written on 22 February 1884, in: KGB III.1, p. 478.
[86] In: *Rilke-Handbuch*, p. 50.

between the text and the reader, or between his subconscious and his 'reality', is fluid, and both clearly leave imprints on one another. Thus, this poem can indeed be seen as Rilke's own reader-response poetics.

Moreover, as the more psychoanalytically inclined Rilke scholars such as Kleinbard, Parkes or Seifert have shown, and as was often admitted by the poet himself, he was plagued frequently by a fear of the loss of his identity by means of the intrusion of powerful outside influences. This is mirrored in his interest in the topic of masks and, as an important aspect of Rilke's experience of reading, may have influenced his avoidance of the thought of his kindred, yet prior spirit Nietzsche.[87] The poet himself provides further evidence for a theory of a problematic relationship to a potential precursor on his part in another poem from *Neue Gedichte*, 'Die Rosenschale'. That poem contains two of the mere twelve mentions of the word 'Einfluß' in the entire catalogued lyrical Rilkean œuvre.[88] As it is also indicative of that concept having been highly problematic to the poet, it is doubly worth considering in this context:

> […]
> Und sind nicht alle so, nur sich enthaltend,
> wenn Sich-enthalten heißt: die Welt da draußen
> und Wind und Regen und Geduld des Frühlings
> und Schuld und Unruh und vermummtes Schicksal
> und Dunkelheit der abendlichen Erde
> bis auf der Wolken Wandel, Flucht und Anflug,
> bis auf den vagen Einfluß ferner Sterne
> in eine Hand voll Innres zu verwandeln.

This poem from 1907 is fairly long with its 9 stanzas (and concluding single line). The one given above is the eighth verse. In order to remain within our context, I shall only pay attention to the word 'Einfluß', rather than interpret the whole poem at this point.

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[87] On the topic of masks in both Rilke and Nietzsche, see further Graham Parkes' 'Facing the Masks: Persona and Self in Nietzsche, Rilke and Mishima', in: *Mosaic - A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature* 20, 1987, pp. 65-79. Parkes neglects, however, to consider Rilke's 'Marginalien zu Nietzsche'.

For a discussion of masks in Nietzsche alone which, undertaken here, would lead too far away from the focus of this study, see further: Walter Kaufmann, *Discovering the Mind*, New York: McGraw Hill, 1980; particularly pp. 137-141; Ernst Behler, who in '"Wer ist Nietzsches Zarathustra?" Eine Auseinandersetzung mit Martin Heidegger' (in: Gerhardt 2000, pp. 351-385) praises as a subtle feature of Salomé's book on Nietzsche the fact that she recognized 'die Wichtigkeit der "Maske" nicht nur für die philosophischen Schriften Nietzsches, sondern auch für seine eigene Person' (359f.); and, forthcoming, Rüdiger Görner, 'Nietzsche and the Praise of Masks', in: David Robb (ed.), *Probing the Boundaries*, Amsterdam: Rodophi, 2005.

[88] The others are in: Rilke, SW I: pp. 659, 721; SW II: pp. 39, 44, 154, 290, 315, 387, 412, 461, 462.

Rilke depicts the rosebuds as self-containing. He enumerates as synonyms for that which is contained by the self such varied and admittedly vague ideas as the world out there, the patience of spring and masked fate. Yet, all of these big general concepts and more can easily be reduced into a handful of inside, save 'der Wolken Wandel, Flucht und Anflug' – and 'den vagen Einfluß ferner Sterne'.[89] The 'vague' (and thus intangible) influence of faraway stars cannot be incorporated, or devoured, by the self. It is not only beyond its control, it actually controls that self, in an unfathomable manner.

Lastly, to further contour 'den vagen Einfluß ferner Sterne' in our context, the nature of Nietzsche's influence, in particular, will be briefly addressed. It can be best described in musical terms, and has indeed been seen as a song of sentence-ideas by Roland Barthes, and as the unfinished melody of his, Nietzsche's, looking by Oswald Spengler. The latter writes:

> In der Erfülltheit des Goetheschen Lebens liegt auch, daß es etwas *abschloß*. Unzählige Deutsche werden Goethe verehren, mit ihm leben, sich an ihm aufrichten, aber er wird sie nicht verwandeln. Die Wirkung Nietzsches ist verwandelnd, weil die Melodie seines Schauens in ihm selbst nicht zu Ende kam.[90]

Spengler explicitly ascribes a transformative effect to the anti-philosopher, which he credits to the unfinished quality of a life cut short by insanity and premature death. Barthes would seem to be a case in point when he reports of having his head full of Nietzsche after having just read him, as well as of desiring him and wanting to catch him:

> Was ist Einfluß? […] was geht von [den Autoren, die ich lese,] auf mich über? Eine Art Musik, ein nachdenklicher Klang, ein mehr oder weniger dichtes Spiel von Anagrammen. (Ich hatte den Kopf voll von Nietzsche, den ich gerade gelesen hatte; doch das was ich begehrte, was ich einfangen wollte, war ein Gesang von Satz-Gedanken: der Einfluß war rein prosodisch.)[91]

Curiously, reading the father of *Zarathustra* made Barthes question the very nature of influence, and he proceeds to liken it to a kind of music, evoking that particular book –

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[89] 'In the fourth century, influence had referred to the stars, and later came to be associated with the exercise of power. It signals an influx or flowing in, and thereby relates the imitation of earlier writers to the power that such writers exert on the tradition' (Helen Regueiro Elam, 'Influence', in: Preminger and Brogan, eds., 1993, p. 605).

[90] Oswald Spengler, 'Nietzsche und sein Jahrhundert' (speech delivered on 15 October 1924, Nietzsche's 80th birthday, in the Nietzsche archive in Weimar), in: *Reden und Aufsätze*, Munich: C. H. Beck, 1937, pp. 110-124; here: p. 123.

[91] Roland Barthes, *Über mich selbst*, Munich: Matthes & Seitz, 1978, p. 117.

Nietzsche's most lyrical, after all – here, without directly mentioning it, in his image of a strange hybrid of contemplation and sound, 'ein nachdenklicher Klang'.

'Verwandelnd', 'prosodisch', 'unterirdisch' – the influence exerted by the anti-philosopher on nearly everyone who read him was such that, arguably, one could not ever hope to free oneself from it entirely; it remained at work, however subconsciously, lyrically or, even, musically. Nietzsche, the music-making artist-metaphysician, of course was aware of having created a most effective intellectual and poetic echo chamber in *Zarathustra*: as will be shown below, more than for anything else, he longed for an answer to it. What one needs to ask is where Rilke immersed himself into this chamber, and how he produced echoes in his own work. Certain Zarathustrian motifs indeed resound more or less directly in the poet's writings, whilst others have undergone a poetic transformation, 'sehr unterirdisch, wie sich von selbst versteht' (KGB III/5, 48).

1.4 New evidence

1.4.1 Rilke as reader of *Zarathustra* and *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*

'Rilke was scarcely a disciple of Nietzsche and the question of influence is too obscure for sensible discussion', Keith M. May writes in 1988, not specifying the reasons he bases his diagnosis on much further.[92] In a similar vein, as we have seen, Heller relativizes the importance and legitimacy of a quest for the proof of influence in the first place by questioning common theories 'über das Verhältnis von Denken, Glauben und Dichten' (1975, 103). Yet, even he, somewhat apologetically, adds: 'Rilke war nur selten geneigt, seine intellektuellen Schulden anzuerkennen.' Heller, without doubt as many others after him, thus takes what he calls his 'different approach' also somewhat 'aus der Not heraus', because of a lack of scholarly evidence; because, as he puts it, 'die übliche Gelehrtenstraße [ist] schon durch den erstaunlichen Mangel an unmittelbaren Zeugnissen fast ungangbar gemacht […]' (76). Similarly, in 1959, Walter Kaufmann proposed in his comparative study on Rilke and Nietzsche to 'focus attention on the *contents* of Rilke's poems […] without trivializing them biographically.'[93] A year earlier, Margot Fleischer had already maintained

> daß es nicht die Absicht dieser Arbeit ist, auf Parallelen Jagd zu machen oder einem 'Einfluß' Nietzsches auf Rilke nachzuspüren. Vielmehr liegt uns daran, Rilke als einen Erben der bei Nietzsche entstandenen geistesgeschichtlichen Situation aufzuweisen, der dieses Erbe übernimmt und weiterführt, selbst wenn er nie auch nur ein einziges Werk Nietzsches gelesen haben sollte (2).

The obvious merits, legitimacy – and contemporary 'fashionableness'[94] – of such an approach notwithstanding, Kaufmann and Fleischer both may have said this, like Heller and May, also at least partly 'aus der Not heraus', as at that time hardly any evidence was available to prove any of Rilke's reading of Nietzsche. Indeed, Fleischer eventually concedes that 'ein Niederschlag von Rilkes Nietzsche-Lektüre scheint kaum greifbar; wir wissen nicht, was Rilke las und wie er es las' (299). As recently as 1993, Theo Meyer had to state that Rilke 'bleibt im Hinblick auf Nietzsche eigentümlich stumm.'[95] In that same year, David Kleinbard still relied on J. R. von Salis, who 'reports in his

[92] He merely mentions, in passing, Rilke's friendship with Salomé, and laconically states, without giving any evidence save Rilke's letter to Westhoff concerning Hans Larson from 9 July 1904, 'we know that Rilke enthusiastically read Nietzsche' (p. 49).
[93] Kaufmann (1980), p. 220.
[94] I have in mind the rise of New Criticism during that time. See further: Staiger, op. cit., particularly p. 7.
[95] See: Theo Meyer, *Nietzsche und die Kunst* (Tübingen: Francke, 1993), p. 210.

book on Rilke's years in Switzerland [from 1936] that the poet told him he had never read Nietzsche'.[96] Von Salis himself mentions Nietzsche only twice, both times in throwaway remarks in parentheses, thus passing off as fact what was actually Rilke's self-created myth: according to von Salis, then, '(Nietzsches Werke hatte Rilke nicht gelesen – er wollte sich mit ihnen nicht beschäftigen).'[97] As Destro indicates, the poet purposefully guided the reception of his œuvre by means of his correspondence to the effect that within scholarship today, his relationship to Nietzsche is still treated exactly as he intended it, namely, as virtually non-existent.[98] Indeed, with other evidence of Rilke's actual reading of the philosopher not available until much later – or until today, as is the case for the latest findings – little wonder, then, that such misconceptions could be propagated for so long.

Yet, Heller's statement regarding the impassability of the usual path of the scholar as quoted above is not strictly true, at least not any more. Today we can truly stress the 'fast' rather than the 'ungangbar'. 'Das Unternehmen [eines Vergleichs] wäre noch lohnender, […] wenn ich ein von Rilkes Hand mit Randbemerkungen versehenes Exemplar von Also sprach Zarathustra gefunden hätte', Heller muses – almost prophetically, as it turns out. For the Rilke archive in Gernsbach indeed houses not one but two such copies[99] – undiscovered and unevaluated up until now. Together, they contain numerous reading traces and marginal notes in Rilke's hand as well as in Salomé's, along with pressed cyclamen, a sketch and a photo placed between selected pages. For the first time ever, these new findings make a high degree of familiarity with Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* on Rilke's part, and particularly with those singled-out pages, a certainty.

Furthermore, we have already established Rilke's well-documented knowledge of two other Nietzschean works and the correspondence between the philosopher and Franz Overbeck: in a letter to Katharina Kippenberg from December 11th 1916, Rilke announced that he would 'Nietzsche und Overbeck […] gewiß mit Eifer lesen'.[100] This was probably not an empty promise, as a copy of the book in question is also located in

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[96] Kleinbard, p. 52.

[97] Von Salis, p. 114. The other mention of Nietzsche, as already quoted previously, is on p. 221. This is a good point to illustrate the previously neglected *merits* of Poststructural theory, which mainly consist in taking the 'authority' away from the 'author'. To von Salis, and partly even to Kleinbard, the two still clearly belonged together, as Rilke's *Selbstaussagen* are not questioned or challenged by them.

[98] See pp. 199f.; in: Cepl-Kaufmann and Neuhaus-Koch (2002).

[99] A warm thank you is due at this point to Hella Sieber-Rilke, who kindly unearthed the battered old books and fragments, which even she had all but forgotten about, upon my enquiry during a visit in Gernsbach in August 2001. Moreover, I would have found it quite impossible to decipher Rilke's, and particularly Salomé's, handwritten marginal notes without her keen eyes, endless patience and large magnifier.

[100] *Briefwechsel*, ed. Bettina von Bornhard,Wiesbaden: Insel, 1954, p. 191.

the Rilke archive.[101] Also, *Die II. Unzeitgemässe Betrachtung: Über den Nutzen und Nachtheil der Historie für das Leben* clearly inspired parts of Rilke's 1895 work *Böhmische Schlendertage*, as in it he counts himself 'zu den Menschen, die Nietzsche die historischen nennt' (SW V, 294). Ever since their appearance in the Salomé-estate and subsequent publication in the sixth volume of the *Sämtliche Werke*, critics have also been aware of the 'Marginalien zu Friedrich Nietzsche. "Die Geburt der Tragödie"' from 1900.

Both of those works are from Nietzsche's early period. At first glance, there seems to be evidence that Rilke also might have been familiar with the philosopher's penultimate work, the autobiographical *Ecce Homo*. A book entitled *La Poésie Allemande Contemporaine* was published in Paris in 1909 which contained poems by Liliencron, Dehmel, Mombert, George, Hofmannsthal, Dauthendey, Wedekind and Rilke in the translation of Charles Morice.[102] Moreover, it contained two extracts from *Ecce Homo*, translated by Henry Albert. As Rilke more than likely had an interest both in publications and translations of his own work, it is plausible that he at least knew of, and possibly read or owned, that book. Unfortunately, however, it cannot be established exactly which portions of *Ecce Homo* were included by Morice. As his collection is not held in any of the archives and libraries I have consulted, and as Rilke's knowledge of it can ultimately not be proven, this particular lead, and a thorough consideration of *Ecce Homo* with it, can be neglected with regard to this study.[103]

In a similar vein, a letter to Axel Juncker from Rome in which Rilke mentions Nietzsche at first sounds rather promising, as well. On 10 May 1904 the poet wrote from his residence in the Villa Strohl-Fern:

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[101] *Friedrich Nietzsches Briefwechsel mit Franz Overbeck*, eds. Richard Oehler and Carl Albrecht Bernoulli (Leipzig: Insel, 1916).

[102] See: Henry F. Fullenwider, 'Charles Morice and *La Poésie allemande contemporaine*', in: *Arcadia. Zeitschrift für vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft,* 12/1977, pp. 166-168. The Rilke poems picked by Morice were 'Du mußt das Leben nicht verstehen'; 'Morgue'; 'In diesem Dorf steht das letzte Haus' and 'Bei Tag bist du das Hörensagen'.

[103] One ought to point out here that Görner (in: Storck 1986, p. 161), without further comment, speaks of 'dem *Ecce Homo*-Verweis' in Rilke's 'Psychodrama' *Murillo* from 1894. On closer inspection of that imaginary monologue by the pious seventeenth-century Spanish painter Murillo (who, when found dying by a peasant, draws an 'Ecce Homo' on the wall in order to prove his identity), however, this suggestion seems unlikely: 'die christlich-kirchliche Frömmigkeit' of its speaker, later questioned by Rilke himself (see Stahl 1979, p. 51), can surely not be associated with Nietzsche. If anything, *Murillo* is an example of Rilke's inadequte understanding of Nietzsche at this stage, as it could at best be argued that the young poet, in line with the fashion of the day (I am referring to the countless contemporary images portraying the insane philosopher wearing a crown of thorns) stylizes his Murillo Nietzsche-like in the fashion of the suffering Christ. Indeed, the drama's closing lines, 'Ihr hebt die Hände zum Gebet...../ Ihr habt mein Werk begriffen. –/ Ich kann sterben' in particular (SW III, p. 100) could be read like a – somewhat pathetic – response to *Ecce Homo*'s urgent question 'Hat man mich verstanden?', repeated three times (KSA 6, pp. 371, 373 and 374). However, as this second *Ecce Homo*-lead is by no means verifiable, it need not concern us further here, either.

> Der englische Dichter Fred G. Bowles bereitet eine sehr sorgfältig gewählte Anthologie von übersetzten deutschen Gedichten vor, die Verse von: Nietzsche, Liliencron, Dehmel, Holz, Mombert, Dauthendey, George, Hofmannsthal, Rilke – enthalten wird.'[104]

This passage strongly suggests that Rilke valued Nietzsche, as the latter is included in what the poet calls a 'sehr sorgfältig gewählte Anthologie'. Unfortunately for Rilke, this innocent statement rather jeopardizes what can – certainly from 1903 onwards – almost be termed a carefully manufactured myth; namely, the myth of his unfamiliarity with Nietzsche's writings. Furthermore, the sequence of more or less illustrious names, which is framed or crowned by Nietzsche's and Rilke's own, also implies that Rilke saw the philosopher as a fellow poet – and as one who was on the same level of poetic achievement as himself and all those others. Moreover, and most importantly, that letter suggests the existence of a book published early on in Rilke's career which included verse by him and Nietzsche at the same time and which therefore potentially pinpoints more of his reading of the philosopher's work. Unfortunately, however, the anthology in question proved to be a dead end, as 'Rilkesche Gedichte in der Übertragung von Frederick G. Bowles sind nicht nachweisbar'.[105] There was such a book by Bowles, but as it did not include any poems by either Rilke or Nietzsche, and as the promised follow-up *More New Songs* never appeared, it cannot be claimed that Rilke might have read some of Nietzsche's poems in translation.[106]

However, another piece of evidence has surfaced recently which virtually proves that Rilke read yet another work from Nietzsche's middle period, apart from *Zarathustra*. A copy of *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*, in a second edition from 1887, is held in the Rilke archive, with the poetry collection 'Die Lieder des Prinzen Vogelfrei' as an appendix. Additionally, Rilke actually 'admits' in writing to having read two of its aphorisms, namely 'Fähigkeit zur Rache' and 'Die Herrinnen der Herren', on 7 November 1902, jotting down in his Westerwede/Paris diary: '"Fröhliche Wissenschaft", (pag. 69-

[104] Rainer Maria Rilke, *Briefe an Axel Juncker*, ed. Renate Scharffenberg (Frankfurt/M.: Insel, 1979), p. 139.
[105] Scharffenberg, p. 269.
[106] *New Songs. An Anthology of Contemporary Verse, Being for the Most Part, the Unpublished Works of New Writers* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1907). Held in the British Library. Adrian Shindler from the BL's Humanities Reference Service kindly provided the information regarding the omission of both Rilke and Nietzsche from that book. Scharffenberg also credits 'the British Library Humanities Reading Room' as her source of the information regarding the non-existence of the second volume (p. 269).

70)'[107]. The notes of the 2000 edition of that diary, which is also the very first one, help to verify that by this Rilke meant aphorisms 69 and 70 (72). The connection of the two works, and indeed their hierarchy, is best defined by the author himself. On 7 April 1884, Nietzsche wrote to Overbeck: 'Beim Durchlesen von "Morgenröthe" und "fröhlicher Wissenschaft" fand ich übrigens, daß darin fast keine Zeile steht, die nicht als Einleitung, Vorbereitung und Commentar zu genanntem Zarathustra dienen kann. Es ist eine *Thatsache*, daß ich den Commentar *vor* dem Text gemacht habe' (KGB III.1, 496).

[107] *Tagebuch. Westerwede, Paris. 1902. Taschenbuch Nr.1, Transkription* (Frankfurt/M.: Insel, 2000), p. 32.

1.4.2 Documentation of the reading traces in both *Zarathustra* copies found in Rilke's estate

The Rilke archive in Gernsbach houses two *Zarathustra* copies once owned by the poet, and both contain reading traces. One of them consists of parts one and two only (in the following referred to as Z1.1 and Z1.2, respectively), published separately around 1883 in Chemnitz by Emil Schmeitzner.[108] The fragment of part one begins with page 35, in the middle of the chapter 'Von den Lehrstühlen der Tugend' (KSA 4, 33), with the line: 'Eine kleine Gesellschaft ist mir willkommener als eine böse'. This means that the first two chapters, 'Zarathustra's Vorrede' and 'Von den drei Verwandlungen', are missing, as are cover and half-title. Even less has survived of part two – merely half, to be precise. The fragment begins with page 51 (KSA 4, 146), with the 12th of this part's 22 chapters, 'Von der Selbstüberwindung'.[109] Hella Sieber-Rilke at first tentatively interpreted the style of the handwritten notes we found in it as Rilke's, writing at some point between 1898 and, roughly, 1900; but she was already unsure regarding the untidy underlinings and Rilke-atypical numbers. Meanwhile, upon re-reading Lou Andreas-Salomés *Friedrich Nietzsche in seinen Werken*, I noticed the congruence of most of the passages marked in Z.1 with quotations from *Zarathustra* used by Salomé in her book on the philosopher. Therefore, although Rilke adapted his handwriting to Salomé's soon after meeting her – which renders an unambiguous classification problematic – the assumption suggests itself that in Z.1 we are probably looking at her working copy used while writing her monograph on Nietzsche. While, as mentioned above, Rilke also owned *Nietzsche in Seinen Werken*, all that remains of it in the Rilke archive today is the cover. However, even if we cannot verify conclusively who the reading traces stem from, the marked passages are, at the very least, likely to have particularly struck Rilke either way. After all, the Z.1 fragments were found in his estate, very probably lent or even given to him by Salomé herself, and it seems extremely unlikely that the two of them should not have discussed *Zarathustra*. Therefore, the Z.1 findings – inclusive of any congruences with *Nietzsche in seinen Werken* – will be documented in the appendix below and, wherever relevant to the Z.2 evidence, referred to at appropriate points in this study.

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[108] Although the year of publication cannot be established definitively due to the fragmentariness of those two copies, this estimation is by far the most probable in the light of additional evidence found both in KSA 14 (see p. 281) and in Andreas-Salomé (2000, p. 186).

[109] With such a degree of incompleteness the question of possible self-censoring arises. The blurring of reading traces might be an issue here, even that of a possible dedication to Rilke by Salomé.

The second copy of Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* we found amongst Rilke's possessions is preserved completely and was published in 1899 by Naumann in Leipzig 'im 14. und 15. Tausend', comprising all four books. Likely to be part of the '20-bändigen Großoktav-Ausgabe von Nietzsches Werken' handled by that publishing house (see KSA 14, 21), it is the main subject of this study, particularly in part three, and will be referred to as Z.2 in the following. It contains the following dedication: 'Clara Westhoff' [Latin]/ 'Ich sende es meinem/ lieben Bräutigam/ nach Arco/ am 5. März 1901./ Westerwede' [German]. The following chapters were pencil-marked in the table of contents: 'Von Kind und Ehe' (from *Zarathustra*, Book I); 'Vor Sonnenaufgang' and 'Vom Vorübergehen' (Book III); and 'Das trunkne Lied', now better known as 'Das Nachtwandler-Lied' (Book IV), but indeed still called thus in the 'Großoktav-Ausgabe' mentioned above (see KSA 14, 343). Moreover, surprisingly many, very neatly executed pencil underlinings mark the text body.[110] Thus, we can work from the assumption that the typically tidy reading traces in Z.2 indeed stem from Rilke, rather than his wife.

[110] According to Hella Sieber-Rilke's experienced and thoughtful judgement, in this case we are without doubt looking at 'die typische Rilke-Art anzustreichen.' Also, as Rilke himself said of Westhoff, she was terribly untidy and 'macht alles aus dem Stegreif' (I am quoting from a conversation with Sieber-Rilke).

1.5 Resulting *desiderata* for research

'Die Frage nach der Einwirkung Nietzsches auf Rilke auf Grund einer geistigen Auseinandersetzung Rilkes mit ihm […] müßte, sollte sie erschöpfend behandelt werden, zum Thema einer eigenen umfassenden Untersuchung gemacht werden', Margot Fleischer stated in 1958. She adds apologetically: 'Es liegt auf der Hand, daß wir uns auf solche Untersuchungen hier nicht mehr einlassen können' (297). In 1967, Peter Pütz wrote: 'Eine genauere Untersuchung über Wortwahl, Satzbau, Rhythmus usw. bei Nietzsche und Rilke wäre wünschenswert. Ein Ausruf Zarathustras wie: "Oh Himmel über mir, du Reiner! Tiefer! [p. 212]" dürfte auch nach dem "Florenzer Tagebuch" noch ein Echo in Rilkes Gedichten haben',[111] while Ulrich Fülleborn's verdict from 1986 is: 'Das Buch über Rilke und Nietzsche ist noch zu schreiben.'[112] Although those quotations are not strictly recent, they still hold some truth. After all, as quoted above, Theodore Fiedler made a similar statement as recently as 1999, as did Alberto Destro in 2002:

> so entsteht für die Forschung die weitere Aufgabe, das Phänomen der so fest fortdauernden Beziehung [Rilkes] zu Nietzsche über Jahrzehnte hinweg zu klären, in denen ein auffälliges Stillschweigen über ihn bewahrt wurde. Das könnte auch einiges Licht auf den inneren Prozeß werfen, durch den Rilke nach enorm langer Zeit schließlich doch zum Abschluß des Duineser Zyklus gekommen ist (213).[113]

As we have seen, criticism has not since produced such a thorough study on the subject. *Zarathustra* in particular and, if to a slightly lesser extent, *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft* have often been rather carelessly assumed by critics to have 'influenced' Rilke, and the 'Engel' and the 'Übermensch' have frequently been found to be closely related, without any empirical evidence being provided. Now, however, one can engage in an informed re-reading of those previous interpretations with particular focus on the passages in both books one now has strong reasons to believe to have been read by Rilke.

Rilke's library has largely been lost due to his nomadic existence. However, 'da sowohl auf dem Autographenmarkt als auch in privaten Nachlässen immer wieder

[111] Peter Pütz, *Friedrich Nietzsche* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1967), pp. 76-77.
[112] 'R. M. Rilke: Zukunftsentwurf aus österreichischer Herkunft', in: Joachim Storck (ed.), 1986, pp. 9-16; here: p. 10.
[113] See also again Fülleborn, who, referring to the ninth *Elegie*, makes the same implication in asking: 'Darf uns die Aussage "von weit her" nicht auch auf die frühe Begegnung mit Nietzsche zurückverweisen, die jetzt, in der Vollendung der *Duineser Elegien*, ihre reichste Frucht trägt?' (1986, p. 12).

Dokumente von oder an Rilke oder gar von Personen, die einen Bezug zu Rilke hatten, auftauchen',[114] the material held in Bern, Gernsbach and Marbach has constantly been re-evaluated. Those are the three accessible places which are still home to substantial numbers of the poet's books, and which broaden their collections incessantly. Unfortunately, I was declined a visit to Muzot, the castle Rilke made his virtually only permanent residence in 1921. However, Balthasar Reinhart, who inherited the property in 1951, has assured me in writing that anything that could be relevant in the context of the Rilke/Nietzsche nexus has been given to the *Schweizerische Landesbibliothek* in Bern. Similarly, the Mises-collection in Harvard's Houghton library and the Mayer-collection at Louisiana State University do not contain anything of interest for my purposes, and hence need not be considered, either.[115]

The fact that two recent efforts to give a comprehensive overview of Rilke's reading (of Nietzsche) are far from complete has further reassured me of the renewed necessity of such an undertaking. With regard to the poet's reading of Nietzsche, Horst Janssen's 'Rilkes Bibliothek' from 1989 disappointingly only lists Nietzsche's *Briefwechsel mit Franz Overbeck* (Leipzig 1916) and *Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik* (Leipzig 1872), although he had access to the Gernsbach archive and visited Bern, too. Similarly, Tina Simon's *Rilke als Leser*, first published as recently as 2000, does not give any new evidence, but rather reiterates well-documented material. With regard to Nietzsche, Simon on the whole stays on the surface and sometimes even resorts to commonplaces such as: 'Die Schriften […] von Friedrich Nietzsche können […] bei Rilke als bekannt und als schulbedingte philosophische Grundlage aufgefaßt werden' (225), and 'Sehr wahrscheinlich entstammt der frühe Impuls zu Nietzsche der allgemeinen Tendenz und weniger dem eigenen Bedürfnis' (229). As such statements represent a deplorable tendency within Rilke criticism, as far as the poet's relationship to Nietzsche is concerned, toward either excuses or excessive generalisation, the need for an encompassing and thorough study on the subject remains obvious.

The constant re-evaluation of all material should result in new interpretative angles on selected key works by both writers which are at present falsely thought of as sufficiently explored. In following the marked Nietzsche passages with interpretations of Rilke's works pertinent to them, such textual analysis has automatically led to a thematic structure which makes visible Rilke's relation to, and transformation of,

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[114] This information stems from Dr. Franziska Kolp from the *Schweizerisches Literaturarchiv* in Bern.
[115] See: Thomas D. Kilton and Sara de Mundo Lo, *The Catalog of the Gerhard Mayer Collection of Rainer Maria Rilke* (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1988); and Paul Obermüller and Herbert Steiner, *Katalog der Rilke Sammlung Richard von Mises* (Frankfurt/M.: Insel, 1966).

Nietzsche during the course of his development as a poet. Whether due to a direct influence or not, the most important point remains that Rilke's thought is often reminiscent of Nietzsche's sentiments (I 'confuse' their disciplines in order to emphasize again, with Erich Heller, that to them 'Dichten ist Denken').

Lastly, an excerpt from one of the *Zarathustra*-chapters selected by Rilke, 'Auf dem Oelberge', is testament to that unity, as it could equally easily be attributed to the poet of the famous line 'Überzähliges Dasein entspringt mir im Herzen' (*Die Neunte Elegie*, SW I 720). A small but perfect meditation on the principle of the eternal return of the same, this passage simultaneously tells of the anti-philosopher's indifference to the question of influence and as such serves as the guiding spirit of this study:

> — der Winter-Himmel, der schweigsame, der oft noch seine Sonne verschweigt! Lernte ich wohl von ihm das lange lichte Schweigen? Oder lernte er's von mir? Oder hat ein Jeder von uns es selbst erfunden? Aller guten Dinge Ursprung ist tausendfältig, — alle guten muthwilligen Dinge springen vor Lust in's Dasein: wie sollten sie das immer nur — Ein Mal thun! (KSA 4, 219)

2 Reading Rilke Reading Nietzsche

2.1 Matters of correspondence: miscellaneous evidence

In *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches*, Nietzsche writes with regard to the question of influence:

> *Gefahr persönlichen Einflusses*. – Wer fühlt, daß er auf einen Anderen einen grossen innerlichen Einfluss ausübt, muss ihm ganz freie Zügel lassen, ja gelegentliches Widerstreben gern sehen und selbst herbeiführen: sonst wird er unvermeidlich sich einen Feind machen (KSA 2, 335).

As has been done all too often, one could call Nietzsche a prophet, particularly, however, in the light of this aphorism. He certainly knew how to induce such sporadic resistance himself, and even lets his alter ego, Zarathustra, openly discourage readers from following him or believing in him. Yet, the philosopher's priority was indeed a problem to virtually every intellectual of the next generation writing in German, as the critic Ingo Seidler, amongst many others, has observed. He names Rilke as one of those many famous writers who shared with Musil 'das Los, der Generation nach Nietzsche anzugehören, [im] Sinn […] einer schicksalhaften Nachfolge.'[116] In his essay 'Nietzsche – nach fünfzig Jahren', Gottfried Benn is rather more specific about the nature of that 'schicksalhafte Nachfolge':

> Eigentlich hat alles, was meine Generation diskutierte, innerlich sich auseinanderdachte, man kann sagen: erlitt, man kann auch sagen: breittrat – alles das hatte sich bereits bei Nietzsche ausgesprochen und erschöpft, definitive Formulierung gefunden, alles Weitere war Exegese.[117]

By using the term 'exegesis', which habitually tends to be reserved for the explication of scripture, Benn is linking Nietzsche's writings to the Bible here. Indeed, amongst the post-Nietzschean poets, Benn has often been considered the one who was receptive to the thought of the anti-philosopher more obviously and openly than most. Stefan George also readily admitted to that inescapably vast influence, as this matter-of-fact observation shows: 'In Nietzsche steht doch ziemlich alles'.[118] Harry Graf Kessler, a

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[116] Ingo Seidler, 'Das Nietzschebild Robert Musils', in: Gotthard Wunberg (ed.), *Nietzsche und die deutsche Literatur. Forschungsergebnisse*, vol. 2 (Tübingen: Max Niemeier, 1978), p. 160. The other 'schicksalhafte Nachfolger' of Nietzsche, according to Seidler, are: Heidegger, Jaspers, Spengler, Klages, Adler, Freud, George, the brothers Jünger and the brothers Mann.
[117] Gottfried Benn, 'Nietzsche – nach fünfzig Jahren', in: *Gesammelte Werke I* (Wiesbaden 1959), p. 482.
[118] In a letter to Friedrich Gundolf from 11 June 1910, in: Mix, p. 192.

critic and publisher who frequently supported Rilke, remembers Nietzsche's extensive influence on himself and all of his contemporaries, too. He describes it as an intangible, messianic mysticism reaching far beyond that of any other contemporary thinker or poet and even goes so far as to equal it with being possessed by the philosopher, 'in Besitz genommen'.[119]

Matters were different with Rilke. Bruno Hillebrand calls the latter's relationship to Nietzsche, particularly in comparison to that of his fellow poets George or Hofmannsthal, 'unbestimmbar' and 'schwer greifbar': 'Kaum etwas Konkretes ist auszumachen.'[120] This echoes a common complaint within Rilke-criticism, as shown in this study's analysis of the state of research. 'Wer nach den Einflüssen fragt', Margot Fleischer writes in 1958, 'die von anderen hervorragenden Männern und ihren Werken auf Rilke ausgegangen sein mögen, hat neben Rilkes Dichtung selbst die Briefe als zuverlässige Fundgrube zur Verfügung.'[121] She adds: 'Wer nach der Einwirkung Nietzsches auf Rilke fragt, dem fehlt diese Quelle.' This is true, unless one is prepared to let silences speak. I shall argue here that the absence of most traces of his reading of Nietzsche was probably intended by the poet. As his œuvre was to speak for itself, clearly testifying to his familiarity with the philosopher's thought, Rilke's almost stubborn silence with regard to Nietzsche is perhaps most obvious in his correspondence, on the nature and quality of which opinions are divided. In 1952, Heller classified the *gros* of the letters written by the poet as embarrassing and claimed: 'wie äußerst prekär Rilkes dichterische Weltdeutung ist, das enthüllen aufs peinlichste deren endlose Variationen in Prosa, die einen großen Teil seiner Korrespondenz ausmachen' (1992, 175); whereas Franz Werfel could still see them as 'Gedichte, die nur unter einem leichteren Druck stehen, sonst wären sie Kristall geworden' in 1929 (B I 9).

The truth probably lies somewhere in the middle, as those letters are of course strange hybrids of poetological statements, records of life and works of art. They are neither always unadulterated testimony to Rilke's experience, as in his will he

[119] See: Harry Graf Kessler, *Gesichter und Zeiten: Erinnerungen*, Berlin: S. Fischer, 1962, p. 229.
[120] Bruno Hillebrand, *Nietzsche. Wie ihn die Dichter sahen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2000), p. 78. This recent book gives a good overview of tendencies in the Nietzsche reception in German poetry the discussion of which would lead us too far afield in this study which wishes to focus on Rilke exclusively.
[121] *Nietzsche und Rilkes 'Duineser Elegien'*, Cologne: unpublished dissertation, 1958. Accessible at the DLA Marbach. Both quotations on p. 298.

'[envisages] their publication […] as works of art in themselves'[122], nor can they automatically be included in his literary work, as some surely do not transcend and transform the personal enough to be quite that.

Whilst by 1904, the tone in which Rilke wrote to Westhoff about Nietzsche on 9 July is already beginning to settle in the vicinity of superiority and distance,[123] at the beginning of his literary career, Rilke was less guarded and would at times still openly declare his awe of the anti-philosopher. In a letter to Alexander Benois from July 1901, Rilke, in decidedly Nietzschean language, explains his apparent avoidance of Nietzsche by what Simon calls a 'Zeitphänomen […], das Rilkes Distanz begründet' (229):

> Darum will ich nicht dazu beitragen, einen Philosophen zu verbreiten, denn das heißt jedes Mal: ihn in Gefahr stürzen, in die große Gefahr, Anhänger zu bekommen, d. h. Gewichte, die ihn, den Leichten, an der Zeit fesseln, der er nicht gehört…Könnten Sie mit eigenen Augen sehen, wie klein Nietzsche geworden ist in Deutschland, seit jeder Ladenjüngling Nietzscheaner ist! Oder doch sich einbildet, es zu sein. Aber eben diese Einbildung ist gefährlich für den großen, heiligen Namen.'[124]

The Benois-letter still truly represents Rilke in what Erich Heller fittingly called the 'Wie er sich räuspert und wie er spuckt'-phase of his early Nietzsche-admiration (1975, 76). The twenty-five-year-old poet, like the philosopher also keen to establish his would-be noble descent, clearly identified with Nietzsche's 'Unverstandensein' by the masses and seemed to adopt his 'Aristokratenmoral' unquestioningly. What must be emphasized again at this point is the new fact that it happened to be in July 1901 that Rilke was most probably in the very process of or had just finished (re-) reading Nietzsche's *Also Sprach Zarathustra*. The Benois-letter indeed reflects that reading, and Rilke's internalization of it; particularly, when we consider Nietzsche's scorn for 'die lesenden Müssiggänger' and their lack of understanding in the following passage from *Zarathustra*'s 'Vom Lesen und Schreiben':

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[122] Donald Prater, amongst others, quotes Rilke's will in *A Ringing Glass. The Life of Rainer Maria Rilke* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), p. 410. Rilke's own words, however, committed to paper on 27 October 1926, relativize such a view somewhat: 'Da ich, von gewissen Jahren ab, einen Teil der Ergiebigkeit meiner Natur gelegentlich in Briefe zu leiten pflegte, steht der Veröffentlichung meiner, in Händen der Adressaten etwa erhaltenen, Korrespondenzen (falls der Insel-Verlag dergleichen vorschlagen sollte) nichts im Wege' (B I, p. 6).

[123] 'Nietzsche, von dem sie bei uns alle einen Rausch bekommen haben, hat er [the Swedish poet Hans Larsson] als Medizin eingenommen und ist noch gesünder geworden davon' (B 02-06, p. 195).

[124] *Briefe aus dem Nachlaß* I, p. 90. This quality of untimely weightlesness had been attributed to the philosopher before, and the same image was used by Rilke again in 1924 in an attempt to defend poetry against criticism, as shown above.

> Von allem Geschriebenen liebe ich nur Das, was Einer mit seinem Blute schreibt. Schreibe mit Blut: und du wirst erfahren, dass Blut Geist ist. Es ist nicht leicht möglich, fremdes Blut zu verstehen: ich hasse die lesenden Müssiggänger. Wer den Leser kennt, der thut Nichts mehr für den Leser. Noch ein Jahrhundert Leser - und der Geist selber wird stinken (KSA 4, 48).

As for the 'Ladenjünglinge': as both Meyer and Görner have observed,[125] Rilke had already ironicized those 'Nietzscheaner' three years earlier in the figure of *Ewald Tragy*'s Herrn von Kranz, who proudly announces: 'wie ich Nietzsche überwand' (SW IV 550). The poet, according to Görner, had realized with some distaste that the biggest critic of ideologies was in the process of being made into an ideology himself. Indeed, in the Benois letter, Rilke continues by comparing the philosopher to Christ in their suffering from being misunderstood. In its proximity to this passage, the following description of God from the *Neue Gedicht* 'Gott im Mittelalter' serves to lend more weight to the impression of the poet, if briefly, having accepted the philosopher's self-apotheosis:

> Und sie hatten Ihn in sich erspart
> Und sie wollten, daß er sei und richte,
> und sie hängten schließlich wie Gewichte
> (zu verhindern seine Himmelfahrt)
> an ihn ihrer großen Kathedralen
> Last und Masse (SW I 502).

Thus, ironically, in his early and, literally, religious admiration for Nietzsche, and by referring to his name as 'holy', in parts of his own work, Rilke himself was potentially contributing to just that chaining down of the anti-philosopher's free spirit to idealistic or institutional contexts which the latter dreaded to once be associated with, let alone monopolized by. In the *Ecce Homo* chapter 'Warum ich ein Schicksal bin', Nietzsche writes: 'Ich habe eine erschreckliche Angst davor, daß man mich eines Tages *heilig* spricht [...] Ich will kein Heiliger sein, lieber noch ein Hanswurst' (KSA 6, 365). Furthermore, it could be argued that in the Benois-letter, apart from elevating Nietzsche to the status of Christ, Rilke also gives away his familiarity with large parts of the philosopher's œuvre for, after all, he confidently assesses its development: 'Ist nicht auch Christus durch die, die sich nach ihm nennen, täglich tausendmal gekränkt

[125] See Meyer, p. 201: 'Der Erzähler führt den pathetischen Rhetoriker Kranz ironisch *ad absurdum*'; and Görner, '*Wie ich Nietzsche überwand.* Zu einem Motiv der Nietzsche-Rezeption bei Rilke, Döblin und Hugo Ball', in: Rüdiger Görner und Duncan Large (Hg.), *Ecce Opus. Nietzsche-Revisionen im 20. Jahrhundert*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003, pp. 193-203; here: p. 197.

worden? […] ein *Widerleger seiner selbst*. War das nicht der echte, wachsende Nietzsche, der sich widersprach – und begann der Abstieg nicht mit dem Moment der Systematisierung seiner selbst?' (B I 90f.).

Another early letter mentioning Nietzsche must be discussed at this point, as it is often cited by critics in order to demonstrate Rilke's dislike or avoidance of Nietzsche – wrongly, as will be argued below.[126] Rilke wrote it on 27 July 1899 to Jelena Woronina, a Russian friend like Benois; and the passage which ought to be (and is) quoted selectively by those inclined to defend Rilke's priority reads:

> Lesen Sie wenig Deutsches, liebste Helene; lassen Sie Nietzsche sein, bitte. Jedesmal wenn es mir einfällt am Abend, daß Sie ihn lesen wollten, kann ich nicht einschlafen! [...] Solche meine ich, die sagen: so ist die Welt, so ist der Mensch, und so und so ist sein Weg, Ziel, Rock, Hut oder Gott! [...] das ist eine wahnsinnige Verarmung (B I 48f.).

As a reader of both Rilke and Nietzsche more subtle than most, Frowen, however, comments on this letter: 'Auffallend widersprechen sich hier Erlebnisnähe und Bilderwahl einerseits und die warnende Ablehnung andererseits' (1987, 21), evaluating its ambivalence as characteristic of the relationship of the young Rilke to Nietzsche. The 'Erlebnisnähe' indeed becomes evident when reading on:

> Bei Ihnen ist jeder ein Philosoph, ein Denker, ein Deuter, ein Dichter […] er verlangt nicht, daß einer oder zehn oder hundert auf seine Seite treten und seine Ansicht bestätigen oder teilen. Im Gegenteil, er fühlt sich nachgeäfft, gestört, verspottet durch eine Anhängerschaft. Er ist – Er und *verlangt* von jedem, das heißt: er *verlangt* nichts (dazu ist er zu stolz), sagen wir also, er nimmt von jedem an, daß er ebenso *Eines* und ein Einsames sei wie er selbst. Dieses aber ist der Mensch von in tausend Jahren und von – vielleicht *vor* tausend Jahren: kurz, der Mensch, nicht der seiende und nicht der vergangene, nicht der aus naher Zukunft, der dauernde, ewige, *immer mögliche* wunderbare Mensch: fühlen Sie Rußland? (49).

In fact, it is remarkable that most of Rilke's very few direct mentions of Nietzsche happen to have been made in his correspondence with Russians. Therefore, it is not surprising that, despite its superficially explicit warning of Nietzsche, Rilke's letter to Woronina in fact simultaneously would seem to contain his individual interpretation of

[126] The most recent example is Perlwitz, who uses this letter to strengthen his claim that it would not be appropriate to read 'die *Elegien* mit ihrer Verwandlungslehre und ihrem Ruf nach Überwindung der Spaltung des Seins als lyrische Umsetzung von Zarathustras Liebeserklärung an das Welt-Ganze'. Of course, he has a point, as surely the *Elegien* are not merely that; however, they are not entirely free from Zarathustra's dark presence, either, as will be shown below, and the Woronina letter cannot be used as 'Warnung [...] für Leser seines [Rilke's, KB] Spätwerks' of such an assumption (as practised by Perlwitz; see: *Rilke-Handbuch*, p. 162), either – provided, it is quoted more fully.

a cross between a Super-Nietzsche, as it were, and a Zarathustrian *Übermensch* as a Russian. Thus, this letter actually speaks in favour of Nietzsche's influence on Rilke, rather than against it, not least in Rilke's obvious, passionate attempts to fulfill Nietzsche's wish for 'lebendige Gefährten […], die mir folgen, weil sie sich selber folgen wollen' (KSA 4, 25). Here, the poet proves himself faithful to Zarathustra's demands to his 'Jünger', 'Nun heisse ich euch, mich verlieren und euch finden; und erst, wenn ihr mich Alle verleugnet habt, will ich euch wiederkehren' (101); and 'Der Glaube macht mich nicht selig, sagte er, zumal nicht der Glaube an mich' (164).

Rilke's extreme pathos of originality and individuality was not uncommon around the *fin de siècle* and may therefore at least partly explain his alleged Nietzsche-abstinence – with the emphasis on 'alleged'. Moreover, the later nationalist-heroic Nietzsche reception with its Machiavellian emphasis on the will to power was without doubt genuinely unacceptable to Rilke. Save perhaps during his brief rush of war enthusiasm documented in 1914 by the 'Fünf Gesänge',[127] he likely would have found it problematic to be associated with that side of the philosopher, whilst the early anti-bourgeois reception by the *Bohème* certainly must have held a great potential for identification to the young poet. In any event, one should note that Rilke probably consciously attempted to adhere to, or at least was *d'accord* with, Nietzsche's advice in 'Vom Nutzen und Nachtheil der Historie für das Leben' (which he read) that there is a certain point from which the past must be forgotten, lest it bury the present: 'Zu allem Handeln gehört Vergessen' (KSA 1, 250). As the success of his œuvre demonstrates, Rilke must have been rooted in his inner nature strongly enough to possess 'die plastische Kraft [...], Vergangenes und Fremdes umzubilden und einzuverleiben' (251), and thus rightly counted himself, despite his numerous creative crises, 'zu den Menschen, die Nietzsche die historischen nennt' (SW V, 294).[128]

[127] Notwithstanding the fact that those poems of course mostly represent badly disgested Hölderlin, in my view, in its didactic imperatives, pompous alliterations, abundantly employed exclamation marks and multifarious Nietzschean motifs, Rilke's 'war child' also bears some rather unfortunate traces of Zarathustra's face (as represented by his 'Vorreden' marked by Rilke – a claim which I have elaborated upon in a separate essay).

[128] They are further described by Nietzsche as violently desiring the future, as 'sie wissen gar nicht, wie unhistorisch sie trotz aller ihrer Historie denken und handeln, [...] nicht im Dienste der reinen Erkenntniss, sondern des Lebens' (KSA 1, p. 255). See also the letter from Rilke to Salomé from 26 June 1914 in which the poet again explicitly attributes the capacity for such 'Einverleibung' to himself. However, by that stage he assesses it as negative, as he feels he is 'vor jedem Blatt Papier und über jeglichem Buch gehemmt wie eine festgepflöckte Ziege, und indem ich die Gebundenheit merkte, mich so ungeschickt anwickelnd, daß mir meist nicht einmal die ganze Stricklänge zur Verfügung stand. In solchem Umkreis, an hundertmal stehen gelassenen Büchern ohne Lust herumknabbernd, bald rechts bald links, die einzelnen Kräuter kaum wieder erkennend; denn auch *das* hab ich mit der Ziege gemein, daß mir, von dem, was ich früher gefressen habe, rein nichts Nachweisbares bleibt an das anzuknüpfen wäre:

Notwithstanding the distinct possibility of a hermeneutics of trust as suggested by those facts – particularly as far as the mature poet is concerned – a theory of denial is beginning to suggest itself by now, which seems increasingly plausible when further bearing in mind other discontinuities in Rilkean statements. Firstly, in 1924 he wrote in response to a questionnaire created by Hermann Pongs that he had 'niemals Philosophen gelesen, außer etwa […] ein paar Seiten Schopenhauer', crediting this to an 'Abneigung gegen derlei Systematisierungen'.[129] We now know that this was a tactical revision of the facts, to say the least.[130] Not only are the names of Bergson, Böhme, Kant, Montaigne and, of course, Schopenhauer to be found throughout his correspondences (Fleischer, 298), but the Rilke-archive in Gernsbach alone holds seven books by Kierkegaard once owned by the poet.[131] According to Hella Sieber-Rilke, Kierkegaard took over from Nietzsche as Rilke's most thoroughly read and revered philosopher at some point in 1901; whereas Theodore Fiedler maintains that 'Rilkes erste nähere Beschäftigung mit Kierkegaard setzt [...] Anfang 1904 mit *Tagebuch eines Verführers* ein' (*Rilke-Handbuch*, 121). More importantly, Rilke had verifiably read at least five works by Nietzsche. However, if a high degree of 'Systematisierung' were the main criterion, it would indeed be legitimate not to count the works of Nietzsche – who was, after all, probably the most unsystematic of all philosophers – strictly as philosophy. That might have been the very justification Rilke chose to apply to his answer in this case. Both men shared a distaste for dead, stagnated convictions – be it those of science, Christianity or philosophical systems – which they expressed in very similar comparisons and metaphors: 'Was man am Christenthume lernen kann […], das kann man an allem, was Leben hat, studiren: dass es aufhört zu leben, wenn es zu Ende

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es wird eben zur Ziege, und das ist, wenn die Ziege erst einmal angefangen hat, sich selber eckig zu sein, keine Erleichterung für sie' (BW LAS, p. 338).

[129] In: *Dichtung und Volkstum. Sonderheft zu Rainer Maria Rilke*, published as *Euphorion* 37, 1936, p. 106.

[130] At this point, the striking similarity to Freud's way of guarding his priority ought to be pointed out, manifested in the psychoanalyst's case in what could be called an 'anti-Nietzsche-pro-science-caesura'. In March 1876, when the young Viennese joined Professor Brücke's physiological research laboratory, it was his highest aim to be recognised as an established natural scientist. Almost having majored in philosophy only the year before, he now regarded metaphysics with much suspicion, finding it 'unsympathisch wegen ihrer abstrakten Natur' (Gasser, p. 28, from *Protokolle der Wiener Psychoanalytischen Vereinigung*, Volume 1, p. 338). Freud now believed in the omnipotence and omnipresence of science. He even believed that all there is to the soul is a result of physio-chemical processes. From now on, he claimed to be avoiding all philosophy, especially anything by Nietzsche, officially in order to remain uninfluenced in his empirical research. Nevertheless, he acquired an edition of Nietzsche's collected works, as he mentions this in a letter to his friend Wilhelm Fliess from February 1900 (Gasser, p. 93). However, we cannot be sure how much of it he actually read, if any; for in that same letter he states that he is as yet too "träge" to let himself in on the writings. On this, Ticho tellingly comments: "Freud lazy? I would rather assume that he was conflicted" (Lehrer, p. 4).

[131] See Janssen, p. 307; and Kohlschmidt (1953), who was shown Rilke's Kierkegaard copies by Clara Rilke-Westhoff and documents some of the reading traces he found in them.

secirt ist', the young Nietzsche writes in *Die Zweite Unzeitgemässe Betrachtung* (KSA 1, 297); and in *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches*:

> Man ist Besitzer seiner Meinungen, wie man Besitzer von Fischen ist, – insofern man nämlich Besitzer eines Fischteiches ist. Man muss fischen gehen und Glück haben – dann hat man *seine* Fische, *seine* Meinungen. Ich rede hier von lebendigen Meinungen, von lebendigen Fischen. Andere sind zufrieden, wenn sie ein Fossilien-Cabinet besitzen – und, in ihrem Kopfe, 'Ueberzeugungen' (2, 693).

In 1902, still in the midst of his Nietzsche-enthusiasm, Rilke chimes in, writing about Fritz Overbeck but, as in most such cases of admiring descriptions of fellow artists, surely also a little bit about himself: 'Aber auch nur solange sie lebten, waren [die Eidechsen, Käfer, Frösche und Schlangen] interessant, aufgespießt oder in Spiritus gesteckt, verloren sie alle Wirklichkeit und wurden mit einem Male abstoßend oder langweilig.' The convinced poet adds laconically: 'Mit solchen Aussichten Naturforscher zu werden, war natürlich ausgeschlossen' (SW V, 96f.).

Furthermore, 'immerhin studiert der junge Rilke in Prag – wenn auch ohne Abschluß – Philosophie […] und hört bei Georg Simmel Vorlesungen zu Problemen der Geschichtsphilosophie' (Simon, 225). The latter part of this statement is again problematic, as is Stefan Offenhäuser's somewhat short claim that 'mit Georg Simmels soziologischer und philosophischer Konzeption dürfte er [Rilke] durch regelmäßigen Kontakt mit dem Hause Simmel in Berlin bekannt geworden sein.'[132] As both, and particularly Simon, largely fail to weigh up the evidence, let us do that now. It is true that in the spring of 1899 Rilke 'hört Vorlesungen' by Simmel, when he was briefly immatriculated as a student of the history of art at Berlin University.[133] Yet, in the summer of 1905, Rilke

> unternimmt […] einen letzten halbherzigen Versuch, sich in Deutschland niederzulassen, zunächst als Hörer bei Georg Simmel in Berlin. Nach dreiwöchigem […] Aufenthalt empfindet er die Stadt als unerträglich und setzt sich noch vor Semesterbeginn aufs Land ab.[134]

Hence, in 1905, he did not actually attend any lectures by Simmel, at least not formally, although he had planned to.[135] On 31 May of that year the poet wrote to Salomé: 'wenn ich jetzt etwas von Simmel lese, so ruft mich nichts zu ihm hin' (BW, 211). It is

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[132] Stefan Offenhäuser, *Reflexion und Freiheit. Zum Verhältnis von Philosophie und Poesie in Rilkes und Hölderlins Spätwerk* (Frankfurt/M.: Peter Lang, 1996), p. 41.
[133] Schnack states this, albeit without further specification.
[134] Leppmann, pp. 251f.
[135] See Rilke's letter to Ellen Key from 15 February 1905, in: Schnack, p. 204.

however a little considered fact that Rilke owned at least one work by the Berlin philosopher, *Rembrandt. Ein kunstphilosophischer Versuch*[136], and likely that he read another: Simmel's *Michelangelo*-essay, 'den er [Simmel] selbst für seine beste Arbeit hält'.[137] Yet, the Pongs-questionnaire again shows up the poet's tendency to deny categorically any philosophical input whatsoever.[138] Pongs asked Rilke: 'Wann zuerst oder überhaupt mit Simmels Werken bekannt geworden und mit welchen?', to which the latter replied: 'Georg Simmel berührte mich nur im persönlichen Umgang (1908 bis [1909 oder 1910]) damals wohnte ich in Schmargendorf bei Berlin (sic).'[139] After again having considered the available evidence, we now know that this is not true, either.[140]

Another silence also seems particularly odd, given Rilke's often acknowledged love of correspondences and readiness to comment on them. His publisher's wife, Katharina Kippenberg, was a Nietzsche-enthusiast and virtually bombarded Rilke in her letters with her often insightful interpretations of the philosopher's thought. Her repeated pleas to give her his opinion of the correspondence between Nietzsche and Overbeck, which he had ordered from her publishing house in 1916 and actually read[141], and later of Salomé's 'Nietzsche-Buch', both fell on deaf ears. As far as we can glean from Kippenberg's memoirs and her published correspondence with the poet, he never commented on either book. This is remarkable since, according to Kippenberg, 'mit

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[136] This book, in the Leipzig edition from 1917, is in the Rilke archive in Gernsbach. See also: Janssen (1989), p. 315; and, in the Rilke / Salomé correspondence (1952), the letter from Rilke to Salomé from 5 September 1897, p. 27: 'las Rembrandt und Velasquez theilweise durch'.

[137] From a letter by Rilke to Marianne Mitford from 15 January 1915, in: Schnack, p. 491.

[138] Therefore, at least the earlier of Simmel's two essays on Nietzsche may, despite protestations to the contrary, have been familiar to Rilke, namely, 'Friedrich Nietzsche. Eine moralphilosophische Silhouette' from 1896. In his attempt at an 'Einordnung Nietzsches in die geschichtliche Moralphilosophie' (p. 115), Simmel attributes to the anti-philosopher, insane but still alive at that time, 'Reize', 'Fülle' and 'Freiheit' in his poetic form whilst describing his 'Dualismus' in a manner much akin to Rilke's who was, later on, to express a very similar tornness, or 'Unrealität', with regard to the contrast of his self and his ideals: 'Von den Künstlern hebt er den typischen Irrtum hervor: als ob sie selbst das *wären*, was sie darstellen, ausdenken, ausdrücken, und führt weiter aus, zu welcher Verzweiflung einen diese ewige Unrealität und Falschheit des innersten Daseins treiben kann' (p. 127). In: *Gesamtausgabe 5*, eds. Heinz-Jürgen Dahme and David P. Frisby, Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp, 1992, pp. 115-129. The other essay is 'Zum Verständnis Nietzsches' (1902), in: *Gesamtausgabe 7*, eds. Rüdiger Kramme, Angela Rammstedt and Otthein Rammstedt, Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp, 1995, pp. 57-63.

[139] *Euphorion* (1936), p. 107.

[140] Even the dates are wrong. During that time (1908-1910), Rilke mostly lived in Paris, whereas his Schmargendorf days, as documented in the *Schmargendorfer Tagebuch* kept for Salomé, ended in May 1900 (see: Schack I, p. 91). As his correspondence with Simmel shows, he was, however, invited 'zum Thee' at Simmels', and attended, a few times both in January 1898 and February 1899, respectively. See: Kurt Gassen and Michael Landmann, eds., *Buch des Dankes an Georg Simmel. Briefe, Erinnerungen, Bibliographie*, Berlin: Duncker & Humblot.

[141] See: Janssen (1989), p. 311; and Rainer Maria Rilke / Katharina Kippenberg, *Briefwechsel*, Wiesbaden: Insel 1954, p. 205.

Nietzsche hat er […] bedeutende Berührungspunkte'.[142] Amongst those, she names as the most important one 'die Bejahung des Diesseits', as well as the rejection of Christianity in favour of a self-determined creativity from within, the 'gesetzgebende Innern' (90). Although to her Rilke thus clearly 'geht […] eine bedeutende Strecke mit Nietzsche zusammen' (90), she also addresses the differences between the two men, mainly emphasizing Nietzsche's loneliness as being more bitter and much more absolute than Rilke's 'schön gestaltete, wenn auch oft harte, [die] wie ein verstellbarer Spiegel so viele Eindrücke und Werte von draußen auf[fing], wie sein Werk brauchte' (320).[143] She then appears to be defending Rilke's priority at the same time with sentences like the following, perhaps thus helping to build the myth of uninfluenced genius surrounding the poet: 'In weiteren Vergleichen aber will es schon dem morphologischen Sinn seltsam widerstreben, bei so verschiedenen Temperamenten, Naturellen und Anlagen tiefere geistige Ähnlichkeiten zwischen ihren Trägern anzunehmen' (320). Thus, Kippenberg can be counted among those 'viele Frauen' who according to herself have first believed in a poet. After all, 'auch Rainer Maria Rilke's Ruhm ha[t] sie zuerst verbreiten helfen' (45).

I would agree with Heller that the later works of Rilke are 'Nietzsche viel inniger verwandt […] als all der Übermensch-Schall-und-Rauch der früheren Schriften' (1975, 77). Yet, as is well documented by Frowen, Leppmann, Szabó and others, the early works *Christus / Elf Visionen*, *Ewald Tragy* and *Der Apostel* are all, despite repeated efforts to maintain a survivable distance from Nietzsche, obvious testament to Rilke's infatuation with the anti-philosopher. What, then, other than this wish to distinguish himself aristocratically from the fashion-conscious masses apparently unable to 'understand foreign blood', was Rilke's intention in blotting out all traces of that influence?

Nietzsche himself suggests an answer. In an apparently autobiographical aphorism – *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft* 100, 'Huldigen lernen' – he writes of an often-observed lack of gratitude towards '[jeden], der auf neuen Bahnen geht und Viele auf neue Bahnen geführt hat', and maintains that human beings have to learn how to praise as well as having to learn how to despise. Most importantly, however, he traces such an

[142] Katharina Kippenberg, *Rainer Maria Rilke. Ein Beitrag*, Zurich: Niehans & Rokitansky Verlag, 1948, this and the following quotation on p. 320.

[143] Despite his reputation as a lone individualist, the young Rilke in fact started to network early on, frequently asking to be introduced to intellectuals and artists, even wanting to belong to a 'scene' (see KA 4, p. 751f.). This can be gleaned from his correspondence (for example, that with Simmel); and it is something he had in common with Lou Andreas-Salomé, who was famously intent on constantly broadening the range of thinkers and writers with whom she could enter into intellectual exchange.

'unartigen' lack of (his?) acknowledgement back to the pride and insecurities of 'Die, auf welche gewirkt worden ist':

> Die Art, wie ein Denker die Wirkung seiner Gedanken und ihre umbildende und erschütternde Gewalt zu spüren bekommt, ist beinahe eine Komödie; mitunter hat es das Ansehen, als ob Die, auf welche gewirkt worden ist, sich im Grunde dadurch beleidigt fühlten und ihre, wie sie fürchten, bedrohte Selbständigkeit nur in allerlei Unarten zu äussern wüssten (KSA 3, 457).

This is a possible explanation which certainly could be applied to Rilke's carefully maintained insistence of being altogether unfamiliar with any philosophy whatsoever, and particularly, with Nietzsche's. The voices of his contemporaries point us in a similar direction. In her book *Wege mit Rilke* the painter Lou Albert-Lasard, who knew the poet intimately, having been his lover in 1915, uses the word 'Heftigkeit' to describe his reaction to her suggestion that he should read Nietzsche:

> [Rilke] lehnte es ab, sich Nietzsche zu nähern. Ich entsinne mich der Heftigkeit, mit welcher er meinen Vorschlag, ihn zu lesen, zurückwies. Ich denke mir indessen, daß trotz der Gegensätzlichkeit der Temperamente zwischen ihnen Gemeinsames zu entdecken wäre. Vielleicht ist eben dies der Grund, warum er ihm gefährlich schien.[144]

In Albert-Lasard's words, Rilke deemed Nietzsche dangerous due to their potential common ground, emphasising their very proximity. She also implies that there was a conscious rejection in place. Save his last sentence – for we now know that Rilke did, in fact, read Nietzsche – J. R. von Salis's brief account (in parentheses) from 1936 confirms this view, mentioning '(…die verschwiegene aber entschiedene Abwendung Rilkes von Nietzsche, um dessen Lehre er gewußt haben muß, aber dessen Namen er nicht nannte und dessen Werke er nicht lesen wollte).'[145]

[144] Lou Albert-Lasard, *Wege mit Rilke* (Frankfurt/M.: 1952), p. 79.
[145] J. R von Salis, *Rainer Maria Rilkes Schweizer Jahre* (Frauenfeld: Huber & Co., 1952), p. 221.

2.2 Lou Andreas-Salomé as Rilke's educator

Conscious rejection and subconscious pathos of priority regarding Nietzsche – such, then, is the context in which Rilke's correspondence with Lou Andreas-Salomé, the Russian intellectual and writer and great love of his life, must be examined. 'Rilkes eingehende, vertiefte Kenntnis von Nietzsches Denken geht auf seinen Umgang mit Lou Andreas-Salomé zurück', Alberto Destro writes, adding

> daß dies kein positiv belegbares Faktum ist, sondern allein eine aufgrund der Biographie logische Wahrscheinlichkeit, die aber dazu ausreichen sollte, daß die Forschung sich der Rolle von Lou Andreas-Salomés Nietzsche-Bild bei Rilke hätte annehmen müssen (202f.).

Indeed, latest research confirms Destro's view, albeit, again, without providing any evidence save that contained in Rilke's work itself: 'Die entscheidende Prägung erhält Rilkes Nietzsche-Verständnis erst im Mai 1897, als er Lou Andreas-Salomé kennenlernt, [die ihn] zu vertiefter Nietzschelektüre angeregt und ihm wesentliche Einsichten in das Werk vermittelt haben [dürfte].'[146] Although the find of Z.1 – '[ein] positiv belegbares Faktum', after all – amongst Rilke's possessions (along with that of his 'Marginalien zu Nietzsche' in her estate) manages to remove such theories from the realm of the subjunctive, this study cannot fully do justice to Destro's *desideratum* due to its slightly different focus.[147] However, as this find has now virtually verified that Salomé was formative with regard to Rilke's preoccupation with Nietzsche, and as she simultaneously played an important role in the birth of *Zarathustra*,[148] it is advisable to briefly introduce her here, before addressing her correspondence with Rilke.

Lou Andreas-Salomé began her literary career and lived, as well as ended, her life without her 'proper' name. Christened Louise von Salomé, she renounced that name along with her Christian faith at the age of 18, only to let herself be renamed 'Lou' by Parson Hendrik Gillot, the first in a long line of unconsummated, intellectualized loves (which sadly resulted in her reputation as a mere muse and *femme fatale*), and arguably her most revered: she kept 'his' name for the rest of her life.[149] She then went on to

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[146] Perlwitz, in: *Rilke-Handbuch* 2004, p. 161.
[147] In fact, I plan to fully evaluate the Z.1 findings, along with 'der Rolle von Lou Andreas-Salomés Nietzsche-Bild bei Rilke', in my next project, which will concern the writings of Lou Andreas-Salomé in general.
[148] For an account of her relationship to Nietzsche, see chapters 2.4 and 3.3 below.
[149] Most of those who wrote about her followed her in this. In '"Wir wollen jetzt Geschichten erzählen…". Sander L. Gilman über seine Jurek-Becker-Biographie, Biographik in Deutschland und den

publish her debut book, *Im Kampf um Gott*, under the male pseudonym of 'Henri Lou'. Lastly, she was buried in her husband's grave, which, to this day, gives only his name, not hers.

This lack of a single, clearly identifiable name can be seen as a metaphor of her ambiguity, as both a historical person and a literary figure. She did not hold commitment, be it to one intellectual or artistic discipline or to one single partner, in the highest esteem. With the remarkable exception of both Sigmund Freud the friend and (Sigmund Freud the father of) psychoanalysis, she remained faithful to no one and nothing but herself or, rather, the self she was determined to become: free and independent. As soon as she observed real need of or desire for her in the many men whose company she was in, Salomé withdrew. This can be said in regard of both Nietzsche – whom she met, and refused, in 1882 – and Rilke, and, of course, first and foremost of her husband, the orientalist F. C. Andreas, who was never to consummate his 'hell-like' (Leppmann 96) 43-year-marriage to her.

'Verzicht auf Realisierung und Übersteigerung einer Möglichkeit lassen sich auch im weiteren Leben Lous oft feststellen', Linde Salber writes (1998, 24). Here Salomé herself provides us with an anecdote symbolical of her tendency to leave her loves unconsummated and her Christmas crackers unopened. It goes to show how she seems to have possessed, or how she was possessed by, a controlling personality from childhood on:

> An einer kleinen Erinnerung wird die Methode, womit ich Zweifel abgehalten haben mag, plausibel: In einem prachtvollen Knallbonbon, mir von meinem Vater anläßlich eines Hoffestes mitgebracht, mutmaßte ich goldene Kleider; als man mich jedoch belehrte, es enthielte nur Kleider aus Seidenpapier mit goldenen Rändchen – da ließ ich es ungeknallt. So blieben darin gewissermaßen doch goldene Kleider. [150]

Throughout her life, she consistently opted for an unrepeatable magic, which she defines no further, rather than for the test of life. Maybe this is why she asked the

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USA' (in: Christian Klein, ed., 2002, pp. 203-217; here: p. 205), Gilman reports: 'Als ich vor Jahren über Nietzsche gearbeitet habe, bemerkte ich, dass die Literatur einerseits immer von Lou (also Lou Andreas-Salomé), andererseits von Nietzsche sprach. Eine Kollegin schlug mir daraufhin vor, einfach von "Freddy" zu sprechen.'

Similarly struck by the continued use of her first name in the academic community, which to me seems to propagate distinctly Lou Andreas-Salomé's limitation to her role as an extra in the lives of great men, and for the sake of convenience (the double-barrelled name being simply too long), I propose to use 'Salomé' instead – tempting as "Freddy" may be – even if this seems unnatural, due to our being conditioned to associate with this figure only the name 'Lou'. The same procedure is applied to Paula Modersohn-Becker and Clara Rilke-Westhoff.

[150]Andreas-Salomé, *Lebensrückblick*, p. 13. See also p. 31: 'Aber gerade infolge von diesen Reifehemmnissen hatte mir die unvollendete Liebeserfahrung einen unwiederholbaren, durch nichts zu überbietenden Zauber behalten, eine Unwiderleglichkeit, die sich die Probe auf das Leben ersparte.'

following question in the last weeks of her life: 'Ich habe eigentlich mein ganzes Leben gearbeitet, schwer gearbeitet, und nur gearbeitet – warum eigentlich, wozu eigentlich?' (LAS 1998, 308). That maybe love held the key to a more perfect, emotional cognition that art can only ever weakly imitate was an idea that came to her too late in life for it to be made a reality. Ultimately, not unlike Rilke and Nietzsche, respectively, she chose first art and then theory over the lessons that a real, consummated, lasting love relationship could teach her. 'Sie will gar nicht die Liebe von Rilke, sondern sie inszeniert den Dichter in ihm. Sie mäkelt an seinen Liebesgedichten herum, sie sagt: Denke an die Form', the psychoanalyst Rohrwasser polemically reminds us.[151]

Notwithstanding the fact that this rather sweeping statement surely requires some refinement, I would argue that it is precisely this attitude of Salomé's that helped Rilke to grow as an artist. This is evident from the poet's *Florenzer Tagebuch* he kept for her in 1898, a year into the love relationship:

> Ich haßte Dich wie etwas *zu Großes*. *Ich* wollte diesmal der Reiche, der Schenkende sein, der Ladende, der Herr, und Du solltest kommen und, von meiner Sorgfalt und Liebe gelenkt, Dich ergehen in meiner Gastlichkeit. Und nun Dir gegenüber war ich wieder nur der kleinste Bettler an der letzten Schwelle Deines Wesens, das auf so breiten und sicheren Säulen ruht (BW LAS 34).

In academic writing, the term 'love' tends to be regarded with suspicions concerning its *Wissenschaftlichkeit*;[152] but this quotation – from a book which, according to Heller, still resounds 'vom Gehämmer und Gesprenge Nietzsches' (1992, 136) – shows why it cannot be avoided in our context. Here, an inner battle becomes visible: the battle of an enamoured young poet to find his own voice which he so desperately wants to present to his beloved whom he considers 'etwas *zu Großes*'. The fact that Nietzsche was the first, even concerning Salomé, must have preoccupied the immature, yet highly ambitious poet as much as the young lover.[153] By the time of Rilke's first encounter with Salomé in 1897, the insane anti-philosopher with whom she had not only had personal contact, but who also, until recently, had engaged her mind to such an extent

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[151] In discussion with Ortrud Gutjahr in the FAZ; source: http://staff-www.uni-marburg.de/~anz/Protokoll.html, as found on 6 June 2002

[152] At this point, I would like to refer to bell hooks' (sic) recent book *all about love* (London: The Women's Press, 2000). First of all, hooks quotes Diane Ackerman, who points out what is all too often forgotten: 'Without a supple vocabulary, we can't even talk or think about [love] directly' (p. 1). It is a sad fact, hooks points out, that the only public discussion on love in our culture takes place in its pop(ular) version. A rather funny example of this is that, when attempting to talk about love with her friends, she is told to consider seeing a therapist. Love thus seems to be regarded today as some form of mental illness; at any rate, it is something which only an expert theorist can talk about.

[153] Bloom's Oedipus-theory as re-told in section 1.3.1 above springs to mind.

that she wrote a book on him, was already ascending to the pinnacle of his fame. Stressing the courage and the audacity it took to even put pen to paper in his wake, Thomas Mann, born the same year as Rilke, considered Nietzsche's influence inescapable:

> Er verlieh der deutschen Prosa eine Sensitivität, Kunstleichtigkeit, Schönheit, Schärfe, Musikalität, Akzentuiertheit und Leidenschaft – ganz unerhört bis dahin und von unentrinnbarem Einfluß auf jeden, der nach ihm deutsch zu schreiben sich erkühnte.[154]

What, then, was the paradigm Rilke chose in order to distinguish himself sufficiently from his precursor? The answer has to be sought on the wide range from apparent avoidance to outright denial. At the latest when Salomé broke off their love relationship, along with any form of contact, after four years in early 1901 as it had become too unbalanced, Rilke would seem to have simultaneously turned away from Nietzsche: once and again, that year is seen as marking the end of the poet's infatuation with the anti-philosopher. Hella Sieber-Rilke, for example, regards it as the point of intersection at which Kierkegaard replaced Nietzsche as Rilke's most revered philosopher. This is, however, contestable not only by this study's assumption of a nearly unbroken Nietzsche reception throughout his career, but mainly also by reading the letters and literature Rilke produced at that time – for now, one only has to recall the monk from the second part of the *Stunden-Buch*, intended, according to Seifert, as 'Gegen-Zarathustra'.[155]

Rather, it would seem as if Rilke was freed by the preliminary end of his relationship to Salomé, which bore traces of dependency, after all: according to Aristotle's positive definition of freedom, he now was free *to* finally take himself as his model, and, according to the negative definition,[156] free *from* the constant emotionally upsetting comparisons with Salomé or Nietzsche, drawn, above all, by himself. His life and work were now no longer 'um den Wunsch zentriert, für Lou der eine, einzige, große Mann und Künstler zu sein' (Salber 90). Nietzsche's physical death in 1900 (after his mind as

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[154] Mann, op. cit., pp. 87f. In turn, in'Moderne Lyrik' written in 1898, Rilke himself calls good prose 'harte Männerarbeit'; 'nicht unbewußtes Gestehen, sondern bewußtes hartes Ringen mit Stoff und Form' (SW V, p. 390).

[155] Walter Seifert, 'Der Ich-Zerfall und seine Kompensationen bei Nietzsche und Rilke', in: *Die Modernisierung des Ich: Studien zur Subjektkonstitution in der Vor- und Frühmoderne*, ed. Manfred Pfister (Passau: Rothe, 1989), S. 229-239. Parts of the *Stunden-Buch* will be analyzed below.

[156] Or, indeed, according to 'dem, was der Hauptstrang der philosophischen Tradition unter Freiheit versteht, nämlich ein von Interessen und Affekten unbehelligter Gebrauch der Vernunft', as defined by Sommer (2000), who further maintains with regard to *Der Antichrist* that Nietzsche, in his 'Beherrschtsein durch Leidenschaft', contradicts such a deficient view of freedom by, conversely, declaring the freedom *of* passion, rather than that *from* it, a *condition sine qua non* of freedom (pp. 529f.).

such had already given up eleven years before) might even have been liberating, both artistically and on a personal level, due to the proximity of the predecessor to Salomé mentioned above. Moreover, Rilke now may have been able to see the artist-philosopher as a fellow sufferer in having been left by the woman who alone had managed to mediate a sense of reality and identity to him, rather than as a rival for fame and love.

Thus, the year 1901 in fact represents a watershed, but not one signalling the end of Rilke's engagement with Nietzsche, as tendentially assumed within scholarship. Rather, it marks the beginning of the actual, productive 'Verwandlung' of the inescapable influence which Nietzsche, so 'verwandt', obviously had on the poet, despite the impression that his silence regarding that matter begins here. Rilke un-learns, not least thanks to Salomé's educative efforts, 'die von unechten Tönen unerträglich glitschig klingende Manier seiner lyrischen Sprache'[157] which characterizes his earliest production. Through the presence, purely spiritual by now, of the woman who firmly believes in his genius, Rilke learns 'von Einfachem zu sagen'. This, in turn, would seem to have been anticipated by Nietzsche, who ponders in *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*, one of his books Rilke read, in a melancholically hypothetical manner (as such circumstances remained elusive to him): 'Wir sagen die stärksten Dinge schlicht, vorausgesetzt, dass Menschen um uns sind, die an unsere Stärke glauben: – eine solche Umgebung erzieht zur "Einfachheit des Stils"' (KSA 3, 511). Furthermore, after platonic contact – which never was to cease again until the poet's death in 1926 – had been resumed on 23 June 1903, Rilke wrote to Salomé on 8 August of that year:

> O Lou, in einem Gedicht, das mir gelingt, ist viel mehr Wirklichkeit als in jeder Beziehung oder Zuneigung, die ich fühle; wo ich schaffe bin ich wahr und ich möchte die Kraft finden, mein Leben ganz auf diese Wahrheit zu gründen, auf diese unendliche Einfachheit und Freude, die mir manchmal gegeben ist (BW LAS 97).

In that sense, Rilke is Nietzsche's ideal poet of the future, of whom the philosopher writes in *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches*: 'Wie der gute Prosaschriftsteller nur Worte nimmt, welche der Umgangssprache angehören, doch lange nicht alle Worte derselben – wodurch eben der gewählte Stil entsteht –, so wird der gute Dichter der Zukunft *nur Wirkliches* darstellen [...], aber lange nicht jede Wirklichkeit' (KSA 2, 426).

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[157] Christoph Meckel, in: Arnold (1975), p. 79.

To summarize, whether he knew it and rebelled against it or repressed it, due to Salomé's influence – in educating him, mediating Nietzsche's thought to him and, most importantly, in leaving him[158] – Rilke much sooner found his own poetic voice. He was forced to become who he was.[159] His correspondence with Salomé is ample testimony to the importance of her role as his foremost educator. It can almost be read like the poet's reception history, since as soon as Rilke read or experienced something new, its echo was certain to resound in one of his letters to Salomé. Moreover, this interplay worked the other way round, too: Rilke got many impulses for new reading from Salomé. On 3 November 1903, he writes to the regained, (by now, platonically) beloved friend: 'Und wenn ich dich nicht zu viel bitte: nenn mir vielleicht ein oder das andere neue Buch, das Du gelesen hast: es könnte mir jetzt sehr helfen. Vor allem aber brauche ich einen Brief von dir, Lou' (BW LAS 122). Her formative influence on his development as an artist and a person can hardly be overestimated. It stretched far beyond the period of their love relationship, which lasted from their first meeting in Munich in May 1897 to the separation famously intitiated by Salomé, in order to 'weiter und weiter [zu] wachsen', in her 'Letzter Zuruf' on 26 February 1901 (BW LAS 54f.). In his foreword to the two-volume edition of Rilke's letters, Horst Nalewski rightly speaks of the author's distance from most of his addressees which creates the art-like quality of many of those letters. The letters to Salomé are regarded as the only exception; like many Rilkeans, Nalewski calls their correspondence Rilke's 'bedeutendsten […] mit den dunkelsten Tönen, [mit einem] außerordentlichen Bezug, gar [einem] existentiellen' (B I 12).

Moreover, what takes place in those letters is also reminiscent of an inner monologue of the poet, and has been likened to a form of therapy for Rilke, not only by both Salomé and the poet himself, but also by a great number of Rilke scholars. Salomé, Biddy Martin writes, 'creates difficulties for those who attempt to separate out [...] knowledge from its basis in what [she] called love.'[160] In a very complex fashion, this is an important link to Rilke's compulsion to 'transform the visible': '*Wir sind die Bienen des Unsichtbaren*', as he explains to Witold Hulewicz, their Polish translator, in the context of the *Elegien* on 13 November 1925, '*Nous butinons éperdument le miel du*

[158] In the goodbye letter titled 'Letzter Zuruf', Salomé admits that she had to grow further, '*bis in meine Jugend hinein!*', and pleads with Rilke, alluding to his mental turmoils: 'gehe denselben Weg deinem dunklen Gott entgegen! Er kann, was ich nicht mehr thun kann an Dir [...]: er kann Dich zur Sonne und Reife segnen' (BW LAS, p. 55).

[159] Nietzsche wrote this to Salomé in late August 1882: 'Zuletzt, meine liebe Lou, die alte tiefe herzliche Bitte: *werden Sie, die Sie sind!*' (KSB 6, p. 247f).

[160] *Woman and Modernity. The (Life) Styles of Lou Andreas-Salomé*, London: Cornell University Press, 1991, p. 1.

visible, pour l'accumuler dans la grande ruche d'or de l'Invisible' (B II 376). Salomé also was a close friend of Sigmund Freud whose theories of sexual difference, however, sometimes were not substantiated by her own work (see Martin 226). Similarly to but going further than the father of psychoanalysis, Salomé firmly believed in a fundamental bisexuality[161] which she saw, along with a steady access to the unconscious, as the root of the creativity and, resulting from that, the mysterious knowledge of a Rilke, Nietzsche or even Freud, himself. Only if there is a mothering female alter ego inside the man's psyche, as David Kleinbard points out,[162] can there be room for a healthy narcissism (or self-love) which is also productive. Salomé granted Rilke an understanding of 'woman's conflictual drives toward self-dissolution in her receptivity and toward self-assertion' because she repeatedly stressed 'the conflict within him between what she called the human (feminine) receptivity to experience and the artist's drive to master experience and give it external form' (Martin 42). Otto Lorenz, similarly, observes how Rilke's attempt to find poetic means of expression for an experience of both the succesion as well as the simultaneity of time finally ripped open the gulf between life and the reflection on it (see 149).

This gulf mainly has its origin in the fact that, throughout most of Rilke's life, his narcissism remained unhealthy insofar as he felt dependent on external figures such as Salomé and, later, Rodin, to provide him with the mirroring without which he felt fragmented, engulfed and unreal.[163] Like Freud, the poet went through long, unproductive periods during which he felt his creative voice being silenced. According to Salomé, however, these periods are vital because 'experiences that prove to be creative within the self [as a transformation of one's entire being] cannot then go into the work' (Martin 45). This is, however, also exactly the point at which the danger of a total creative 'Verstummen' looms largest: whilst developing his personality to the extent that he could heal, he did not balance along the rim of the abyss of insanity, which was also the source of his creative genius, anymore. The 'perpetual two-way

[161] Not to be understood here as related to Freud's 'perverted polymorphous infant' and his bisexuality, which is supposed to, almost always, eventually make room for a steady chain of either homo- or heterosexual object choices (see: Freud's *3 Abhandlungen*, in: *Studienausgabe Band V. Sexualleben*, eds. Alexander Mitscherlich, Angela Richards and James Strachey, Frankfurt/M.: Fischer, 1972).

[162] *The Beginning of Terror. A Psychological Study of Rilke Maria Rilke's Life and Work*, New York and London: NYU Press, 1993; here: p. 217: out of 'emotional impotence', Rilke made a 'new commitment to loving, not another person, but the woman within.'

[163] Moreover, without the example of such strong figures, Rilke often remained unproductive as far as his poetry was concerned which, in turn, he depended on for a sense of wholeness and reality. See Freedman 2001, p. 137: 'Sieht man von Auguste Rodin einmal ab, so wird Rilke nie wieder in seinem Leben ein Vorbild wie Lou haben, die eine geradezu zwanghafte Arbeiterin war und die ihm, der sich ständig selbst zu blockieren drohte, Tag für Tag das Tempo vorgab.'

traffic between experience and imagination', as Michael Hamburger defines poetry,[164] was closed off in one direction for a while.

Before Rilke had become 'truly healed', before he had reached the unconscious 'Besserwissen'[165] of someone who reconciled in himself the ability to 'transform the visible' with that to live within its realm, the development of his œuvre indeed excluded that of his psyche, which he bitterly needed: for example, it is safe to say that Rilke often literally did not know himself. Because he believed 'that the little ego must be shattered by the exploding titanic forces of the unconscious' (Kleinbard 50) in order, presumably, to gain those genuinely new experiences so vital to the making of genuine art, all he could do after the event was pick up the pieces and make himself a mask, much like Nietzsche used to. Thus, he cultivated his image as a sensitive, aristocratic poet; he 'developed a persona out of the vocation which was central to his innermost sense of self' (Kleinbard 55). The isolation brought about by this confinement of the core of his self was intensified by his tendency to root his relationships in the unconscious, to prefer 'a relationship with an introject (the living presence of a person within the mind) to a sustained, intimate relationship with the real person' (159). Indeed, even when they had long split up, Rilke continued to frequently depend on Salomé for a sense of his own identity, telling her 'Du allein bist wirklich' (LAS 1998, 138), and: 'Du allein weißt wer ich bin' (BW LAS 60).

After this brief but necessary psychological detour attempting to grasp the scope of Salomé's importance to Rilke, back, for now, to matters of correspondence and criticism. Exemplifying the questionable practice of many other critics, Richard Detsch calls Andreas-Salomé 'the woman who had introduced [Rilke] to the writings of Nietzsche'.[166] Yet, he seems unable to provide any supporting evidence for a claim which, left standing alone, must seem rather bold. What it neglects to consider is the fact that the poet had read the philosopher before he met and began his affair with Salomé. After all, the lovers were brought together by Nietzsche, or rather, by 'zwei ganz [in seinem Geiste] geschriebenen Werken'.[167] It is true, however, that Salomé must be credited for encouraging Rilke – first, by educating him, then, in 1901, by

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[164] *The Truth of Poetry. Tensions in Modern Poetry from Baudelaire to the 1960s*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969; p. 104.
[165] Salomé, in: Martin, p. 227.
[166] Richard Detsch, 'A Non-Subjectivist Concept of Play: Gadamer and Heidegger versus Rilke and Nietzsche', in: *Philosophy Today* 29, 1985, pp. 156-172; here: p. 163. Other recent critics claiming this without giving evidence include Kahl (1999), Simon (2000), Seifert (1989) and Sprengel (1998).
[167] Frowen 1987, p. 22: 'Lou Andreas-Salomés Aufsatz *Jesus der Jude* und Rilkes *Christus-Visionen*', both of which emphasized 'den Leidenden und Allein-Gelassenen' (Nalewski, in: KA 4, p. 1062), 'den menschlich-weltlichen Jesus, nicht den Christus, der sich zwischen Mensch und Gott stellt' (Brunkhorst, in: *Rilke-Handbuch*, p. 40).

leaving him – thus that he eventually dared to go 'allein den Weg seinem dunklen Gott entgegen' (BW LAS 55), as mentioned above. Thereby, he matured as a poet so rapidly that he soon began to transform Nietzschean ideas rather than merely resounding them, as he had done in many of his earlier writings, such as the *Florenzer Tagebuch*.[168]

Yet, Salomé's formative role in Rilke's appropriation of Nietzsche remains hard to verify for, astonishingly, not a single mention of the philosopher's name occurs in Rilke's extensive correspondence with her. Attempting in vain to establish a viable connection between Nietzsche and Rilke, Hillebrand even maintains that 'sich auf die Verbindungslinie Lou von Salomé zu berufen, ist gewagt' (2000, 78). I would however argue that one can, and indeed must, dare to refer to precisely that connection between the poet and the philosopher – provided one supports one's claims sufficiently.

The very absence of Nietzsche's name – which had by 1900 become synonymous with the 'Pflichtlektüre der Intellektuellen' – from every one of the 199 published letters of that correspondence, written over twenty-nine years, is potentially more telling than silent. In the light of the fact that a first edition (1894) of Salomé's *Friedrich Nietzsche in Seinen Werken* was in Rilke's possession[169] – the title page of which was found, after all, with the Z.1 fragments – that absence seems decidedly treacherous. Unfortunately without giving any evidence for this, Tina Simon claims that Rilke knew that book well.[170] Such statements should indeed not be made so lightly due to the aforementioned silence regarding Nietzsche which overshadows Rilke's correspondence with Salomé. Yet, when considering the now available evidence, it would seem very likely indeed that the lovers and life-long friends did talk about Nietzsche, if only as filtered through Salomé's book.

Rilke's ownership of that book suggests even more when we recall that a substantial number of letters is missing from his correspondence with Salomé. From the time of their platonic friendship, which lasted from June 1903 to the poet's death in December 1926, a tenth of Rilke's and a staggering third of Salomé's letters have been lost. Ernst Pfeiffer reports further that at least those missing from 'der ersten, leidenschaftlichen Phase der Beziehung' – May 1897 until February 1901 – were definitely destroyed by both lovers in a conscious and concerted effort.[171] Furthermore, the implications of the clearly intentional corruption of large parts of the poet's correspondence with Salomé,

[168] For a thorough discussion of Nietzsche's presence in the *Florenzer Tagebuch*, see again László V. Szabó's online contribution
[169] Hans Janssen, 'Rilkes Bibliothek', in: Reimar W. Fuchs (ed.), *Philobiblon* 33/1 (Stuttgart: Dr. Ernst Hauswedell & Co., 1989), p. 295.
[170] Tina Simon, *Rilke als Leser*, Frankfurt/M.: Peter Lang, 2001, pp. 86-88 and 225-230; here: p. 229.
[171] See: *Rainer Maria Rilke / Lou Andreas-Salomé. Briefwechsel*, ed. Ernst Pfeiffer (Wiesbaden: Insel, 1952), p. 644.

Nietzsche's former confidante, become even more serious when again bearing in mind the fact that, save during the earlier years, Rilke's letters tended to have been written with publication in mind (see Prater 410). Also, the fact that what was most probably Salomé's working copy of *Zarathustra*, Z.1, was found amongst Rilke's possessions cannot be stressed enough. Lastly, the poet wrote his 'Marginalien zu Friedrich Nietzsche. "Die Geburt der Tragödie"', 'das ausführlichste Dokument einer philosophischen Lektüre Rilkes'[172] and the subject of the next chapter, in 1900 when he was still romantically linked to Salomé. Based on the weight of such evidence, it is now indeed a distinct possibility that Rilke let traces of his knowledge or reading of Nietzsche disappear with intent.

[172] Gert Mattenklott, 'Der geistige Osten bei Rilke und Kassner', in: BlRG 15, 1988, pp. 21-34; here: p. 25.

2.3 Reading *Zarathustra*. Rilke's reasons and the 'Marginalien zu Nietzsche'

What was it in *Zarathustra* that drew Rilke towards that particular book; and how might he have approached it when re-reading it in 1901? Before introducing the book itself and turning to the interpretation of the textual evidence in Z.2 for possible answers, it may prove helpful to consider first the only other record of the poet's Nietzsche reception so far, his 'Marginalien zu Friedrich Nietzsche. "Die Geburt der Tragödie"'. Although 'eine impressionistische Skizze über einen impressionistischen Philosophen'[173] never intended for publication, particularly the time of origin of those unnumbered sheets found in Salomé's estate[174] renders them relevant in the context of this study, as Rilke most likely comitted them to paper in March 1900, exactly a year before Clara Westhoff sent him his *Zarathustra* copy – the distinct possibility, and indeed likelihood, that he had read both Nietzsche works before notwithstanding.[175]

Still typical of Rilke's early essayistic phase,[176] unlike the reading traces in Z.2,[177] the 'Marginalien' are rather more substantial than that term would suggest: his only directly documented 'Anverwandlung' of the artist-philosopher takes place on eighteen pages, and it is assumed there may have been more.[178] This is hardly surprising given

[173] Irina Frowen (in: BlRG 14, 1987, p. 33). As Frowen has provided a rather thorough interpretation of *Die Geburt der Tragödie* in connection with the 'Marginalien', as have, amongst others, Görner ('"...und Musik überstieg uns...". Zu Rilkes Deutung der Musik', in*:* BlRG 10, 1983, pp. 50-66), Heller (1975) and Mattenklott (1988), it would not be productive to merely re-state those critics' efforts here. Therefore, and due to this study's focus on *Zarathustra* and the new findings, this contribution to that topic is kept deliberately brief, and focuses largely on the 'Versuch einer Selbstkritik', which has so far been comparatively neglected.

[174] Along with the fact that, in turn, what could be termed *her* 'Marginalien zu Nietzsche', namely Z.1, are part of *Rilke's* estate, this renders an intellectual exchange between Salomé and the poet regarding Nietzsche ever more likely.

[175] The exact time of origin of the 'Marginalien' has not been verified, although a poem contained in them, 'Hinter mir sind dunkle Chöre', was dated 18 March 1900 by Rilke: scholarship merely tends to rely on that date as applicable to the entirety of the 'Marginalien', and Zinn's notes do not provide any relevant information, either. Hella Sieber-Rilke, however, considers the 'Marginalien' most likely to have been written at some point between 1897 and 1900 (to be precise, sooner rather than later, at a time when the romantic relationship with Salomé was still fully intact); and Rilke's notes 'Zur Melodie der Dinge' from 1898 with their emphasis on the 'Lied des Hintergrunds' and 'einzelne Stimmen, welche diesen vollen Chor ergänzen' (KA 4, p. 107) lend weight to the suggestion that he was familiar with *Die Geburt der Tragödie* by then already (see also Görner 1983).

[176] That phase lasted roughly from 1893 to 1904, a 'Scheitelpunkt künstlerischer Entwicklung für Rilke' (KA 4, p. 751). As far as their topics were concerned, those prose efforts were, in their majority, 'Ort der Reflexion über das Wesen der Kunst' (p. 752): the year 1898 alone saw Rilke write on, for example, 'Moderne Lyrik', 'Über Kunst', 'De[n] Wert des Monologs' as well as begin an 'Aufzeichnung über Kunst'.

[177] *Zarathustra* being a book that had been 'covered' (in notes, and in *Friedrich Nietzsche in seinen Werken*) by Salomé already, visibly so to Rilke in her copy, Z.1, which she had most likely already given to him at that point.

[178] As Zinn, who first published them in 1975, states, 'der Schluß der Betrachtungen [ist] als verloren anzusehen' (SW VI, p. 1521).

the fact that those pages represent the poet's 'Auseinandersetzung mit einem Text Nietzsches, der [...] als einziger in Nietzsches Werk eine vollständige Kunsttheorie entwickelt' (Frowen 23). That theory, culminating in the famous claim, twice repeated,[179] that 'nur als *aesthetisches Phänomen* ist das Dasein und die Welt ewig *gerechtfertigt*' (KSA 1, 47), of course holds that the Socratic equation of reason with virtue and happiness (94), represented in Nietzsche's day (and ours, to some extent) by both scientific positivism and Christian morality, brought about the decline of Greek tragedy, which in turn had drawn on the Dionysian experience of ego dissolution, held in and formed by the dream-world of Apollinian individuation.

Here was a terrain which preoccupied the poet very much at the time.[180] He had only very recently reached a deeper intensity in his work, arriving '[im] vollem Bewußtsein seiner Kunst' (Freedman 2001, 156) by virtue of the first *Stunden-Buch* poems from September 1899. Yet, the following passage, as Theo Meyer claims (209), is still nothing more than a lyrical paraphrase of 'Ecce Homo', an aphorism from *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft*:[181]

> Du Dunkelheit, aus der ich stamme,
> ich liebe dich mehr als die Flamme,
> welche die Welt begrenzt,
> indem sie glänzt
> für irgend einen Kreis,
> aus dem heraus kein Wesen von ihr weiß (SW I 258).

When Rilke's young monk continues: 'Aber die Dunkelheit hält alles an sich:/ Gestalten und Flammen, Tiere und mich', and elsewhere reports of his calling to provide a mirroring 'Gestalt' (260) or 'Bild' by the activities of 'bauen', 'malen' or 'schreiben' (289) for his dark god, the binary opposition of *Die Geburt*'s Dionysos and Apollo – turned into a fruitful, mutually complementary relation, or

> das [immer von Neuem wieder] spielende Aufbauen und Zertrümmern der Individualwelt als den Ausfluss einer Urlust […], wie wenn von Heraklit dem Dunklen die weltbildende Kraft einem Kinde verglichen wird, das spielend Steine hin und her setzt und Sandhaufen aufbaut und wieder einwirft (KSA 1, 153),

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[179] KSA 1, pp. 17 and 152, respectively.

[180] 'Rilkes [Nietzsche-] Lektüre-Notizen [..., ein eigenwilliges Produktiv-Machen des Gelesenen,] verbinden sich auf bestätigende Weise mit Kunst-Einsichten, die Rilke in Rußland gewonnen hatte und deren Niederschlag man in den Anfängen des *Stunden-Buchs* findet' (Nalewski, in: KA 4, p. 757).

[181] 'Ja! Ich weiss, woher ich stamme!/ Ungesättigt gleich der Flamme/ Glühe und verzehr' ich mich./ Licht wird Alles, was ich fasse,/ Kohle Alles, was ich lasse:/ Flamme bin ich sicherlich' (KSA 3, p. 367).

by their joint enmity to Socrates – is recalled distinctly. In fact, much of Georg Simmel's impression of the *Stunden-Buch* as reverse pantheism, which he put to Rilke on 9 August 1908, reads like a paraphrase of Nietzsche's 'Artistenmetaphysik', provided, one replaces 'Gott' and 'Pantheismus' with 'Dionysos' and 'the Dionysian', respectively:[182]

> ich will nur, als Philosoph, aussprechen, wie außerordentlich interessant mir die Wendung des Pantheismus erscheint, die Ihr Buch bietet. Der Pantheismus, obgleich er vielleicht die fundamentale *Stimmung* alles Künstlertums bildet, ist als *Inhalt* eigentlich nicht künstlerisch zu formen, weil er in der Verneinung jeder Sonderform besteht. Alle individuellen Gestaltungen lösen sich in dem absoluten Einen auf, verlieren ihren Sinn [...]. Dadurch bekommt der Pantheismus etwas unplastisches, unanschauliches. In diesem Buch aber läuft der pantheistische Weg in umgekehrter Richtung: [...] das Einzelne schmilzt nicht in Gott ein u. verliert damit seine greifbare [...] Form, sondern Gott schmilzt in das Einzelne aus u. dieses wird in seiner Sonderform dadurch erhalten u. gestärkt, das Empirisch-Zufällige der einzelnen Dinge gewinnt so gleichsam eine transzendente Legitimation.[183]

The last sentence of this statement, in turn, is strikingly evocative of Rilke's 'transformation of the visible', the project of his mature work; and as the *Stunden-Buch*, not least by the author himself, has often been acknowledged to both incorporate the basic structures later to develop, via the *Neue Gedichte* and *Malte*, into the *Sonette* and *Elegien*, and to betray a Nietzschean influence, the way in which the artist-philosopher's thought provided at least some of the soil for Rilke's own thought to grow in becomes increasingly evident.

Thanks to his 'marginal' notes which have received much scholarly attention since they were first published in 1975,[184] what the poet saw in Nietzsche's first book is, thus,

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[182] As will be shown in chapter 3.2 below, the term 'Gott' in Rilke's writing usually refers to anything but the Christian God. In the context of Rilke's Kierkegaard reception, Kohlschmidt points out with regard to 'die romantisch-pantheistische Verschwommenheit seines Werks vor der Duineser Krise': 'in der "Stundenbuch"-Zeit verbot ihm [Rilke] innerlich nichts, "Gott" zu sagen, und zwar immer wieder, auch wenn er etwas Materielles […] meinte. Er spielte hiermit nur vor sich selbst und seinem Leser, den er irreführte, das allgemein übliche Spiel der Selbsttäuschung des Menschen um 1900, das den Gottesbegriff jeder noch so subjektiven Umdeutung und Ausweitung preisgab' (1953, p. 96).

[183] In: Gassen and Landmann (eds.), p. 121. Rilke thanked Simmel on 26 August 1908 and, whilst emphasizing the distance which he felt between himself and the *Stunden-Buch* already, admitted: 'Es ist das einzige unter meinen älteren Büchern, das nicht unter mir zurückweicht' (p. 123).

[184] Whilst, as mentioned above, Frowen, Görner, Heller, Mattenklott and Meyer have produced sensitive and productive readings of the 'Marginalien', those notes seem to have presented a problem to other critics. Claude David, for example, maintains: 'diese Anmerkungen, die nur persönliche Reflexionen sein wollten und sich an kein Publikum richten, sind nicht leicht zu lesen' (in: Gockel 1993, p. 163). However, David perhaps merely ought to have read the text more attentively, instead of falsely claiming that Rilke was unaware of the fact 'daß Richard Wagner, den er wahrscheinlich kaum kannte, hinter der ganzen gewagten Konstruktion stand' (163f.).

evident: as he wrote to Frieda von Bülow on 27 May 1899, 'im Grunde sucht man in jedem Neuem (sic) (Land oder Mensch oder Ding) nur einen Ausdruck, der irgendeinem persönlichen Geständnis zu größerer Macht und Mündigkeit verhilft' (B I 41). Not only was it a work in which he must have felt comfortably at home; after all, *Die Geburt der Tragödie. Oder: Griechenthum und Pessimismus*, as the new edition from 1886 was called, was explicitly written 'für Blutsverwandte in artibus' (KSA 1, 14), pitting – as Rilke did subsequently in his 'ursprungstheologische[n] Verklärung und Ästhetisierung des Ostens' (Mattenklott 27) – 'gegen den Sokratismus des Westens das Dionysische [...] als Energie gegen alle abgrenzende Individuierung durch den Logos und die Form' (29). Moreover, unlike the cryptic but masterful *Zarathustra*, Nietzsche's first book from 1872, despite advocating a Greek 'Pessimismus der *Stärke*' (KSA 1, 12), is characterized by a youthful optimism, or 'jugendlicher Muth' (13) according to its author, who laments that he had not quite found his '*eigne Sprache*' yet,[185] leaning too heavily on Kant or Schopenhauer rather than 'sing' himself. This 'Versuch einer Selbstkritik' included in the 1886 edition used by Rilke not only emphasizes how important his first book always remained to the philosopher, it also must have held a great potential for identification for the young poet, who was, at that time, in the very process of finding *his* own poetic voice for the first time. Hence, that particular Nietzsche book, including its self-reflexive preface, was not only pertinent in theme and encouraging in tone, but also, in its very flaws, comparatively less threatening to a budding artist than other, more stylistically accomplished Nietzsche works.

What, in contrast, was it about *Die Geburt der Tragödie* that may have implied something more than itself to Rilke, referring him (back) to the 'Buch für Alle und Keinen' a year later? The first answer quite possibly lies in the equation artist=antichrist=Dionysos=Zarathustra, as this 'Selbstkritik' by Nietzsche suggests:

> *Gegen* die Moral also kehrte sich damals, mit diesem fragwürdigen Buche, mein Instinkt, als ein fürsprechender Instinkt des Lebens, und erfand sich eine grundsätzliche Gegenlehre und Gegenwerthung des Lebens, eine rein artistische, eine *antichristliche* [...] ich hiess sie die *dionysische*' (KSA 1, 19).

[185] KSA 1, p. 19. Echoing this, Colli maintains that in his first book, Nietzsche had not yet found 'seine neue, einzigartige, einem mystischen Kontext entsprechende Ausdrucksform'; and, with regard to the philosopher's 'Selbstkritik': 'Später wird sich Nietzsche in der Distanzierung von den Inhalten als rational entdecken und seinen ureigenen Stil erobern' (902f.).

In the 'Marginalien', the poet also explicitly blames 'de[n] Zufall Wagner' for the – to him, disappointingly premature – fulfillment of the artist-philosopher's high hopes and findings concerning the resurrection of Dionysos, his critique, it would seem, a more or less direct paraphrase of the philosopher's 'Versuch einer Selbstkritik':[186]

> Dieser Schaden ist viel größer als der Gebrauch [...] Schopenhauer'scher Terminologie. [...] die sofortige Anwendung alles eben Entdeckten auf die Schöpfungen Wagner's [nimmt] das Aussehen einer Enttäuschung an; man *will* gar nicht, daß Alles dieses Hohe, Verheißene sich *schon* erfüllt haben soll, vor allem glaubt man, daß der Verfasser des Buches, selbst geeignet ist (*als Dichter*) den Versuch zu machen zu einer 'Auferstehung des Dionysos' (SW VI 1174f.).

Here, in this assessment by Rilke of Nietzsche as an able poet – more precisely, a poet able to resurrect Dionysos – one is led back in a circle to 'jene[m] dionysischen Unhold [...], der Zarathustra heisst'[187] as a possible projection screen for the young Rilke, who may have had aspirations to being that chosen *Dichter* himself, and to the most obvious reason for him, as a reader of *Die Geburt der Tragödie*, to revisit the Persian prophet, whose prophecies, unlike those made in the earlier book, are never fulfilled, but keep on pointing into the future forever.

Leaving *Die Geburt der Tragödie* for now, one ought to consider other conceivable reasons why Rilke might have chosen *Zarathustra* out of Nietzsche's writings, or why it was chosen for him – after all, one copy was a gift from Salomé; the other, from Westhoff: most importantly, as I have shown earlier, because it is the most poetic of the philosopher's works, that is, it is the one which, according to Nietzsche himself, comes closest to 'Dichtung'.[188] Another feature which attracted Rilke, however, might be precisely both that authoritative, didactic tone mentioned above, and the main message, apparently so juxtaposed to it, which Nietzsche is conveying in Zarathustra's name. Indeed, he – or should one say 'they', as the line between the philosopher and his mouthpiece is blurred, and, as per usual in Nietzsche, contradictions abound? – often sound(s) rather dogmatic, not unlike a religious fanatic, in his insisting on the necessity

[186] Referring to his 'Vorwort an Richard Wagner', to whom he had originally dedicated the book, Nietzsche laments: 'Aber es giebt etwas viel Schlimmeres an dem Buche, das ich jetzt noch mehr bedauere, als mit Schopenhauerischen Formeln dionysische Ahnungen verdunkelt und verdorben zu haben: dass ich mir nämlich überhaupt das grandiose *griechische Problem*, wie es mir aufgegangen war, durch Einmischung der modernsten Dinge *verdarb*! Dass ich Hoffnungen anknüpfte, wo Nichts zu hoffen war' (p. 20).

[187] In *Die Geburt der Tragödie*, Nietzsche thus directly mentions Zarathustra at the end of his 1886 preface (KSA 1, p. 22).

[188] See for example *Ecce Homo*: 'mit einem Dithyrambus wie dem letzten des *dritten* Zarathustra, "die sieben Siegel" überschrieben, flog ich tausend Meilen über das hinaus, was bisher Poesie hiess' (KSA 6, p. 305).

to become free and independent of the 'Viel-zu-Vielen' (KSA 4, 91), and, paradoxically, of himself.

Yet, one can imagine the young Rilke, still constantly in search of an artistic identity and voice of his own, to be in awe of such firm authority and self-assuredness in advertising individualism at all costs. Zarathustra's confident answers in the shape of prophecies, conveyed in pseudo-religious, dramatic prose, must have appealed to the twenty-one-year-old poet who wrote: 'Ich trage in mir tausend wilde Fragen./ Wenn ich sie rufe, kommt nur Widerhall,/ nicht Antwort mir' (SW III 565). Yet, ironically, in tone and vocabulary, this is simultaneously reminiscent of the desperation of Zarathustra's *creator*, whose loneliness had become thousandfold after his creation failed to elicit an answer, any answer, to the call from deep within his soul. Like the philosopher, the poet longed for genuine discourse, even disagreement; not for mere echoes of his own voice. Of course, Rilke probably only was to read Nietzsche's correspondence with Overbeck, which I am referring to here, for the first time in 1911, and thus at twenty-one, before meeting Salomé, must have been unaware of the philosopher's anguish. As we will see, Zarathustra's style more than likely had an extremely powerful impact on him, as we know it did on practically every single one of his contemporaries who read the book.

The consolation, however, of the content of that poetic prose must have outweighed the impact even of its style. Here was a fellow artist and thinker about human existence who did not fit into perceivedly 'normal' bourgeois Wilhelmine society, either. In 1898, Ewald Tragy, the thinly veiled autobiographical protagonist of Rilke's eponymous novella, ironicizes his father's shame upon being asked what his son 'is' (as opposed to what he 'does for a living') by pretending to empathize:

> Was soll man sagen? *Nur* Dichter? Das ist einfach lächerlich. Selbst wenn es möglich wäre – das ist ja kein Stand. Er trägt nichts, man gehört in keine Rangsklasse, hat keine Pensionsberechtigung, kurz: man steht in keinem Zusammenhang mit dem Leben (SW IV 531).

Rilke's poet, who has no 'standing' and does not 'carry' anything, being disconnected from life, is reminiscent of Nietzsche's astronautical free-floating detachment from day-to-day human existence, as well as of Zarathusta, whom the magician tantalizingly calls '*nur* Narr! *Nur* Dichter!' in 'Lied der Schwermuth' (KSA 4, 372-4). Not only is the emphasis on 'nur' identical, along with the association of the poet with ridicule in both 'lächerlich' and 'Narr'; but also the irony used by both men. In the Nietzsche quotation, however, the fool's divine madness, or *theia mania*, corresponds with the poet's reputation as exclusive truth-teller, both in *Wahrheit und Lüge* and in notes from 1884

found in the philosopher's estate: 'Der Dichter, der lügen kann/ wissentlich, willentlich/ Der allein kann Wahrheit reden' (KSA 11, 306).

Of course, as so often in Nietzsche, one is confronted with the problem of slipperiness with regard to the authorization of his text, as well: after all, Zarathustra maintains that the poets lie too much, only to then count himself among them. Therefore, the reader is never sure whether to associate the fool and the poet with truth, as suggested in the sub-text; or whether to see them as 'banished' from it, as it would seem on the surface (see KSA 4, 371-4). Absolute certainty in terms of the 'right' level of meaning simply cannot exist, which is of course presicely what gives the Nietzschean text its wonderfully performative quality: each reader is forced to think, and act, for himself.

However, it is likely that a young poet such as Rilke would have read Nietzsche's poet not as a 'mere fool', but rather, in line with the *Wahrheit und Lüge* definition, as someone who tells the truth by naming things anew, whereas conventional language lies by using old metaphors which no longer have anything to do with the thing they supposedly name.[189] This is potentially already evident in his introduction to *Worpswede*,[190] where he notes 'wie die Sprache nichts mehr mit den Dingen gemein hat, welche sie nennt' (KA 4, 315). At the very least, he will have arrived at such a view by 1921, when he writes:

> Oh sage, Dichter, was du tust?
> – Ich rühme.
> [...]
> Woher dein Recht, in jeglichem Kostüme,
> in jeder Maske wahr zu sein?
> – Ich rühme (SW II 249).

Thus, it may have been Nietzsche who helped to give Rilke the right to be true, as it says in the poem. Here was the absolution to create his own morals, values and meaning; to be free. As I have shown in chapter 2.1, the young Rilke was not alone in following Nietzsche like a second messiah, with *Zarathustra* as his substitute Bible, precisely by trying his hardest *not* to follow him, just as Zarathustra had wished – but I will return to that aspect in due course. The point here is that Rilke likely felt consoled

[189] See also *Morgenröthe* 47: '[Man muss] bei jeder Erkenntnis über steinharte verewigte Worte stolpern, und wird dabei eher ein Bein brechen, als ein Wort' (KSA 3, p. 53).
[190] A study of the five painters (Fritz Mackensen, Otto Modersohn, Fritz Overbeck, Hans am Ende and Heinrich Vogeler) living in an artists' colony in the village of that name along with Paula Becker, sadly not featured in the book, as well as Clara Westhoff.

by the knowledge that he was not the only 'mere' poet out there. A feeling of affinity must have connected him to Nietzsche, a consciousness of belonging to the same 'monumental' lineage of those whom the latter, in his second *Unzeitgemäße Betrachtung*, pathetically refers to as the great ones, the lonely ones of history.[191]

Besides being the most poetic and didactic, *Also sprach Zarathustra* is also that book by Nietzsche which poses the greatest difficulty. Alexander Nehamas, for example, sees as 'the single most serious problem *Zarathustra* presents [...] the fact that the book resists a unified reading, concealing its general structure and strategy, its overall point.' As stated above, the text hovers in a constant state of indecisiveness, due to its problem of lacking, or perhaps questioning, any possibility of authorized discourse. Nietzsche's abundant use of the ancient rhetorical technique of *prosepopoië*, of speaking through masks, makes a clear distinction between author, narrator, Zarathustra and the many other characters who populate the book very hard indeed. Confusion results, and the book, although the most popular of Nietzsche's, can easily turn from 'Ein Buch für Alle' into 'Ein Buch für Keinen'. This means that 'most of Nietzsche's readers still only dip into the book here and there, dazzled by its brilliant parts and passing over the rest in silence.'[192] Rilke himself probably proved no exception, as he was a famously erratic reader ('an hundertmal stehen gelassenen Büchern ohne Lust herumknabbernd, bald rechts bald links'; BW LAS 338) unlikely to have progressed in an orderly fashion, and it is a distinct possibility that he returned to his *Zarathustra* copy, albeit in an unbalanced way, not once, but time and again throughout his life, whenever he was in need of inspiration, consolation or consolidation of nascent ideas.

The *Zarathustra* passages selected by Rilke of course verifiably demonstrate for the first time exactly which Nietzschean topics were of special interest to the poet. Most obviously, as I have argued above, those passages may have functioned as projection screens or sounding boards, merely triggering or mirroring what was already there within him, unfinished and dormant until then. The experience of some of those *Zarathustra* passages may also have added genuinely new impulses to the psychic material out of which Rilke went on to create his poetry.

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[191] See chapter two of 'Vom Nutzen und Nachtheil der Historie für das Leben' in its entirety, which incidentally also already encapsulates the thought of the eternal return (KSA 1, pp. 258-265).
[192] 'For whom the Sun shines. A Reading of *Also sprach Zarathustra*', in: Gerhardt (2000), pp. 165-190. Both quotations on p. 166.

A neat separation of these themes and topics from one another however proves almost impossible. Like so much in Nietzsche, they form a tightly interwoven pattern. If one tries to draw a diagram of the 'Rilkean' Nietzsche themes, the lines of connection between them soon make the picture look more like a spider's web. Or, to remain within the musical terminology established in the methodology section of this study, it seems as though the passages merely echo one and the same theme in manifold variations and harmonies. As Giorgio Colli writes, 'es [scheint] richtiger, anstatt von allgemeinen Ideen von musikalischen Leitthemen zu sprechen, die [...] keimende Ausdrucksformen einer fundamentalen Unmittelbarkeit sind' (KSA 4, 415). Therefore, rather than progressing by topic, I shall examine selected passages (as representative of the respective *Zarathustra* book they belong to) singled out by Rilke as natural vantage points from which to embark on analyses of Rilke and Nietzsche's treatments of their respective topics; for Rilke was of course not merely an interpreter as much as a productive transformer of Nietzsche's thought.

2.4 Writing *Zarathustra*: unholy trinities. Salomé, Rée and Nietzsche

Famously, *Also sprach Zarathustra* stands apart from Nietzsche's other works. It is not only the artist-philosopher's most poetic book, but, as shown in the earliest thoughts on his Persian prophet found in Nietzsche's estate, also his most didactic one. It was obviously very much intended as such, as Nietzsche titled the incipient ideas for his new protagonist's adventures 'Fingerzeige zu einem neuen Leben' (KSA 9, 519). Shortly afterwards, on 26 August 1881 in Sils-Maria, he jotted down the embryonic structure of a project he calls *Mittag und Ewigkeit* under the heading 'Entwurf einer neuen Art zu leben'. Finally, he then defined such a new way of life as 'Die unablässige *Verwandlung* – du musst in einem kurzen Zeitraume durch viele Individuen hindurch. Das Mittel ist *der unablässige Kampf*' (KSA 9, 519f.). This begs the question of who Nietzsche's interlocutor, his 'du', is. For whom was the message of incessant self-transformation and struggle as signposts to and designs for a new life, written in a pseudo-biblical prose thus far entirely untypical of Nietzsche, intended? As the famous Nietzsche translator R. J. Hollingdale laconically states, 'even when ostensibly talking to others, Zarathustra sounds as if he were addressing himself […]. In any event, Zarathustra appears to care little whether he is understood or not' (1999, 153).

Furthermore, Zarathustra, 'like all imagined personages, is and is not his author' (154). One can indeed work from the assumption that Zarathustra himself was not only a projection and sublimation of the child Nietzsche never had,[193] but indeed also very much the philosopher's alter ego. In *Nietzsche in Seinen Werken*, Lou Andreas-Salomé argues that 'Nietzsche und sein Zarathustra' seem to be constantly merging into one another (2000, 268); whilst Nietzsche's friend Rohde saw an analogy to Plato's Socrates in the figure of Zarathustra and wrote to his creator on 22 December 1883:

> Der persische Weise bist zwar Du, aber es ist eine ganz andre Sache ob man höchst persönliche Meinungen direct als solche ausspricht oder sich ein Idealwesen erschafft, damit dieses sie als *seine* Meinungen vortrage; erst so setzt man sie recht aus sich heraus und steht sozusagen über sich selbst (KGB III.2, 412).

If we then consider the fact that the *Übermensch*, too, is positioned beyond man – as the self that lies immeasurably high above man's self – we arrive at the implication that Nietzsche, by creating this ideal being in Zarathustra, is simultaneously attempting to

[193] Nietzsche himself of course repeatedly likens the gestation period of a work, and particularly that of *Zarathustra*, to pregnancy (see KSB 6, p. 290), whilst Ida Overbeck remembers: 'Er hat im Sommer 1882 ausgesprochen, daß er [wegen dem (sic) Schmerz und der Entsagung, keinen Sohn zu haben, nie einen zu haben,] auf die Idee gekommen sei, eine Sohnesgestalt künstlerisch zu schaffen' (Bernoulli 1908, p. 336).

become the *Übermensch*. As this self-assessment from 1883 shows, 'diese Dichtung [...] enthält in der größten Schärfe ein Bild meines Wesens, wie es ist, *sobald* ich einmal meine ganze Last abgeworfen habe' (KSB 6, 326). It is worth noting here that Nietzsche on the one hand emphasizes the book's fictional character by calling it 'Dichtung'; but, on the other, avoids the formal future tense in favour of the more immediate present tense: his essence 'ist', rather than will be, his creation one day; his hopes for the future are still high.

Indeed, the trinity of Nietzsche, Zarathustra and the *Übermensch* is not always an easy one to split up into its constituent parts. My choice of this word from Christian theology is not accidental, for *Zarathustra* is of course not purely to be seen from a biographical angle, but also, among various other things, as the attempt at a 'philosophisch-religiösen und moralisch-prophetischen Ersatz für Religion und Moral'.[194] Nietzsche apparently heeded his own advice of 'unablässige *Verwandlung*' (KSA 9, 519) and forced himself through many different personae in a short space of time in order to get closer to that ever elusive goal of throwing off all his ballast and becoming the ideal version of himself.

The parallels between the prophet and his creator become apparent from the book's very beginning: In the first 'Vorrede', Zarathustra quite literally has a change of heart ('Endlich aber verwandelte sich sein Herz', KSA 4, 11). After ten years of loneliness in the mountains, he has gathered so much wisdom that he feels himself overflowing and wants to share and give of his cognizance. Thus, not only is he changing his own life – which, incidentally, resounds in Rilke's Apollo's 'Du mußt dein Leben ändern' (SW I 557) – but he also needs to take his design for a new way of life elsewhere and teach it to others. In order to do that, Zarathustra likens himself to the sun, which in Plato stands for truth, and says he has to go down – which in German of course also means to go under, to drown, or to come to an end – to the people, to whom he is now longing to belong once more: 'Siehe! Dieser Becher will wieder leer werden, und Zarathustra will wieder Mensch werden' (KSA 4, 12). Readers of Nietzsche already know at this stage on which connotation the emphasis must go, and that the 'Untergang', born from the urge to belong and to end his isolation, will end in tragedy, namely in a loneliness greater than ever before. Aphorism 342 of *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft* (published in 1882), which is nearly identical to that first *Zarathustra* 'Vorrede', also ends on 'Also begann Zarathustra's Untergang'; but, unlike its twin, begins with the sombre, prophetic warning '*Incipit tragoedia*' (KSA 3, 571).

[194] Ida Overbeck, in: Bernoulli (1908), p. 336.

At the very end of the tragedy bearing his name, Zarathustra only has his animals left to love and comfort him. Even the 'höheren Menschen' are far from his ideal, the *Übermensch*: first, they leave him alone by oversleeping, which indicates their sloth. Then, they cowardly run away from the roaring lion. Now, unlike Jesus, Nietzsche-Zarathustra is not willing to take pity on men any longer. He becomes hard (his face turns into ore) and turns away from his fellow human beings, seeking refuge in his work: 'Mein Leid und mein Mitleiden – was liegt daran! Trachte ich denn nach *Glücke*? Ich trachte nach meinem *Werke*' (KSA 4, 408). Clearly, the philosopher himself sublimated his emotions into his work ('die Erkenntniß [...] muß *Leidenschaft* sein'; KSA 9, 517) and thereby fought to smother them as he felt he might otherwise be killed by them.[195] With the parallels, then, between the philosopher and his mouthpiece this apparent, we must ask: how *did* the tragedy begin?

In 1881, at the age of 37, Nietzsche formulated the basic idea leading to *Zarathustra* for the first time: in aphorism 341 of *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*, 'Das größte Schwergewicht' on people's actions is the question of whether they could bear to live through them again and again (KSA 3, 570). The answer can only be yes if they have experienced an 'ungeheuren Augenblick' which they would love to live again to such an extent that they would be willing to live through the dreary, everyday rest of their lives again as well. Therein, the concept of the eternal return is born, and with it one of the defining traits of the *Übermensch*: 'Der Übermensch würde mit der ewigen Wiederkehr nicht nur zu leben verstehen; er würde sie fordern; denn sie allein könnte den Überfluß an ungeheuren Augenblicken bergen' (Heller 1992, 259). This means that the *Übermensch* is someone who lives his[196] life very much seizing the day, making each moment as intense as possible, in order not to be crushed by the prospect of potentially having to repeat all his experiences in an endless loop. The key to such an attitude could paradoxically simply be an increased awareness of the facts of death and the fleetingness of life, rendering each moment precious. Such a view of death as a part of life, or a very rare form of it, as Nietzsche puts it, was of course very much endorsed by both himself and Rilke.[197]

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[195] 'Es giebt Gefühle, die den Einsamen tödten wollen; gelingt es ihnen nicht, nun, so müssen sie selber sterben! Aber vermagst du das, Mörder zu sein?' (KSA 4, p. 81).

[196] I am afraid Nietzsche's considerable misogyny (developed, it would seem, in direct correlation with Salomé's rejection of him) does not allow for me to add 'or her'. See further: 'Nietzsche Emasculated: Postmodern Readings' by Carol Diethe, who calls herself an 'unrepentant dinosaur', in: Görner and Large (2003), pp. 51-64.

[197] 'Hüten wir uns, zu sagen, dass Tod dem Leben entgegengesetzt sei. Das Lebende ist nur eine Art des Todten, und eine sehr seltene Art.' In: *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft* 109, KSA 3, p. 468.

Amor fati is another important *Zarathustra* idea which appears in the 'gaya scienza', the artist-philosopher's most balanced and psychologically 'healthy' work (KSA 3, 660), which in early 1882 he opens with the following resolution 'zum neuen Jahre': 'Ich will immer mehr lernen, das Nothwendige an den Dingen als das Schöne sehen: – so werde ich Einer von Denen sein, welche die Dinge schön machen. Amor fati: das sei von nun an meine Liebe! [...] ich will irgendwann einmal nur noch ein Ja-sagender sein!' (519).

Promptly, the year which he began with this programmatic wish for himself presented him with one of the strangest adventures of his life (cf. Frenzel 107), putting his resolution to a test it was not to pass. Together with his friend – or, as some would argue, platonic lover[198] – the philosopher Paul Rée, 'ein Moralist im Sinne der französischen Moralisten, Pessimist, Positivist und, wie er sich gern bezeichnete, Atheist',[199] he met twenty-one-year-old Lou von Salomé through Malwida von Meysenbug in Rome. 'Nach dieser Gattung von Seelen lüstern' before even having set eyes on 'die junge Russin' (KSB 6, 185f.), Nietzsche's intentions clearly differed somewhat from those of his and Rilke's muse *in spe*. A 'heilige Dreieinigkeit' was born, '[die] keusche Variante der populären ménage à trois' (LAS 1998, 80), which was to prove momentous with regard to Nietzsche's work, yet ill-fated at a personal level. 'Von welchen Sternen sind wir uns hier einander zugefallen?' are the philosopher's dramatic first words to the young woman, which she went on to comment on drily in her memoirs.[200] Both men fell in love, proposed and were rejected as lovers and, particularly, as husbands. At that time, Salomé still formally insisted on her absolute independence and, with it, on her 'grundsätzliche Abneigung gegen alle Ehe überhaupt' (LAS 1998, 80). This attitude was encouraged by the idealist Meysenbug, her motherly friend who advised against 'das Spielen mit Gefühlen'[201] and wrote to her regarding

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[198] See Joachim Köhler, *Zarathustras Geheimnis. Friedrich Nietzsche und seine Verschlüsselte Botschaft* (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1992), particularly pp. 255-266.

[199] Ernst Pfeiffer (ed.), *Friedrich Nietzsche, Lou Andreas-Salomé, Paul Rée. Die Dokumente ihrer Begegnung,* Frankfurt/M.: Insel, 1970, p. 6.

[200] In an earlier version, she wrote 'von welchen Sternen gefallen sind wir uns hier einander zugeführt worden?' (see Pfeiffer 1970, p. 108). Pfeiffer states that Salomé 'entsann sich ganz des Sinnes, aber nicht genau der Formulierung' (p. 423). Köhler, once more, holds a different opinion. He argues that Salomé intentionally falsified Nietzsche's 'actual' first words – which concerned, in Köhler's view, the philosopher's 'Sternenfreund', Rée, rather than her – 'Von welchen Sternen gefallen sind wir hier einander zugeführt worden?', because she wanted to evoke the impression of a chance meeting, rather than admitting to the fact that it had been well planned by both herself and Rée (p. 332). The case remains open, as neither version can be verified conclusively. Andreas-Salomé's role in both men's lives in general remains equally hotly debated, as our picture of her is influenced by so many different constructions, including, above all, her own.

[201] In a letter of 25 May 1882 (in: Pfeiffer 1970, p. 111f.), where she continued: 'Je stolzer wir unsere Unabhängigkeit der Welt gegenüber bewahren wollen, jemehr müssen wir uns hüten ihr Waffen in die Hand zu geben, bei Dingen die durchaus nur von unserer Willkür abhängen' (p. 113).

what Nietzsche termed the 'Herbst- und Winterpläne' (135) for a shared flat in Vienna made by the 'Dreieinigkeit':

> So fest ich von *Ihrer* Neutralität überzeugt bin, so sehr sagt mir die Erfahrung eines langen Lebens und die Kenntniß der menschlichen Natur, daß es nicht gehen wird, ohne daß ein Herz grausam dabei leidet im edelsten Fall, im schlimmeren ein Freundschaftsbündniß zerstört wird.[202]

However, before Meysenbug's premonition was to be fulfilled, after a well documented joint trip via Orta and Lucerne which proved productive not least in terms of the myths concerning its participants,[203] Salomé – who was then still unfamiliar with the philosopher's work 'außer [mit] der "Fröhlichen Wissenschaft", die er noch in letzter Arbeit hatte und aus der er uns schon in Rom vorlas' (LAS 1998, 83) – stayed alone with Nietzsche for the first and last time during their three-week soujourn in Tautenburg. On daily ten-hour-walks, they 'sprechen [sich] förmlich todt' and enter each other's private thoughts to such an extent that Salomé worries: 'wenn uns Jemand zugehört hätte, er würde geglaubt haben, zwei Teufel unterhielten sich' (84). Nietzsche, in turn, enthused about 'die Tautenburger Wochen' spent with her:

> Das Nützlichste aber, was ich diesen Sommer gethan habe, waren meine Gespräche mit Lou. Unsre Intelligenzen und Geschmäcker sind im Tiefsten *verwandt* – und es giebt andererseits der Gegensätze so viele, daß wir für einander die lehrreichsten Beobachtungs-Objekte und –Subjekte sind. Ich habe noch Niemanden kennen gelernt, der seinen Erfahrungen eine solche Menge *objektiver Einsichten* zu entnehmen wüßte, Niemanden, der aus allem Gelernten so viel zu ziehn verstünde (KSB 6, 255f.).

Presumably because Nietzsche, in contrast to both Rée[204] and, later, Rilke's 'schicksalhaftem Gewicht', had a purely 'geistige Bedeutung' for her – Salomé had 'einmal nachsinnend bemerkt, sie könne sich Nietzsche aus ihrem Leben fortdenken' (LAS 2000, 20) – the author does not go into any detail about those 'lehrreiche Gespräche' in her *Lebensrückblick*, and emphasizes in its very title that *Friedrich*

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[202] From a letter of 6 June 1882, in: Pfeiffer 1970, p. 133. Meysenbug adds: 'Was *wir* wollen, geht nur auf größerer Basis'; Salomé, however, felt herself to be different, 'selbst wo wir übereinstimmen', and rebelled against her inclusion in that new 'wir', as she had against the expectations projected onto her by bourgeois society: 'dabei hab ich doch keine Ahnung, wer dies "wir" eigentlich wohl ist, [...] ich selber weiß doch nur was von "ich"' (p. 102).

[203] See chapter 3.3, which gives a brief account of the famous visit to Monte Sacro where Nietzsche and Salomé are assumed to have kissed, as well as of the circumstances in which the infamous photograph of Nietzsche, Salomé and Rée was taken in Lucerne.

[204] In a letter to Gillot written on 26 March 1882, shortly after having met the two 'Menschen [...], die [...] vor lauter Geist und Verstandesschärfe schon fast platzen', Salomé maintains, in an attempt to dispel Gillot's concerns regarding the potential threat posed to her by 'so viel ältere und überlegene Männer wie Rée, Nietzsche': 'Das Wesentliche (und das Wesentliche ist *menschlich* für mich nur *Rée*) weiß man entweder sofort oder garnicht' (in: Pfeiffer 1970, p. 102).

Nietzsche in Seinen Werken is based not so much on 'persönliche[m] Verkehr' as on 'den *sachlichen* Eindrücken' of the work (86).

In this context, it is worth noting that, while Salomé's literary achievement consists mainly in the psychological insights of her biographic depictions which informed even her novels,[205] her own memoirs remain the most widely read of all her books. An exercise in the opposite of Nietzschean forgetting as advocated in the second *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtung per definitionem*, they have, however, turned out to be a rather mended patchwork of memory.[206] Hence, they bring to the fore questions of authenticity and authorship: Salomé's memoirs, after all, shape our memory of her. How much is 'true', how much self-stylization? What is fact, what is fiction? In this context, as such questions have been dealt with sufficiently in the preceding chapters of this study, let it suffice here to let Gerhard Kaiser remind us, in 'Warum und wie ich schreibe', that 'autobiographische Erzählung [ist] immer auch schon Konstruktion von Vergangenheit und, darin, Apologie', and Salomé's is surely no exception.[207]

Those matters aside for now, what we have in the way of gleaning an idea of the topics of those devilish conversations is, in fact, nothing less than *Zarathustra* itself, for, 'trotz verschiedener, einander in die Hände arbeitende Anlässe zum Zarathustra, hat doch Lou den direkten Anteil daran',[208] as we shall see below; and 'die Ausführungen Lou Salomés über Nietzsches *Zarathustra* sind schon deshalb von Interesse, weil sie an der Grundkonzeption dieses Werks selbst mit beteiligt gewesen war'.[209] Moreover, Salomé kept a Tautenburg diary for Rée;[210] and 'Tautenburger Aufzeichnungen für Lou von Salomé' were found in Nietzsche's estate (KSA 10, 37-42). They included those 'Zur Lehre vom Stil',[211] which later appeared in *Nietzsche in Seinen Werken* word for word (2000, 156f.) and were thus more than likely known to Rilke as well.

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[205] Many critics have stated this; for examples, see Irmgard Hülsemann's biography *Lou* (Munich: Claassen, 1998); Carol Diethe's discussion of *Fenitschka* in her book *Vergiss die Peitsche: Nietzsche und die Frauen*, Hamburg/Wien: Europa, 2000, 74 ff; and Biddy Martin's book from 1991 (op. cit.).

[206] See, for example, Ernst Zinn's comment in SW III, p. 837f., regarding Salomé's account, given in *Lebensrückblick* (p. 139) of the origin of the *Stunden-Buch* verse 'Lösch mir die Augen aus' in 1897 (which he dates to 1899 at the earliest): 'Der Widerspruch zwischen ihrer Erinnerung und allen übrigen Indizien scheint also unaufhebbar.'

[207] Gerhard Kaiser, *Rede, daß ich dich sehe. Ein Germanist als Zeitzeuge.* Stuttgart/München: DVA 2000, p. 17.

[208] This was stated by Ida Overbeck, wife of Nietzsche's close friend Franz Overbeck whose correspondence with the philosopher Rilke read. In: Carl Albrecht Bernoulli, *Franz Overbeck und Friedrich Nietzsche. Eine Freundschaft*, Jena: 1908, p. 336.

[209] Ernst Behler, in: Gerhardt (2000), p. 358. Behler is referring to Salomé's 'Lebensgebet' and the passage in *Ecce Homo* in which Nietzsche credits her for it (see again KSA 6, p. 336).

[210] In Pfeiffer (1970), pp. 181-190. There is also the 'Stibber Nestbuch' containing aphorisms by both Salomé and Rée, partly corrected by Nietzsche (pp. 190-211); it is uncertain, however, whether it was written at Tautenburg.

[211] 'Zur Lehre vom Stil.

1. Das Erste, was noth thut, ist Leben: der Stil soll *leben*.

After Tautenburg, however, Nietzsche never saw either of his friends again, with the exception of one last meeting of the former 'Dreieinigkeit' in Leipzig in late September 1882. There, the jealous philosopher's ill-advised attempts to discredit Rée, later continued 'in einem hässlichen und würdelosen Briefwechsel, der sich bis ins nächste Jahr hinzog und dessen Peinlichkeit und Ungerechtigkeit Nietzsche sehr wohl empfand' (Frenzel 113), only served to seal his fate of loneliness and, in its wake, an increasingly torn sense of identity:[212] Salomé and Rée moved to Berlin to live as platonic, intellectual lovers in a shared flat, rather than going to Vienna or Paris with Nietzsche as planned. The latter's disappointment was deep and painful, and considerably worsened by Elisabeth Nietzsche's infamous and sadly effective smear campaign against the 'Finnish Jew' Salomé, her rival for her brother's attention, in whom she saw, 'ich kann es nicht leugnen, die *personificierte* Philosophie meines Bruders [...]: dieser rasende Egoismus der alles niederstößt was ihm in den Weg kommt und diese vollständige Morallosigkeit.'[213]

Therefore, looking back on 1882, the year he had begun with the intention to become a true devotee to *amor fati*, Friedrich Nietzsche was far from being in love with his fate:

> Ich gieng dieses Jahr mit einem wirklichen Verlangen 'zu den Menschen' zurück – ich meinte, man dürfe mir schon etwas Liebe und Ehre erweisen. Ich erlebte Verachtung, Verdächtigung und, in Hinsicht auf das, was ich kann und will, eine ironische Gleichgültigkeit (KSB 6, 306).

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2. Der Stil soll *dir* angemessen sein in Hinsicht auf eine ganz bestimmte Person, der du dich mittheilen willst. (Gesetz der *doppelten Relation*.)
3. Man muß erst genau wissen: 'so und so würde ich dies sprechen und *vortragen*' – bevor man schreiben darf. Schreiben muß eine Nachahmung sein.
4. Weil dem Schreibenden viele *Mittel* des Vortragenden *fehlen*, so muß er im Allgemeinen eine *sehr ausdrucksvolle* Art von Vortrag zum Vorbild haben: das Abbild davon, das Geschriebene, wird schon nothwendig viel blässer ausfallen.
5. Der Reichthum an Leben verräth sich durch *Reichthum an Gebärden*. Man muß alles, Länge und Kürze der Sätze, die Interpunktion, die Wahl der Worte, die Pausen, die Reihenfolge der Argumente – als Gebärden empfinden *lernen*.
6. Vorsicht vor der Periode! Zur Periode haben nur die Menschen ein Recht, die einen langen Athem auch im Sprechen haben. Bei den Meisten ist die Periode eine Affektation.
7. Der Stil soll beweisen, daß man an seine Gedanken *glaubt*, und sie nicht nur denkt, sondern *empfindet*.
8. Je abstrakter die Wahrheit ist, die man lehren will, um so mehr muß man erst die *Sinne* zu ihr verführen.
9. Der Takt des guten Prosaikers in der Wahl seiner Mittel besteht darin, *dicht* an die Poesie heranzutreten, aber *niemals* zu ihr überzutreten.
10. Es ist nicht artig und klug, seinem Leser die leichteren Einwände vorwegzunehmen. Es ist sehr artig und *sehr klug*, seinem Leser zu überlassen, die letzte Quintessenz unsrer Weisheit *selber auszusprechen*.'

[212] In June, still under the impression of the 'Winterpläne' yet coming to fruition, bearing 'eine Menge meiner Lebensgeheimnisse[,] in diese *neue* Zukunft eingewickelt', he had written to Overbeck: 'in der Art, wie ich *hier* handeln will und werde, bin ich einmal ganz und gar der Mensch meiner Gedanken, ja meines innersten Denkens: diese *Übereinstimmung* thut mir so wohl', in: Pfeiffer 1970, p. 136.

[213] In a letter to Clara Gelzer from 24 September 1882, in: Pfeiffer 1970, p. 252.

In the letter quoted above, Rohde further elaborates on the quality of height and weightlessness in an attempt to comfort Nietzsche in the face of the contempt for him and the ignorance of his work he felt. Both he and Nietzsche had so far only associated said quality with Zarathustra, the philosopher's ideal version of himself free from ballast, but now he attributes it directly to his 'dear friend':

> Du lebst, lieber Freund, in einer andern Höhe der Stimmung und der Gedanken: es ist, als hättest Du Dich über den atmosphärischen Dunstkreis, in dem wir alle herumwanken und Luft schnappen, emporgeschwungen und die Erde mit ihrem Dunstmantel kreiste unter Dir ohne Dich mit herum zu ziehen. Nichts von der Zeit, von dem was jetzt saeculum vocatur hängt sich Dir an. Uns andern will es nicht so wohl werden (KGB III.2, 414).

The majestic, even godlike, status of being weightless, of leaving behind time and gravity, means that no earthly troubles such as human emotions will affect the free-floating philosopher. However, Rohde sums up his friend's dilemma perfectly here: 'nichts...hängt sich Dir an' also implies that there are no 'Anhänger', no followers, that the work has failed to resound, to provoke a human response. As we know now, Nietzsche felt far from 'wohl' in the face of such complete detachment from all others, and it is dubious whether Rohde's letter had the desired consoling effect.

In January 1883, a year after the ecstatically happy 'Sanctus Januarius' which had brought him the 'gaya scienza', Nietzsche was still under the spell of the Salomé/Rée episode – likely, the farthest-reaching of his entire life. Lonely and embittered, he wrote down the first part of *Zarathustra* in a mere ten days, and critics such as Hollingdale even hold that this act of sublimation of his pain into art saved his life (1999, 153f.). When Nietzsche later recalls, or perhaps stylizes, that January's involuntary rush of inspiration – later used by C. G. Jung to illustrate, or even form, his theory of *Kryptomnesie*, or hidden memory – beyond his control and likens it to a 'Sturme' (KSA 6, 339f.), one cannot help but be reminded of how, forty years later, in 'einem einzigen, über alles menschliche Maß hinaus gesegnetem Monat, dem Februar 1922',[214] the yet outstanding *Duineser Elegien* came to Rilke as through a miracle, in a 'Sturm [...]. Es war doch wie eine Verstümmelung meines Herzens, daß die *Elegien* nicht da-waren' (BW LAS, 444f.).[215]

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[214] In a letter to Claire Studer-Goll from 11 April 1923, in: B II, p. 293.

[215] See again Destro, who goes so far as to credit Nietzsche directly for Rilke's *Elegien*-'Sturm': 'so entsteht für die Forschung die weitere Aufgabe, das Phänomen der so fest fortdauernden Beziehung [Rilkes] zu Nietzsche über Jahrzehnte hinweg zu klären, in denen ein auffälliges Stillschweigen über ihn bewahrt wurde. Das könnte auch einiges Licht auf den inneren Prozeß werfen, durch den Rilke nach enorm langer Zeit schließlich doch zum Abschluß des Duineser Zyklus gekommen ist. Vielleicht könnte

Yet, there is a difference in all the similarity of the way this blessed inspiration was perceived by the two men. Nietzsche writes about his prophet-child: 'Seine Entstehung war eine Art *Aderlaß*, ich verdanke ihm, daß ich nicht erstickt bin. Es war etwas Plötzliches' (KSB 6, 361). Both artists use metaphors of heart or, respectively, blood, and perceive their inspiration as coming suddenly and violently from the outside, saving their lives, as both suffocation and a mutilation of the heart must be regarded as rather lethal. To Rilke, however, the newly created book *adds* to him by completing his heart which was mutilated before; whilst to Nietzsche, it *diminishes* him, acting as a valve releasing pressure by ridding him of superfluous blood. Those are of course apt echoes of their different personalities which become visible in their respective approaches to their work: In comparison with Rilke's often cited spiritual humility, and his tendency to seek outside mirroring and strengthening of his easily collapsible sense of self, Nietzsche was much surer of his 'genius' (up to the point of self-deification shortly before insanity struck), more of a teacher needing to give of himself and his 'wisdom'.[216] His sense of mission can easily be construed as an expression of the overcompensation of the actual isolation and lack of resonance he experienced.

In 1885, Nietzsche completed the bloodletting, which also nearly killed him,[217] by publishing *Zarathustra*'s fourth and last part independently, as he was tired of the antisemitic escapades of his old publisher, Schmeitzner, and unable to find a new one. 'Es ist mein *Bestes*', he instantly wrote about his new book to his right-hand man, the composer Heinrich Köselitz better known as Peter Gast, 'und ich habe einen schweren Stein mir damit von der Seele gewälzt' (KSB 6, 321). Again, we have an image of the work as pressure valve allowing for the abundance of Nietzschean ideas to flow freely, away from him, to be received by others. Now that the stone is lifted, Zarathustra's spirit soars out in search of 'neue Freunde'.[218] Regardless of the scorn his alter ego Zarathustra pours on people by the end of the book, his creator clearly hoped to find an

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sich manches von Rilkes Aussagen über diese eruptive schöpferische Phase vom Februar 1922 als Legende entpuppen, und hinter dem "Diktat" von oben, hinter dem "Wunder" und dem "Orkan im Geist" könnte sich ein Willensakt zeigen, der viel bewußter ist, als man gewöhnlich annimmt, wenn man den Zeugnissen des Autors blindlings folgt' (2002, p. 213).

[216] At this point one should note that while Rilke has tended, particularly in his poet-persona, to be regarded as relatively un-didactic (particularly, of course, in comparison with Nietzsche), this view is beginning to shift, most notably so wherever the historical figure is considered alongside the literary author: Freedman, for example, in his recent biography speaks of the way the poet was given to writing letters 'auf seine didaktische Art' (2001, p. 149).

[218] In July 1883, Nietzsche wrote to his sister with regard to the printing of *Zarathustra II* by Schmeitzner: 'Ich will damit zu Ende kommen und von dieser Expansion des Gefühls erlöst sein, die solche Produktionen mit sich führen: es ist mir öfter der Gedanke gekommen, daß ich an so Etwas plötzlich sterbe' (KSB 6, p. 392).

[218] This is from Nietzsche's poem 'Einsiedlers Sehnsucht' written in 1884, which Rilke read in the *Insel-Almanach* (1912) and commented on. See further section 3.3.5 below.

echo, if not an answer, to it. On 17 June 1887 he sent what must be termed a cry of despair to his friend Franz Overbeck:

> Nach einem solchen Anrufe, wie mein Zarathustra es war, aus der innersten Seele heraus, nicht einen Laut von Antwort zu hören, nichts, nichts, immer nur die lautlose, nunmehr vertausendfachte Einsamkeit – das hat etwas über alle Begriffe Furchtbares, daran kann der Stärkste zugrunde gehen – ach, und ich bin nicht "der Stärkste!" Mir ist seitdem zumute, als sei ich tödlich verwundet.

The lack of a response along with the silent isolation it brings about are terrible beyond words, they cannot be 'begriffen'. The evocation of this deadly, nameless terror which, in turn, results in speechlessness vividly exemplifies the inner turmoil of a philosopher torn between his visions of himself as the wise and noble hermit and his (all-too-) human need for recognition. For the remaining two years of his sane life, Nietzsche's longing for a 'Geschwister-Gehirn'[219] was not to be fulfilled. The search for someone who could end the silent isolation of the recluse by truly understanding him, and being able to respond to him, was doomed to failure after the disappointment at the hands of Salomé and Rée.

[219] 'Meine liebe Lou, Ihr Gedanke einer Reduktion der philosophischen Systeme auf Personal-Acten ihrer Urheber ist recht ein Gedanke aus dem "Geschwistergehirn"'; letter from Nietzsche to Salomé from 16 September 1882, KGB III.I, p. 259.

3 Interpretation of the Findings*

3.1 Book I: 'Von der Entmenschlichung der Natur'. 'Von der Nächstenliebe' and the ghostly spectre of the *Übermensch*

> **Erstes Buch** im Stile des ersten Satzes der neunten Symphonie. *Chaos sive natura*: *'von der Entmenschlichung der Natur.'* Prometheus wird an den Kaucasus angeschmiedet. Geschrieben mit der Grausamkeit [...] 'der Macht' (KSA 9, 520).

The *Zarathustra* chapters 'Von der Nächstenliebe' and 'Von Kind und Ehe', and their echoes in Rilke's writings – most notably in his 'Requiem' for Paula Modersohn-Becker as well as in his later works such as the *Elegien* and *Sonette* – complement each other in their closely related themes to such an extent that it would be short-sighted not to consider them alongside each other. Most importantly, what Nietzsche attempts here is a re-definition, a revaluation even, of the term 'love'; with the first of the chapters apparently dealing with self-love, and the second, it would seem, with the 'romantic' variety, love of an Other.

However, this is only the case on the surface. What Nietzsche is mainly writing about is the love of the *Übermensch*, of the potential inherent in oneself, paradoxically at the risk, and indeed the cost, of the perdition of that very self. The great *Zarathustra* theme of *Selbstüberwindung*, of developing one's will of overcoming one's weakness resulting in the sublimation of one's human needs into the deeds of the creative individual, is very much present in these two chapters. In order to more accurately locate echoes of that theme in Rilke's work – mainly, in his belief in unpossessing love and in the mutual exclusivity of life and the great work of art – we must first trace further Nietzsche's notion of the *Übermensch* as outlined in 'Von der Nächstenliebe' and 'Von Kind und Ehe', and investigate his origins.

* Rilke's annotations in his own copy, Z.2, are distributed strikingly evenly between the four parts of the work: Three chapters are singled out in Book I; two in Book II; and three in Books III and IV, respectively. However, as *Zarathustra* was originally conceptualized as a three-part work, and as Book IV, published separately, mostly contains marginal notes by Westhoff rather than by Rilke himself, it is not discussed in a separate chapter here. Therefore, and in the absence of much other structural guidance, the three *Zarathustra* books provide the model for the structure of my interpretation. Throughout part three of this study, extracts from the Z.1 annotations and *Fröhliche Wissenschaft* will aid the interpretative process as and when relevant.

3.1.1 Inhuman acts of sublimation

'Durst dem Schaffenden, Pfeil und Sehnsucht zum Übermenschen: sprich, mein Bruder, ist diess dein Wille zur Ehe?' To Nietzsche, the answer to this key question in 'Von Kind und Ehe', a chapter underlined in the table of contents in Z.2, has to be 'no', as the question merely represents Zarathustra's idealized vision of the love leading to marriage. To him, that which the 'Viel-zu-Vielen' call marriage is actually merely the dirt and poverty of the soul (KSA 4, 91). This implies that the *Übermensch* is not recognized and encouraged in the partner by the vast majority of people who believe themselves in love. Consequently, the only means by which the *Übermensch* should be strived for is complete loneliness.[220] He could be defined as the highest possible self which, paradoxically, is actually *im*possible, as it is seen as a direction for love, rather than its achievable goal: 'Für Nietzsche ist der Übermensch keine historisch realisierbare Realität, er ist eher eine Leitfigur, eine immer zu leistende Aufgabe'.[221]

Again, the biographical derivation of such a demand which inextricably binds love to loneliness, and thus seems almost masochistic in its inhuman hardness, cannot be overlooked.[222] The Nietzsche translator Hollingdale writes:

> Having broken with his family because of his association with Lou and Rée, and then having been deserted by them too, Nietzsche felt he was now truly alone in the world, and his health was such that, ridiculously, he could neither die nor live: had he not been an artist, we can feel tolerably certain that around the turn of the year [1882-83] he would have put an end to an existence grown to a painful absurdity. Being an artist he was able, instead, to translate the pains of solitude into pleasures, and in the figure of Zarathustra […] to create a type of man who desires solitude because it is his natural element (1999, 153f.).

Indeed, the line in 'Von der Nächstenliebe', 'Also spricht der Narr: "der Umgang mit Menschen verdirbt den Charakter, sonderlich wenn man keinen hat"', directly echoes a letter to Salomé from 8 November 1882: 'Der Umgang mit Menschen hat mir den Umgang mit mir verdorben' (KSB 6, 274). Once more, Nietzsche speaks the truth under the guise of the fool. Like the lonely artists in Rilke's 'Requiem für eine Freundin', who 'ahnen manchmal in der Arbeit,/ daß sie verwandeln müssen, wo sie lieben' (SW I 655),

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[220] This is echoed in Rilke's 'Requiem für eine Freundin' which will be discussed below: 'Die Frauen leiden: lieben heißt allein sein,/ und Künstler ahnen manchmal in der Arbeit,/ daß sie verwandeln müssen, wo sie lieben' (SW I, p. 655).

[221] Destro 2002, p. 212. See also Simmel's interpretation in 'Friedrich Nietzsche. Eine moralphilosophische Silhouette': 'er bewegt sich, wenn ich ihn richtig deute, in einem steten Konflikt zwischen dem Bewusstsein der Annäherung an den "Übermenschen", d. h. an sein Entwicklungsideal des Menschen, und der grenzenlosen Entfernung von ihm' (p. 127).

[222] See *Ecce Homo*: 'die unterste Gewissheit darüber, *dass alle Schaffenden hart sind*, ist das eigentliche Abzeichen einer dionysischen Natur' (KSA 6, p. 349).

Nietzsche transformed the mental torments he experienced during the Zarathustra years, constitutive mainly of 'die schauerliche Stille [der...] Einsamkeit' (KSA 6, 342), into the imperative of 'werdet hart!' (349). This imperative should in fact be in the singular, as it is probably directed mainly at Nietzsche-Zarathustra himself. It is necessary to become hard as his own concept of the *Übermensch*, life-saving in its artistic sublimation of his demons as it may have been, is in fact terrifying even to him. In the Zarathustra chapter 'Vom Wege des Schaffenden' which immediately follows 'Von der Nächstenliebe', Nietzsche himself indeed seems to be his addressee:

> Einst wirst du dein Hohes nicht mehr sehn und dein Niedriges allzunahe; dein Erhabnes selbst wird dich fürchten machen wie ein Gespenst. Schreien wirst du einst: 'Alles ist falsch!'
>
> Es giebt Gefühle, die den Einsamen tödten wollen; gelingt es ihnen nicht, nun, so müssen sie selber sterben! (KSA 4, 81).

What could be more terrifying than emotions so intense they feel potentially lethal, except perhaps the prospect of having to murder one's own emotions, and thereby part of oneself? In fact, the very next question in the text is: 'Aber vermagst du das, Mörder zu sein?' In the case of Nietzsche himself, it was of course a rhetorical question. As Zarathustra says in the first 'Vorrede', and as Nietzsche admitted to Rohde in 1882, both went back to the people with the desire, in the case of the literary figure, to belong to them once more; and, in that of its creator, to be loved and honoured (KSA 4, 12; KSB 6, 306).

Yet, in December 1882, after the love for both Salomé and Rée had been disappointed, Nietzsche wrote to Overbeck: 'Weise wie ich lieben nur Gespenster – und wehe wenn ich einen M[enschen] liebe – ich würde ba[ld] an dieser Liebe zu Grunde gehen. Der M[ensch] ist eine zu unvollkommene Sache' (KSB 6, 311). This statement found its place in Zarathustra's second 'Vorrede', uttered not by the protagonist but by a saintly hermit and fellow 'Einsiedler'. The striking similarity of the literary passage in question to that from the letter quoted above suggests that that old man, as 'eine [s]einer Vorbereitungen und Zwischenakte' (KSB 7, 48), is arguably another mask Nietzsche is speaking through: 'Jetzt liebe ich Gott: die Menschen liebe ich nicht. Der Mensch ist mir eine zu unvolkommene Sache. Liebe zum Menschen würde mich umbringen' (KSA 4, 13).[223]

[223] The 'Einsiedler' in his forest has not yet heard of the death of God. This, in turn, implies that God is merely present, if at all, as his own ghost and therefore not too far removed from the 'Gespenster' Nietzsche loves.

In ‘Von der Nächstenliebe’, the contrast of the love for humans to that for spectres is built up again, as the latter are decidedly inhuman in their equation with things, and positioned in a ‘fernste’ future:

> Höher als die Liebe zum Nächsten ist die Liebe zum Fernsten und Künftigen; höher noch als die Liebe zu Menschen ist die Liebe zu Sachen und Gespenstern.
> Diess Gespenst, das vor dir herläuft, mein Bruder, ist schöner als du; warum giebst du ihm nicht dein Fleisch und deine Knochen? Aber du fürchtest dich und läufst zu deinem Nächsten (KSA 4, 77).

Yet, the love for his ‘Erhabnes’ is no less lethal than that for humans, which Nietzsche feared could kill him, and which he tried to renounce so defiantly: here, the potential deadliness of the spectre is evoked as it seems to require the very flesh and bones of the man who is following it. To give his body, and thus his life, up to it would seem the only way in which man could become such a spectre himself. Herein, the impossibility of ever achieving the elusive goal of turning into the perfection that is the *Übermensch* is demonstrated vividly.[224] All this suggests that Nietzsche actually despised himself for his imperfection, manifested most clearly by the Salomé/Rée episode. He was a victim of feelings beyond his control, vulnerable and full of the maddening resentment he so resented.[225]

However, there is more to the uncanny spectre of the *Übermensch*, forever tantalizingly running ahead of him. In this other aspect, it is related to Rilke’s ‘Gespenst des Vergänglichen’ from the *Sonette an Orpheus* (II/27; SW I 769).[226] Its history possibly goes back to March 1868 when, as a twenty-five-year-old student in Leipzig, Nietzsche had a riding accident. To combat the pain in his chest, he took morphine each evening. Soon, his notes took on the character of drug-induced hallucinations:

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[224] A challenging discussion of the eternal return and the *Übermensch* as ‘self-consuming’ (and, therefore, impossible) concepts can be found in: Bernd Magnus, ‘A Bridge too far. Asceticism and Eternal Recurrence’, in: Volker Gerhardt (ed.), *Friedrich Nietzsche. Also sprach Zarathustra*, Berlin: Akademie, 2000, pp. 285-321.

[225] See his letter to Overbeck from 26 August 1883: ‘Die kuriose Gefahr dieses Sommers heißt für mich – um das böse Wort nicht zu scheuen – Irrsinn [...]. Man hat mich ein Jahr lang zu einer Gattung von Gefühlen gehetzt, denen ich mit allerbestem Willen abgeschworen habe und über die ich in der gröberen Form wirklich glaubte Herr geworden zu sein: Rachegefühle und “ressentiment’s” (sic)’ (KSB 6, p. 435).

[226] It is true that, during Nietzsche’s adolescence and up until the *fin de siècle*, ghosts were a topic of common interest: ‘Die Zeit verlangte nach Spuk. Das Gespenst der Revolution, vor dem man die Augen verschloß, tauchte nachts in den eigenen vier Wänden auf’, as Köhler writes (1992, p. 12). However, particularly as ‘Freud demonstrierte dem neuen Jahrhundert, daß im Gespenst die Angst vor übermächtiger Patriarchal-Gewalt steckt’ (ibid.), Rilke, writing in 1922, cannot be considered part of that trend anymore.

> Was ich fürchte, ist nicht die schreckliche Gestalt hinter meinem Stuhl, sondern ihre Stimme: auch nicht die Worte, sondern der schauderhaft unartikulierte und unmenschliche Ton jener Gestalt, Ja, wenn sie doch redete wie Menschen reden...(Schlechta 3, 148).

Similarly, in Rilke's *Malte*, the protagonist speaks of 'die Angst, daß ich nichts sagen könnte, weil alles unsagbar ist' (SW VI 767). Thus, it would seem that both poet and philosopher were driven by similar fears regarding the inexpressibility of experience, and alike in their at times defiant-seeming attempts to prove themselves wrong.[227] In his essay 'Nietzsches Terror: Die Zeit und das Unartikulierte', Heller assesses the Nietzsche fragment quoted above as follows: 'das Ziel des totalen Krieges, den Nietzsche gegen das Ungeformte führte, [angetrieben von dem Schrecken...der entsetzlich unartikulierten und unmenschlichen Stimme des Gespenstes, ist,] die unmenschlichen Laute mit der vox humana zu besiegen.'[228] The critic argues further that Nietzsche's 'Redseligkeit', his almost manic, constant outpouring of words, was a result of his lifelong flight from that inarticulate spectre. In essence, that flight also resulted in the philosopher's famous distaste of logic and his infamous proneness to contradictions: 'seine Widersprüche […] sind das Ergebnis seiner Furcht, die Reichweite der Artikulation zu verkürzen; und eine solche Verkürzung ist unter der Tyrannei logischer Folgerichtigkeit unvermeidlich' (249).

However, I would go even further and argue that the frightful 'Gestalt', along with the two people whom Nietzsche could not cease to love, more or less directly engendered the 'Gespenst' that is the *Übermensch*.[229] Firstly, the philosopher wrote of his inability to express to them both, Salomé and Rée, his innermost feelings in a way directly reminiscent of the terrible inarticulateness of the 'Gestalt': 'Diese erzwungene Lautlosigkeit ist mir mitunter fast zum Ersticken – namentlich weil ich Sie Beide lieb habe.'[230] Further evidence for the chain of emotional events leading from 'Unmensch'

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[227] Both repeatedly expressed the wish to be able to stop writing and settle down to a more bourgeois existence. On the topic of silence and the cognitive value of art, see further section 3.3.5 below.

[228] 1992, p. 246. Other interpretations of the 'Gestalt hinter dem Stuhl' deviate too far from our own to be helpful, and therefore are not given in detail here. Suffice it to state that according to Köhler, who – rather reductively, no doubt as it serves the objective of his own project – sees the hallucinatory fragment in the context of both the death of Nietzsche's father and the philosopher's 'Aushungerung der Leiblichkeit und der Begierde', Werner Ross's and Curt Paul Janz's 'Deutungen wirken unglücklich, fast widerwillig. Ross mutmaßt, ihn [Nietzsche] habe "die Angst vor dem Gottseibeiuns" überfallen; Janz sieht hinter der Stimme einen "Boten aus jenem Reich, in das er [Nietzsche] 20 Jahre später eingehen sollte' (p. 90).

[229] In *Nietzsche in Seinen Werken*, Lou Andreas-Salomé, albeit without recourse to the 'Gestalt hinter dem Stuhl' from the morphine-anecdote, also discusses 'das Räthsel und Geheimnis in den Lehren Nietzsches, [...] die Frage: Wie denn die Entstehung des Uebermenschlichen aus dem Unmenschlichen überhaupt möglich sei, wenn Beide als unversöhnliche Gegensätze zu denken sind' (p. 237).

[230] In a letter to Salomé from December 1882 which was never sent, in: KSB 6, p. 295.

via ‘Mensch’ to ‘Übermensch’ lies in the second to last aphorism of *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*, ‘Die grosse Gesundheit’. It is from Book five, written years after *Zarathustra* and, therefore, even more justifiably a commentary of it than books one to four which came into being in 1882, and is repeated in *Ecce Homo*, where Nietzsche quotes it explicitly in order to better describe ‘Zarathustra selber, als Typus’ (KSA 6, 337): ‘Ein andres Ideal läuft vor uns her, [...] das Ideal eines menschlich-übermenschlichen Wohlseins und Wohlwollens, das oft genug *unmenschlich* erscheinen wird’ (KSA 3, 636f.). Here, in 1887, in the ‘Ideal eines Geistes’ (ibid.) running ahead of us humans, Nietzsche explicitly unites all three levels, which in *Zarathustra* he had still kept quite separate from each other: inhuman, human and superhuman.

Part of the origin of the *Übermensch* can thus be seen in the following process: driven by the uncannily inarticulate shape standing behind him (‘unmenschlich’) whilst simultaneously avoiding the potentially deadly love for fallible humans (‘menschlich’) who also rendered him speechless, Nietzsche, in a frenzied outpouring of words, went on to chase without cease the spectre of impossible perfection running ahead of him (‘übermenschlich’). What the two entities, the shape and the spectre, have in common is their inhumanity, and the fear they were able to induce in the philosopher. Most importantly, however (and, in that way, *like* the beloved human to Nietzsche), they are essentially out of reach. We have already established this quality of unattainability for the spectre of the *Übermensch*, who can only be a direction for a human’s love or striving, as he is not a goal which can be achieved, but rather the guiding light for an ongoing process of self-overcoming (‘ich bin das*, was sich immer selber überwinden muss*’; KSA 4, 148).[231] Similarly, in *Zarathustra*, the partner in marriage must merely be an arrow towards that *Übermensch* and therefore cannot be a terminus, either. Finally, the shape behind the chair – which, in my view, is the spectre’s older brother and, in Heller’s words, Nietzsche’s ‘Terror’ – can never be vanquished (and thereby grasped), as even the most creative mind will never be able to record all of his or her experience.[232]

As was shown in chapter 2.4 of this study, Nietzsche perceived the writing of *Zarathustra* as having saved him from death by that very suffocation: ‘Seine Entstehung war eine Art *Aderlaß*, ich verdanke ihm, daß ich nicht erstickt bin. Es war etwas Plötzliches’ (KSB 6, p. 361).

[231] See also Z.1.2.7: ‘49. Sich selbst überwinden <als Lebenssinn> = Definition des Lebens’. Compare this to Salomé: ‘Denn gerade die vollendetste und umfassendste Seele muß am klarsten und unwiderruflichsten das Grundgestz des Lebens in sich zum Ausdruck bringen, welches heißt: “Ich bin das, *was sich immer selbst überwinden muss* ”’ (2000, p. 228f).

[232] This notion is mirrored in a passage of Rilke’s *Erster Elegie* and in his *Sonett* II/26. Both will be discussed further in this chapter.

The resemblance of Rilke’s angels to the *Übermensch*, albeit on the basis of textual interpretation alone due to the lack of evidence of Rilke’s reading of Nietzsche so far, has been discussed at length in

Ironically, the human element of that terrible trinity was perhaps the hardest to reach for the lonely philosopher: in the end, Nietzsche was unable to catch up even with himself as he, literally, lost his mind.[233] Indeed, by the time of his death in 1900, he had actually become what, in 1888, had been a mere metaphor for himself: a 'Gespenst', an inhuman, ghostly spectre, an *Übermensch* even, 'ein Mythos, eine Figur, die [...] auch durch ihre Existenz, nicht zuletzt durch die geistige Umnachtung, allem Menschlichen entrückt zu sein scheint'.[234] With his insanity he very possibly paid the price for his dangerous submission, as Rilke put it in regard to Rodin, of the free and unbounded divine: 'jede Unterwerfung des Zu-großen uns Übertreffenden, des frei und unverpflichtet Göttlichen [muß sich] irgendwann rächen'.[235]

Rilke scholarship, for example, by Richard Detsch, Walter Kaufmann, Keith M. May and Theo Meyer, not to mention Martin Heidegger and Margot Fleischer (for further reference, see again chapter 1.2 of this study). Rather imprecisely, Detsch calls them 'the more ethereal versions of Nietzsche's overman' and even goes so far as to claim: 'the teachings of Nietzsche's Zarathustra form the background of Rilke's entire *Duino Elegies*' (2003, p. 57), possibly leaning on Kaufmann's verdict from 1959 that 'the angel of the elegies (sic) [...] is the image or incarnation of the accomplishment of our striving, and his features thus merge with those of Nietzsche's *Übermensch*' (1980, p. 233). Whilst stating that the Rilkean angels ('eine letztlich nie zu realisierende Möglichkeit') rather differ from the *Übermensch* ('als reale Möglichkeit des Menschen gedacht', p. 212. As this note shows, I disagree in this point), Meyer had, however, already pointed out ten years before Detsch: 'Nicht zuletzt die *Duineser Elegien* sind ohne Nietzsches Weltverständnis kaum denkbar' (p. 210). Entirely neglecting Nietzsche's statement regarding *Zarathustra* in *Ecce Homo*, 'Hier redet kein "Prophet"' (KSA 6, p. 259), May writes that 'the vital distinction between the two is that the Angel is a fantasy and the *Übermensch* a prophecy' (p. 69). Without further engaging in such a complex discussion in a footnote, for now I would like to point out that, contrary to the view held by May and Meyer, Nietzsche's *Übermensch* at the very least shares the unattainability of Rilke's angel: 'Engel, und würb ich dich auch! Du kommst nicht./ Denn mein Anruf ist immer voll Hinweg' (*Siebente Elegie*, SW I, p. 713). It is not his function to ever become a reality.

[233] While the precise nature of his insanity is still debated, I would maintain that, whatever the medical reason, Nietzsche's excessive 'Denken am Abgrund', along with his human isolation, cannot have furthered his mental health. By convincingly reassessing Nietzsche's symptoms, however, latest research shows that the organic part of the cause of his decline was not, as customarily assumed, syphilis; but that the philosopher almost certainly died of brain cancer: 'Dr Leonard Sax, the director of the Montgomery Centre for Research in Child Development in Maryland, claims that the universally accepted story of Nietzsche having caught syphilis from prostitutes was actually concocted after World War II [in 1947] by Wilhelm Lange-Eichbaum, an academic who was one of Nietzsche's most vociferous critics. It was then adopted as fact by intellectuals who were keen to demolish the reputation of Nietzsche, whose idea of a "Superman" was used to underpin Nazism. Despite the lack of documentary or medical evidence, the allegation [of Nietzsche's syphilis] had since been repeated without question by generations of academics.' From an article by Robert Matthews in *The Age* from 6 May 2003, source: http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2003/05/05/1051987652842.html?oneclick=true. See further: Sax's article in the *Journal of Medical Biography* (2003).

[234] Meyer, p. 213. See also Nietzsche's prophetically accurate self-appraisal in *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft* in full: 'Auch wir gehen mit "Menschen" um, auch wir ziehen bescheiden das Kleid an, in dem (als das) man uns kennt, [...] und setzen jeder Neugier, die nicht unser "Kleid" betrifft, auf eine höfliche Weise den Stuhl vor die Türe. Es gibt aber auch andere Arten und Kunststücke, um unter Menschen, mit Menschen "umzugehen": zum Beispiel als Gespenst – [...] man greift nach uns und bekommt uns nicht zu fassen. Das erschreckt. Oder: wir kommen durch eine geschlossene Tür. Oder: wenn alle Lichter ausgelöscht sind. Oder: nachdem wir bereits gestorben sind. Letzteres ist das Kunststück der *postumen* Menschen par excellence' (KSA 3, p. 613).

[235] To Gertrud Knoop on 20 March 1922, in: *Briefe aus Muzot*, p. 123.

‘Daß alles Geformte gefährdet ist, ist offensichtlich’, as Heller writes (1992, 246), and selectivity in language, even in poetry, cannot be bypassed. This means that time will always win, and that all experience will fall victim to forgetfulness eventually. The rhetorical question from Rilke’s *Sonett* II/26: ‘Giebt es wirklich die Zeit, die zerstörende?’ (SW I 769) is already answered in the affirmative in his *Erste Elegie*: ‘Denn Bleiben ist nirgends’ (687); thus, ‘das Gespenst des Vergänglichen’ (*Sonett* II/26, 769) unavoidably remains our destiny. This is the knowledge behind Nietzsche’s frenzy to ceaselessly write, against his better judgement that we can never arrive at anything. As in Freud’s *Jenseits des Lustprinzips*, Thanatos, the death drive urging us toward stillness in his constant fight against Eros, the pleasure principle, can only ever be appeased in actual death. As so often, Nietzsche would seem to have anticipated the father of psychoanalysis here; in this instance, in Zarathustra’s ‘Nachtwandler-Lied’: ‘*Weh spricht: Vergeh!/ Doch alle Lust will Ewigkeit –,/ – will tiefe, tiefe Ewigkeit!*’ (KSA 4, 404). Yet, there is a gulf between this wish and reality, as he writes in *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*: ‘wir Deutsche sind Hegelianer, […] insofern wir […] dem Werden, der Entwicklung instinktiv einen tieferen Sinn und reicheren Werth zumessen als dem, was “ist” – wir glauben kaum an die Berechtigung des Begriffs “Sein”’ (KSA 3, 599). Similarly, to Rilke, there is only constant becoming, and in this, he is a truly German poet, despite his cosmopolitan lifestyle: in his later works, notably the *Elegien*, ‘nothing is a terminus [anymore], not even death’ (May 53). Here lies the root, for both Nietzsche and Rilke, of an irrationalist artistic drive to combat transience by constantly creating and giving shape to invisible, inarticulate things and emotion.

3.1.2 Friendship as 'Fernsten-Liebe'

Now, Rilke's situation at the time he most likely engaged with the two chapters under discussion must be considered. Once more, women played a vital role in his reception of the Nietzschean text. He was given *Zarathustra* by Westhoff in March 1901 for their wedding, mere months after he had lost Salomé, who later went on to remain his closest friend and platonic lover. Another woman close to him who shared his love of Nietzsche, which he still declared relatively openly around the turn of the century, was the Worpswede painter Paula (Modersohn-) Becker (1876-1907). In the context of their interconnected biographies as artists, the attractiveness of the Nietzschean concept of friendship as the purest form of non-possessive love as set forth in the two *Zarathustra* chapters in question becomes evident.

Around 3 March 1899 Paula Becker wrote in her diary:

> Also sprach Zarathustra beendet. Ein köstliches Werk. Es wirkt auf mich berauschend mit seiner morgenländischen Psalmensprache, mit seiner tropischen Fülle leuchtender Bilder. Manches Dunkle stört mich nicht. Ich schaue darüber hinweg. Verstehen wir denn im Leben alles? Der Nietzsche mit seinen neuen Werten ist doch ein Riesenmensch. Er hält die Zügel stramm und verlangt das Äußerste der Kräfte. Aber ist das nicht die wahre Erziehung? Sollte nicht in jeder Liebe dies Streben liegen, den geliebten Gegenstand zu seinen schönsten Möglichkeiten zu treiben? Mir war es sonderbar, klar ausgesprochen zu sehen, was noch unklar und unentwickelt in mir ruhte. Ich fühle mich wieder freudig als moderner Mensch und Kind meiner Zeit.[236]

In *Zarathustra*, the young painter is most attracted, even intoxicated, by the tropical abundance of bright and vivid images. In her description, the book seems rather like a deliciously exotic banquet to pick and choose from only what is pleasing. Indeed, dark and obscure passages – which she happily admits not to understand – are simply overlooked, with the explanation of the book representing life itself, which is largely unintelligible to us, as well: 'Verstehen wir denn im Leben alles?' Simply put, Becker here reads love according to Nietzsche as the education of the beloved, with the necessity of having to be cruel to be kind, in contrast to the doctrines of compassion and altruism established by the institutionalized Christian church and still prevailing at that time. Consequently, she reads the *Übermensch* as the realization of the beloved's most beautiful possibilities. Excited by those new values expressed clearly for the first time, she is grateful to the 'Riesenmensch' Nietzsche for finding the words apparently

[236] Paula Modersohn-Becker, *Briefe und Aufzeichnungen*, ed. Beate Jahn, Leipzig and Weimar: Kiepenheuer, 1982, p. 99.

describing her as yet inarticulate subconscious and giving her back her sense of belonging to her time, to be part of a process.[237]

As I set out in chapter 2.1, such an enthusiastic reception of Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* was not unusual by any means, in fact, it was rather typical of a *fin de siècle Bohèmienne*: 'In Nietzsche sieht man nicht nur die Grundtendenzen der Gegenwart und der Zukunft, sondern auch die eigenen, persönlichen Probleme und Antriebe verkörpert', the critic Theo Meyer maintains with regard to the 'Nietzsche-Fieber' intoxicating the philosopher's contemporaries, mainly the academic and artistic elites (213f.). The main reason for involving Becker here is the fact that her photograph was found between pages 88 and 89 of Rilke's Naumann-edition of *Zarathustra*, Z.2, marking the chapter 'Von der Nächstenliebe'. The gifted painter was not only a close friend of Rilke's sculptor wife and married the painter Otto Modersohn shortly after the Rilkes' wedding; she also shared an intense friendship with the poet himself, and the lively exchange of ideas between them is documented in their correspondence.

In his diary, Otto Modersohn displays a view of Nietzsche and his influence on Rilke, Westhoff and Becker seemingly rather different from his wife's:

> Egoismus, Rücksichtslosigkeit ist die moderne Krankheit. Nietzsche der Vater. Gegenteil von christlicher Nächstenliebe...So ist Rilke und seine Frau...Leider ist Paula auch sehr von diesen modernen Ideen angekränkelt. Sie leistet auch etwas im Egoismus.[238]

Arguably, as Nietzsche admirers, all three of the thus accused would have been proud of Modersohn's observation, following their 'Vater' in his revaluations. In 'Von der Nächstenliebe' Zarathustra indeed claims that 'Fernsten-Liebe' is more advisable than 'Nächstenliebe', its pious variety, which is merely a running away from one's self further promoting the ancient 'Heiligsprechung des Du' (KSA 4, 77). Indeed, Rilke's lines from the *Siebente Duineser Elegie* – the elegy which most openly bears witness to Nietzsche's subterranean influence in its praise of immanence and creative, transformative powers –

> Nur, wir vergessen so leicht, was der lachende Nachbar
> uns nicht bestätigt oder beneidet. Sichtbar
> wollen wirs heben, wo doch das sichtbarste Glück uns
> erst zu erkennen sich giebt, wenn wir es innen verwandeln (SW I 711)

[237] Arguably, Nietzsche here did for Becker what he was unable to do for himself: he vanquished the inarticulate shape behind *her* chair, so to speak.
[238] Paula Modersohn-Becker in Briefen und Tagebüchern, eds. Günter Busch and Liselotte von Reinken, Frankfurt/M.: Insel, 1987, p. 324.

– distinctly mirror the philosopher's distaste for depending on others for one's sense of self in this chapter:

> Ihr ladet euch einen Zeugen ein, wenn ihr von euch gut reden wollt; und wenn ihr ihn verführt habt, gut von euch zu denken, denkt ihr selber gut von euch.
>
> [...] Und so redet ihr von euch im Verkehre und belügt mit euch den Nachbar (KSA 4, 78).

In Nietzsche's revaluation, 'der Nächste' is to be avoided at all costs, as in this eponymous aphorism from *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*: 'Nah hab den Nächsten ich nicht gerne:/ Fort mit ihm in die Höh und Ferne!/ Wie würd' er sonst zu meinem Sterne?' (KSA 3, 359). The reason for this avoidance is that, according to Zarathustra's teachings, love is to be reserved for the furthest future, which in turn is one of the definitions of the *Übermensch*, who is also seen as the cause for one's self or for today, and represented by the friend: 'Die Zukunft und das Fernste sei dir die Ursache deines Heute: in deinem Freunde sollst du den Übermenschen als deine Ursache lieben' (KSA 4, 78).[239]

Before returning to Becker and her relationship to the Rilkes once more, Nietzsche's possible motivation for this particular revaluation must be examined briefly. It was certainly a swipe mainly at the Christian upbringing which still had even him under its spell despite all his fervent attempts to free himself from it; but certainly also at romantic love, which the philosopher had failed to kindle in Salomé immediately before committing *Zarathustra* to paper. He needed to construct a new belief system which would replace the old Christian one which had put far too great an emphasis on emotions which were weakening, such as pity and charity. Consequently, he let *his* (anti-) prophet continue: 'Nicht den Nächsten lehre ich euch, sondern den Freund' (KSA 4, 78).

Analogously, in another aphorism of *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft* – the commentary, as Nietzsche put it, to *Zarathustra*[240] – the philosopher expresses his view of an ideal relationship between two people rather more clearly than in the somewhat obscure language of his Persian protagonist. In 'Was Alles Liebe genannt wird' he equates love

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[239] This difficult passage explains Otto Modersohn's concern, for after all, who would want to be married to a partner who believes that love should be reserved exclusively for one's ego? Implications of narcissism become threatening indeed when one recalls that potentially even that friend who embodies the beloved *Übermensch* is none other than oneself: 'Ich wollte, ihr hieltet es nicht aus mit allerlei Nächsten und deren Nachbarn; so müsstet ihr aus euch selber euren Freund und sein überwallendes Herz schaffen' (KSA 4, 77).

[240] In a letter to Overbeck, 7 April 1884, in KGB III.1, p. 496.

with avarice and asks: 'Unsere Nächstenliebe – ist sie nicht ein Drang nach neuem *Eigenthum*?' (KSA 3, 386).[241] Nietzsche once more, as so often in his aphoristic writings, turns to etymology in his process of revaluation, in this case investigating why the same drive has two such different names. His verdict is that, not only in the case of charitable love, but particularly in that of romantic love, 'hier haben offenbar die Nichtbesitzenden und Begehrenden den Sprachgebrauch gemacht' (387). In those who already own their beloved, the drive has subsided, and they now fear the loss of their possession. Therefore, they refer as 'Habsucht' to the same thing which those who are yet unsatisfied name 'Liebe'. Nietzsche is puzzled that romantic love, which to him by definition is the most ingenious expression of egotism as it excludes all others from the bliss it seeks to experience with its object, has been branded as the very opposite of egotism. However, there exists a very rare kind of love which, to him, truly deserves the name:

> Es giebt wohl hier und da auf Erden eine Art Fortsetzung der Liebe, bei der jenes habsüchtige Verlangen zweier Personen nach einander einer neuen Begierde und Habsucht, einem *gemeinsamen* höheren Durste nach einem über ihnen stehenden Ideale gewichen ist: aber wer kennt diese Liebe? Wer hat sie erlebt? Ihr rechter Name ist *Freundschaft* (ibid.).

Hence, with Nietzsche, love is revaluated as friendship, which logically should be the only reason for marriage; and likened to the *Übermensch* in being described as a guiding principle or ideal still beyond the reach of humans.

[241] The mature Rilke's view is almost identical: 'Rilke bekannte sich entschieden gegen die Auffassung jener Menschen, die glauben, daß die Liebe identisch sei mit einem juristischen Eigentumsbegriff, und betonte, wie unerträglich oft die Anwendung dieses Eigentumsbegriffes unter der verkappten Vorgabe, es sei Liebe, sein könne' (Wertheimer, p. 40f.).

3.1.3 'Von Kind und Ehe': the art of marriage

The question the philosopher asks in 'Von Kind und Ehe', a chapter underlined in Z.2 both in the table of contents and in the text, is: 'Du bist jung und wünschst dir Kind und Ehe. Aber ich frage dich: bist du ein Mensch, der ein Kind sich wünschen *darf*?' (KSA 4, 90). By his further questions we learn that Zarathustra's ideal marriage involves two people who have mastered, and thus freed, themselves; who are ready to build something together which amounts to more than just the two of them; and, finally, who are in awe of each other for that very reason. This is one of his definitions of friendship. 'Oder', he asks, knowing the reality always threatening that ideal, 'redet aus deinem Wunsche das Thier und die Nothdurft? Oder Vereinsamung? Oder Unfriede mit dir?' (Ibid.).[242]

To Rilke, passages from the two *Zarathustra* chapters in question such as the one quoted above, or the following, must have felt as if addressed to him personally: 'Ihr haltet es mit euch selbst nicht aus und liebt euch nicht genug […]. Der Eine geht zum Nächsten, weil er sich sucht, und der Andre, weil er sich verlieren möchte' (KSA 4, 77) Half a year into the marriage Rilke indeed still had the hope that by his 'Zusammenschluß' with Westhoff, they would 'geeint weiter in die Zukunft […] reichen […] als vorher',[243] which is reminiscent of Zarathustra's various demands for lovers to develop upwards into a distant future and create beyond themselves. In the new couple's case, their '*gemeinsamer* höherer Durste nach einem über ihnen stehenden Ideale' (KSA 3, 387) was their mutual thirst for achievement as artists. However, both newlyweds soon felt confined and unhappy, and running away from himself as despised by Nietzsche was, in a way, exactly what Rilke later admitted to have done in marrying Westhoff.[244] He had hoped that a home and a family could ground his fragile, restless mind and give him his longed-for sense of reality: 'meine Gefahr liegt darin, daß ich nicht wirklichwerden kann […]. Früher glaubte ich, das würde besser, wenn ich einmal ein Haus hätte, eine Frau und ein Kind'.[245] Such hopes soon had to be abandoned, as the

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[242] In Z.1, someone (most likely Salomé, possibly Rilke) underlined the sentence: 'Eure Liebe zum Weibe und des Weibes Liebe zum Manne: ach, möchte sie doch Mitleiden sein mit leidenden und verhüllten Göttern!' (KSA 4, p. 91; see Z.1.1.7). The next sentence in the text again stifles this desperate hope with its resigned statement that in reality love is merely the name for our basest animal needs and instincts: 'Aber zumeist errathen zwei Thiere einander.'

[243] From a letter to Emanuel von Bodman from 17 August 1901, in B I, p. 98.

[244] See again: 'Ihr flüchtet zum Nächsten vor euch selber und möchtet euch daraus eine Tugend machen: aber ich durchschaue euer "Selbstloses"' (KSA 4, p. 77).

[245] From a letter to Salomé, 13 November 1903, in: BW LAS, p. 125f. See also the letter of 8 August of that year on p. 96: 'als ich mich immer nach einer Wirklichkeit sehnte, nach einem Haus, nach Menschen, die weithinsichtbar zu mir gehörten, nach dem Täglichen –: wie irrte ich da. Seit ich es habe, fällt es von mir ab, eins nach dem anderen. […] was sind mir die nahen Menschen mehr als ein Besuch, der nicht gehen will.'

marriage failed to provide the poet with 'jenem Wirklichkeitsgefühl, […] nach de[m] ich so sehr verlange: Wirklicher unter Wirklichem zu sein' (ibid.).

The pressure of responsibility for another person's sense of being real, and therefore, by implication, for their sanity, must have been too great on his young wife. Early on, Becker observed a change in Westhoff for the worse for which she blamed Rilke. At times, the painter criticized the poet with a passionate, almost Nietzschean severity, as in this letter to Westhoff from 10 February 1902, in which she complains that her friend has given up too much of her old self in favour of her husband:

> Ich folge Ihnen ein wenig mit Wehmut. Aus Ihren Worten spricht Rilke zu stark und zu flammend. Fordert das denn die Liebe, daß man werde wie der andere? Nein und tausendfach nein. Ist nicht dadurch der Bund zweier starker Menschen so reich und so allbeglückend, daß Beide herrschen und Beide dienen in Schlichtheit und Friede und Freude und stiller Genügsamkeit. Ich weiß wenig von Ihnen Beiden, doch wie mir scheint, haben Sie viel von Ihrem alten Selbst abgelegt und als Mantel gebreitet, auf daß Ihr König darüber schreite. Ich möchte für Sie, für die Welt, für die Kunst und auch für mich, daß Sie den güldenen Mantel wieder trügen. Lieber Reiner [sic] Maria Rilke, ich hetze gegen Sie. Und ich glaube es ist nötig daß ich gegen Sie hetze. Und ich möchte mit tausend Zungen der Liebe gegen Sie hetzen, gegen Sie und gegen Ihre schönen bunten Siegel, die Sie nicht *nur* auf Ihre feingeschriebenen Briefe drücken (PMB 1982, 197).

Only two days later, Rilke retaliated and, in turn, accused Becker of wanting Westhoff all to herself:

> Ist Ihre Liebe und Freundschaft so mißtrauisch, das sie immerfort sehen und greifen will, was sie besitzt? [...] ich [halte] für die höchste Aufgabe einer Verbindung zweier Menschen diese [...]: dass einer dem andern seine Einsamkeit bewache.[246]

This topic of protecting and guarding one another's loneliness is taken up again in a letter to the young poet, Kappus, from 14 May 1904, where Rilke writes: 'diese menschlichere Liebe […] wird jener ähneln, die wir ringend und mühsam vorbereiten, der Liebe, die darin besteht, daß zwei Einsamkeiten einander schützen, grenzen und grüßen' (BI, 197). Both statements mirror Nietzsche's demands for solitude even in love as expressed in the two chapters under discussion, and directly echo a motif from aphorism 285, 'Excelsior!', in *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft* where, in the context of the loss of God, the philosopher states: 'du hast keinen fortwährenden Wächter und Freund

[246] Rilke, *Briefe. Erster Band. 1897-1914*, Wiesbaden: Insel, 1950, p. 29.

für deine sieben Einsamkeiten' (KSA 3, 527).[247] As suggested in 'Von Kind und Ehe', one first has to accept and welcome one's ultimate loneliness and should not wish for the partner to dispel it; on the contrary, he or she should help *guard* it as it is the only path towards the *Übermensch*, as we have seen.

However, in order for such an ideal relationship to be achieved, it needs to be balanced. Both partners, as Becker puts it, need to be strong, each needs to rule as well as serve the other. Indeed, in the *Zarathustra* chapter 'Vom Wege des Schaffenden' in Salomé's copy (Z.1), the sentence 'Es giebt Manchen, der seinen letzten Werth wegwarf, als er seine Dienstbarkeit wegwarf' (KSA 4, 81) was underlined. Rilke, who was once so passionately in love with Salomé he probably would have gladly served her religiously for the rest of his life, was not willing to apply the same principle to his marriage. In fact, he eventually resented his wife for the very qualities which Salomé had seen in him, and which consequently estranged her from him, merely a year ago; namely, for her weakness and the fact that she was mirroring him rather than being strong and independent, as this complaint to Salomé from 7 February 1912 demonstrates:

> Die schönen Briefe, die sie [Clara] mir zu Zeiten schrieb, waren mein, meine Briefe, Briefe in meinem Ton, oder sie schrieb überhaupt nicht. […] Wie oft hab ich's mich mit Sorge gefragt: *wer* ist sie, in was drückt sie sich aus […]? Denn nicht einmal ihre Arbeit ist ihr ein Ausdruck für sich (BI, 399).

This is reminiscent of Becker's accusation, 'aus ihren [Clara's] Worten spricht Rilke zu stark und zu flammend' (PMB 1982, 197), which, ten years before, he had reacted so strongly to. It makes one wonder whether Rilke realized that his wife's mirroring of him was exactly what he had done in his relationship to Salomé, whose handwriting he copied and who gave him a new name and strongly influenced his style of writing (see again section 2.1.2). In a letter to his friend Sidonie von Borutin from 31 October 1913, the poet goes even further and denies Westhoff's capability of being a good wife to anyone altogether, perhaps thereby exonerating himself of his part of the blame for the failure of their marriage:

[247] To give but one example of Rilke's deification of the beloved (particularly Salomé) here, he wrote to her on 8 June 1897: 'Ich hab dich [sic] nie anders gesehen, als so, daß ich hätte beten mögen zu Dir. Ich hab Dich nie anders gehört, als so, daß ich hätte glauben mögen an Dich. Ich hab Dich nie anders ersehnt, als so, daß ich hätte leiden mögen um Dich. Ich hab Dich nie anders begehrt, als so, daß ich hätte knien dürfen vor Dir' (BW LAS, p. 17f.).

> Darum glaube ich nicht, daß sie jemandem als Frau würde haben zur Seite stehen können: sie wird in der Hingabe an ein anderes Leben nicht stark, sondern nachgiebig, spiegelt anstatt ein Gegenspiel zu bilden (BI, 474).

In a nutshell, to both Nietzsche and Rilke, the secret of a successful, balanced partnership – something which neither of them ever actually made a reality – is to always remain oneself. In order to achieve this, one's distance to the beloved must be kept and all aspirations to their possession must be relinquished. Thereby, the space necessary for the constant becoming or developing of one's personality in which they both so strongly believed is created. This belief in staying true to oneself had indeed been impressively put into practice, and thus demonstrated to both of them, by the fiercely independent woman they had both loved and admired beyond measure, and then lost. In *Die Erotik*, Lou Andreas-Salomé maintains accordingly:

> Nur wer ganz er selbst bleibt, eignet sich auf die Dauer dazu, geliebt zu werden, weil nur er in seiner lebendigen Fülle dem anderen das Leben symbolisieren, nur er als eine Macht desselben empfunden werden kann. Nichts ist deshalb so verkehrt in der Liebe wie eine ängstliche Anpassung und Abschleifung an einander (67f.)

This takes us back to the definition of the beloved friend in 'Von der Nächstenliebe', by which Salomé, who in turn helped to shape Rilke's picture of Nietzsche, was evidently influenced in this instance: 'Ich lehre euch den Freund, in dem die Welt fertig dasteht, eine Schale des Guten, – den schaffenden Freund, der immer eine fertige Welt zu verschenken hat', Zarathustra says (KSA 4, 78). Indeed, in her copy (Z.1), part of the very next sentence in the text was underlined: 'Und wie ihm die Welt auseinander rollte, so rollt sie ihm wieder in Ringen zusammen, als das Werden des Guten durch das Böse, als das Werden der Zwecke aus dem Zufalle.' The world which the friend has to give away may be complete, but it is by no means stagnant or static: what comes apart at the seams is joined together again in ripples, thus connecting everything and making sense of even evil and senseless chance. The friend thus constitutes meaning and purpose, replacing the dead God. He or she is the *Übermensch*.[248]

In the letter to Kappus from 14 May 1904 mentioned above, Rilke takes up the Nietzschean motif of having to become a world for an Other – although that Other will always come second, remaining a mere 'Zweiter' to the 'Einzelnen':

[248] Salomé's importance to Rilke can hardly be overestimated. Let one quotation suffice here: 'Durch Dich will ich die Welt sehen; denn dann seh ich nicht die Welt, sondern immer nur Dich, Dich, Dich!' (BW LAS, p. 17).

> Lieben ist zunächst nichts, was aufgehen, hingeben und sich mit einem Zweiten vereinen heißt (denn was wäre eine Vereinigung von Ungeklärtem und Unfertigem, noch Ungeordnetem – ?), es ist ein erhabener Anlaß für den Einzelnen, zu reifen, in sich etwas zu werden, Welt zu werden, Welt zu werden für sich um eines anderen willen (B I 193).

The poet's own bitter experience is palpable in these lines; first, with Salomé, when he was the unfinished, immature one; later, with Westhoff, when he perceived her to be weak and confused. Importantly, in Nietzsche, it is the friend, and in Rilke, the romantic lover, who is the occasion for self-improvement and maturing – 'Pfeil und Sehnsucht zum Übermenschen' (KSA 4, 92); provided they leave enough room for such development to unfold.

3.1.4 A 'Requiem' for possession

The consequences of not being given enough space to unfold upwards, of being possessed by the partner instead, are potentially lethal to Rilke. This belief found its most urgent artistic expression in 'Requiem für eine Freundin', written on 31 October and 1 and 2 November 1908 in Paris, a year after Paula Modersohn-Becker's death in 1907 during the birth of her only child. Even if passages from the two *Zarathustra* chapters in question did not – although I propose that they did – directly inspire the long poem, they still testify to the kindredness in spirit of the two writers, Rilke and Nietzsche. What Winfried Eckel states about the voice in the 'Requiem', which is atypical in its sense of urgency with regard to the fact that, due to its time of origin, this poem tends to be associated with the famously objective *Ding-Gedichte*, could as easily be attributed to Zarathustra: 'Das Ich klagt und klagt an, es fragt und belehrt, es beruhigt und fordert auf, es bittet für sich um Hilfe.'[249] What the voice of the poem is lamenting is of course the fact that Modersohn-Becker died tragically early; therefore, it is a distinct possibility that her portrait found its way into Z.2 at some point after her death. This in turn implies a possible re-reading of *Zarathustra* by Rilke on this sad occasion.

The following is one of the key passages of the requiem:

> Denn d a s ist Schuld, wenn irgendeines Schuld ist:
> die Freiheit eines Lieben nicht vermehren
> um alle Freiheit, die man in sich aufbringt.
> Wir haben, wo wir lieben, ja nur dies:
> einander lassen; denn daß wir uns halten,
> das fällt uns leicht und ist nicht erst zu lernen (SW I 654).

Here, in a way uncannily reminiscent of an unpublished note from Nietzsche's estate Rilke is unlikely to have known,[250] the deeper meaning or purpose of love is seen as the readiness to learn things which are difficult. In this case, the difficulty lies in increasing the freedom of the Other although this goes against our natural impulse to hold on to him or her. Again, the beloved is merely an occasion for self-improvement. In consequence, not to make use of that opportunity is seen as guilt not directly towards the beloved, but towards oneself. Like the passage from the *Erste Elegie* quoted in the

[249] In: *Rilke-Handbuch*, p. 346.

[250] '"Liebe deinen Nächsten" – d. h. zu alleroberst: "laß deinen Nächsten laufen!" – Und gerade dieser Theil der Tugend ist der schwerste!' (KSA 10, p. 100). This was written in the summer or autumn of 1882, immediately after the stay in Tautenburg with Salomé, and, unlike most other notes from that time, was not used by Nietzsche in either *Zarathustra* or *Jenseits von Gut und Böse* (see KSA 10, p. 673). Hence, a printed version of the thought did not exist during Rilke's lifetime. However, this fact does not entirely rule out the possibility of Salomé having mediated it to him.

following, this is above all a formula for Rilke's belief in non-possessive love not necessarily directed at its object, 'eine Liebe, die um der Perfektion des Fühlens willen auf denjenigen verzichten muß, der eben dieses Fühlen erregt hat':[251]

> Sollen nicht endlich uns diese ältesten Schmerzen
> fruchtbarer werden? Ist es nicht Zeit, daß wir liebend
> uns vom Geliebten befrein und es bebend bestehn:
> wie der Pfeil die Sehne besteht, um gesammelt im
> Absprung
> *mehr* zu sein als er selbst. Denn Bleiben ist nirgends (SW I 687).

In its imagery and vocabulary, this passage is reminiscent of the bitter chalice of love described as an arrow toward the *Übermensch* in 'Von Kind und Ehe' (KSA 4, 92). It also resounds in the *Orpheus-Sonett* I/4, where the lovers are described as 'Bogen der Pfeile und Ziele von Pfeilen' and encouraged to suffer and embrace difficulty ('Fürchtet euch nicht zu leiden, die Schwere'), and thereby to create, and gain, space: 'Aber die Lüfte...aber die Räume...' (SW I 733). The Rilkean idea – famously and well-documentedly embodied by his various 'große Liebende' – of becoming more than oneself by virtue of letting go of the beloved whilst holding on to one's love corresponds directly to the Nietzschean idea of being 'Pfeile der Sehnsucht nach dem andern Ufer' (KSA 4, 17), of loving beyond oneself, and beyond one's partner: 'Ehe: so heisse ich den Willen zu Zweien, das Eine zu schaffen, das mehr ist, als die es schufen' (90). Like Nietzsche, Rilke viewed the traditional bourgeois version of marriage as wrong, as in this passage from the requiem:

> Denn dieses Leiden dauert schon zu lang,
> und keiner kanns; es ist zu schwer für uns,
> das wirre Leiden von der falschen Liebe,
> die, bauend auf Verjährung wie Gewohnheit,
> ein Recht sich nennt und wuchert aus dem Unrecht.
> Wo ist ein Mann, der Recht hat auf Besitz?
> Wer kann besitzen, was sich selbst nicht hält,
> was sich von Zeit zu Zeit nur selig auffängt
> und wieder hinwirft wie ein Kind den Ball (SW I 654).

[251] Holthusen, p. 67. See also Anthony Stephens's description, in *Nacht, Mensch und Engel*, of Rilke's 'Zustand, in dem eine bestimmte "Richtung des Herzens" mit solcher Intensität eingehalten wird, daß der Gegenstand, dem diese Hinwendung ursprünglich galt, nicht mehr benötigt werden soll [...]. Indem das jeweilige Gefühl seinen realen Gegenstand transzendiert, verabsolutiert es sich zu jener "Strömung", die [...] als Mittel der "Selbsterhebung" erscheint' (p. 224).

The man's love is considered wrong, as in the distinction, in *Malte*, of the lovers from the beloved, which associates the latter with men, the former, with women: 'Und aus ihnen sind, unter dem Druck endloser Nöte, die gewaltigen Liebenden hervorgegangen, die, während sie ihn riefen, den Mann überstanden' (SW VI 832f.). Only seemingly in contrast to Nietzsche's theme of 'Überwindung' of the self, suggesting activity, Rilke's *Leitmotiv*, typically passive, is that of 'Überstehen': 'Schlecht leben die Geliebten und in Gefahr. Ach, daß sie sich überstünden und Liebende würden' (924).

However, both concepts are very much related despite their apparent difference, which is, yet again, only one in colour or tonality, rather than substance: as we have seen earlier, Nietzsche locates any possibility of romantic love (as represented by marriage) ever leading the way to the *Übermensch* in a distant future: 'Über euch hinaus sollt ihr einst lieben! So *lernt* erst lieben!' (KSA 4, 92). In this context, it is clear by now that the connection of 'lieben' and 'lernen' is vital to both Rilke and Nietzsche. In the *Zarathustra* chapter 'Vom Geist der Schwere' Nietzsche seems to summarize 'Von der Nächstenliebe' when he states: 'Und wahrlich, das ist kein Gebot für Heute und Morgen, sich lieben *lernen*. Vielmehr ist von allen Künsten diese die feinste, listigste, letzte und geduldsamste' (KSA 4, 242). Connecting love and difficulty as well, Rilke wrote to Kappus on 14 May 1904:

> Wir wissen wenig, aber daß wir uns zu Schwerem halten müssen, ist eine Sicherheit, die uns nicht verlassen wird; es ist gut, einsam zu sein, denn Einsamkeit ist schwer; daß etwas schwer ist, muß uns ein Grund mehr sein, es zu tun. Auch zu lieben ist gut: denn Liebe ist schwer. Liebhaben von Mensch zu Mensch: das ist vielleicht das Schwerste was uns aufgegeben ist, das Äußerste, die letzte Probe und Prüfung, die Arbeit, für die alle andere Arbeit nur Vorbereitung ist (BI, 193).

By now, the actual difference between Nietzsche and Rilke should be evident: to the philosopher, it is the love of self, and to the poet, the love of an Other which is hardest to learn. This brings us back to 'Von der Nächstenliebe' where Nietzsche states: 'Eure schlechte Liebe zu euch selber macht euch aus der Einsamkeit ein Gefängniss' (KSA 4, 78).

In turn, whatever is hard is also productive. To both men, 'das Schwere' is associated with depth. Only the difficult experiences in life acquaint us with our deepest depths, our recesses of subconscious experience and emotion which can – or must, in order to stay alive – then be transformed into the art of poetry, or philosophy. Love, thus, is only one of the ways which we can tread in order to walk along in the general direction of the *Übermensch*. Rilke wrote to Arthur Holitscher on 13 December 1905:

> Arbeiten und Altwerden, das ist es, was das Leben von uns erwartet. [...]Wir wissen ja oft nicht, die wir im Schweren sind, bis über die Kniee, bis an die Brust, bis ans Kinn. Aber sind wir denn im Leichten froh, sind wir nicht fast verlegen im Leichten? Unser Herz ist tief, aber wenn wir nicht hineingedrückt werden, gehen wir nie bis auf den Grund. Und doch, man muß auf dem Grund gewesen sein. Darum handelt sich's (B I, 207).

Nietzsche, in turn, said in 1886, in his second 'Vorrede' to *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft* which Rilke very probably read as he owned that second edition, on the necessity of illness and pain in the context of philosophy as the art of transfiguration of his state of being, mind and health into a spiritual shape and distance:

> Es steht uns Philosophen nicht frei, zwischen Seele und Leib zu trennen [...] wir müssen beständig unsre Gedanken aus unsrem Schmerz gebären [...] Leben – das heisst für uns Alles, was wir sind, beständig in Licht und Flamme verwandeln [...] Erst der grosse Schmerz [...], der letzte Befreier des Geistes, [...] zwingt uns Philosophen, in unsre letzte Tiefe zu steigen' (KSA 3, 349 f).

In Z.1, a passage very similar in content was underlined by Salomé or Rilke in 'Von den Dichtern': '"Seit ich den Leib besser kenne, – sagte Zarathustra zu einem seiner Jünger – ist mir der Geist nur noch gleichsam Geist; und alles das "Unvergängliche" – das ist auch nur ein Gleichniss"' (KSA 4, 163; Z.1.2.10). This passage can obviously be interpreted as yet another piece of evidence of Nietzsche's contempt for the Christian church's teleological 'Entwertung des Hiesigen' so passionately shared by Rilke.[252] It is that, but perhaps it is also the key to answering the question why Nietzsche found self-love the hardest to learn: he hated being trapped in his (ever painful) body, between which and his soul he draws such a clear analogy here. After all, Zarathustra counts himself amongst the poets in that chapter, and Nietzsche, in turn, writes in *Ecce Homo* that the great poet draws exclusively on his individual reality to the degree that he cannot bear his own work after its completion. He then refers to *Zarathustra* in the same breath, and confesses that whenever he so much as glances through it, he will pace his room for half an hour, 'unfähig, über einen unerträglichen Krampf von Schluchzen Herr zu werden' (KSA 6, 287).

Hence, the book was indeed wrenched from his own, painful reality, which, famously, largely consisted of a constant flight from bad climates worsening his

[252] This example is from the *Brief des jungen Arbeiters* (SW VI, p. 1114). It will be discussed at greater length, along with the topic of religiosity in the works of both Nietzsche and Rilke, in the next chapter, 3.2.

countless bodily ailments. As argued in chapter 2.4, in *Zarathustra*, the philosopher sublimated his emotion, and the by now abandoned hope to ever live it with another human being, into the hoped-for consolation that was his work. In this, Nietzsche conceivably could have been the direct model for one of Rilke's great lovers in his *Malte* where, on one of his rare days of mental clarity, the insane medieval king, Charles VI of France, is leafing through Christine de Pisan's book dedicated to him:[253]

> Das Buch schlug sich ihm immer an den einfachsten Stellen auf: wo von dem Herzen die Rede war, das dreizehn Jahre lang wie ein Kolben über dem Schmerzfeuer nur dazu gedient hatte, das Wasser der Bitternis für die Augen zu destillieren. [Wie Magdalena und Christine; KB] begriff [er], daß die wahre Konsolation erst begann, wenn das Glück vergangen genug und für immer vorüber war. Nichts war ihm näher, als dieser Trost.

The analogies to Nietzsche are evident, particularly in the theme of letting go of (the idea of) love and in the image of its bitterness, as well as in the function of pain as a distiller. Yet, once again, there is an important difference: in Nietzsche, the philosopher gives birth to thoughts out of his pain, and those thoughts, his work, are his own life, transformed into fire (see again KSA 3, 349). In Rilke, conversely, fire is equated with the pain necessary for gaining – rather than being, as in Nietzsche – that elusive end product of emotional processes, namely, cognition (the king 'begriff') and its inherent consolations.

The chapter immediately following the one singled out by Becker's picture, 'Vom Wege des Schaffenden', contains a passage which may help to shed light on a reason why Rilke, in contrast to Nietzsche, found love of an Other the hardest thing to learn. It seems to be referring to Rilke's personal demons as it thematizes what was undeniably closest to his heart: the angels of his art, which were, after all, engendered by those very demons. Zarathustra says:

> Einsamer, du gehst den Weg des Schaffenden: einen Gott willst du dir schaffen aus deinen sieben Teufeln! Einsamer, du gehst den Weg des Liebenden: dich selbst liebst du und deshalb verachtest du dich, wie nur Liebende verachten. Schaffen will der Liebende, weil er verachtet! (KSA 4, 82)

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[253] *Le Livre du chemin de longue étude* (1402/03). Along with the following quotation, this is in SW VI, p. 910. See also: Katja Brunkhorst, 'Mittelalter', in: *Rilke-Handbuch*, p. 46: 'Die frühhumanistische Schriftstellerin und "Feministin" Christine de Pisan (1365-1430) hat Rilke wohl am meisten als "große Liebende" interessiert. Ihr für die damalige Zeit ungewöhnliches Selbstverständnis als Bildungsträgerin im Rahmen der "translatio studii", der Kontinuität der antiken Kultur von Athen über Rom nach Paris, hat den Dichter sicher auch beeindruckt. Eingang in den *Malte* fand sie jedoch unter einem anderen Vorzeichen', namely, that of the 'Mysterium der Liebe' (SW VI, p. 908).

This passage, exemplary for the style of the entire book, evokes a quasi-religious spirituality, an embracing of totality, in the world of the artist. Contempt and love and, for Rilke, demons and angels, all co-exist in the creator of a new world which is a transformation of the earthly that aims beyond the ego: 'Ich liebe den, der über sich selbst hinaus schaffen will und so zugrunde geht', Zarathustra says further (83). Paula Modersohn-Becker, of course, perished in the creation of a new life, but this actual fact is not likely to have been an analogy drawn by Rilke with this Nietzsche passage neighbouring that marked by her picture. Rather, it is Zarathustra's appeal to the creator to be lonely with which the poet could identify – himself, as well as the painter. Had she been alone and not the 'possession' of a man, she could have fulfilled her calling as an artist. Her fate can be seen as a metaphor for the perils the artist encounters in the company of others: Rilke, unlike her, was not going to quietly submit himself and his art to the – in Becker's case, literally – *deadening* daily routine of partnership. From his marital confinement in Westerwede he wrote to Arthur Schnitzler on 14 January 1902: '…ich weiß, daß es für meine Kunst keine größere Feindschaft gibt als die Zeit, das Tägliche…das Allzutägliche!'[254] Hence, the following famous lines from the 'Requiem' are probably, at least in part, also a projection: 'Denn irgendwo ist eine alte Feindschaft/ zwischen dem Leben und der großen Arbeit' (SW I 655f.). The following quotation from a letter to Sidonie Nádherný von Borutin, which can almost be called feminist, echoes the requiem and implies Modersohn-Becker's fate more than his own. Given Rilke's narcissism, this shows how profound an effect her death still had on him six years on: 'Daß Kunst-Arbeit und Leben irgendwo ein Entweder-Oder ist, entdeckt ja jeder zu seiner Zeit, – aber für die Frau mag diese Wahl freilich einen Schmerz und Abschied ohnegleichen bedeuten.'[255]

[254] *Deutsches Literatur-Archiv*, Marbach.
[255] Written on 31 October 1913, in: RMR, *Briefe in zwei Bänden*, p. 475

3.1.5 Love's lesson learnt

Rilke often expressed regret at being excluded from life, but only whenever his art was more demon than angel, whenever he suffered from writer's block. Only 'wenn der merkwürdige Hintergedanke, *nicht mehr zu schreiben*, [ihm] wirklich ernst wäre'[256] he would consider analysis or, indeed, 'das Allzutägliche' which he otherwise dreaded so much:

> Wie wird es mit meiner Arbeit? Jeden Morgen stehe ich auf, zu diesem nutzlosen und bangen Warten und gehe schlafen enttäuscht, verstört und geschlagen von meiner Unfähigkeit. Oh wenn ich ein Handwerk hätte, etwas tägliches, etwas nahes…[257]

Throughout his life, the poet experienced a conflict between his need for isolation forced upon him by the demands made by his art and his human, all-too-human need for company – in particular, that of Salomé – which remained unsolvable. 'Man wird mich schwer davon überzeugen', as he lets Malte say, 'daß die Geschichte des verlorenen Sohnes nicht die Legende dessen ist, der nicht geliebt werden wollte' (SW VI 938). Like the troubadours he describes in his novel, Rilke arguably feared nothing more than to be 'erhört'. Like Malte, he may have realized that his resolve never to love anyone – which, of course, turned out to be impossible – stemmed from his dread to thereby create a beloved, for whose freedom he would be constantly afraid (see 941). Loving, in turn, is associated both with the freedom and the permanence inherent in the independence from its object: 'Geliebtsein heißt aufbrennen. Lieben ist: Leuchten mit unerschöpflichem Öle. Geliebtwerden ist vergehen, Lieben ist dauern' (937).

In 1922, in a fragment associated with the *Elegien*, Rilke conceded that his ideal kind of love, the non-possessive variety as espoused by Nietzsche in 'Von der Nächstenliebe' and advocated in his very own 'Requiem', is achievable only by the angels, who are beings quite as inhuman and remote as the *Übermensch*: 'Liebe der Engel ist Raum' (SW II 474). The contrast to the love attainable by us humans, and Rilke's proximity to Nietzsche along with it, is obvious: 'Wir in den ringenden Nächten/ wir fallen von Nähe zu Nähe' (475). Unlike the philosopher, who only did so in his private correspondence but hardly ever in his work, Rilke time and again admits to the constant battle

[256] From a letter to Salomé, 24 January 1912; B I, p. 390. In the next sentence, Rilke demonstrates his notion of the interconnectedness of his angels with his devils so similar to Nietzsche's idea of creating a God out of his seven devils (see again KSA 4, 82): 'Dann dürfte man sich die Teufel austreiben lassen, da sie ja im Bürgerlichen wirklich nur störend und peinlich sind, und gehen die Engel möglicherweise mit aus, so müßte man auch das als Vereinfachung auffassen und sich sagen, daß sie ja in jenem neuen nächsten Beruf (welchem?) sicher nicht in Verwendung kämen.'

[257] Rilke, *Tagebuch. Westerwede, Paris. 1902. Taschenbuch Nr.1, Transkription*, Frankfurt/M.: Insel, 2000, p. 44.

('ringend') for distance which we are only ever bound to lose ('wir fallen'). To the poet, despite the constant temptation by the angel and the *Übermensch*, the destiny of humans ultimately lies in their 'Nähe' to one another.

Yet, Rilke's art required of him to be lonely, loving only himself, and, consequently, full of contempt for himself like Zarathustra, who preaches that the lonely man loves himself, despises himself like only a lover can, and therefore needs to create (see KSA 4, 82). As the poet wrote to Salomé on 7 January 1905, even with three years' experience of his daughter, he found it

> schwer, das Neue aufzufassen, das Ruth ist, – schwer, ihrem lieben und prüfenden Entgegenkommen greifbar da zu sein; allzuschwer zu lieben […] Rathlos, das war alles was ich war, unfähig […], *der* zu sein, der ich werde (BW LAS 196f.).

Along with the imperative Rilke reports the painter Böcklin to have uttered to Otto Modersohn, as representative of the young artist in general, in *Worpswede*, 'Sei du!',[258] this echoes both directly and uncannily Nietzsche's advice from *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft* while inverting it: 'Was sagt dein Gewissen? – "Du sollst der werden, der du bist"' (KSA 3, 519), which the philosopher repeated in August 1882 to Salomé: 'Zuletzt, meine liebe Lou, die alte tiefe herzliche Bitte: *werden Sie, die Sie sind!*' (KSB 6, 247f.).[259] Salomé, in turn, often pleaded with Rilke to become who he was, most notably in the famous 'Letzter Zuruf' in which she broke off their intimate relationship (see BW LAS 54-56). Importantly, in his admission of finding love too hard, in the quotation concerning Ruth given above, Rilke links that shortcoming to his inability to be who he is becoming. To him, being is the difficult part; whilst to Nietzsche, becoming is harder. This implies that the poet can only truly be – that is, catch up with the self he is invariably becoming – once he has learnt how to love another human being, not as a mere occasion for his narcissistic self-development, but for that person's own sake. Perhaps, like the mysterious Abelone in *Malte* in her relationship to God, Rilke 'sehnte sich, [seiner] Liebe alles Transitive zu nehmen', but could not fool his 'wahrhaftiges Herz' about the fact that he needed 'nur eine Richtung der Liebe […], kein[en] Liebesgegenstand' (SW VI, 937). In this, he is echoing Nietzsche once again, who claims in *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft* that 'Gott […] ist kein Gegenstand der Liebe' (KSA 3, 489), and states in *Ecce Homo* 'was für ihn [Zarathustra] allein "der

[258] *Worpswede*, Frankfurt/M.: Insel, 1987, p. 94.
[259] In *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche gives away the method to become what one is: cluelessness. According to him, 'dass man wird, was man ist, setzt voraus, dass man nicht im Entferntesten ahnt, *was* man ist' (KSA 6, p. 293).

Mensch" sein kann – *kein* Gegenstand der Liebe' (KSA 6, 348). The logical consequence of this realization is Rilke's famous advice to Ilse Jahr from 22 February 1923 that one ought to learn, 'statt des Besitzes [...], den Bezug' (B II 292); not only in the love of God, as thematized here, but, implicitly, also in that for an Other.[260]

[260] Later, in 1914, in the midst of his writer's block, the poet repeatedly thematized this complex connection between being able to love an Other, achieving a sense of one's self and being a productive artist, most notably in the poem 'Wendung', discussed in section 3.3.5 below.

3.2 Book II: 'Von der Einverleibung der Erfahrungen'. Creative cognizance 'Auf den glückseligen Inseln': the dead God and the eroticization of the religious

Zweites Buch. Flüchtig-skeptisch-mephistophelisch. *"Von der Einverleibung der Erfahrungen."* Erkenntnis = Irrthum, der organisch wird und organisiert (KSA 9, 520).

3.2.1 Preliminaries: Nietzsche, Rilke and religion

Lou Andreas-Salomé's advice from 1894 that 'eine rechte Nietzsche-Studie' must be 'in ihrer Hauptsache eine *religionspsychologische* Studie' (2000, 65) has since been translated into action, and Nietzsche's relationship to religion has received much critical attention.[261] Nonetheless, an important misunderstanding regarding Nietzsche and religion which still has some currency due to the philosopher – to whom self-contradiction was almost programmatic – having happily perpetuated it himself is central to the argument: contrary to popular opinion, Nietzsche was not strictly an atheist. Far from saying that God never existed, he rather repeatedly explicitly stated that he once did, and that we (above all the Christian church with its false morals) have killed him.[262] More precisely, in the chapter 'Ausser Dienst', Zarathustra, 'der Frömmste aller Derer, die nicht an Gott glauben', speaks of the rumour 'dass ihn [God] das Mitleiden erwürgte' (KSA 4, 323). Nietzsche's loud proclamations of the death of God seem to have made many a scholar overhear the often quieter and mostly masked, but no less desperate calls to his 'unbekannter Gott' (317); and his attacks against

[261] See, for example, A. U. Sommer, *Der Geist der Historie und das Ende des Christentums. Zur 'Waffengenossenschaft von Friedrich Nietzsche und Franz Overbeck'*, Berlin 1997; by the same author, *Friedrich Nietzsches 'Der Antichrist'. Ein philosophisch-historischer Kommentar*, Basel 2000; and Konrad P. Liessmann *Philosophie des verbotenen Wissens. Friedrich Nietzsche und die schwarzen Seiten des Denkens*, Wien 2000; or, for a bibliographical overview, Metzler's *Nietzsche-Handbuch* (p. 384f.). For a discussion on the general development of individual religiosity, in its distinct difference from institutionalized religion, since Romanticism see Kurt Goldammer, *Die Formenwelt des Religiösen. Grundriß der systematischen Religionswissenschaft*, Stuttgart: Kröner, 1960; and Bernhard Grom, 'Gibt es eine neue Religiosität?', in: Karl Rahner (ed.), *Ist Gott noch gefragt?*, Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1973, pp. 98-124. Grom sees the new religiosity as provoked by and directed against rationalism, 'den ichverkrampften und verkopften westlichen Menschen' (p. 100). As this would simultaneously seem to be a very accurate description of the *Zarathustra*-chapter 'Unter Töchtern der Wüste', Grom, in particular, is relevant in our context: the desert's daughters really are daughters of emptiness and areas for projection to the stagnated cultural conventions of the West, which need the Eastern *Atopie* in order to renew themselves.

[262] See *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*, aphorisms 108 (KSA 3, p. 467) and 125 (p. 480f.): 'Gott ist tot! Gott bleibt tot! Und wir haben ihn getötet!'

Zarathustra's 'Widersacher, die Priester' (KSA 6, 344) seem to have successfully blanketed the *Antichrist*'s descent from a long line of pastors. [263]

The fact remains, however, that Nietzsche could never quite free himself from wishing God, or some kind of god, into existence, as he wrote in March 1885, just after finishing Book IV of his *Zarathustra*: 'Was mich beschäftigt, bekümmert, erhebt, dafür habe ich nie einen Mitwisser und Freund gehabt! es (sic) ist schade, daß es keinen Gott giebt, damit es doch Einer wüßte' (KSB 7, 24). Indeed, according to Andreas-Salomé, this urgent wish, which eventually led to the philosopher's self-apotheosis, equalled nothing less than the entire 'Geschichte seines Geistes, seiner Werke, seiner Erkrankung' (2000, 65). In *Die Genealogie der Moral*, Nietzsche defines what he calls atheism as a liberation from humanity's collective guilt complex regarding its beginnings, 'das Bewusstsein, Schulden gegen die Gottheit zu haben', rather than as the absolute abolition of that 'Gottheit': 'Atheismus und eine Art *zweiter Unschuld* gehören zu einander' (KSA 5, 329f.). In his notes he finally had to admit to himself that 'im Grunde ist ja nur der moralische Gott überwunden', and wonders, pointing to a hopeful alternative to both Christianity and atheism: 'Hat es einen Sinn, sich einen Gott jenseits von Gut und Böse zu denken?' (KSA 12, 213).

In contrast to Nietzsche, the nature of Rilke's religiosity has been investigated surprisingly infrequently by scholarship, given how vital it was with regard to his œuvre.[264] 'Es läge nahe, den Vergleich seiner religiös grundierten Dichtkunst in Nietzsches Nachfolge mit der religionspsychologischen Nietzsche-Kritik der Freundin [Lou] fortzuführen', Manfred Riedel muses (2002, 46), but, like his article, this study

[263] In *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*, Nietzsche also explicitly states 'worauf ich hinaus will, nämlich [...] dass auch wir Erkennenden von heute, wir Gottlosen und Antimetaphysiker, auch *unser* Feuer noch von dem Brande nehmen, den ein Jahrtausende alter Glaube entzündet hat, jener Christen-Glaube [...] dass Gott die Wahrheit ist' (KSA 3, 577). Jörg Salaquarda invokes this aphorism as proof that Nietzsche, who was called 'der kleine Pastor' at school, 'blieb sich auch der Tatsache bewußt, daß seine Kritik an der christlichen Tradition von dieser mit bestimmt wurde' (*Nietzsche-Handbuch*, p. 381).

[264] Ulrich Fülleborn speaks of 'jenen Bereich von Rilkes Leben und Dichtung, der in der Forschung nur selten zum speziellen Gegenstand gewählt wurde, obgleich ein Großteil der Wirkung des Rilkeschen Werkes sich von dort herleitet. Ich meine Rilkes Religiosität' on the first page of his essay on 'Rilkes Gebrauch der Bibel', in: Engel/Lamping (1999), pp. 19-38. See also my overview in the *Rilke-Handbuch*, p. 43: 'Selbst die übergeordnete Frage nach der Religiosität des Dichters, obgleich eigentlich naheliegend [...], erfreut sich als Forschungsgegenstand kaum größerer Beliebtheit (als Rilkes Beziehung zur Bibel).' Most of the few contributions indeed stem from the 1930s, such as Gertrud Bäumer, *Ich kreise um Gott. Der Beter Rainer Maria Rilke* (1935); Albert Schäfer, *Die Gottesanschauung Rainer Maria Rilkes* (1938) or J. H. Wild, *Rainer Maria Rilke. Sein Weg zu Gott* (1936).

This study has a slightly different focus, and thus cannot hope to remedy said *desideratum*, either. Therefore, I say with Karl-Josef Kuschel, who concedes in his recent article, 'Gott von Mohammed her fühlen. Rilkes Islam-Erfahrung und ihre Bedeutung für den religionstheologischen Diskurs der Zukunft': 'Der Komplex Rilke und die christliche Tradition ist hier nicht auch nur annähernd darstellbar' (BlRG 24, 2002, pp. 67-94; here: p. 87).

has a slightly different perspective and cannot follow this worthwhile suggestion. Instead, the focus will be on what Rilke shares with Nietzsche, namely, a deeply rooted spirituality combined with a rebellion against institutionalized religion,[265] along with his preference for the Old Testament over the New, stemming from a distinct aversion against Christ and the asceticism which the religion bearing his name represents, 'd.h. eine negative Grundeinstellung zum Leben'.[266] Like Nietzsche, the poet tried to bypass 'das Telephon "Christus", in das fortwährend hineingerufen wird: *Holla, wer dort?*, und niemand antwortet.'[267] Rather, he aimed to win back the immediate (as it cannot be mediated) connection to an individual God, or some sort of divine entity, continuously in a state of becoming for a deeply personal kind of religiosity firmly rooted in the 'Diesseits'; manifested most vividly in an embracing of sexuality as both divine and innocent. In an allusion to what the critic Gerald Stieg has aptly named 'Die Mythisierung des Eros'[268] in the works of Rilke, one could speak of 'the eroticization of the religious' – always seen as opposed to religion[269] – at work in the writings of both Rilke and Nietzsche, as I will argue below.[270]

Hence, although 'Auf den glückseligen Inseln' and 'Von den Mitleidigen' at first glance appear to be centering around themes of a largely religious nature, the topics of these two chapters in fact only seem to be distinct from those discussed in this study's preceding chapter. Besides the *Übermensch*, the key connecting element is that of love, albeit strictly its physical variety, Nietzsche's 'Freuden der Liebenden' (KSA 4, 156), or Rilke's 'Glück des Geschlechts' (SW VI 1125), often employed by both men *as*

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[265] This is obvious from the fact that Rilke formally left the Catholic church on 11 March 1901 (see Schnack I, p. 123), days after having been given his *Zarathustra*-copy, Z.2, by Westhoff on 5 March. The fact that those two events are more than probably related demonstrates the powerfully performative impact the re-reading of Nietzsche's book clearly had on the young poet.

[266] *Nietzsche-Handbuch*, p. 384.

[267] To Marie von Thurn und Taxis, 17 December 1912; B I, p. 448.

[268] In the eponymous essay, in: Stevens and Wagner (eds.), 2000, pp. 38-48.

[269] According to Goldammer's definition, the new religiosity which, following Romantic tradition, came into being around the *fin de siècle* is 'eigen', 'persönlich' and 'subjektiv' (p. 4f.) as opposed to religion, which is characeterized by objectivity, dogma and stagnation: 'Aller Religion wohnt unverlierbar *das soziale und das institutionelle Element* inne, die Neigung zum gruppenmäßigen Zusammenschluß und zur Ausbildung fester Formen und Gesetze' (p. 22). It seems idle to suggest now why both Nietzsche and Rilke, as anti-systematic, individualist elitists, were less than enthused by institutionalized religion.

[270] See also Joachim Köhler (1992; here, p. xvi): 'Ohne die innerste Erfahrung der Geschlechtlichkeit ist Nietzsches intuitive Philosophie nicht zu verstehen, bleiben seine Begriffe bizarre Hülsen, der "Zarathustra" ein Buch mit sieben Siegeln.' Köhler further argues the case for Nietzsche's homosexuality, but as this study is not quite a biography, I shall refrain from commenting on Köhler's theory here.

As far as joint studies on both Rilke and Nietzsche in the context of religiosity are concerned, I only found Toshio Matsui's article, which is only held in Chinese in Cambridge library, 'Künstler und Gott: Von der Mystik zur Romantik – Rilke und Nietzsche – Thomas Mann und Nachkriegsschriftsteller', in: Area & Culture Studies 17, Tokyo: 1968, pp. 133-155.

religion.[271] Indeed, in the Bible, one of the most important sources of material to the poet as well as to the philosopher, 'erkennen' stands not only for the ability to differentiate between good and evil, but, simultaneously, for the act leading to conception, or the 'befleckte Empfängniss', as Nietzsche terms it accusingly in *Der Antichrist* (KSA 6, 207): 'Und Adam erkannte seine Frau Eva, und sie ward schwanger und gebar' (Genesis 4.1). As Nietzsche's mouthpiece declares 'erkennen' in both senses innocent in *Also sprach Zarathustra*, particularly in 'Auf den glückseligen Inseln', in this chapter I will focus on the complex connections between belief and physical love (or desire) made so frequently by both Rilke and Nietzsche before analyzing the bearing of those re-defined concepts on the issues of cognizance and creativity.

[271] 'Inkompatibel mit der vollen, der "reinen" Existenz als Schreibender ist die "Ehe", nicht die Sexualität', as Stieg rightly pinpoints the difference between both concepts of 'love' in Rilke (p. 38).

As for the substitution of religion in a *fin de siècle* context, see Uwe Spörl's article 'Mystisches Erleben, Leben und Schreiben um 1900', in: Manfred Engel et al (eds.), *KulturPoetik* 1/2, Göttingen 2001, pp. 215-230. Spörl, who is without doubt correct in seeing Nietzsche as both formative for and an example of a new, godless mysticism, writes with regard to the 'Ersetzung Gottes durch Weltimmanentes': 'Das Gegenüber des gottlosen Mystikers der transzendenzlosen Moderne ist [...] nicht mehr festgelegt, außer vielleicht im Hinblick auf seine Immanenz. Bevorzugte Gegenstände sind jedoch das Selbst, die Welt, das Leben, das beelebte oder beseelte (oft dem anderen geschlecht angehörende) Du' (p. 218). He describes 'die Neomystik', as other contemporary attempts, to be aiming at a compensation of the collective or individual deficit in meaning brought about by certain modern developments, its purpose being 'in dieser Hinsicht die etablierten Religionen zu ersetzen oder zu ergänzen' (p. 222). As Nietzsche himself, however, considers 'mystische Erklärungen [...] noch nicht einmal oberflächlich', let alone deep (*FW* 126; KSA 3, 484), and as Spörl repeatedly states that such mystic, or visionary, experiences during which the subject merges with an object are almost impossible to communicate in day-to-day human language, whilst conceding great complexity to this cultural phenomenon; I will not engage it further at this point and refer the interested reader back to Spörl's essay instead: 'Ein einigermaßen erfolgversprechender Versuch, ein komplexes historisches Kuluturphänomen wie die neue Mystik rekonstruieren, verstehen, einordnen und beurteilen zu können, ist auf interdisziplinäre Zusammenarbeit und transdisziplinäre Offenheit angewiesen' (p. 227).

3.2.2 The void created by the death of God

Most of the hand-written notes found on the last page of the Z.1.2 fragment refer to 'Auf den glückseligen Inseln',[272] a chapter also marked in Z.2 by an inlaid cyclamen along with the beginning of 'Von den Mitleidigen'. 'Die Feigen fallen von den Bäumen' at the beginning of 'Auf den glückseligen Inseln', and Zarathustra announces: 'Ein Nordwind bin ich reifen Feigen. Also, gleich Feigen fallen euch meine Lehren zu, meine Freunde: nun trinkt ihren Saft und ihr süsses Fleisch' (KSA 4, 109). The Persian prophet's Christ-like communication, or rather, communion, with his disciples sets the scene for the problem this chapter will deal with; the problem of religiosity in a God-less world. That scene takes place by the sea, on a clear autumn afternoon. One is looking 'hinaus [...] auf ferne Meere' which, according to Zarathustra, were once called 'God'. Now, he wants his followers to call them '*Übermensch*'. Regardless of the fact that 'throughout Books I and II of the work, Zarathustra addresses his speeches to a group of disciples'[273], his isolation is already increasingly palpable. Indeed, in her book on Nietzsche, Salomé writes with regard to this very passage: 'Gebirge [Engadin] und Meer umgeben ihn bei seinen Gedanken-Wandelungen als der wirkungsvolle Hintergrund für die Gestalt dieses Einsamen', and suggests to readers of the line 'aus dem Überflusse heraus ist es schön hinaus zu blicken auf ferne Meere' to imagine Genoa as its setting (159).

Whether due to a direct influence or mere coincidence, many of the Nietzschean props from this scene – from the fig-tree to the seabreeze – feature in Rilke's 'Lied vom Meer', its subtitle, 'Capri. Piccola Marina', rendering its Italian birthplace part of the poem itself.[274] It was written in January 1907 as the earliest of *Der neuen Gedichte anderer Teil*. Notwithstanding considerable differences, consisting particularly in the comparative subtlety regarding the *mise-en-scène*, it can be read as a variation on the Nietzsche passages quoted above:

> Uraltes Wehn vom Meer,
> Meerwind bei Nacht:
> Du kommst zu keinem her;
> wenn einer wacht,
> so muß er sehn, wie er
> dich übersteht:

[272] See Z.1.2.1-4.
[273] Alexander Nehamas, in: Gerhard (2000), p. 169.
[274] Writing about the *Neue Gedichte* in general, Anthony Phelan draws attention to 'Rilke's use of titles. In many instances they are indispensably part of the poems they name.' He maintains further that some of those poems 'would be enigmatic without their titles' (1992, p. 90).

uraltes Wehn vom Meer,
welches weht
nur wie für Ur-Gestein,
lauter Raum
reißend von weit herein...
O wie fühlt dich ein
treibender Feigenbaum
oben im Mondenschein (SW I 600f.).

In a letter to Gudrun von Uexküll from 5 January 1907, the poet speaks of his nightly winter walks by the Capri coast, 'in großem Sturm und großem Mondschein' (B I 230). Indeed, in Rilke's poem, Zarathustra's autumn, symbolizing harvest, would seem to have been replaced by a cold, lifeless winter. Rilke's melancholic 'Wehn', potentially bearing connotations of the pain preceding birth, stands in contrast to the fresh Nietzschean 'Nordwind', which invites positive associations with vitality and new, hopeful beginnings.[275] That 'Nordwind', symbolizing Zarathustra, is coming for the over-ripe figs, which stand for his teachings; whilst the Rilkean 'Wehn', although addressed as a 'Thou', is purposeless, disinterested and 'kommt zu keinem her' save the barren 'Ur-Gestein'. Highlighting an important formal difference between the two writers, the scene in the Rilke poem is nocturnal, illuminated by the moon rather than the typically Nietzschean afternoon sun.[276] To anyone who might still be awake in this deserted, moon-like landscape, it is difficult to withstand the ancient, ripping gale felt particularly intensely ('o wie fühlt dich...') by the drifting fig tree, its implied sense of a mystically sublime sadness heightened by the assonance ('Wehn vom Meer'). Thus, in comparison to the Nietzsche passage, in the Rilke poem the feeling of isolation – mediated to the reader by means of 'an utter evacuation of the pathetic fallacy' (Phelan 1992, 92) – is considerably stronger.

Importantly, in the *Zarathustra* chapter, the sea represents the dead God *as well as* the *Übermensch*, whose arrival Zarathustra has announced, but who has not yet appeared. Therefore, in terms pertaining to the respective historical situation of both men, Rilke's scene in 'Lied vom Meer' really could indeed be read as the natural

[275] In her essay 'Umkehr und Wiederkehr' (in: Gerhardt 2000, pp. 323-350, here: p. 332), Vivetta Vivarelli draws attention to the origin of the frequently employed image of Zarathustra as 'frischer Brause-Wind' (KSA 4, 258): once again, it is a typically Nietzschean reversal, expressing 'die befreiende Eingebung einer Bejahung des Lebens und der Immanenz [...], die über das christlich-Schopenhauersche Ideal träger Meeresstille des Geistes triumphiert.'

[276] See Heller's assessment in 'Rilke und Nietzsche': 'Mittag und Abend – dieses Beispiel bezeichnet den auffälligsten Unterschied zwischen Nietzsche und Rilke; er ist in allen ihren Werken offenbar. [...] Aber ist dies notwendig ein Unterschied in der Substanz?' The critic answers in the negative. To him, both men merely express 'zwei Stimmungen desselben Gemüts' (1992, 139).

continuation of that autumn afternoon on the 'glückseligen Inseln' into the night: the seabreeze that is Zarathustra has shaken down the figs which are his teachings from the tree, and he has asked his disciples to ingest, and thereby realize, them. As those teachings centre around the abolition of God, with all its consequences of uncertainty and confusion, and as the morning, representing the bright future that is the *Übermensch*, has not yet arrived, the scene at night is suggestive of just such a transitory mood:[277] purposeless drifting in 'lauter Raum', which the wind still blowing from the sea, as it always has done since 'Ur-Zeiten' regardless of all the various human interpretations of the world, has ripped into the unnamed spectator's consciousness. Nietzsche's declaration of the death of God has created a void which has not yet been filled by anything quite capable of taking his place, least of all the *Übermensch*.[278] The strange image of a drifting tree, conjuring up images of infertility, stagnation and death, strongly emphasizes the notion of homelessness in this new world, as a tree is normally associated with the very opposite of drifting; namely, with strong roots connecting it firmly to the earth and enabling it to flower and bear fruit; in short, to live.[279]

Such a healthy, 'normal', rooted tree, unaffected by the cripplingly false morality of the Christian church – as attacked by the philosophizing *Antichrist* in many of his writings, and by the poet, most notably, in his *Arbeiterbrief* – is, in turn, precisely the image to visualize the substitute religion of a Nietzsche and a Rilke as: the religion of the earthly, the physical and the material. It is constituted by making immanence the new transcendence in affirming and embracing life in the here and now, including the unalterable facts of that life such as, above all, mortality and sexual desire.[280]

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[277] 'Der Tod Gottes', as Werner Stegmaier writes in his essay 'Anti-Lehren. Szene und Lehre in Nietzsches *Also sprach Zarathustra*', 'die Gleichgültigkeit gegenüber Gott, war am Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts zu einem Gemeinplatz geworden', in: Gerhardt (2000), pp. 191-224; quotation on p. 206. This is true; yet, Nietzsche's particular merit arguably lies in having painted the most vivid picture of the causes, and, more importantly, potential consequences, of that event.

[278] Paul de Man, in *Allegories of Reading*, even argues that the chiasmus, the 'ground-figure of the *New Poems*, can only come into being as the result of a void, of a lack' (p. 49).

[279] This is only one of many possible interpretations of 'Lied vom Meer'. However, for the purposes of this chapter, this particular approach may serve to demonstrate vividly the first obvious consequences of the Nietzschean destruction of old belief systems connecting humans to their surroundings. One could even argue, as I have done in chapter 2.1, that Rilke's initial reaction to (Nietzsche's proclamation of) the death of God was to fill this scary void immediately by actually accepting the anti-philosopher's self-apotheosis, and by making him, Nietzsche, if ever so briefly, his, Rilke's, own new god.

[280] As the former topic, death, has been enjoying far greater critical attention so far (see, for example, Marielle Sutherland's recent PhD dissertation, *Refiguring Death: the Poetics of Transience in the Works of Rilke*, for University College London (2004), publication imminent; or Gerald Stieg in Stevens and Wagner, p. 40, who points out that 'die Rilke-Rezeption [...] hat in diesem Punkt [Rilke's frequent use of erotic themes and images, KB] oft die Augen schamhaft geschlossen'), I will concentrate on the latter topic, that of sexuality, in the following.

3.2.3 The eroticization of the religious

Sexuality *as* religion is celebrated most directly in Rilke's so-called 'phallic poems', or 'Sieben Gedichte', as the following selection shows: in the second poem, the female genitalia are declared a 'Gegen-Himmel', into which the tree of the speaker's sex 'wirklich bäumt und wirklich ragt'; while in the third, 'die Säule [...] in meinem Schamgehölze' becomes 'des Gottes Bild' (SW II 436). In the sixth poem, the act is even explicitly compared to Christ's ascension to heaven, with the speaker's sex, or his 'steife Leiche', cast as Jesus:

> Wem sind wir nah? Dem Tode oder dem,
> was noch nicht ist? Was wäre Lehm an Lehm,
> formte der Gott nicht fühlend die Figur,
> die zwischen uns erwächst. Begreife nur:
> das ist mein Körper, welcher aufersteht.
> Nun hilf ihm leise aus dem heißen Grabe
> in jenen Himmel, den ich in dir habe:
> daß kühn aus ihm das Überleben geht.
> Du junger Ort der tiefen Himmelfahrt.
> Du dunkle Luft voll sommerlicher Pollen.
> Wenn ihre tausend Geister in dir tollen,
> wird meine steife Leiche wieder zart (437f.).

Those poems, blasphemous even by Nietzsche's standards, were written for another Lou; namely, the painter Loulou Albert-Lazard, around 1 November 1915, a year after the 'Fünf Gesänge'. They have since been equally neglected or dismissed by scholarship. Stieg's verdict, for example, is harsh but accurate: 'Rilkes Drang nach dem Mythos hat, wenn er sich so direkt wie in den "Fünf Gesängen" und den "Sieben Gedichten" ausspricht, auch das negative Gegengewicht der Eindeutigkeit an sich, das nach Nietzsche und Freud einigermaßen naiv erscheinen mag' (45). Phelan's critique, albeit with regard to the *Neue Gedichte*, is equally applicable here when he speaks of 'the puzzling conjunction in Rilke of an openness to sexual metaphor and an extraordinary insensitivity to sexual symbolism' (1992, 59). In the 'Sieben Gedichte' with their blunt and sometimes even unintentionally comical metaphors, and perhaps

even in his poetic treatment of sexuality in general, Rilke was not at his subtle, sensitive best; that group of poems may have been overlooked for that very reason.[281]

Things are different, however, when it comes to prose. Here, as so often in the works of both Rilke and Nietzsche, sexuality is a stand-in for the more abstract 'Erde', 'das Hiesige' or 'das Irdische'; and in the tradition of Nietzsche, to whom 'the Christian attitude to sex seemed [...] simply perverse',[282] Rilke passionately defends sexuality against false Christian morality, the 'Schutt christlicher Vorurteile' (SW VI 1125), which poisons and darkens 'unser Geschlecht' (1124) by means of the notion of sinfulness attached to it:

> Und hier in jener Liebe, die sie mit einem unerträglichen Ineinander von Verachtung, Begierlichkeit und Neugier die 'sinnliche' nennen, hier sind wohl die schlimmsten Wirkungen jener Herabsetzung zu suchen, die das Christentum dem Irdischen meinte bereiten zu müssen (1123).

This is one of the key passages of Rilke's *Brief des jungen Arbeiters* (1922), which Rilke scholarship occasionally understands as 'ein anonymes Denkmal' to Freud.[283] This is probably at least partly true, particularly when one considers the line 'einmal waren wir überall Kind, jetzt sind wirs nur noch an einer Stelle' (SW VI 1125) in the context of Freud's *Drei Abhandlungen* (1905);[284] however, the *Arbeiterbrief*, as I will argue below in more detail, is surely also a tribute to Nietzsche in at least equal measure.[285] Rilke assumes the guise of a young, educated worker addressing a poet, possibly Emile Verhaeren (1855-1916), or Rilke himself, as argued by Görner (2004,

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[281] As Stephens rightly points out, 'die damals bereits vollendete *Dritte Elegie* hatte mit weitaus größerem Erfolg eine eng verwandte Thematik behandelt – vor allem weil hier keine ins Abstruse ausartende stilistische Synthese versucht wird und das lyrische Ich in seinem phallischen Aspekt nicht auf so penetrante Weise in den Vordergrund gestellt wird' (*Rilke-Handbuch*, p. 402). The project of the *Dritte Elegie* is indeed 'nichts Geringeres als die Aufhebung der "entsetzlichen Unwahrheit" [as described in the *Arbeiterbrief*, KB], die "uns von der ganzen übrigen Natur" – im sexuellen Sinne – "trennt"' (p. 375). However, as Manfred Engel, amongst others, has described the process of the transformation of the 'schuldige Fluß-Gott des Blutes' (SW I, p. 693) by a 'unerwartet versöhnliche Anthropomorphisierung' (*Rilke-Handbuch*, p. 375) most precisely already (see KA, p. 638f.), we shall not engage in what would be mere paraphrasing here.

[282] Hollingdale, p. 205. He cites passages from *Morgenröthe* ('Ist es nicht schrecklich, nothwendige und regelmässige Empfindungen zu einer Quelle des inneren Elends zu machen'; KSA 3, p. 73) and *Ecce Homo* ('die Predigt der Keuschheit ist eine öffentliche Aufreizung zur Widernatur. Jede Verachtung des geschlechtlichen Lebens [...] ist die eigentliche Sünde wider den heiligen Geist des Lebens'; KSA 6, p. 307; also in *Der Antichrist*, KSA 6, p. 254) to support this claim.

[283] Theodore Fiedler, in: *Rilke-Handbuch*, p. 172. For another example, see also: Hans-Dieter Schmidt, 'Rilkes "Arbeiterbrief": Dokument einer Freud-Rezeption?', in: *Weimarer Beiträge*, 33 (1987); pp. 1034-1038.

[284] See Freud (1972), pp. 81ff., for a discussion of the child as a polymorphous pervert. Freud called the popular opinion which assumes the absence of a sex drive in children a 'folgenschwere[n] Irrtum.'

[285] Görner calls it 'Rilkes Version des *Antichristen* Nietzsches' (2004, p. 263).

264), whom he perceives to be one of the 'Lehrer, die uns das Hiesige rühmen' (SW VI 1127). Along with Zarathustra in 'Auf den glückseligen Inseln' and using identical images, such as the clouding of water, from related chapters,[286] he asks 'warum hat man uns das Geschlecht heimatlos gemacht, [...] warum gehören wir nicht zu Gott von *dieser* Stelle aus?' (1124), reclaiming the lost paradise.[287] Explicitly blaming the figure of Christ for the guilt which has come to be associated with it, he demands that 'unsere Sinnlichkeit' (1125) be afforded its rightful, innocent place again: 'Ich will mich nicht schlecht machen lassen um Christi willen, sondern gut sein für Gott' (1126). Whoever denies human sensuality, as those living in the 'Zwielicht der Christlichkeit' (1124) have done for so long, becomes ignorant, dishonest and, as 'Auf den glückseligen Inseln' demonstrates and as we will see below, less creative.

This was already foreshadowed in the *Zweite unzeitgemäße Betrachtung*, where Nietzsche, in the past participle 'umschattet' in combination with the noun 'Wurzeln', also implicitly conjures up the image of a tree, ideally rooted in faith and love and, in turn, able to provide the shade, or the illusion, of that love, which is a *conditio sine qua non* of creativity:

> nur in Liebe aber, nur umschattet von der Illusion der Liebe schafft der Mensch, nämlich nur im unbedingten Glauben an das Vollkommene und Rechte. Jedem, den man zwingt, nicht mehr unbedingt zu lieben, hat man die Wurzeln seiner Kraft abgeschnitten: er muss verdorren, nämlich unehrlich werden (KSA 1, 296).

Nietzsche warns of the destructive dangers of a purely objective and judgemental historical approach not reigned in by creative instincts and illusions, such as love, here. Such historicism has, in his view, already dissolved Christianity into 'reines Wissen um das Christenthum' (297). Rilke, in turn, seems to be picking up on this equation of love and faith in his rarely discussed fragment of a speech *Über die Gegenliebe Gottes* from 1913; if, yet again, in a 'leisere Färbung' than Nietzsche's 'unbedingte'. The poet's mirroring, in 'Zwang', of the Nietzschean notion of force in 'zwingt' in association with

[286] Compare Zarathustra's verdict 'Von den Dichtern', 'Sie sind mir auch nicht reinlich genug: sie trüben Alle ihr Gewässer, dass es tief scheine' (KSA 4, p. 165), to Rilke's description of those who 'haben aus dem Christlichen ein métier gemacht': 'und so trüben sie ihr eigenes Gewässer und müssen es immer wieder erneun' (SW VI, p. 1114). The image reapperas ten pages on when he asks 'Warum, wenn schon Schuld oder Sünde, wegen der inneren Spannung des Gemüts, mußte erfunden werden, warum heftete man sie nicht an einen anderen Teil unseres Leibes, warum ließ man sie fallen dorthin und wartete, daß sie sich auflöse in unserem reinen Brunnen und ihn vergifte und trübe?' (p. 1124). For further analysis of that particular similarity, see section 4.3.1, on 'Vor Sonnenaufgang', below.

[287] See, again, Gerald Stieg (in Stevens and Wagner, p. 40): 'Schuld- und sündebefreite Sexualität, unbewußte kindliche Pansexualität: das ist Rilkes Paradies.'

a false kind of faith makes the suggestion of a direct influence in this instance even more plausible:

> das Wort Glauben [...] hat einen Nebensinn von Zwang, von Anstrengung angenommen, daß man fast nur noch die langen Mühen einer Bekehrung darin erkennt und vergißt, daß Glaube nur eine leise Färbung der Liebe ist (SW VI 1043).

However, whilst Nietzsche, arguing in favour of action as always, pitted his Zarathustra, as someone who creates truth, against what he calls 'the merely faithful' (KSA 6, 343), and repeatedly stressed '*Nicht* ein Glauben, sondern ein Tun' (KSA 6, 211) as the only mode of existence still possible for Christianity; Rilke, in contrast, saw faith, or rather, the love of God, as superior, as 'reine Leistung', that is, an intransitive love which is free to go on forever, unhindered by an object such as a real and present (human) beloved. As this particular aspect of Rilke's view of love (of both God and an Other) has already been discussed in the preceding chapter of this study, suffice it at this point to note that 'that objectless formula[288] [...] is close in meaning, if not in wording, to Nietzsche [...]. In short, Rilke's notoriously idiosyncratic thought on the nature of the God-man relationship appears considerably less so in the light of Nietzsche's writings on this same subject.'[289] Desire (be it for a beloved or for some kind of god) in Rilke's œuvre as well as Nietzsche's is more often than not a modality of absence which urges on creativity.

[288] Malte's statement 'daß Gott nur eine Richtung der Liebe ist, kein Liebesgegenstand' (SW VI, 937).
[289] J. M. Hawes, *Nietzsche and the End of Freedom. The Neo-Romantic Dilemma in Kafka, the Brothers Mann, Rilke and Musil 1904-1914*, Frankfurt/M.: Peter Lang, 1993; here, p. 106. In his study, Hawes is mainly referring to the *Antichrist*, and, in this instance, particularly to the phrase 'Das Himmelreich ist ein Zustand des Herzens' (KSA 6, 207). One could add, as further examples, 'Gott […] ist kein Gegenstand der Liebe' (*Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*; KSA 3, 489) and 'was für ihn [Zarathustra] allein "der Mensch" sein kann – *kein* Gegenstand der Liebe' (*Ecce Homo*; KSA 6, 348).

3.2.4 A new innocence: cognizance and the will to create

The origins of 'das Gift der Lehre'[290] of Christianity so despised, and eventually turned around, by Nietzsche and, following him, Rilke, need to be examined a little more closely. Allusions to what Nietzsche called 'das bisher beste deutsche Buch' abound in *Also sprach Zarathustra*, a book, in turn, written entirely in a pseudo-biblical style.[291] In the *Zarathustra* chapters in question here, Nietzsche plays with themes from Genesis, most notably with the problem of cognizance. Before analyzing how the philosopher looks at that problem, and the role it plays in the relationship between the creative being and the dead God, it is advisable to briefly turn to his source material first.

In Luther's translation of the Old Testament used by both Rilke and Nietzsche, God created Adam (which is the Hebrew word for 'man') according to his likeness, but did not want him to be too much like himself: similarity, rather than identity, was the divine plan. In this context, cognizance is the vital feature still distinguishing God from man. Before Adam and Eve partook of the forbidden fruit, they were innocent in both senses: without guilt as well as ignorant. However, the unavoidable soon happened, and 'Gott der Herr sprach: Siehe, der Mensch ist geworden wie unsereiner und weiß, was gut und böse ist' (Gen 3, 22).[292] The consequences for his unruly creatures are harsh: first, they fall from grace; and subsequently, God even regrets having made them in the first place and drowns everyone save Noah and his family. In the Bible, cognizance thus signifies both the divine ability to differentiate between good and evil, and human sexual intercourse. It automatically renders human beings guilty and, eventually, dead.

Taking his lead from the plastic arts, but possibly also from Genesis, as Nietzsche did with 'Auf den glückseligen Inseln' and related *Zarathustra* chapters, Rilke wrote 'Adam' and 'Eva' for *Der neuen Gedichte anderer Teil* in the summer of 1908 in Paris. In 'Adam', the transitoriness of human life, implying both mortality and the power to create, is set positively against 'fertig-volle', divine 'Dauer':

> Staunend steht er an der Kathedrale
> steilem Aufstieg, nah der Fensterrose,
> wie erschreckt von der Apotheose,

[290] *Der Antichrist*, KSA 6, p. 217. Nietzsche is mainly writing about 'die große Lüge von der Personal-Unsterblichkeit' here, which he also calls the 'Attentat' or simply the 'Verbrechen' committed against earthly joy, happiness and noble excellence (p. 218). Although that book – considered, 'together with *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, [...] the most important and the most radical of Nietzsche's works' (Thomas Brobjer, in: *The Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, 21, 2001, p. 102), not least by the philosopher himself – is highly germane to this chapter's topics, the main focus needs to remain on those of Nietzsche's works Rilke is now known to have read, above all, of course, *Zarathustra*.

[291] The quotation from *Jenseits von Gut und Böse* 247 describes, of course, the Bible (KSA 5, 191).

[292] It is worth noting at this point that the snake, who seduced Eve, is condemned and expelled by God and, in contrast, embraced by Zarathustra as his friend, and the wisest of all animals (KSA 4, p. 27).

welche wuchs und ihn mit einem Male

niederstellte über die und die.
Und er ragt und freut sich seiner Dauer
schlicht entschlossen; als der Ackerbauer
der begann, und der nicht wußte, wie

aus dem fertig-vollen Garten Eden
einen Ausweg in die neue Erde
finden. Gott war schwer zu überreden;

und er drohte ihm, statt zu gewähren,
immer wieder, daß er sterben werde.
Doch der Mensch bestand: sie wird gebären (SW I 583f.).

Death, to which the circle of earthly life begun by the act of physical love invariably leads, is threatened by God rather than granted, implying the alienation from the totality of life perpetuated by the church. It is thematized more thoroughly in 'Eva', along with the problem of guilt:

Einfach steht sie an der Kathedrale
großem Aufstieg, nah der Fensterrose,
mit dem Apfel in der Apfelpose,
schuldlos-schuldig ein für alle Male

an dem Wachsenden, das sie gebar,
seit sie aus dem Kreis der Ewigkeiten
liebend fortging, um sich durchzustreiten
durch die Erde, wie ein junges Jahr.

Ach, sie hätte gern in jenem Land
noch ein wenig weilen mögen, achtend
auf der Tiere Eintracht und Verstand.

Doch da sie den Mann entschlossen fand,
ging sie mit ihm, nach dem Tode trachtend;
und sie hatte Gott noch kaum gekannt (584f.).

This poem says very clearly that it is impossible for Eva to get to know God in the here and now. He is present only in His world beyond that of humans, in the circle of eternities hermetically sealed off from human life characterized by birth, love and death.

The word which begins the poem, 'einfach', distinctly juxtaposes Eve, innocently guilty forever,[293] to 'der Kathedrale großem Aufstieg', pompous, it would seem, like a theatre. This notion of the theatricality of institutionalized religion is intensified by her posing, highlighting the artificiality of the status quo of human guilt, and, thereby, its changeability: even the statues of Adam and Eve, symbolic of their 'Apotheose', are man-made, after all. Invariably, one is again reminded of the *Arbeiterbrief*, where the writer rhetorically asks: 'Diese zunehmende Ausbeutung des Lebens, ist sie nicht eine Folge, der durch die Jahrhunderte fortgesetzten Entwertung des Hiesigen?' (SW VI 1114); and of Rilke's hopeful prophecy in a letter to Ilse Jahr from 22 February 1923 that 'alles tief und innig Hiesige, das die Kirche ans Jenseits veruntreut hat, kommt zurück' (B II 292). Adam is decided, insisting very consciously and definitively on his choice of a mortal human life, directly following, as it would seem, Zarathustra's advice in 'Von den Hinterweltlern' where, in Z.1, Salomé or Rilke drew a circle round the following passage:

> Einen neuen Stolz lehrte mich mein Ich, den lehre ich die Menschen: nicht mehr den Kopf in den Sand der himmlischen Dinge zu stecken, sondern frei ihn zu tragen, einen Erden-Kopf, der der Erde Sinn schafft!
>
> Einen neuen Willen lehre ich die Menschen: diesen Weg <u>wollen</u> [underlined by Rilke or Salomé], den blindlings der Mensch gegangen, und gut ihn heissen und nicht mehr von ihm bei Seite schleichen, gleich den Kranken und Absterbenden! (KSA 4, 36f.).

The underlined word is the crucial one,[294] as the situation in *Zarathustra* is indeed rather different from that in the Bible. It is the last part of 'Auf den glückseligen Inseln' which was singled out by Rilke; and here, the book's protagonist explains what lures him away from 'Gott und Göttern' and simultaneously drives him towards both man and, in compelling consequence, the *Übermensch*: it is the 'Wille zur Zeugung' (KSA 4, 111) inherent in his cognizance. The innocence famously absent from it since the Fall is restored to cognizance precisely by virtue of that will to create when the Persian prophet

[293] The paradox again juxtaposes the two modes of existence to each other; that dedicated to transience and that committed to immanence.

[294] 'The underlying theme of *Zarathustra*', Carol Diethe writes in 2000, 'the will to power, is never again dealt with as cogently. Admirers of *Der Wille zur Macht*, the work that Nietzsche's sister compiled from her brother's unpublished notes after his death, are unlikely to agree with this assessment, since this particular book has been a mainstay of authors engaged in poststructuralist theory (such as Michel Foucault)', in: Matthias Konzett (ed.), *Ecyclopedia of German Literature*, Chicago and London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2000, p. 766.

speaks of the 'Unschuld in meiner Erkenntnis' (ibid.). This reappears further on in Book II, in 'Von der unbefleckten Erkenntnis':[295]

> Wo ist Unschuld? Wo der Wille zur Zeugung ist. Und wer über sich hinaus schaffen will, der hat mir den reinsten Willen.
>
> Wo ist Schönheit? Wo ich mit allem Willen *wollen muss*; wo ich lieben und untergehn will, dass ein Bild nicht nur Bild bleibe.
>
> Lieben und Untergehn: das reimt sich seit Ewigkeiten. Wille zur Liebe: das ist, willig auch sein zum Tode (KSA 4, 157).[296]

By means of his restoration, Nietzsche turns God's word, represented here by the allusion to Genesis, around, and thereby presents the reader with another drastic revaluation – in his notes from 1888, shortly before insanity claimed him, he went even further and declared, referring to Baudelaire as he often did at that time,[297] 'la certitude de faire le *mal*' the very precondition and definition of 'la volupté unique et suprême de l'amour' (KSA 13, 77f.). 'Eure eignen Sinne sollt ihr zu Ende denken' (110), Zarathustra demands, still somewhat tamer, connecting creativity to sensuality and anticipating Rilke's wish for 'unsere Sinnlichkeit' to be whole and innocent again, as well as his idea of paradise regained already mentioned above:

> Die entsetzliche Unwahrheit und Unsicherheit unserer Zeit hat ihren Grund in dem nicht eingestandenen Glück des Geschlechts, in dieser eigentümlich schiefen Verschuldung, die immerfort zunimmt und uns von der ganzen übrigen Natur trennt, ja sogar von dem Kind, obwohl [...] des

[295] That chapter title is of course an allusion to what Nietzsche calls the 'Dogma von der "unbefleckten Empfängniss"' in *Der Antichrist* of which he says further: '*damit hat sie* [die Kirche] *die Empfängniss befleckt*' (KSA 6, p. 207).

[296] In his notes from 1888, Nietzsche describes 'das Schöne' as understood by Baudelaire and Wagner as something glowing and sad which is a little insecure and leaves room for assumption (KSA 13, 79).

Incidentally, the connection between love, beauty and death set up by Nietzsche, particularly in this *Zarathustra* passage, is also one made frequently by Rilke; for example, in his early poem 'Agathe' (1896) from his estate, which would seem to bear testimony to the poet's reading of *Zarathustra* at the time: 'Sie möcht' in Sehnsucht sinken/ glückgierig in den wilden Arm der Kraft/ und einmal nur sich selig trunken trinken/ an einer tödlich großen Leidenschaft' (SW III, p. 547). Here, sexual passion is simultaneously described as intoxicating and potentially deadly in a Dionysian way, and as a blissful blessing by the young poet. However, those immature lines indubitably also already mediate an inkling of the master poet's embracing of the totality and interconnectedness of all of life from the first *Elegie*, 'Denn das Schöne ist nichts/ als des Schrecklichen Anfang, den wir noch grade ertragen' (SW I, p. 685).

[297] A thorough study on the presence of Baudelaire in Nietzsche and Rilke would be a worthwhile pursuit, and certainly a *desideratum* within scholarship, but cannot be undertaken here due to the different focus of this thesis. Suffice it here to mention Gisela Dischner, 'Dionysische Bejahung: Baudelaire und Nietzsche', in: Gisela Dischner, *Wandlung ins Unsichtbare. Rilkes Deuten der Dichterexistenz*, Berlin: Philo, 1999; Barbara Smitmans-Vajda, *Dionysos Philosophos. Nietzsche, Narr und Künstler...*, Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1997; and Adrian Stevens's essay '*La sensation du neuf*: Rilke, Baudelaire und die Kunstauffassung der Moderne', in: Stevens and Wagner (eds.), pp. 226-246: 'Daß das Schöne und das Vernichtende bei Baudelaire prinzipiell zusammengedacht werden, ist in Rilkes Sicht die Voraussetzung dafür, daß die ruinierte Welt der Moderne in den *Fleurs du Mal* künstlerisch neu zusammengesetzt und in ihrer Totalität wiederhergestellt werden konnte' (p. 243).

Kindes Unschuld durchaus nicht darin besteht, daß es, sozusagen, kein Geschlecht kenne, [...] sondern, [...] jenes unbegreifliche Glück, das uns an *einer* Stelle erwacht mitten im Fruchtfleisch der geschlossenen Umarmung, ist noch in seinem ganzen Körper namenlos verteilt (SW VI 1125).

3.2.5 Does God make sense? Of spite and humility

In 'Von den Hinterweltlern', however, a chapter from Book I in its topics also very much related to 'Von den glückseligen Inseln' and underlined in Z.1, the philosopher's alter ego admits to having been prone to believing in God in moments of weakness and 'grosser Müdigkeit' (111) himself: 'Einst warf auch Zarathustra seinen Wahn jenseits des Menschen' (35).[298] In this context, it is worth noting that 'Wahn' once also carried connotations of hope. Indeed, the word is repeated in Zarathustra's claim that that God was created by himself (He is 'Menschen-Wahnsinn'); and, moreover, that all gods are man-made:

> Ach, ihr Brüder, dieser Gott, den ich schuf, war Menschen-Werk und -Wahnsinn, gleich allen Göttern!
>
> Mensch war er, und nur ein armes Stück Mensch und ich: aus der eigenen Asche und Glut kam es mir, dieses Gespenst, und wahrlich! Nicht kam es mir von Jenseits!
>
> Was geschah, meine Brüder? Ich überwand mich, den Leidenden, ich trug meine eigne Asche zu Berge, eine hellere Flamme erfand ich mir. Siehe! Da *wich* das Gespenst von mir!
>
> Leiden wäre es mir jetzt und Qual dem Genesenen, solche Gespenster zu glauben (35f.).[299]

In a letter to Lotte Hepner from 8 November 1915, Rilke also equates God, and all gods in general, with a 'Gespenst' and echoes Nietzsche's assessment of God as 'Menschen-Werk und -Wahnsinn' beyond human senses ('übersinnlich'):

> Verwirrt es Sie, daß ich Gott sage und Götter und mit diesen Satzungen (genau wie mit dem Gespenst) um der Vollzähligkeit willen umgehe, meinend, es müsse sich dabei auch für Sie gleich etwas denken lassen? Aber nehmen Sie Übersinnliches an. Verständigen wir uns darüber, daß der Mensch, seit seinen frühesten Anfängen, Götter gebildet hat' (B I, 600)

This would seem to be echoing Nietzsche's rhetorical question asked 'Auf den glückseligen Inseln', 'könntet ihr einen Gott *denken*?' (KSA 4, 109), its answer in the negative implied: as in *Zarathustra*, the Rilkean implication is that God himself is, literally, unthinkable; and that he, as 'Übersinnliches' – that is, something beyond the grasp of human senses – is a mere 'Muthmaassung' (ibid.) which can only be

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[298] According to Jörg Salaquarda, this chapter represents Nietzsche's critique of the 'metaphysisch-religiösen "Hinterwelt"', echoing Schopenhauer's view of the metaphysical world of religion as a mere mirror of the empirical world (*Nietzsche-Handbuch*, p. 383).

[299] Nietzsche's view of himself as a flame, or a phoenix from the ashes, even, originates in *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*: 'Ecce Homo. Ja! Ich weiss, woher ich stamme!/ Ungesättigt gleich der Flamme/ Glühe und verzehr' ich mich./ Licht wird Alles, was ich fasse,/ Kohle Alles, was ich lasse:/ Flamme bin ich sicherlich' (3, 367); and is promptly echoed in the *Stunden-Buch*, with the variation of Rilke identifying with the darkness rather than the flame (SW I, p. 258).

'angenommen', or assumed. In Rilke, however, in its connotation of 'embraced', this verb clearly points to the positive aspect of faith. The only thing about God actually accessible to rationality and expressible in language, the only thing about which humans can reach a consensus (in Rilke, 'sich verständigen', with connotations of rationality), is the fact that they themselves have always been creating gods.

The continuity of Rilke's view of God's relationship of dependence on human belief in him, possibly modeled on Nietzsche's, is demonstrated by both the young worker's assessment of the idea of a 'Jenseits' as 'Wahnsinn' (SW VI 1114),[300] and the following famous lines from the *Stundenbuch*, written sixteen years before the letter quoted above, and twenty-three before the *Arbeiterbrief*. They address a God who 'hat durchaus Züge einer provisorischen Erfindung, ein Gott, den Rilke selbst im Verdacht hatte, ohne den Gläubigen, ohne den Beter überhaupt nicht vorhanden zu sein':[301]

> Was wirst du tun, Gott, wenn ich sterbe?
> Ich bin dein Krug (wenn ich zerscherbe?)
> Ich bin dein Trank (wenn ich verderbe?)
> Bin dein Gewand und dein Gewerbe,
> mit mir verlierst du deinen Sinn (SW I 275).

Rilke's image of the believer as a potentially breaking vessel vital for God's very existence seems like a direct referral to the dead old God in 'Ausser Dienst' in Book IV whom Zarathustra compares to an untalented, petulant potter wreaking revenge on his badly-turned-out 'Töpfe und Geschöpfe' (KSA 4, 324f.).

It should be evident by now that in the passages by both poet and philosopher examined so far, 'Sinn' is inextricably linked to, and limited by, human senses and what they can perceive – and linked particularly to sensuality, that earthliest of all modes of experience, which simultaneously affords the closest we can ever get to anything approaching a feeling of transcendence, having forever lost the ecstasies of true belief in God. Thus, in Nietzsche and Rilke, those famous critics of anthropocentrism, it is, paradoxically, precisely the human being, rather than God, who is at the centre of the universe as its sole provider of – sense. The difference is that Rilke, 'der heilige

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[300] Again, *Der Antichrist* springs to mind: 'Wenn man das Schwergewicht des Lebens *nicht* in's Leben, sondern in's "Jenseits" verlegt – *in's Nichts* –, so hat man dem Leben überhaupt das Schwergewicht genommen. [...] *So* zu leben, dass es keinen *Sinn* mehr hat, zu leben, *das* wird jetzt zum Sinn des Lebens...' (KSA 6, p. 217). This could not demonstrate any clearer that Nietzsche was not a nihilist, but, rather, equated Christianity with nihilism.

[301] Kurt Klinger, 'Rilke und die Fremdheit der Welt', in: Stevens and Wagner (2000), pp. 10-24; quotation on p. 23.

Franziskus des Willens zur Macht',[302] as in the *Stundenbuch*, still addresses his God directly. Contrarily, Nietzsche, radical as always, asks in the guise of 'der tolle Mensch' in *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*: 'Ist nicht die Grösse dieser That [des Gottesmordes, KB] zu gross für uns? Müssen wir nicht selber zu Göttern werden, nur um ihrer würdig zu erscheinen?' (KSA 3, 480). Similarly, he has Zarathustra suggest to the old pope to do away with God altogether, and for them both to be gods themselves instead ('lieber selber Gott sein!', KSA 4, 325). Rilke however, like his young labourer, always seems to know 'daß die Unterwerfung weiter führt als die Auflehnung' (SW VI 1122).

Yet, although this association of the poet with humility, often seen in contrast to the philosopher's pride and spite, surely holds in a general context, and as such has become a commonplace within Rilke scholarship,[303] it is by no means to be taken as absolute. Again, the variants and nuances, often overlooked, must be taken into consideration. In 'Die stillste Stunde' – the concluding chapter of Book II only separated from 'Vor Sonnenaufgang' by three chapters and 'eine bewußte Nachbildung der alttestamentlichen Berufungsvisionen von Moses, Elias, Jesaja und [...] Johannes dem Täufer'[304] – for example, we re-encounter Nietzsche's 'Gespenst' (KSA 4, 187f.). This spectre, also referred to as his 'stillste Stunde' or his enraged and terrible mistress,[305] speaks to Zarathustra, who has gone back into his cave, in a dream. It is symbolic of the solitude still needed by the Persian prophet, who must now withdraw from the people in order to mature before he can hope to reach them. Uncannily 'ohne Stimme' throughout, much like the spectre behind the chair from the philosopher's morphine dreams, his mistress chides him for being powerful, yet refusing to rule. The 'drei Verwandlungen' are echoed, and Zarathustra is still lacking all their qualities: most importantly, the shamelesness of the child, and also, the roaring voice of the lion. But – and at this point, we finally get back to the topic of humility – it is the passage about the camel which was marked in Z.1 (see Z.1.2.16):

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[302] Heller (1992), p. 140. Hawes relativizes Heller's phrase by suggesting that, if it is to be accepted, 'we should note that Nietzsche had already, in his last days of sanity, arrived at such a figure himself and that Rilke is already using such imagery by the time of *Malte* [in his passive saints, who are very close relatives of Nietzsche's heroes of "amor fati"]' (1993, p. 113).

[303] See, for example, Detsch, Frowen, Heller and Meyer.

[304] In Gerhardt (2000), p. 361. Behler is drawing on the essay 'Nietzsche und Luther', written in 1921 by Emanuel Hirsch, in this instance.

[305] Köhler writes with regard to this spectre: 'Was den Studenten als Gestalt hinter seinem Stuhl mit tonloser Stimme quälte, hat Zarathustra nun begriffen: Sein kranker, von ihm totgeschwiegener Körper hat das Schweigen mit toter Stimme durchbrochen' (1992, p. 520). In Köhler's view, the spectre of the 'stillste Stunde' also represents Nietzsche's dead father, as well as Nietzsche himself, ordering himself to teach the unbearable idea of the eternal return, which also implies the return of the dreadful spectre.

> Da sprach es wieder ohne Stimme zu mir: "Was liegt an dir, Zarathustra! Sprich dein Wort und zerbrich!" –
>
> Und ich antwortete: Ach, ist es m e i n Wort? Wer bin ich? Ich warte des Würdigeren; ich bin nicht werth, an ihm auch nur zu zerbrechen."
>
> Da sprach es wieder ohne Stimme zu mir: Was liegt an dir? Du bist mir noch nicht demüthig genug. Die Demuth hat das härteste Fell" (188).

Thus, the new findings help to make evident why Nietzsche cannot always serve as the counter-example to Rilke's humility; for he, too, valued that quality. The poet, in turn, expresses his belief in the identity of pride and humility in the letter to Jelena Woronina from 27 July 99 described by Frowen as 'ein Wiederhall von Nietzsches *Zarathustra*' (1987, 21):

> Liebe Helene, wissen Sie, wie stolz alles Russische ist, und haben Sie manchmal nachgedacht darüber, daß Stolz und Demut fast dasselbe ist, ja, daß man die Ähnlichkeit der beiden geradezu zum Maßstab ihrer Echtheit und Wahrhaftigkeit machen kann (B I 46)?

In that letter, Rilke further describes humility *as* pride, and 'Sich-Verneigen', which makes one bigger, as 'eine Gebärde der Macht und der Milde zugleich' (47). This view is by no means to be ascribed merely to the poet's youth, as twenty-two years later, on 5 March 1921, he wrote the following dedication 'An Pfarrer W. Becker':

> Dass Demut je in Stolzsein überschlüge –,
> o Zauber aller Zauber –: wie geschähs?
> Was wird aus stolzer Demut? Wird sie Lüge? –
> Nein: sie wird Überfluß – und der Genüge
> am Überfluß das herrlichste Gefäß (SW II 245).

This is both testament to Rilke's decidely Nietzschean notion of a circular spirituality – the proudly humble believer is self-sufficient, he is both source and vessel for his belief – as well as an example to contest the popular view of Rilke as exclusively humble, and of Nietzsche as exclusively proud.

Theo Meyer, adhering to this traditional scholarly view, assesses the differences in the two men's perspectives as follows: 'Nietzsche ist mit dem Tod Gottes, dem Nihilismus, konfrontiert, während Rilke von dem Gedanken getragen ist, daß Gott ein aus der menschlichen Gefühlskraft zu Schaffendes sei' (1993, 199). However, we have seen earlier that the concepts of atheism and nihilism are far from absolute in Nietzsche; indeed, according to Giorgio Colli, a nihilist interpretation of *Zarathustra* is out of the

question altogether, as the book contains 'keine einzige Vorstellung, die eine andere Vorstellung meint oder sich gegen sie wendet, denn seine Wurzeln reichen direkt in die Unmittelbarkeit, wo es nichts gibt, was zerstört werden könnte' (KSA 4, 415). Thus, if the term 'god' is not read in too limited a way (as Rilke, as we have seen, is hardly referring to the conservatively biblical meaning of the word, either), then Meyer's verdict of a gulf between the two writers becomes entirely untenable, as his statement on a god made by human emotive power regarding Rilke could equally apply to Nietzsche.[306] The following passage from the beginning of 'Auf den glückseligen Inseln' is particularly supportive of such a view:

> Einst sagte man Gott, wenn man auf ferne Meere blickte; nun aber lehrte ich euch sagen: Übermensch.
>
> Gott ist eine Muthmaassung; aber ich will, dass euer Muthmaassen nicht weiter reiche, als euer schaffender Wille.
>
> Könntet ihr einen Gott *schaffen*? – So schweigt mir doch von allen Göttern! Wohl aber könntet ihr den Übermenschen schaffen (KSA 4, 109).

We can only create, is Zarathustra's implication here, what we already have: affirmation is in fact the creative will he is speaking of.

In logical consequence, in 'Von den Dichtern', a chapter heavily marked in Z.1 (see Z.1.2.10), Nietzsche considers even the *Übermensch* as 'unzulänglich' (KSA 4, 165), once more equating him with gods in their shared fictionality: 'alle Götter sind Dichter-Gleichniss, Dichter-Erschleichniss! [...] auf [die Wolken] setzen wir unsre bunten Bälge und heissen sie dann Götter und Übermenschen: –' (164).[307] Beatrix Himmelmann has observed that Zarathustra formulates his teachings 'in ausdrücklicher Umkehrung der Schlußverse von Goethes *Faust*' here,[308] as in the criticism of the idea of transcendence expressed in 'Auf den glückseligen Inseln':

> Alles Unvergängliche – das ist nur ein Gleichniss! Und die Dichter lügen zuviel. –
>
> Aber von Zeit und Werden sollen die besten Gleichnisse reden: ein Lob sollen sie sein und eine Rechtfertigung aller Vergänglichkeit (110)!

[306] See also Szabó's online-article criticizing Hillebrand's view of Rilke's religiousness as 'unvereinbar mit Nietzsches Absage an den substanzlosen Gottesbegriff seiner Zeit' (1978, p. 31). Szabó agrees that 'Rilke entbehrt zwar die Radikalität von Nietzsches Wert-Philosophie', but argues that, nevertheless, 'eben die auch bei Rilke vorhandene immanente Metaphysik gestattet eine Neuinterpretation, die "Umwertung" des Gottesbegriffes, die bei Rilke [...] Gott von jeder moralischen Vorstellung fern hält.'

[307] Walter Kaufmann sees this passage as yet another piece of evidence for Rilke's similarity to Nietzsche and writes, quoting the third *Orpheus-Sonett*, in which 'a god appears where the elegies would have introduced an angel, and Nietzsche the overman', as an example: 'In Rilke, gods and angels are indeed mere poets' parables and are actually used interchangeably' (1980, p. 233).

[308] 'Zarathustras Weg', in: Gerhardt (2000), pp. 17-46; here, p. 28.

The poets' utterances are unreal, they are associated with lies and 'Gespenster-Hauch und -Huschen' (165). This stance, along with Nietzsche's comparison of those poets' creations, namely, gods and *Übermenschen*, to bastards ('Bälge'), recalls a letter of Rilke's to Salomé from 20 June 1914 regarding both his essay 'Puppen' and his famous poetological 'Wendung':

> ist es nicht furchtbar, daß man, ahnungslos, so etwas hinschreibt, unter dem Vorwand einer Puppenerinnerung vom Ureigensten handelnd, und dann die Feder rasch fortlegt, um das Gespensthafte noch einmal unbegrenzt, ja wie noch nie, auszuleben: bis einem jeden Morgen der Mund dürr war vom Werg, mit dem man, Balg durch und durch, angefüllt war bis in ihn herauf (BI, 537)?

This demonstrates how the transformation of personal experience into artistic creation can, in turn, transform the creator into something ghostly and artificial which, in allusion to the connotation of 'Balg' mentioned above, literally has no right to exist.

To come back to *Zarathustra*: at the outset of the infamous Nietzschean claim that God was killed by human beings stands the assumption that he was once created by them, too. In fact, when Nietzsche says explicitly that God is 'nur ein armes Stück Mensch', which implies that he is even less than a human being, and that nothing really exists 'jenseits des Menschen'; he is engaging in yet another reversal of the Bible ('Gott schuf den Menschen zu seinem Bilde', Gen 1, 27): man created God according to his likeness. Furthermore, as we have seen, what Nietzsche terms *Übermensch* is not too far away from the Rilkean 'aus der menschlichen Gefühlskraft zu schaffenden' God, and, in 'Auf den glückseligen Inseln', even introduced as God's substitute.

The important point in *Zarathustra* is that what makes God such a poor, pitiful and fragmented part-human is the fact that he represents the non-creative part of man. Moreover, the belief in him (as the old, moral God not yet beyond good and evil) impairs or even destroys human creativity altogether. Zarathustra appeals to his listeners to stop making gods with a rhetorical question in which the exclamation mark signals how certain he already is of their non-existence: 'was wäre denn zu schaffen, wenn Götter – da wären!' (KSA 4, 111). Yet, this is not really a satisfactory explanation for the gods' absence, but rather, a circular one, and Nietzsche knows it. He says so in the same chapter, in a passage both marked in Z.1 (see Z.1.2.3) and quoted by Andreas-Salomé in *Nietzsche in Seinen Werken*: '*wenn* es Götter gäbe, wie hielte ich's aus, kein Gott zu sein! *Also* giebt es keine Götter./ Wohl zog ich den Schluss; nun aber zieht er

mich.'[309] In her book, Salomé then adds the last lines from 'Von der schenkenden Tugend', the concluding chapter of Book I: '*Todt sind alle Götter: nun wollen wir, dass der Übermensch lebe*' (KSA 4, 102), and calls this statement 'den innersten Seelengrund seiner [Nietzsche's] Philosophie' (66). Unfortunately, Nietzsche does not necessarily always manage to differentiate the *Übermensch* sufficiently from the God he is designed to replace. At times, he seems as sick of both his creations, or 'Bälger' – as neither of them is truly real – as of weak humanity itself; and in those instances, his Schopenhauerian pessimism, usually so well disguised, breaks through in palpable despair: 'Was sich apollinisch in die Gestalt des Übermenschen verwandelt, ist der große Ekel, die Betrachtung [...] der konkreten Menschheit [...]. Im Hintergrund erhebt sich der nie überwundene Meister: Schopenhauer'.[310]

However, in passages such as the one from 'Von den Hinterweltlern' quoted above, the *Übermensch* is indeed still seen as the 'hellere Flamme' able to drive away the older 'Gespenst', that is, the man-made God once created out of a suffering Zarathustra's embers and ashes. A passage in 'Auf den glückseligen Inseln' underlined in Z.1 reads: 'Schaffen – das ist die große Erlösung vom Leiden, und des Lebens Leichtwerden. Aber dass der Schaffende sei, dazu thut Leid noth und viel Verwandelung' (KSA 4, 110). Earlier in the text, that 'Leid' was implicitly defined as the pain, or 'Qual', inherent in the 'Muthmaassung' that is the old God (ibid.) – hence, he was necessary both as the raw material to be transformed, and as source of the suffering vital for that creative transformative process to be set in motion. In her book on Nietzsche, Andreas-Salomé quotes the consequence Zarathustra draws from those insights: 'Dass der Schaffende selber das Kind sei, das neu geboren werde, dazu muss er auch die Gebärerin sein wollen und der Schmerz der Gebärerin' (KSA 4, 111; LAS 268), which anticipates Rilke's concept of the 'Todgebärer', nearing Nietzschean self-apotheosis, in the *Stundenbuch*.[311]

[309] KSA 4, p. 110; LAS 2000, p. 67. See also Rilke's *Florenzer Tagebuch*, p. 38: 'Gäbe es Götter, wir könnten es nie erfahren; denn daß wir um sie wissen, genügt, sie zu vernichten.'
[310] Colli, in: KSA 4, p. 415.
[311] See SW I 350; and, again, chapter 1.2, as well as Seifert's article (in: Pfister, 1989, pp. 229-239).

3.2.6 Consequences: sculpting the earth's meaning

Regardless, for now, of Nietzsche's 'Allmachtsphantasien' already clearly discernible in it; by means of that painful transformation, the paradigm has changed: health and sanity are now equated with creativity and the here and now needs to be shaped. Now that the new, brighter spectre of the Übermensch tantalizingly burns ahead of Zarathustra as his 'hellere Flamme' illuminating the future, it would mean torture and suffering to believe in the old God once again. Christian teleology preaching an attitude of childish (not to be confused with child-like) dependence is passé; there is no 'beyond' anymore. At this point, as in section 3.1.1, a trinity of beings, irresistably bound together by a chain of cause and effect, becomes visible; and the true function of the dead God finally emerges.[312] He is taking the place of the 'Gestalt hinter dem Stuhl' in the chain leading Zarathustra, via man, to the *Übermensch*.

To the mature Rilke, that trinity consists of devil, man and angel. The hierarchy within it is different, but there is the same notion of mutual dependence, and of reality, symbolizing identity, gained by difference. Speaking of 'Bilderfenstern' in old churches which still showed the terrible aspects of life, as well – unlike the new ones which only display 'die guten Beispiele' – the young worker states: 'Hier ist der Engel, den es nicht giebt, und der Teufel, den es nicht giebt; und der Mensch, den es giebt, ist zwischen ihnen, und, ich kann mir nicht helfen, ihre Unwirklichkeit macht ihn mir wirklicher' (SW VI 1120f.).

In contrast, to Nietzsche, it is man who is unreal on many levels, described as an image asleep in a stone; as well as the dead God, whose function, as that of the – equally unreal – inarticulate shape, is to spur on the 'inbrünstigen Schaffens-Willen' which alone may ultimately result in making the promise of the *Übermensch* a reality:

> Hinweg von Gott und Göttern lockte mich dieser Wille; was wäre denn zu schaffen, wenn Götter — da wären!
>
> Aber zum Menschen treibt er mich stets von Neuem, mein inbrünstiger Schaffens-Wille; so treibt's den Hammer hin zum Steine.

[312] See also *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*: 'vielleicht könnte [die gesammte (sic) *Religion*] das seltsame Mittel dazu gewesen sein, dass einmal einzelne Menschen die ganze Selbstgenügsamkeit eines Gottes und alle seine Kraft der Selbsterlösung geniessen können: Ja! – darf man fragen – würde denn der Mensch überhaupt ohne jene religiöse Schule und Vorgeschichte es gelernt haben, nach *sich* Hunger und Durst zu spüren und aus *sich* Sattheit und Fülle zu nehmen? Musste Prometheus erst *wähnen*, das Licht *gestohlen* zu haben und dafür büssen, – um endlich zu entdecken, dass er das Licht geschaffen habe, *indem er nach dem Lichte begehrte*, und dass nicht nur der Mensch, sondern auch der *Gott* das Werk *seiner* Hände und Thon in seinen Händen gewesen sei? Alles nur Bilder des Bildners? – ebenso wie [...] die ganze tragische Prometheia aller Erkennenden?' (KSA 3, p. 539).

> Ach, ihr Menschen, im Steine schläft mir ein Bild, das Bild meiner Bilder! Ach, dass es im härtesten, hässlichsten Steine schlafen muss!
>
> Nun wüthet mein Hammer grausam gegen sein Gefängniss.
>
> Vom Steine stäuben Stücke: was schiert mich das?
>
> Vollenden will ich's: denn ein Schatten kam zu mir – aller Dinge Stillstes und Leichtestes kam einst zu mir!
>
> Des Übermenschen Schönheit kam zu mir als Schatten. Ach, meine Brüder! Was gehen mich noch — die Götter an! —
>
> Also sprach Zarathustra (KSA 4, 111f.).

The key words here are 'schaffen' and 'wollen'. In 'Auf den glückseligen Inseln', Zarathustra points out that the will liberates one. Nietzsche's concern could not be more glaringly obvious: the will to create, automatically endowed with a childlike innocence and vital in giving stabilizing meaning to life after the corset of Christian morality has fallen away from it, can only arise when those old, stagnant belief systems are finally abandoned completely. To become healthy, one needs to turn away from the paralysing status quo propagated by the church and create meaning for the earth, for the here and now, oneself.[313]

In this context, a passage from 'Im Gespräch' springs to mind. It is part of Rilke's story 'Die Letzten', written in the winter of 1898/99 and published in 1901. In words strikingly reminiscent of Nietzsche's description of 'das Spiel des Künstlers und des Kindes' in the early, unpublished fragment 'Die Philosophie im tragischen Zeitalter der Griechen',[314] the narrator writes:

> Kunst ist Kindheit nämlich. Kunst heißt, nicht wissen, daß die Welt schon *ist*, und eine machen. Nicht zerstören, was man vorfindet, sondern einfach nichts Fertiges finden. [...] Niemals vollenden. Niemals den siebenten Tag haben. Niemals sehen, daß alles gut ist. Unzufriedenheit ist Jugend. Gott war zu alt am Anfang, glaub ich. Sonst hätt er nicht aufgehört am Abend des sechsten Tages. Und nicht am

[313] In this case, probably both Wilhelmine society and the artistic individual are Nietzsche's intended recipients.

[314] See KSA 1, p. 830: 'Ein Werden und Vergehen, ein Bauen und Zerstören, ohne jede moralische Zurechnung, in ewig gleicher Unschuld, hat in dieser Welt allein das Spiel des Künstlers und des Kindes.' As Colli is certainly correct both in attributing an overall disharmoniousness to the fragment, as well as in assessing the passage in question as a 'nicht einmal originelle Banalisierung seines [Nietzsche's] Denkens' (p. 917), we shall not engage it any further here, apart from noting that, in this particular instance, the similarities between Rilke and Nietzsche cannot stem from a direct influence, but must rather be accredited to their relatedness in spirit; particularly at a time, respectively, when they were both full of 'jugendliche Ungeduld' as in the case of the origination of 'Die Letzten', during which Rilke was twenty-four, and 'Die Philosophie im tragischen Zeitalter der Griechen', written by thirty-one-year-old Nietzsche 'in der angespannten, leidenschaftlichen Suche [...], in der sich das Entstehen seines literarischen Ehrgeizes ausdrückt' (p. 912).

> tausendsten Tag. Heute noch nicht. Das ist aller Grund, den ich gegen ihn habe. [...] Daß er kein Künstler war, das ist so traurig. Daß er *doch* kein Künstler war (SW IV 229).

Manfred Riedel sees this passage, without doubt correctly, along with the *Florenzer Tagebuch* as 'ein Zeugnis, daß Rilke dabei[315] Nietzsche als Dichter wahrgenommen und sich dessen innerste Denkerfahrungen erschlossen hat'.[316] The parallels are evident by now: to Rilke, God was not an artist, because he stopped creating and being unsatisfied; and Nietzsche calls 'all diess Lehren vom Einen und Vollen und Unbewegten und Satten und Unvergänglichen' 'böse […] und menschenfeindlich' (KSA 4, 110), and also views God as old, contrasting him to his young, creative self (see 324). In the philosopher's view, this is the greatest threat posed to life itself: the human 'Hang, Lebendiges in seiner Vergänglichkeit zu übermächtigen' (45). The credo common to Rilke and Nietzsche, then, is that of constant becoming: 'von Zeit und Werden sollen die besten Gleichnisse reden: ein Lob sollen sie sein und eine Rechtfertigung aller Vergänglichkeit!' (110).

However, an important difference to Nietzsche is palpable in the poet's line: 'Nicht zerstören, was man vorfindet, sondern einfach nichts Fertiges finden', which contrasts harshly with Nietzsche's emphasis in the Zarathustra-part of *Ecce Homo* on the Dionysian 'Lust am Vernichten' and the 'Gewissheit darüber, dass alle Schaffenden hart sind' (KSA 6, 349). In Nietzsche there is still very clearly the will to perfection (even if it cannot be reached), along with said preparedness for destruction: in the stone, an image is sleeping which Zarathustra wants to liberate at all costs. Likening man to the stone and himself to the hammer trapped, along with the image of the *Übermensch*, inside that stone, he exclaims: 'Nun wüthet mein Hammer grausam gegen sein Gefängniss. Vom Steine stäuben Stücke: was schiert mich das? Vollenden will ich's: denn […] des Übermenschen Schönheit kam zu mir als Schatten' (KSA 4, 111f.). Cruelty, possibly even ending in self-destruction, is accepted as *conditio sine qua non* of the creation of something new, which will invariably entail 'Vollendung'.

In contrast, to Rilke, the child and the artist, as opposed to God as described in the Bible, share an innocent, yet impatient view of the state of the world, and in turn the need to create ceaselessly. Thus, unlike the supposed Creator himself, the child and the artist have the power to improve the world for human beings as they are never willing to

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[315] 'bei der Klärung seiner Nietzsche-Interpretation, zu der er von Lou herausgefordert wurde.'

[316] 'Pathos des Hörens. Orphischer Gesang bei Nietzsche und Rilke', in: BlRG 24/2002, p. 33-51; here, p. 43. The story's time of origin (1898/99) suggests it is another potential testament to Rilke's appropriation of Nietzsche through Salomé, possibly by means of her working copy of *Zarathustra*, Z.1: he was only given his copy, Z.2, in 1901. Hence, see passages Z.1.2.2-4 as documented in the appendix of this study.

accept perfection, which would imply deadly stagnation, for the world, for God or for themselves: 'Wir aber, die wir uns Gott vorgenommen haben, wir können nicht fertig werden' (*Malte*, SW VI 926). In 1900, in his 'Marginalien zu Nietzsche', Rilke continues this line of thought and 'verleiht [...] dem Künstler eine über die Tragödienschrift hinausreichende Bedeutung' (Meyer 208), which was, however, later given to all men by Nietzsche himself in his *Zarathustra*, that of 'der Erde Sinn schaffen':

> Gottes unendliche Freiheit wurde durch die Schöpfung beschränkt. Mit jedem Ding wurde ein Stück seiner Kraft gebunden. Aber nicht sein *ganzer* Wille ist mit der Schöpfung verknüpft. Musik (Rhythmus) ist der freie Überfluß Gottes, der sich noch nicht an Erscheinungen erschöpft hat, und an diesem versuchen sich die Künstler in dem unbestimmten Drange, die Welt nachträglich in *dem* Sinne zu ergänzen, in welchem diese Stärke, weiterschaffend, gewirkt hätte und Bilder aufzustellen jener Wirklichkeiten, die noch aus ihr hervorgegangen wären (SW VI 1164).

What Nietzsche and Rilke have in common, then, is the belief that through the rejection of guilt and by means of an innocence regained, the dead God is replaced by the divinely creative being, often represented by the sculptor. In the poet's œuvre, the layering of an aesthetics of creativity, or of sculpting, to be precise, with religious themes and motifs is rife, and most clearly visible in the commissioned work on his erstwhile employer and sometime ego-ideal, Auguste Rodin (1840-1917).[317] 'Da waren Steine, die schliefen, und man fühlte, daß sie erwachen würden bei irgend einem Jüngsten Gericht', Rilke writes with regard to the grace of all things great sought for by the young Rodin, in this imaginary case, in the Louvre (SW V 143), echoing Zarathustra's line 'im Steine schläft mir ein Bild'. In the late autumn of 1900, he muses in his Berlin residence, in immediate vicinity to Salomé's, that 'in jedem Ding ist ein Gefangener' (SW III, 705), evoking associations with Zarathustra's hammer, which 'wüthet [...] grausam gegen sein Gefängniss' (KSA 4, 111), as well as with the letter to Woronina from 27 July 1899, where Rilke talks of 'Gottes schwere Bildhauerhand' (B I 49).

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[317] Rilke began work on his monograph on Rodin in mid-November 1902, after a two-month stay at the sculptor's Meudon home close to Paris. It only took a month to write, but the poet stayed in Paris until July 1903. Two years later, from September 1905, he became Rodin's secretary for eight months until the two artists fell out in May 1906.

For the most recent critical account of their relationship, see the chapter 'Rodin, Rilke und der Weg zum plastischen Schreiben' in Görner (2004), pp. 197-211. The best source remains their correspondence, *Der Briefwechsel und andere Dokumente zu Rilkes Begegnung mit Rodin*, ed. by Rätus Luck, Frankfurt/M.: 2001. For further elaboration on Rilke's ego-ideals along with a thorough explication of the term, see Kleinbard.

A passage underlined in Z.1 reads: 'Nicht nur die Vernunft von Jahrtausenden — auch ihr Wahnsinn bricht an uns aus. Gefährlich ist es, Erbe zu sein' (see Z.1.1.8); whilst Rilke, who was, famously, afraid of inherited insanity,[318] wrote to Salomé on 10 August 1903: 'gegen alles Ererbte muß ich feindsälig sein und mein Erworbenes ist so gering, ich bin fast ohne Kultur' (BW LAS 106). To Rilke, '*alles* Ererbte' does not mainly imply the Christian dogma of a 'Jenseits', as the 'Erbe' in the Nietzsche passage indubitably does[319] – possibly, it includes Rilke's former Nietzsche enthusiasm, as well. This may be the reason why he needed to cease the 'Gehämmer und Gesprenge Nietzsches' (Heller 1992, 136) which characterized his literary beginnings. He had to let go of Zarathustra's hammer, if you will, and find his very own: 'darum thut es mir so furchtbar noth, das Werkzeug meiner Kunst zu finden, den Hammer, meinen Hammer, daß er Herr werde und wachse über alle Geräusche' (105). The young artist's need for identity and mastery gulfing in an almost Nietzschean self-apotheosis is still palpable in the notion of 'Herr werden'; whilst the image of himself of a sculptor of word-material is still present in the mature Rilke. Indeed, alluding to the love letter to Baladine Klossowska from 16 December 1920 ('J'ignore, Merline, si de tels mots jamais ont été écrits entre amants, mais je les grave dans ce papier comme dans du granit, et je tremble en les traçant'; B II 106), Görner sees him 'als Bildhauer der Sprache, ein Graveur, der härtestes Sprach-Gestein bearbeitet' (2004, 267).

However, in the mature poet, in contrast to the ageing philosopher approaching insanity, the praise of totality and wholeness steadily replaces the need for idols or indeed self-idolatry.[320] It turns into the dominant motif, drowning out all other 'Geräusche', particularly in the *Orpheus-Sonett* so reminiscent of Salomé's 'Lebensgebet' once set to music by Nietzsche:

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[318] The twenty-one-year-old poet wrote: 'Für die Gegenwart hege ich heißes Streben nach Licht, für die Zukunft eine Hoffnung und eine Furcht. Hoffnung: Inneren Frieden und Schaffensfreude. Furcht (als erblich nervös belastet): Wahnsinn!' (SW VI, p. 1526). Frowen sees this fear as one of the possible reasons for the ambivalence in Rilke's relationship to Nietzsche: 'Rilke fühlte, daß in seiner Nähe zu Nietzsche auch eine Gefährdung lag' (1987, p. 33).

[319] 'Bleibt mir der Erde treu, meine Brüder', Zarathustra famously implores his disciples (KSA 4, p. 99). He urges them not to let their virtue fly away from the earthly and beat its wings against 'ewige Wände' (p. 100).

[320] 'Er [Rilke] bedurfte vom werdenden Gott des *Stundenbuchs* bis zum Engel der *Elegien* immer des Gegenüber, um die Konturen seines Künstlertums dagegen abzugrenzen: das Unsägliche gegen die schöpferische Aufgabe des Sagbaren', Frowen writes (1987, p. 32). I would argue that this is true only up to a point; as Rilke himself writes of the *Elegien*: '*es gibt weder ein Diesseits noch Jenseits, sondern die große Einheit*, in der [...] die "Engel" zu Hause sind' (to Witold Hulewicz on 13 November 1925, in: B II, p. 375). Therefore, the angels are at home in the same world as ours, rather than 'uns gegenüber'. When Frowen states that for Nietzsche 'gab es kein Gegenüber' (p. 32), I would also suggest to modify this traditional distinction between the two men which has held for some time, and suggest a subtler approach instead which takes into account Nietzsche's very *desire* and constant search for just such a 'Gegenüber'. Ultimately, however, both he and Rilke rebelled against the traditional reasoning in binary oppositions propagated for so long by, for example, the Christian church.

> Singe die Gärten, mein Herz, die du nicht kennst; wie in Glas
> eingegossene Gärten, klar, unerreichbar.
> Wasser und Rosen von Ispahan oder Schiras,
> singe sie selig, preise sie, keinem vergleichbar.
>
> Zeige, mein Herz, daß du sie niemals entbehrst.
> Daß sie dich meinen, ihre reifenden Feigen.
> Daß du mit ihren, zwischen den blühenden Zweigen
> wie zum Gesicht gesteigerten Lüften verkehrst.
>
> Meide den Irrtum, daß es Entbehrungen gebe
> Für den geschehnen Entschluß, diesen: zu sein!
> Seidener Faden, kamst du hinein ins Gewebe.
>
> Welchem der Bilder du auch im Innern geeint bist
> (sei es selbst ein Moment aus dem Leben der Pein),
> fühl, daß der ganze, der rühmliche Teppich gemeint ist (SW I 765).

Heller also describes this *Sonett* as 'Lous Hymne auf das Leben, von Rilke dichterisch vertont', and muses that 'Nietzsche hätte diesen Sonetten begeistert zugestimmt' (1992, 142). The speaker is happy to be a mere 'Faden im Gewebe', in contrast to the young Rilke, who still perceived himself as a 'Knoten im Faden' (BW LAS 164), and at times possibly over-compensated by stylizing himself as a divine 'Herr'. Now, however, there is no need for a hiercharchy of priorities any longer. Adam's 'geschehne[r] Entschluß, diese[r]: zu sein!' reappears, as does the fig tree, taking us full circle. In contrast to both the *Zarathustra* passage asking the reader to look 'hinaus auf ferne Meere', which saw its figs harvested, and 'Lied vom Meer' with its barrenness, the tree now simultaneously bears ripening fruit and flowers, symbolizing both Rilke's artistic achievement in filling the void left by the death of the Christian God, and the unbreakable circle of earthly life itself, the praise of which replaces him,

> *nicht im christlichen Sinne* (von dem ich mich immer leidenschaftlicher entferne), sondern, in einem rein irdischen, tief irdischen, selig irdischen Bewußtsein [...]. [U]nsere Aufgabe ist es, diese vorläufige, hinfällige Erde uns so tief, so leidend und leidenschaftlich einzuprägen, daß ihr Wesen in uns 'unsichtbar' wieder auferseht (B II 375f.).

This is why the speaker's gardens are 'keinem vergleichbar'. Thus, the 'Integrationssehnsucht, die ihren Ausdruck im Begriff "Gott" findet' attested to the

young Rilke by Meyer (204) has at last transcended both Nietzsche and his quasi-predecessor to Rilke, Christ: now it is earth itself which is resurrected, but not in heaven. It rises within 'uns'. As in the *Arbeiterbrief*, written only weeks apart from *Sonett* II/11, the poet praises the totality of all of life, including death, religiously and joyously. Thus, the author of the aphorism 'Die Künstler *verherrlichen* fortwährend – sie thun nichts Anderes'[321] could have coined it, and the phrase 'der Frömmste aller Derer, die nicht an Gott glauben', with Rilke in mind – had he known him.

[321] Aphorism 85 from *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*, KSA 3, p. 442.

3.3 Book III: 'Vom letzten Glück des Einsamen'. The loneliness of the creative individual and *amor fati*

> **Drittes Buch.** Das Innigste und über den Himmeln Schwebendste, was je geschrieben wird: *"*vom *letzten Glück des Einsamen"* – das ist der, welcher aus dem 'Zugehörigen' zum Selbsteignen des höchsten Grades geworden ist: das vollkommene *ego*: Nur erst *dies* ego hat *Liebe*, auf der früheren Stufe, wo die höchste Einsamkeit und Selbstherrlichkeit nicht erreicht ist, giebt es etwas anderes als Liebe (KSA 9, 520).
>
> Ihr seht nach Oben, wenn ihr nach Erhebung verlangt. Und ich sehe hinab, weil ich erhoben bin.
> Wer von euch kann zugleich lachen und erhoben sein?
> Wer auf den höchsten Bergen steigt, der lacht über alle Trauer-Spiele und Trauer-Ernste (KSA 4, 192).

The first quotation is from 1881, from those embryonic first *Zarathustra* ideas titled 'Mittag und Ewigkeit' found in Nietzsche's estate. The second, written a year later, was taken by the philosopher from Book I of the definitive version as motto of and introduction to Book III. The main theme has not changed from the former to the latter: laughing detachment from men, floating on the mountains or above the heavens, high above all that is human – and even superhuman, that is, divine – is praised. Indeed, as Robert Pippin rightly states, '*Zarathustra* is as much in two major parts as four: the first two, where Zarathustra still attempts to speak publicly (and looks like a teacher), and the latter two, where he does not.'[322] In an attempt to understand this caesura's origin, we must turn to biography once more,[323] which demonstrates the tight bond between Nietzsche and his Zarathustra. 'Vollständig durchsichtig wird dies für den',[324] as Salomé argues in *Nietzsche in Seinen Werken*, 'der weiß, in wie vielen kleinen, rein persönlichen Zügen Nietzsche sich selbst in seinen Zarathustra hineingeheimnist hat.'

Like Books I and II before, Nietzsche claimed to have laid down the third part of his *Zarathustra* in a mere two weeks, as he wrote to his publisher on 18 January 1884 (see KSB 6, 465). In reality, he had been working on it since August 1883 (*Chronik* 566). The actual gestation period of Book III thus coincides with the turning point in the inner

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[322] Robert Pippin, 'Irony and affirmation in Nietzsche's "Thus Spoke Zarathustra", in: M. A. Gillespie and T. B. Strong (eds.), *Nietzsche's New Seas: Explorations in Philosophy, Aesthetics, and Politics*, Chicago 1988, pp. 45-71; here: p. 51.

[323] As Werner Ross claims, 'immer wieder ist Nietzsches Leben als "Hintergrund" zu seinem Werk [...] verstanden worden. Dagegen gilt es Ernst zu machen mit Nietzsches Satz: "Das Produkt des Philosophen ist sein *Leben* (zuerst, vor seinen *Werken*)' (1999, p. 10).

[324] By 'dies', the author is referring to 'ein wundersames Gedankenspiel, in dem Nietzsche und sein Zarathustra unablässig in einander überzugehen und sich wieder von einander zu lösen scheinen' (2000, p. 268).

relationship to Salomé and Rée, initiated by 'manchem schlimmen Nagewurm' in the philosopher's head of which he reports in early August 1883 (KSB 6, 419). Whilst only a month before he had not found either of his two former friends 'würdig, meine Stiefelsohlen zu lecken' (403), with an extremity typical of him as man and philosopher,[325] he was now turning his hatred against his sister, whom, due to what he called the uncalculable meanness of her instincts, he came to consider a 'canaille' and 'den tiefsten Gegensatz zu mir' (KSA 6, 268). 'Nachdem die schwesterlichen Einflüsterungen wenigstens zum Teil verdampft sind, fühlt sich Nietzsche in einen Abgrund hineingezerrt', even contemplating suicide at times.[326] A year on from the split, he was beginning to realize that Elisabeth's scheming had probably played a decisive part in losing him the only person he ever felt he could be himself with, and who would understand his thought, in Salomé:[327]

> Mir *fehlt* sie, selbst mit ihren schlechten Eigenschaften: [...] ich habe Niemanden so vorurtheilsfrei, so gescheut und so vorbereitet für meine Art von Problemen gefunden. Mir ist seitdem, als ob ich zum Stillschweigen [...] im *Verkehre* mit *allen* Menschen verurteilt sei (KSB 6, 424).

Apart from symbolizing all of humanity to him as in this quotation, or poetry, as in his 'Lehre vom Stil' written for her in Tautenburg,[328] Salomé – whose 'Lebensgebet' provided the words for Nietzsche's favourite composition, his 'Hymnus an das Leben', after all – at times also represented life itself to Nietzsche. This is particularly evident in 'Das andere Tanzlied', a tribute to the principle of the eternal return also from Book III, where Zarathustra calls life a 'Hexe' to whom he attributes 'verwirrte gelbe thörichte Haarzotteln' and a 'lockichtes Mähnlein'.[329] Zarathustra is tired of always being turned down by Life, and the sexual innuendo cannot be missed when he complains that

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[325] This quality is shared by Rilke, and, as Destro writes: 'Diese gemeinsame angeborene Tendenz zur Kompromißlosigkeit ist die Basis, bzw. die Voraussetzung für eine produktive Begegnung der Geister, sie kann nicht als Folge des Kontaktes angesehen werden' (p. 205).

[326] E. F. Podach, *Nietzsches Zusammenbruch*, Heidelberg: Niels Kampmann, 1930, p. 46. Podach further quotes a letter by Nietzsche to his sister from the summer of 1883 in which he states: 'seit diese Sache soweit zerschnitten ist, dass eine Versöhnung mit jenen Beiden nicht mehr möglich ist, weiß ich nicht mehr wie leben, – ich denke fortwährend daran.'

[327] See also a letter fragment from May 1884 intended for Meysenbug: 'Was Frl. L[ou] betrifft, so wünsche ich sehr, ihr einmal auch noch nützlich sein zu können, nachdem ich ihr bisher *thatsächlich* (Dank dem Eifer meiner Angehörigen) sehr viel Schaden gethan habe, – sehr wider den Willen meines Herzens, was sich von selber versteht' (in: Pfeiffer 1970, p. 359); and Görner's assessment of Nietzsche's ideal of friendship as indebted to both Montaigne and classical antiquity (2000, p. 198).

[328] Görner (ibid., p. 183) sees Salomé as 'personifizierte "Poesie"' in Nietzsche's 'Lehre vom Stil', which, in turn, he calls 'eine[n] der originellsten Liebesbriefe'.

[329] Salomé's thick, dark-blonde, wavy hair may have been the model in this instance.

although she is thirsty, her mouth will not drink what he has to offer.[330] No longer willing to let her make him look sheepish, Zarathustra is intent on using the whip on the witch to make her dance and scream.[331] Stating that she is jealous of his wisdom, Life maintains that, nonetheless, she loves Zarathustra because of it, albeit 'nicht von Grund aus'.[332]

Particularly at the beginning of 'Das andere Tanzlied', the philosopher's longing for his lost love is nearly undisguised:[333]

> In dein Auge schaute ich jüngst, oh Leben: Gold sah ich in deinem Nacht-Auge blinken, – mein Herz stand still vor dieser Wollust:
>
> – einen goldenen Kahn sah ich blinken auf nächtigen Gewässern, einen sinkenden, trinkenden, wieder winkenden goldenen Schaukel-Kahn (KSA 4, 282)!

This, in turn, is very reminiscent of Nietzsche's melancholic poem about Venice, which he explicitly equates with both music and tears, from *Ecce Homo*:

> An der Brücke stand
> jüngst ich in brauner Nacht.
> Fernher kam Gesang:
> goldener Tropfen quoll's
> über die zitternden Fläche weg.
> Gondeln, Lichter, Musik –
> trunken schwamm's in die Dämmrung hinaus...

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[330] A potential precedent of such coded communication with Salomé, taking the form of 'sublimierte Erotik', is present in Nietzsche's 'Lehre vom Stil' (see, once more, Görner, p. 182).

[331] This could be mirroring Nietzsche's hurt pride after Salomé turned him down and left him, as Hollingdale writes: 'He was a proud man, and the thought that he had devoted himself to Lou Salomé – a girl of 21 – as he had to no other woman and that she had then calmly walked out maddened him: it was his pride, first and foremost, which was wounded' (p. 152).

Also, the famous (and strangely uncanny) picture of Salomé brandishing a makeshift-whip over Nietzsche and Rée is brought to mind by Zarathustra's line 'Ich vergass doch die Peitsche nicht?' which reverses the relationship of power in that picture, if you will. It can be found in *Lebensrückblick*, p. 236. In this context, Carol Diethe's statement in *Vergiß die Peitsche* (Hamburg and Vienna: Europa, 2000; here: p. 72) is illuminating: 'sein [Nietzsches] Gefühlsleben [hat] sich durch den Bruch ihrer [his and Salomé's] Beziehung tiefgreifend verändert [...]. Insbesondere sind seine misogynen Tendenzen dadurch entscheidend verstärkt worden.' This is without doubt correct; yet, Diethe's assessment of Salomé as a sadist (brandishing a whip) who was always looking for a masochistic partner (Nietzsche) who she would then turn down like Severin in Sacher-Masoch's *Venus im Pelz* (1870), is questionable.

[332] Here, Nietzsche's bitterness about this limitation implying his rejection as a man is palpable once more, as Salomé, who famously only wanted a platonic, intellectual relationship, was not interested in marrying him. This is pure conjecture, but possibly, he even evokes places of symbolic meaning for the two of them, as if the entire chapter were a coded message to the beloved: Monte Sacro close to Lake Orta where Nietzsche and Salomé went on a long walk alone together and reputedly shared their one and only kiss, may be alluded to when Zarathustra begs Life, 'du Übermuth', for mercy: 'Gerne möchte ich mit dir – lieblichere Pfade gehen!/ – der Liebe Pfade durch stille bunte Büsche! Oder dort den See entlang' (KSA 4, p. 283).

[333] Even if 'Sohn Zarathustra' is not quite Nietzsche himself, he remains inextricably part of him, 'eine [s]einer Vorbereitungen und Zwischenakte' (KSB 7, p. 48).

> Meine Seele, ein Saitenspiel,
> sang sich, unsichtbar berührt,
> heimlich ein Gondellied dazu,
> zitternd vor bunter Seligkeit.
> – Hörte Jemand ihr zu?... (KSA 6, 291).

This poem – echoed, incidentally, in Rilkes's 'Liebes-Lied' as well as in his description of 'Venedig mit seiner goldendunkelnden Luft' in *Worpswede* (1987, 201)[334] – was first published in 1894, but written in late 1888, and therefore has to be read against the backdrop of Nietzsche's increasingly, and, literally, maddening isolation towards the end of his sane life. Sprengel reads the question in the last line – which is, in fact, symptomatic of this phase[335] – as directed at the reader, and argues that the poem is to be interpreted 'als herbes autobiographisches Resümee [...], als Klage des "Freigeistes" auf dem Weg in die absolute Einsamkeit' (1998, 643). John A. McCarthy is without doubt correct when taking for granted 'daß eine klare Trennung zwischen [...] Individuum und Institution im Falle Nietzsches und seiner Nachwirkung nicht möglich ist, zumal das Leben für ihn Literatur, Literatur aber auch Leben war;'[336] as will be demonstrated below, those biographical elements, by way of 'an insurance against disappointment',[337] are sublimated into a literary text in praise of the very isolation in silence which its author desperately loathed, cursed and perceived as a form of sentence.

Whilst László V. Szabó provides an 'Ansatz, der die von Nietzsche formulierten Denkfiguren Pathos der Distanz und Wille zur Einsamkeit vor allem beim frühen Rilke

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[334] Rilke's 'Liebes-Lied' (SW I, p. 482), written in March 1907 on Capri, indeed bears an uncanny resemblance to Nietzsche's 'Venedig', but, typically, does not thematize the absolute loneliness of the creative soul, but, rather, the conflict between a love relationship and the task of the artist. Earlier, in a poem for Charlotte Scholtz from Rilke's estate written in Berlin in 1900, Rilke already used identical imagery: 'Saiten sind Brücken' over unknown abysses. However, 'nur Klänge/ gehen sicher auf Saitenspielen' (SW III, p. 720), whilst we are left behind lonely at the shore. In the original ending of the 'Buch von der Armut und vom Tode' from 1903, the speaker asks a 'Du', who is a 'großer Geigenbauer', when he will build another such violin with blessed strings. That instrument is set in opposition to the many which are emitting sound already, who 'reifen nicht, weil sie nicht einsam sind' (p. 771). Silence is the means by which the violin builder is set apart from the 'Verlorene in Lärm und Lust der Zeit'. At the latest when he is described as the silent hand 'die aus dem Abgrund reicht', the vocabulary reveals itself to be unmistakably Nietzschean, or Zarathustrian, to be precise. The 'Dunkel' which does not vibrate from 'Liebes-Lied' is also anticipated in the darkness of the one special violin; while its builder forms and perhaps completes the weak who have been waiting for him at night.

[335] See the final chapter of *Ecce Homo* where Nietzsche asks three times: 'Hat man mich verstanden?' (KSA 6, pp. 371-4).

[336] 'Die Nietzsche-Rezeption in der Literatur 1890-1918', in: York-Gothart Mix (ed.*), Naturalismus, Fin de siècle, Expressionismus 1890-1918*, Munich: Hanser, 2000, pp. 192-206; here: p. 193.

[337] Hollingdale observes this tendency in Nietzsche; here, with regard to 'his assertion that his works belonged to the *few*' (p. 194).

nachweist,'[338] I would, however, go further and argue that both figures of thought feature constantly throughout Rilke's œuvre. Such a view would seem to be supported by Rilke himself, who attempts to provide an answer to Alfred Schaer's question on matters of influence, and readily admits 'daß ich mich dazu nicht recht fähig fühle', in a letter written less than three years before his death (26 February 1924; B II 327). The poet considers an investigation of his influences both absurd and impossible, for to him they were countless: 'Was hat nicht alles gewirkt!' Despite this dismissal, he does mention names; although he manages to subtly lower their importance by associating them negatively with his '*früheste* (Rilke's emphasis) Zeit, vor fünfundzwanzig, vor dreißig Jahren', when there still could be talk of '"Einflüssen", die sich einfach und namentlich anführen lassen.' Apart from the Danish writer Jacobsen and German poets such as Liliencron, Hofmannsthal and George, Russian writers encountered on his travels to their homeland – with those travels, of course, highly influential in themselves – are thus accredited. Rilke goes on to stress the importance of the plastic arts for his œuvre, exclaiming 'Und die Kunst...die Künste!' immediately before he mentions Rodin, maintaining that he was not the sculptor's secretary as much as his student. 'Als das stärkste Vorbild stand, seit 1906, das Werk eines Malers vor mir, Paul Cézannes', he adds, thereby keeping his distance from other probable idols 'im eigenen Metier' (328) such as Nietzsche, whose name he does not mention at all, but who used the same raw material – words – and who was maybe too dangerously close to be openly acknowledged.[339]

Yet, the anti-philosopher would seem to be treacherously present in that very letter, nonetheless; namely, when Rilke then wonders whether it is not 'das an sich Unbetonte' – which also implies silence – that has had the most essential influence on his education and production. As examples, he enlists simple day-to-day observations and occurences, gathered mostly on his travels, such as the contact with a dog or his near-native knowledge of Venice. The conclusion he then arrives at could have been drawn by Nietzsche, as well – with slight, but essential modifications:

> Dies alles, nicht wahr?, war 'Einfluß' – , und der größeste (sic) bleibt vielleicht zu nennen: daß ich *allein* sein durfte in so viel Ländern, Städten und Landschaften, ungestört, mit der ganzen Vielfalt,

[338] Online only. He need not have mentioned 'vor allem', as he analyzes *Der Apostel* and *Ewald Tragy* almost exclusively, sparing but a few sentences for the *Elegien*.

[339] The influence of the plastic arts as represented, above all, by Cézanne and Rodin, on Rilke has been examined at length in 'einer großen Fülle von Einzelstudien' (listed in the *Rilke-Handbuch*, p. 148; see also, for concrete examples, Stevens and Wagner, 2000), due, without doubt, mainly to Rilke's readiness to thematize it himself; therefore, and due to its different focus, this study will, for the most part, refrain from adding to the list.

> mit allem Gehör und Gehorsam meines Wesens einem Neuen ausgesetzt, willig ihm zuzugehören und doch wieder genötigt, mich von ihm abzuheben...(329).

Here lies the crux indeed of what united poet and philosopher whilst separating them in the context of the pathos of distance: like most writers, they had in common the need for undisturbed loneliness, yet also relied on outside influences in order to be productive. The difference is that Rilke considers himself 'willig [...] zuzugehören', while Nietzsche, in contrast, and without doubt self-referentially, writes approvingly of one who no longer belongs as 'der, welcher aus dem "Zugehörigen" zum Selbsteignen des höchsten Grades geworden ist' in his embryonic plan for Book III (KSA 9, 520).

However, Nietzsche clearly suffered in his attempts, which resulted directly from the disappointments eventually inflicted on him by almost all of his friends, to be a lone Phoenix from his own ashes. As Werner Ross writes,

> die beiden anderen Denk-Revolutionäre des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts, Marx und Freud, [...] waren mittendrin, umstritten auch im befeuernden Sinne des Wortes. Sie lebten, verstrickten sich, befreiten sich in dicht gewobenen Beziehungsnetzen, Menschen unter Menschen. Nietzsche, so absurd das klingen mag, hatte nicht einmal Feinde. Seine Bücher fielen ins Leere (1999, 592).

This already implies the actual difference to Nietzsche in the context of the pathos of distance: Rilke was at leisure, or often also under pressure, to choose his loneliness, whilst the philosopher lacked such control or choice: he was chosen by his loneliness, which eventually became absolute.

Once more, the philosopher's letters prove that perhaps his genius was at its strongest when making a virtue of a necessity, turning his personal suffering into art. The result is a potent consolation for fellow individualist thinkers and disappointed lovers alike: in its praise of loneliness, combined with that of *amor fati*, the third part of *Zarathustra* reads like a manual for the strengthening, even deification, of one's self in the face of ignorance by the many, or rejection from The One, simultaneously effortlessly effecting the liberation from the 'Zwang und Zweck und Schuld' (KSA 4, 208) invariably brought about by both rationality and Christian morality.[340] One can

[340] Christian morality is circumscribed as 'Gut und Böse'.

The phrase 'jenseits von Gut und Böse', which is used in 'Vor Sonnenaufgang' in opposition to the 'feuchte Trübsale und Zieh-Wolken' staining Zarathustra's bright, clear sky of innocent chance and limitless possibility (see KSA 4, p. 209) in the very passage Rilke underlined in Z.2 was coined in another of Nietzsche's works Rilke is now known to have read, namely in *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*, in one of the 'Lieder des Prinzen Vogelfrei' written in Sils-Maria in the summer of 1881: 'Hier saß ich, wartend, wartend, – doch auf nichts,/ Jenseits von Gut und Böse, bald des Lichts/ Genießend, bald des Schattens,

already see why this would have appealed to and inspired the young Rilke, who had just been left by Salomé, and for whom the will to loneliness would become formative and programmatic for the rest of his life.

ganz nur Spiel,/ Ganz See, ganz Mittag, ganz Zeit ohne Ziel.// Da, plötzlich, Freundin! Wurde eins zu zwei –/ – Und Zarathustra ging an mir vorbei...' (KSA 3, p. 649).

3.3.1 The matter of heaven 'Vor Sonnen-Aufgang'

The further one progresses in *Zarathustra*, the more impossible it becomes to neatly separate individual topics from each other: they are repeated and laid over each other in increasingly tighter circles.[341] In particular, 'Vor Sonnen-Aufgang', underlined in the table of contents in Z.2, features most of the Nietzsche topics also present in Rilke: the pathos of loneliness, the anti-utilitarian and anti-rationalist stance in favour of chance and playing and 'das ungeheure unbegrenzte Ja- und Amen-sagen' (KSA 4, 208) are all assembled. Innocence reappears, as well, now defined as tomfoolery, gaiety, chance and irrationality, all of which are vital ingredients of freedom. Yet, all those themes are dominated by an overriding *Leitmotiv*: the messianic belief in the revaluation of all values leading to both the consecration of chance and the apotheosis of the lonely creator, mediated on a vertical trajectory as Nietzsche plays with common connotations of height (intellect, heaven) and depth (emotion, subconscious).

The addressee throughout the chapter is the pure, deep light-abyss of the sky, or of heaven – in German, such a distinction cannot be made:

> Oh Himmel über mir, du Reiner! Tiefer! Du Licht-Abgrund! Dich schauend schaudere ich vor göttlichen Begierden.
>
> In deine Höhe mich zu werfen — das ist *meine* Tiefe! In deine Reinheit mich zu bergen — das ist *meine* Unschuld! (207)

Notwithstanding the difference (once again, merely in tone rather than substance) between the Nietzschean 'über' and the Rilkean 'zwischen', the unusual association of 'Himmel' with an abyss is directly reminiscent of Rilke's letter to Ilse Jahr from 22 February 1923, in which the poet urges her, as discussed in the previous chapter, to let go of the idea of Christ:

> Die starke innerlich bebende Brücke des Mittlers hat nur Sinn, wo der Abgrund zugegeben wird zwischen Gott und uns –; aber eben dieser Abgrund ist voll vom Dunkel Gottes, und wo ihn einer erfährt, so steige er hinab und heule drin (das ist nötiger, als ihn überschreiten). Erst zu dem, dem auch der Abgrund ein Wohnort war, kehren die vorausgeschickten Himmel um (B II 29).

Stephens sees 'die vorausgeschickten Himmel' (1978, 228) as the third mode of transcendence in Rilke.[342] He maintains that they imply the derivation of the

[341] Görner, amongst others, has maintained that Nietzsche's project in *Zarathustra* was to imitate Wagner's circles.

[342] The others being the objectless love, or 'Strömung', continuing the solipsistic world view from the *Florenzer Tagebuch* which Stephens sets in relation to 'de[n] durch Lou Andreas-Salomé vermittelten

magnificence which was originally attributed to the area of transcendence, and is now being returned to immanence, from nothing but the creative imagination. This, in turn, entails clearly once again that to Rilke, as to Nietzsche, the heavenly beyond is man-made and that heaven is, in fact, a fully accepted and embraced earth.

At the other end of this vertical axis, the 'Abgrund [...] voll vom Dunkel Gottes' into which one ought to climb according to Rilke is a strikingly clear echo of Zarathustra's fourth 'Vorrede', in which the philosopher's alter ego sees men as bridges or ropes across an abyss separating animal from *Übermensch* who 'gehn als Verkündiger zu Grunde' (KSA 4, 18).[343] Rilke's efforts to overcome Christianity in order to be able to attain a personal relationship to his individual god in the *Arbeiterbrief* are brought to mind: 'Ich kann mir nicht vorstellen, daß das *Kreuz bleiben* sollte, das doch nur ein Kreuzweg war' (SW VI 1112). The same vertical trajectory as employed by Nietzsche throughout *Zarathustra* is used by the poet once more, in this case, to emphasize the deictic qualities, the 'Zeigen', he attributes to Jesus:

> Christus hat sicher dasselbe gewollt [as the Old Testament and the Koran, KB]. Zeigen. Aber die Menschen hier sind wie die Hunde gewesen, die keinen Zeigefinger verstehen [...]. Statt vom Kreuzweg aus, wo nun der Wegweiser hoch aufgerichtet war in die Nacht der Opferung hinein, statt von diesem Kreuzweg weiterzugehen, hat sich die Christlichkeit dort angesiedelt und behauptet, dort in Christus zu wohnen, obwohl doch in ihm kei Raum war (SW VI 1113).

To Rilke, Christ was two-dimensional; a bridge or a signpost, rather than the goal. There is no room in him, as 'in jedem Weisenden, der eine Gebärde ist und kein

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Einfluß Nietzsches' (p. 224f.); in contrast to that, the passive waiting for a 'Diktat' from something *beyond* immanence (p. 226); art, or one's own creative potential (p. 229); and the operations of the speculative imagination, which entail an experimenting attitude towards being (p. 232).

[343] This fall, or failure, of the Nietzschean figure of the 'Seiltänzer' – who, in turn, would seem to be darkly present in Rilke's last *Duineser Elegie* to be written, namely, the fifth, inspired by Picasso's 'La famille des saltimbanques' which Rilke guarded in Hertha König's Munich flat in the summer of 1914 – renders Marion Faber's statement that 'Nietzsche's artist traverses the abyss, while Rilke's artist *is* the abyss' [in 'Aus dem Umkreis: Nächte'; SW II, p. 177] relative, if not wrong, along with her conclusion that 'Rilke actually inverts Nietzsche's imagery' (1979, p. 114). In both Rilke and Nietzsche one ought to go to ground.

According to Eudo Mason, Rilke admitted 'die eigene Ratlosigkeit' concerning his own identity as an artist in that particular *Elegie* (p. 168); whereas Stephens sees the artistry of the saltimbanques as representing, on a more general level, 'die prinzipielle Vergeblichkeit menschlichen Könnens', which Rilke still manages to transform by means of the epiphany of the smile praised by the angel: 'Und dennoch, blindlings,/ das Lächeln...' (SW I, p. 703). Faber argues that 'Rilke's acrobats, like Nietzsche's tightrope walker, are a stage in a *transition* to an end' (p. 111), that end being, respectively, the artist and the *Übermensch*. Lastly, Stephens also states that *Die Fünfte Elegie* offers itself up to explicating paraphrase less than any of the others, as 'ihre visuelle Dimension wird so großartig realisiert, daß eigentlich wenig zu erklären übrig bleibt' (in: *Rilke-Handbuch*; p. 378). Perhaps this is precisely the nature of Rilke's poetic achievement finally differentiating him sufficiently from Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*, which is always defying interpretation, yet forever in need of it – it certainly partly explains why Rilke considered the fifth his favourite elegy in a letter to Katharina Kippenberg from 10 January 1923 (in: BW KK, p. 481).

Aufenthalt' (1113f.).[344] In contrast, 'Wohnort' to Rilke was the abyss, characterized by an embracing of diffcult experiences. As argued in chapter 3.1 of this study, to both Rilke and Nietzsche, 'das Schwere', including tasks such as love, loneliness and the acceptance and embracing of death, is vital for us in order to become whole, ideal versions of ourselves: artist-philosophers heavy enough to fall 'so grade hinein in Gottes Mitte' (1113). To Rilke, such an achievement will be rewarded by the return of the heavens which were sent ahead. As we have seen, it is evident, and, indeed, explained by the poet himself what those heavens are to him, namely, their supposed opposite or counterpart, the earthly, or 'alles tief und innig Hiesige, das die Kirche ans Jenseits veruntreut hat' (B II 292).

Contrarily, in *Zarathustra*, the answer to the question of what, or who, that 'Himmel' may be is far from straightforward; yet it is crucial for the interpretation of this chapter, and even for that of the entire book. Intimately addressed as 'du' and, as in Rilke, 'umgekehrt' (into an abyss), on first impression, it appears to rather resemble biblical heaven. In the first six lines, God is already referred to twice, and the general mood is still quasi-religious, with a dialogical structure and distinct allusions to the bible, such as the one to psalm 23 ('Und ob ich schon wanderte im finstern Tal, fürchte ich kein Unglück; denn du bist bei mir'), in Zarathustra's question 'Und wanderte ich allein: *wes* hungerte meine Seele in Nächten und Irr-Pfaden?' (KSA 4, 208).

However, Nietzsche-Zarathustra characteristically roams the mountains close to his 'Licht-Himmel' (ibid.) rather than the dark valley, and this in itself is, once more, indicative of the almost spiteful way in which the anti-philosopher literally upends ancient values and beliefs. More importantly, in contrast to the speaker of the psalm, the Persian prophet is rambling alone. This mirrors Nietzsche's existential loneliness after the death of the old, universal God: his new, individual God, who in *Zarathustra* is none other than his *Übermensch*,[345] has not yet existed: 'Niemals noch gab es einen *Übermenschen*' (119). If the concept of the eternal return is adhered to, this obviously

[344] Without doubt, Rilke, at least at times, also considered Nietzsche one of those 'Weisenden' whose 'Gebärde' points us upwards, into Zarathustra's light-abyss of the sky liberated from an eternal will much like his own 'vorausgeschickte Himmel', or indeed 'in die Nacht der Opferung' of those who 'gehn [...] zu Grunde'.

[345] As shown in the preceding chapter. It is true that elsewhere, and particularly as far as the realm of art is concerned, that new god is of course not monotheistic, but, rather, a hybrid of Dionysos and Apollo; as stated by the majority of scholars working on the topic such as Engel (1986, p. 2) or Szabó (online only), to name but a few. The topic of Rilke's Orpheus – who, following tradition (as well as Nietzsche, as argued by both Pfaff and Por), also unites the Apollinian element with the Dionysian – has been thoroughly explored, too, by, for example, Annette Gerok-Reiter (op. cit. 1996), Peter Pfaff ('Der verwandelte Orpheus. Zur ästhetischen Metaphysik Nietzsches und Rilkes', in: Karl-Heinz Bohrer, ed. , *Mythos und Moderne. Begriff und Bild einer Rekonstruktion*, Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp, 1983, pp. 290-317) or Peter Por ('Nietzsche und Rilke. Die Verwandlung des Orpheus. Für Erich Heller, en hommage', in: *Sprache im technischen Zeitalter* 99, 1986, pp. 217-227).

implies that he never will. Thus, noone is there, nor ever will be, to comfort Zarathustra; quite contrarily, his soul hungers for his ‘heavenly’ companion. But who is he, she, or, indeed, it?

3.3.2 The number of fate: blessed chance and spiders' webs

It becomes increasingly obvious that Nietzsche's 'Himmel' is most likely not meant to be biblical heaven, or God's empire, but rather a – potentially – blissfully empty sky devoid of any purpose or higher 'heavenly', or divine, will:[346] 'Diese Freiheit und Himmels-Heiterkeit stellte ich gleich azurner Glocke über alle Dinge, als ich lehrte, dass über ihnen und durch sie kein "ewiger Wille" – will' (KSA 4, 209). That stagnant and paralyzing eternal will, dogma-like and equated by Zarathustra with rationality, is replaced by the 'Übermuth' and 'Narrheit' of dancing and playing chance. According to Gilles Deleuze, the 'Göttertisch' (KSA 4, 210) of heaven for divine dice and godly players and that of earth (288) described by Zarathustra are 'nicht zwei Welten. Es sind die zwei Tageszeiten ein und derselben Welt [...]: die Stunde, da die Würfel geworfen werden, und die Stunde, da die Würfel fallen.'[347] Hence, heaven according to Nietzsche is, much like Rilke's, identical with fully affirmed earthly life, which is ruled not by eternal dogma or rationality, but by chance.

The notion of the abolition of biblical heaven is contained clearly in one of the very few passages Rilke actually underlined within the text body in his Z.2 copy:

> Das aber ist mein Segnen: über jedwedem Ding als sein eigener Himmel stehn, als sein rundes Dach, seine azurne Glocke und ewige Sicherheit: und selig ist, wer also segnet!
>
> Denn alle Dinge sind getauft am Borne der Ewigkeit und jenseits von Gut und Böse; Gut und Böse selber aber sind nur Zwischenschatten und feuchte Trübsale und Zieh-Wolken.
>
> Wahrlich, ein Segnen ist es und kein Lästern, wenn ich lehre: "über allen Dingen steht der Himmel Zufall, der Himmel Unschuld, der Himmel Ohngefähr, der Himmel Übermuth" (209).

What Nietzsche lets Zarathustra do yet again in 'Vor Sonnenaufgang' is thus, in fact, to rebelliously demand liberation from the Christian church's limiting morality, represented, as 'Gut und Böse', by clouds here. He religiously renders homage to the creative, and therefore divine, power of chance, represented by a clear sky, upending the bible's contents whilst parodying its language.[348] Read in context with the definition of

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[346] Nietzsche's pathological fear of actual clouds, as representing changes in the weather affecting his health, may have helped to inspire this particular metaphor of the empty sky. Werner Ross has pointed out that from September 1881 Nietzsche saw flashes as symbols of physical pain, as he was indeed 'gegen jede Wolke empfindlich', and evaluates the philosopher's 'extreme Wetterempfindlichkeit' as pathological neurosis (1999, p. 561).

[347] *Nietzsche und die Philosophie* (Hamburg: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1991); p. 31.

[348] See Duncan Large, 'Nietzsche's use of biblical language', in: *The Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 22, 2001, pp. 88-115: 'Nietzsche knows that the most effective way to point up the difference between his "frohe Botschaft" (KSB 8, 573) and the message of the Christian Bible is by parodying it' (p. 93); and: 'At the hands of Nietzsche the immoralist, the overcomig of Judeo-Christian morality is to be accomplished from the inside, as a self-overcoming, by a revaluation of biblical formulations' (p. 99).

hybris *Die Genealogie der Moral*, 'der Himmel Übermuth' takes on an even stronger connotation of the elevation of the self over God:

> Hybris ist unsre Stellung zu Gott, will sagen zu irgend einer angeblichen Zweck- und Sittlichkeits-Spinne hinter dem grossen Fangnetz-Gewebe der Ursächlichkeit – wir dürften wie Karl der Kühne im Kampfe mit Ludwig dem Elften sagen 'je combats l'universelle araignée'.[349]

With regard to both that passage and 'Vor Sonnenaufgang', Deleuze concludes: 'das Paar Kausalität-Finalität [...] ersetzt Nietzsche durch [...] das dionysische Paar Zufall-Schicksal' (33). Indeed, at the latest when Zarathustra claims that his 'helle Lehre' ('wer nicht segnen kann, der soll fluchen *lernen*!'; KSA 4, 208) has fallen down from the sky, the German saying 'aus heiterem Himmel' springs to mind, inviting associations with sudden spontaneity. It implies an involuntary flash of thought or an instinctual reaction which happens inexpclicably and without warning, or out of the blue, as the corresponding English saying goes. Zarathustra is moving entirely beyond the grasp of rational explanations such as the law of cause and effect, and exactly as in *Die Genealogie der Moral*, he explicitly denies the existence of an 'ewige Vernunft-Spinne und -Spinnennetze' (209) in 'Vor Sonnenaufgang', echoing images already employed a decade before in his own critique of exaggerated positivist rationality in his second *Unzeitgemäße Betrachtung*:

> Überstolzer Europäer des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts, du rasest! Dein Wissen vollendet nicht die Natur, sondern tödtet nur deine eigene. Miss nur einmal deine Höhe als Wissender an deiner Tiefe als Könnender. Freilich kletterst du an den Sonnenstrahlen des Wissens aufwärts zum Himmel, aber auch abwärts zum Chaos. Deine Art zu gehen, nämlich als Wissender zu klettern, ist dein Verhängniß; Grund und Boden weichen ins Ungewisse für dich zurück; für dein Leben giebt es keine Stützen mehr, nur noch Spinnefäden, die jeder neue Griff deiner Erkenntniss auseinanderreißt (KSA 1, 313).

[349] KSA 5, p. 357. Much like Nietzsche, who explicitly does so here, Rilke also identifies with Charles, Duke of Burgundy (1432-1477), or, rather, has his Malte do so (see SW VI, pp. 884-890). 'Karl der Kühne' lost the battle at Nancy and, of course, his life to the French King Louis XI (1423-1483), nicknamed 'the spider' and feared for his severe style of leadership. In *Malte*, Charles is portrayed as spiteful and desperate, as he was tortured, yet ruled, by his half-Portugese, heavy blood, and entirely not the cool, rational master of his own destiny. Importantly, as this is a parallel to his function in the Nietzsche passage, where he arguably personifies fate as opposed to Louis's spider-like rationality, he is inextricably bound up with the concept of fate. Rilke shows his allegiance in the battle of fate versus rationality quite effectively by naming the duke's jester, who finds his dead body, 'Louis Onze': like Nietzsche, he thereby demonstrates his belief in 'ein *wenig* Vernunft' which is, 'um der Narrheit willen, [...] allen Dingen eingemischt' (KSA 4, p. 209).

A brief but necessary detour must be taken at this point, as the identical image of the spider's web of rational cognizance here demonstrates vividly how Nietzsche's third and last phase, rung in by *Zarathustra* and including *Die Genealogie*, resembled his first, as represented mainly by *Die Geburt der Tragödie* and the *Unzeitgemäße Betrachtungen*, in its mistrust of all things scientific, positivist or, indeed, 'vernünftig'. According to Andreas-Salomé, it constituted

> eine Art von *Rückkehr* zu Nietzsches erster philosophischer Entwicklungsphase, die vor seinem positivistischen Freigeisterthum liegt, – nämlich zur Metaphysik der Wagner-Schopenhauerischen *Aesthetik* und ihrer Lehre vom Übermenschlichen Genie. Und hierauf endlich gründet sich [...] *das Mysterium einer ungeheuren Selbst-Apotheose*' (1994, 185).

The Persian prophet, as the god-like part of Nietzsche's self fractured into 'Ich und Mich' (KSA 4, 71), is symbolic of the anti-philosopher's return to metaphysics, who had still focussed on the benefits of scientific ability, trained in scientific rigour, during his middle period, culminating in *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches* and, of course, *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*. One can see, then, why that particular book, the *gaya scienza*, must have appealed to Rilke when he read it in November 1902, as notes from his diary, written a mere day after having created the very first of his *Neue Gedichte*, 'Der Panther', in Paris, demonstrate:[350] in 'middle Nietzsche', the self, as the telos of the human psyche, could only be achieved by the disciplined honing of one's craft, by being an objective spectator. This must have made an impact on the young poet, who had just returned from his first, formative stay at Auguste Rodin's, in whom, famously, he admired just such qualities: patience, disciplined craftsmanship and absolute independence from the hustle and bustle of daily human life.

To return to Zarathustra and his 'heitere Himmel', we should note that Nietzsche's alter ego also teaches the necessity to accept the potential violence inherent in liberated thought processes, as suggested particularly by the saying's variant, the '*Blitz* aus heiterem Himmel', which is electric and energizing, but also destructive.[351] Although,

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[350] See Schnack, *Chronik*, p. 153; and Rilke's *Tagebuch. Westerwede, Paris. 1902. Taschenbuch Nr.1, Transkription* (Frankfurt a. M.: Insel, 2000), p. 32.

[351] On a marginal note, however, it needs to be stated that in this particular chapter, Nietzsche uses the image differently: the flash does not come out of the blue, but is indeed provoked by the 'Zieh-Wolken' staining the bright sky, robbing Zarathustra of its boundless affirmation, and vice versa, as they can neither bless nor curse properly. 'Diesen Mittlern und Mischern sind wir gram, den ziehenden Wolken: diesen Halb- und Halben, welche weder segnen lernten, noch von Grund aus fluchen. [...] oft gelüstete mich', Zarathustra says of those clouds, 'sie mit zackichten Blitz-Golddrähten festzuheften' (KSA 4, p. 208). Here, the chapter 'Von den Priestern' from Book II helps to identify those clouds also as the church's 'falsche Werthe und Wahn-Worte' created by the Christians – who are, ironically, prisoners of

by its very definition, such a creative brainwave or spontaneous reaction cannot be willed into existence, it can, however, be encouraged. Zarathustra sets an example in his willingness to abandon existing habits, structures or beliefs, thereby allowing the room necessary for genuinely new ideas to occur. He is playing a game which involves the ability to affirm each throw of the dice absolutely without wanting to repeat it, as only then will the number of fate become visible: 'den Zufall bejahen können heißt spielen können' (Deleuze 32); and Zarathustra even goes so far as to bless the necessity of chance which rules the game played at the 'Göttertisch' with 'göttlichen Würfeln' (KSA 4, 210). Before turning to the most striking example of the decidedly Nietzschean way in which Rilke treats the topics of chance and fate poetically in the late poem 'Spiele' (1925) from the poet's estate, it is advisable to briefly consult other such evidence first.

Rilke already also associates heaven, or the sky, with chance in the first part of *Das Stunden-Buch* from 1899. However, when he describes the forehead 'eines jungen Bruders' as demanding nothing more than a picture 'von Himmeln, die der Zufall drüber hängt' (SW I 267) before he started to believe in his God, the implication is, in contrast to Zarathustra's teachings, that chance is inferior to the new purpose given to the monk's life in building his faith. In the second part of the *Stunden-Buch*, written in Rilke's 'Zarathustra-year' 1901,[352] the negative connotation of 'Zufall' still prevails, along with the notion of a passive humanity entirely at the mercy of an exclusively creative God:

> Keiner lebt sein Leben.
> Zufälle sind die Menschen, Stimmen, Stücke,
> Alltage, Ängste, viele kleine Glücke
> [...].
> Lebst du es, Gott, - das Leben?
> [...]
> mit deinem Hammer in der Hand (SW I 316ff.).[353]

'de[m], welchen sie Erlöser nennen' (p. 117) – as they felt ashamed faced with the pure bright sky and needed to cover it up.

[352] He was given his copy, Z.2, then.

[353] With 'Leben' substituting God, as *en vogue* around the *fin de siècle*, this was later taken up by Salomé in her *Dank an Freud* on p. 14 (quoted in LAS 1998, p. 7): 'Menschenleben – ach! Leben überhaupt –*ist* Dichtung. Uns selber unbewußt leben *wir* es, Tag um Tag wie Stück um Stück, – in seiner unantastbaren Ganzheit aber lebt es, dichtet es *uns*. Weit, weitab von der alten Phrase vom "Sich-das-Leben-zum-Kunstwerk-machen"; wir sind nicht *unser* Kunstwerk.'

Two years on, on 8 August 1903, Rilke wrote to Salomé: 'Das Ding ist bestimmt, das Kunst-Ding muß noch bestimmter sein; von allem Zufall fortgenommen, jeder Unklarheit entrückt, der Zeit enthoben und dem Raum gegeben' (BW LAS 94). After Paula Modersohn-Becker's death in 1907, in the 'Requiem' he wrote for her the poet mourns the powerlessness even of the artist's farthest development, and the futility of his or her efforts of transformation towards a stronger being, when faced with the arbitrariness of death:

> [...] Deiner Tränen Kraft und Andrang
> hast du verwandelt in dein reifes Anschaun
> und warst dabei, jeglichen Saft in dir
> so umzusetzen in ein starkes Dasein,
> das steigt und kreist, im Gleichgewicht und blindlings.
> Da riß ein Zufall dich, dein letzter Zufall
> riß dich zurück aus deinem fernsten Fortschritt
> in eine Welt zurück, wo Säfte *wollen* (SW I 651).

Here, the violent change of the direction of the artist's formerly steadily ascending life brought about by ripping chance is amplified by the chiasmus of 'riß' and 'Zufall'. When we then also consider that Rilke writes of the God 'der nirgends einen Zufall kennt' (SW II 248) whilst lamenting 'diesen Überfluß an Zufall' in human life, caused by 'unser Hingestelltsein/ an der Gefühle stürzendes Gebraus' (SW II 260) more than two decades later, it becomes evident that to Rilke, the work of art is, literally, inhuman in its superiority to mere humanity due to its god-like qualities of purpose and transcendence.

In a poem dedicated to Lorenz Lehr written a year before Rilke's death, 'Musik' is indeed addressed as 'Du mehr als wir..., von jeglichem Wozu/ befreit'. This time, however, it is purpose, associated negatively with the earth – which is unusual in Rilke, who tends to use 'das Irdische' as a positive symbol of, for instance, magnificent immanence – rather than chance which is seen as humanly inferior:

> Schlag an die Erde: sie klingt stumpf und erden,
> gedämpft und eingehüllt von unsern Zwecken.
> Schlag an den Stern: er wird sich dir entdecken (SW II 267)!

In contrast to purpose, anthropocentric and, thereby, misleading and limiting, 'schwingt namenlos der Überfluß' of music: 'Eine erschreckende Einsicht, daß die Musik, von der

wir Trost erhoffen, an sie also einen Zweck herantragen, darauf nur dumpf antwortet';[354] whilst in 'Baudelaire', written for Anita Forrer into his copy of *Les Fleurs du Mal* which he gave to her for her twenty-first birthday, it is the poet's task to deliver man from the world's meaninglessness by means of the 'Feier' of boundless praise and affirmation: 'Der Dichter einzig hat die Welt geeinigt,/ die weit in jedem auseinanderfällt' (SW II 246).[355] This, in turn, seems to be echoing a passage from 'Von der Erlösung' marked in Z.1 (see Z.1.2.13):

> Ich wandle unter Menschen als den Bruchstücken der Zukunft: jener Zukunft, die ich schaue.
>
> Und das ist all mein Dichten und Trachten, dass ich in Eins dichte und zusammentrage, was Bruchstück ist und Räthsel und grauser Zufall.
>
> Und wie ertrüge ich es, Mensch zu sein, wenn der Mensch nicht auch Dichter und Räthselrather und der Erlöser des Zufalls wäre (KSA 4, 179)!

Both Rilke and Nietzsche seem to be departing from the Heraclitean 'Gegensatzlehre' according to which only a god, in contrast to mortals, can see the seemingly fragmented and mutually contradicting as a meaningful whole. Only the poet's creative perception can replace the god's ability to see meaning in the chaos of life and the universe.[356] Indeed, Gisela Dischner's claim that the reader can partake in lyrical catharsis by re-comprehending the poet's experience in 'Baudelaire' – which, in turn, she reads as a direct echo of 'Une charogne', the famous Baudelaire poem also read by Nietzsche – is equally applicable to the Nietzsche passage above, as is her statement that in *amor fati*, the poet is approximating God, as he is able to see the whole in the phenomenon: 'So kann der Dichter, indem er in der poetischen Welt des Bezugs alles vereinigt, das

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[354] Görner, in: BlRG 10, 1983, p. 65.

[355] Particularly the remainder of the poem, 'Das Schöne hat er unerhört bescheinigt,/ doch da er selbst noch feiert, was ihn peinigt,/ hat er unendlich den Ruin gereinigt:// und auch noch das Vernichtende wird Welt' is extremely reminiscent of Salomé's 'Lebensgebet' which so inspired Nietzsche, the last verse of which reads: 'Jahrtausende zu sein! zu denken!/ Schließ mich in beide Arme ein:/ Hast Du kein Glück mehr mir zu schenken –/ Wohlan – noch hast Du Deine Pein' (LAS 2000, p. 301f.). Salomé gave it to Nietzsche in August 1882 in Tautenburg and included it in *Im Kampf um Gott*. Nietzsche called it 'Hymnus an das Leben', changed the last lines to 'Jahrtausende zu denken und zu leben/ wirf deinen Inhalt voll hinein!/ Hast du kein Glück mehr übrig mir zu geben,/ wohlan! Noch hast du deine Pein'; and, with the involvement of both Peter Gast and Professor Riedel, immediately composed the music 'für gemischten Chor und Orchester' (KSA 6, p. 336). In *Ecce Homo*, he explicitly connects it to *Zarathustra* and comments: 'Wer den letzten Worten des Gedichts überhaupt einen Sinn zu entnehmen weiß, wird errathen, warum ich es vorzog und bewunderte: sie haben Größe. Der Schmerz gilt *nicht* als Einwand gegen das Leben!' (ibid.). Salomé, in turn, 'bemerkte zu dem Schluß des "bombastischen" Gedichts, für *sie* drücke er aus, daß sie auch das durch den Gottesverlust "beraubte" Leben noch ganz habe umfassen wollen, für *ihn*, Nietzsche, sei der Schluß ein Ausdruck seines amor fati gewesen' (Pfeiffer, in: LAS 1998, p. 225).

[356] (see again 'Die Philosophie im tragischen Zeitalter der Griechen' (KSA 1, particularly, p. 870); and Dischner 1999, p. 174).

Zerbrochene zusammenfügen, den Ruin reinigen' (1999, 174). In a similar vein, Theodore Fiedler writes:

> Fast alle Züge des vergöttlichten Übermenschen, die Lou aufführt [in *Nietzsche in seinen Werken*], kehren in Rainers Darstellung des Einsamen, des Schöpfer-Gottes wieder [...] dabei ist nicht zu übersehen, daß die Einzelheiten wiederum auf *Also sprach Zarathustra* zurückgehen.[357]

Fiedler is referring to a passage from the *Florenzer Tagebuch*, where the poet speaks of 'Bäume und Berge, Wolken und Wellen [...] Alles ist in ihm zusammengeflossen' in connection with the figure of the lonely creator.[358]

Thus, the similarities between Nietzsche and Rilke are obvious: to both of them, the world, represented by and present in each human being, is fragmented and ruled by cruel chance. While it is the poet's god-like task to unify the fragments in order to deliver us from chance, he achieves this by boundless affirmation of – chance. Deleuze provides the solution of this apparent paradox:

> Was Nietzsche *Notwendigkeit* (Schicksal) nennt, bildet folglich niemals die Aufhebung, sondern die Kombination des Zufalls selbst. Die Notwendigkeit bestätigt sich im Zufall, sofern der Zufall selbst bestätigt, bejaht wird. Denn es gibt nur eine einzige [...] Zahl des Zufalls als solchen, eine einzige Schicksalszahl (1985, 32).

By affirming 'göttliche Zufälle' absolutely, as that which 'fällt uns zu', they become the fate we have wanted, want and will want, and effect our liberation from 'Zwang und Zweck und Schuld' (KSA 4, 208). Herein lies the inextricable connection of heavenly (and therefore consecrated) chance and *amor fati* in Nietzsche, who wants to re-create 'it was' into 'thus I willed it', thereby achieving deliverance.[359]

Rilke, however, is doubtful of this at times, and his writing can be 'weit entfernt davon, 'eine Feier […] zu sein',[360] be it of a fleeting moment or of fate in general. In

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[357] 1999, p. 297. Although the *Florenzer Tagebuch* is one of the few Rilkean works actually openly documenting the poet's Nietzsche reception, I will not engage it too thoroughly here as, firstly, Rilke was only twenty-two when he wrote it, which helps to explain its proliferation of rather blunt, more or less 'unverwandelte' Nietzscheanisms; and secondly, enough work on it has been done already (apart from Fiedler, see, for example, Szábó).

[358] *Tagebücher aus der Frühzeit*, p. 119.

[359] Although the will liberates one, it is a prisoner itself; namely, of time and transience: 'dies allein ist *Rache* selber: des Willens Widerwille gegen die Zeit und ihr "Es war"' (180). This is bound up with Nietzsche's critique of Nihilism: 'Und nun wälzte sich Wolke auf Wolke über den Geist: bis endlich der Wahnsinn predigte: "Alles vergeht, darum ist Alles werth zu vergehen!"' Nietzsche calls such insanity 'Fabellieder' and teaches that the will is creative, uniting past, present and future. But the will to power still needs to learn reconciliation with time.

[360] This was stated by de Man (1979, p. 85). Engel points out de Man's pioneering role in opposing the traditional scholarly tendency to only seek, and find, positive, 'seins-gläubige Philosopheme' in Rilke's

contrast to the demand to *love* 'das Nothwendige' made by Nietzsche in the *Ecce Homo* passage quoted below, the voice of Rilke's *Orpheus-Sonett* I/16, for example, admits that he can 'bloß ertragen' the human fate of fragmentariness and limited perception: 'Sieh, nun heißt es zusammen ertragen/ Stückwerk und Teile, als sei es das Ganze' (SW I, 741). Whilst Rilke would seem to be adhering directly to the Zarathustrian demand of 'in Eins dichte[n] und zusammentrage[n], was Bruchstück ist und Räthsel und grauser Zufall' (KSA 4, 179) here, in his use of the subjunctive, he simultaneously lays open the fact that he is not always able to believe in the existence of Zarathustra's 'Eins', or in his own concept of 'das Ganze' (B II 728). In its Rilkean transformation, the Nietzschean 'zusammentragen' can thus become a 'zusammen ertragen', and *amor fati* remains elusive.

The clearest definition the philosopher gives of that love of fate in any of his works can be found in *Ecce Homo*:

> Ich kenne keine andre Art, mit grossen Aufgaben zu verkehren als das *Spiel* [...]...Auch an der Einsamkeit *leiden* ist ein Einwand [...]...Meine Formel für die Grösse am Menschen ist *amor fati*: dass man Nichts anders haben will, vorwärts nicht, rückwärts nicht, in alle Ewigkeit nicht. Das Nothwendige nicht bloß ertragen, noch weniger verhehlen – aller Idealismus ist Verlogenheit vor dem Nothwendigen –, sondern es *lieben* (KSA 6, 297).

As Dischner writes, *amor fati* – which Nietzsche serenades as 'dionysische Erkenntnis, [jedem] ungefährdeten Behagen [abhold]' – as described in this passage speaks from both *Zarathustra* and Rilke's *Duineser Elegien*: 'Beider Ton ist hymnisch, das Hiersein feiernd und ins Dasein des Inneren verwandelnd' (1999, 177). Indeed, not unlike Nietzsche here, but in a different context, Rilke – to whom, influenced by Rodin's motto 'travailler toujours', the artist's destiny was to ceaselessly create – also revaluates 'das Nothwendige' as positive in one of his letters to Kappus: 'Ein Kunstwerk ist gut, wenn es aus Notwendigkeit entstand'[361]. He continues by emphasizing the necessity of fate as the unique means by which a work of art can be judged, as the only measure applicable to it.

Again thematizing art jointly with fate and numbers, another letter, written almost a decade on, at last points us in the direction of 'Spiele', Rilke's love poem to chance, if you will, declaring his own consecration of fate, written in Val-Mont nine months before his death. From Spain, the poet writes to Marie von Thurn und Taxis about 'die

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texts, but notes that the poet himself was already 'aller Dekonstruktion voran [...], weil er, Nietzsche-geschult, [...] um die [...] Fiktionalität *aller* menschlichen Sinnsetzungen weiß' *Rilke-Handbuch* (p. 413).

[361] 17 February 1903; B I, p. 145.

tiefste innere Ursache, das vergrabene Sein, [...] die *Rückseite der Musik*'[362] as a blessed number. In the poem, however, it is not the number, but, rather, the die itself which is blessed:

> Hier ist ein Spiel von Frag und Antwort, das,
> alt wie es ist, uns nicht mehr kümmern sollte.
> Ein kleiner Liebes-Würfel fiel und rollte
> und zeigte eine Zahl....Man wurde blaß
>
> und warf ihn wieder und noch einmal aus ...
> Da fiel der kleine Würfel durch die Platte
> des Tisches durch und fiel durchs ganze Haus
> der Schwerkraft zu, die ihn gezogen hatte.
>
> Daß wir dem Fallen etwas unterschieben,
> macht seinen Niederfall erst leserlich.
> Glaub an den Tisch, so zeigt der Würfel: SIEBEN.
>
> Glaub an ihn selbst, weil ihn das Schicksal heiligt.
> Nimm doppelt teil: denn er ist unbeteiligt,
> und sagst du DU, so sagt er niemals ICH (SW II 269f.).

Although at first glance this seems to be a straightforward Petrarchan sonnet, the slightly unusual rhyme scheme *abba cdcd efe ggf* renders the structure almost symmetrical, with the first quartet and the last tercet embracing the second and third verses, as it were, in a circular effect.

More importantly, however, in its themes, this poem is directly reminiscent of the passage in 'Vor Sonnenaufgang' marked in Z.2, and indeed of the entire chapter, with slight shifts in the subject-object-relationships: in Nietzsche, Zarathustra blesses the 'Himmel Zufall' – simultaneously 'ein Göttertisch [...] für göttliche Würfel und Würfelspieler' (KSA 4, 210) – whilst in Rilke, fate itself actively consecrates the die. Like the philosopher before him, the poet indirectly advises the reader against throwing the die 'wieder und noch einmal': instead, the number shown by the first throw needs to be fully accepted, as fate will eventually find its way past our anthropocentric meanings,

[362] 17 November 1912; B I, p. 446.

or through the table and the entire house (of language with all its rules and regulations, perhaps), either way.[363]

Richard Detsch, having stated elsewhere that 'Nietzsche is the intellectual progenitor of Rilke's game-imagery',[364] is without doubt correct when he assesses this poem – save its first five lines, which he associates with child's play – as a 'metaphysical speculation' based on the idea of 'play as the essence of all reality' in his recent comparative study on Rilke and Nietzsche.[365] In my view, however, his interpretation of the first tercet as making the reader 'realize that there would have to be a surface for the die to land in order to make the message of fate intelligible for us' (ibid.) is too simplistic, as it neglects the connotation of 'unterschieben': we interpret, and thereby influence, fate, represented by a free-falling die, with the aid of human constructs such as probability, cause and effect, symbolized here by the table. It is true that we can thereby make the message of fate 'leserlich', but not 'intelligible', as Detsch suggests, as we have simultaneously distorted and falsified it: whenever we believe in our table falsely attributed, or 'untergeschoben', to free-falling fate, the die will always show the number seven. Although Detsch has also rightly noted that this could imply 'that he [Rilke] is thinking of the total number of dots of the side on which the die lands together with those on its opposite side, which in every case amounts to seven' (2003, 116), he fails to draw the logical conclusion from this. In my view, the table, precisely in making the number on the die legible, renders the message of fate illegible, as such human intervention eradicates all difference: a number which is always identical becomes meaningless.

The consequence from this would be the realization that we cannot ever know the number on the die of fate as we either falsify it by attributing our human constructs of meaning to it, or let it fall, in which case it never comes to rest and remains illegible. But, as the speaker in Rilke's poem says, this is the point, precisely: we do not need to

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[363] Incidentally, Rilke would seem to have interpreted Nietzsche's 'Göttertisch' most consistently here, as in *Zarathustra*, that table is also the sky, which means that nothing falling on it (upwards, from the direction of earth, in the reversal of up and down so typical in both Rilke and Nietzsche described elsewhere in this study) will ever come to rest: it will carry on falling into the universe forever, or, in Nietzsche's words, 'vorwärts [...], in alle Ewigkeit' (KSA 6, p. 297).

[364] 'A Non-Subjectivist Concept of Play: Gadamer and Heidegger versus Rilke and Nietzsche', in: *Philosophy Today* 29 (1985), pp. 156-172; here: p. 163. Detsch neglects to mention that, in turn, Schiller is, of course, the intellectual progenitor of Nietzsche's game-imagery; yet, to go into more detail here would lead too far from this study's focus.

[365] *Rilke's Connections to Nietzsche* (2003; here: p. 115 and 101, respectively). Detsch, who does not engage 'Vor Sonnenaufgang' or, indeed, other *Zarathustra*-material in his discussion at this point, further contends 'that this concept of play forms the basis not only of Nietzsche's worldview as articulated in his entire life's work but also of Rilke's entire literary production' (p. 104). The evidence provided for such a rather sweeping statement is scant (the entire book gets by on thirty-five notes), and he bases his idea of 'this concept of play' in Nietzsche mainly on the unpublished fragment 'Die Philosophie im tragischen Zeitalter der Griechen', discredited by Colli as banal and all but irrelevant (see KSA 1, p. 971).

know the number as we ought to believe in the die itself which is consecrated by fate and 'unbeteiligt'. To Detsch, this, in turn, implies that 'the player in Rilke's game makes valid what is without any validity in itself', and that both the poet and Nietzsche 'demand the ultimate in subjective involvement in a universe that is otherwise devoid of subjectivity' (ibid.). With this in mind, it is more than likely that Rilke valued Nietzsche's poem 'An Goethe' from the 'Lieder des Prinzen Vogelfrei' which were included in the poet's copy of *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*, where Nietzsche, as in *Zarathustra*, calls God 'Dichter-Erschleichniss':

> Welt-Rad, das rollende,
> Streift Ziel auf Ziel:
> Noth – nennt's der Grollende,
> Der Narr nennt's – Spiel...(KSA 3, 639).

Unlike 'Gott der Verfängliche', 'das Ewig-Närrische' is, according to Nietzsche the poet, the only constant we can always reckon with: it 'mischt *uns* – hinein!' into the eternal play of the world. As Salomé writes, life composes us, rather than vice versa (LAS 1998, 7). Nietzsche's advice here is, as so often, against resentment, as all which 'der Grollende' will achieve.

Indeed, as the die of fate remains outside our reach, we need to literally redouble our efforts to accept, and possibly affirm, what we have been given. This is typical of the poet's comparatively passive stance of humble listening as described in 'Von den Dichtern'.[366] The decidedly more Nietzschean side to this coin would be to take active part in playfully creating our own lives according to our will to power over – and let us not forget that Rilke is writing about a '*Liebes*-Würfel'[367] here – 'der Gefühle stürzendes Gebraus' (SW II 260), which leads us back to Nietzsche's tendency – shared, evidently, by Rilke – to insure himself against disappointment mentioned above.

[366] 'Das aber glauben alle Dichter: dass wer im Grase oder an einsamen Gehängen liegend die Ohren spitze, Etwas von den Dingen erfahre, die zwischen Himmel und Erde sind' (KSA 4, p. 164).
[367] My emphasis.

3.3.3 Vertigo at the crossroads: heights and abysses

Early on in Book III, 'die Grundconception des Werks, der *Ewige-Wiederkunfts-Gedanke*',[368] is uttered for the first time: 'War *das* das Leben? Wohlan! Noch Ein Mal!' (KSA 4, 199). This thought – according to Köhler, nothing else but Nietzsche's 'Dämonion', the spectre behind the chair, now actively confronted rather than fearfully answered[369] – of the affirmation of the eternal return 'wurde zur geheimnisvollsten und umstrittensten Lehre Nietzsches'[370] and is inextricably bound up with the idea of *amor fati* here. It is uttered not by Zarathustra himself, but by his 'Muth' – the courage necessary to transform men into the *Übermensch* – which even beats death in its boundless affirmation of life: 'Der Muth schlägt auch den Schwindel todt an Abgründen: und wo stünde der Mensch nicht an Abgründen! Ist Sehen nicht selber – Abgründe sehen?' (199).

A short step back in *Zarathustra* must be taken at this point, as the almost Buddhist stance of *amor fati*, along with Zarathustra's ascent into his bright sky, achieved by 'Vor Sonnenaufgang' is a natural progression from his vertigo-inducing limbo between the low human and the high *Übermensch* still manifested in Book II where, in 'Von der Menschen-Klugheit', the following passage, which anticipates the sense of stagnation 'am Kreuzweg' in Rilke's *Arbeiterbrief*, was marked in Z.1:

> Nicht die Höhe: der Abhang ist das Furchtbare!
>
> Der Abhang, wo der Blick *hinunter* stürzt und die Hand *hinauf* greift. Da schwindelt dem Herzen vor seinem doppelten Willen.
>
> Ach, Freunde, errathet ihr wohl auch meines Herzens doppelten Willen?
>
> Das, Das ist *mein* Abhang und meine Gefahr, dass mein Blick in die Höhe stürzt, und dass meine Hand sich halten und stützen möchte – an der Tiefe! (KSA 4, 183).

Both the abyss and the vertigo feature in a letter to Rée from 18 August 1882, written by Nietzsche's 'sister brain' Salomé after one of their ten-hour walks in Tautenburg: 'Seltsam, daß wir unwillkürlich mit unsern Gesprächen in die Abgründe geraten, an jene schwindligen Stellen, wohin man wohl einmal einsam geklettert ist um in die Tiefe

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[368] *Ecce Homo*, KSA 6, p. 335.

[369] 1992, p. 531: 'Ja, selbst das Gespräch mit dem Gespenst ist wiedergekommen. In einem Briefentwurf für Lou Salomé aus dem verzweifelten Herbst 1882 in Santa Margherita taucht die Formulierung auf: "wie mit meinem Dämonion reden". Bis dahin hatte der Dämon immer die Initiative ergriffen [...]. Nun ist es Zarathustra, der redet und den Dämon zum Schweigen bringt.'

In the original version of his lecture on Rodin from 1905, Rilke defines his demon as the work of art: 'das Ding, das um der Schönheit willen geformte, ist wie der Eros des Sokrates, ist ein Daimon, Etwas zwischen Gott und Mensch, selber nicht schön, aber Liebe zur Schönheit und Sehnsucht und Schrei nach ihr' (SW V, p. 263).

[370] Stegmaier, in: Gerhardt (2000), p. 215.

zu schauen' (LAS 1974, 84). As the only person able, and willing, to accompany Nietzsche on his precarious climbs along the edge, Salomé thus played an important part both in the conception of *Zarathustra* and in the book itself, as well as a formative role in shaping Rilke's idea of Nietzsche-Zarathustra.

For now, the focus lies on the Nietzschean image of the two-fold will of the heart in this passage. It resounds very clearly in Rilke's *Orpheus-Sonett* II/3, where a single-minded god, much like the *Übermensch* in *Zarathustra*, is set in opposition to the weaker human, whose strength is drawn by his contradictory nature. Like Zarathustra hovering at the 'Abhang' separating man from the *Übermensch*, and like Christianity in front of the cross in the *Arbeiterbrief*, the 'Mann' in the sonnet is stagnant and immobile. He cannot move in either direction at the 'Kreuzung zweier Herzwege'; unlike a god, he cannot make a clear decision – which in Rilke's case should be one in favour of a life devoted exclusively to art. In this, he is not too dissimilar to Nietzsche, who lets Zarathustra turn away from humans and the emotions they can provoke in him altogether, in dedication to his 'Werke' (KSA 4, 408):

> Ein Gott vermags. Wie aber, sag mir, soll
> ein Mann ihm folgen durch die schmale Leier?
> Sein Sinn ist Zwiespalt. An der Kreuzung zweier
> Herzwege steht kein Tempel für Apoll (SW I 732).

Not only for its mention of Apollo could that sonnet be called Nietzschean, but particularly when its line 'Gesang ist Dasein' is considered, as well, which seems like a reversal of the phrase coined in *Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik* of the world being eternally justified only as an aesthetic phenomenon, or, to paraphrase, 'Dasein ist Gesang'.[371]

In this context, Rilke's 'Siebente Antwort' to Erika Mitterer, a young Austrian poet who, upon reading the *Sonette an Orpheus*, 'fühlte sich zu einer poetischen Antwort aufgerufen', ought to be considered.[372] In the first of the nine poems from July 1924, which he, incidentally, also refers to as 'Spiele' (SW II 313), the poet, repeating images

[371] Moreover, as Manfred Engel has observed recently, 'Appelle und Imperative geben ihnen [den *Orpheus-Sonetten*] streckenweise geradezu den Charakter einer Lehrdichtung' (*Rilke-Handbuch*, p. 417), which would render them a clearly Nietzschean category. Due to their poetic density however, the critic sees such a reductively philosophical interpretation of the *Sonette* as 'schlechterdings desaströs'. I see his point and will therefore refrain from in-depth interpretations of both *Sonette* and *Elegien*, which not only have been undertaken *en masse* already, but which would also explode the framework of this study.

[372] See the chapter on that poetic correspondence in Görner's *Rainer Maria Rilke* (2004), pp. 253-259, where, unfortunately, the 'Siebente Antwort' is not brought up. Görner does, however, see as 'eine weitere Grundbedingung dieses Sprach-Verhältnisses das Schweigen zwischen den poetischen Antworten' (p. 256).

used by Mitterer, addresses her as 'Du "einig Weiß" [...] mit Deinem weißen Licht', which will always manage to outshine the diverse, but potentially confusing seven colours of the rainbow as it incorporates and unifies them. This is relevant to the Nietzschean vertical trajectory in conjunction with the second poem, where both 'Tiefe' and 'Höhe' as well as the desire to reach a far-away goal are thematized. In fact, Zarathustra's 'Abhang, wo der Blick *hinunter* stürzt und die Hand *hinauf* greift' is recalled vividly here:

> Es kann wohl *ein so fernes Ziel erreichen*,
> das Aufschaun, das aus unsern Tiefen steigt –;
> irgend ein Stern ist immer zugeneigt:
> so kann es *ein so fernes Ziel erreichen*.
>
> Scheint es für uns zu zittern, jenes Zeichen,
> in einem Himmel, der beständig schweigt? (SW II 304)

Rilke's speaker – in this case, the poet himself – assumes that the 'Aufschaun, das aus unsern Tiefen steigt' will be able to reach that elusive, italicized goal evoked by his poetic penpal, much like Nietzsche's 'Blick, [der] in die Höhe stürzt'; similarly as in 'Von alten und neuen Tafeln', where Zarathustra, ready to face his most hidden will, proclaims himself 'ein Bogen brünstig nach seinem Pfeile' – which is, in fact, an inversion of the image of the arrow in need of a bow so frequently found in Rilke.[373] Moreover, the Persian prophet also states that he is 'ein Pfeil brünstig nach seinem Sterne' (KSA 4, 269), as well as that star, ready and ripe to be shot down by annihilating sun arrows.

The differences, however, are once again seemingly obvious: not only does the glance in Rilke's poem rise meditatively from our collective human depths, steadily and gently, in contrast to Zarathustra's, which plunges violently and ruttingly upwards, 'weil es mich hinauf reisst zum Übermenschen' (KSA 4, 183).[374] More importantly, in an image vividly calling up an attempt to focus on a tiny star in the night sky which will inevitably appear blurred, and thereby remain inaccessible, due to our limited vision,

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[373] See again Rilke's question in the first *Elegie*, 'Ist es nicht Zeit, daß wir liebend/ uns vom Geliebten befrein und es bebend bestehn:/ wie der Pfeil die Sehne besteht, um gesammelt im/ Absprung/ mehr zu sein als er selbst. Denn Bleiben ist nirgends' (SW I, p. 687).

[374] In this context, however, Rilke's image of the poet's emotional work as a waterfall from 'An Hölderlin' (KA II, p. 123f.) must also be mentioned, along with Engel's interpretation: 'Seine [des modernen Dichters] Lebensbewegung besteht nicht in einem Aufstieg über die Zeit hinaus, sondern im Vollzug des "Fallens" gleichsam in die Zeit hinein – als als ein ständiges Preisgeben und Überschreiten der jeweils erreichten Grenzen, als ein "Transzendieren ohne Transzendenz", letztlich auf den Tod zu' (KA I, p. 593).

Rilke makes the vertical trajectory reciprocal which is tragically one-sided in Nietzsche who, 'zugleich Pfeil [...] und Stern' (Köhler 554), lets Zarathustra say disdainfully 'nach Oben hin sehnt sich jeder sternenlose Busen' (223): our upward glance can only reach its faraway goal because there is always a star which is inclined towards us. The masterful use of the comma after 'Zeichen' results in a relationship of cause and effect between the continuous silence of the sky and the quivering of the sign: it appears to be trembling for us because of that silence – a probable implication being that the now silent sky used to be a heaven satured with meaning, and thus, resounding with language. Indeed, the last two lines resolve the remainder of doubt inherent in the (rhetorical) question: 'Es giebt sich Mühe, unserm Blick zu gleichen,/ wenn es in unser Zögern niederzeigt.' The star/sign is shaking with the effort of resembling our very glance, mirroring its hesitance.[375]

Therein, the distance to Nietzsche is lessened again; for in Rilke, as well, the reciprocity is finally shown to be a mere illusion. All Rilke's star – originally cast as the means by which we can reach our highest goals, or even as that highest goal itself, in the poetic partner ('Oh Herz, oh Stern'; SW II 313) – can do is quiver (thereby potentially both inducing a Nietzschean vertigo and making a sound, as it is not 'dumpf' as earth in 'Musik', 'eingehüllt von unsren Zwecken') and point us back to ourselves. This in itself is assessed as positive, however, as it makes us aware of our hesitance, which is the first step of overcoming it. Therefore, the Rilkean reciprocity on a vertical trajectory is a good and necessary lie akin to Nietzsche's life-saving illusions as described in early works such as *Über Wahrheit und Lüge* and *Die Geburt der Tragödie*.

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[375] Rilke's letter to Marie von Thurn und Taxis from 17 November 1912 mentioned above, in which he muses on music's ability to make the universe approximate us so that very close to us 'zittert die Neigung der Sterne' (B I, p. 446), reads like a study for this poem: the white light unifying the colours of the rainbow is anticipated in 'die *Rückseite der Musik*, [...] die selige Zahl, die sich dort teilt und wieder zusammennimmt und aus unendlichen Vielfachen in die Einheit zurückfällt [...] (wie immer sich im Übrigen das Schicksal verhielt).'

See further Silke Pasewalck, *'Die fünffingrige Hand'. Die Bedeutung der sinnlichen Wahrnehmung beim späten Rilke*, Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 2002; particularly p. 99, where the author states in context with a letter by Rilke to Hulewicz of 13 November 1925: 'Keineswegs zufällig werden hier die Sterne aufgerufen. Die Bewegung der Gestirne und konkret der Sternenfall mußte den späten Rilke im Sinne des Verwandlungskonzepts interessieren; er steht geradezu Pate für die geforderte Aufgabe und zwar, insofern er als *sichtbares Zeichen* der im Universum sich vollziehenden Verwandlung figuriert.'

Moreover, on a side note, the star, like the one guiding the three kings to Bethlehem by means of their faith, could perhaps also be seen as a remedy against the utilitarian, anthropocentric taming of fate represented by the number seven in 'Spiele' with regard to the superstition of the Princes of Baux in *Malte*. As Rilke explains to Hulewicz on 10 November 1925, 'Denen, die an die Macht der Zahl Sieben glauben, erscheint "sechzehn" als die gefährlichste Gegenzahl, und die des Baux trugen im Wappen den 16strahligen Stern. (den Stern allerdings, der die Könige aus dem Morgenland [...] nach Bethlehem führte: denn sie glaubten an ihre Herkunft von dem heiligen König Balthazar...) Das "Glück" [or *fortuna*, as related to fate. KB] dieses Geschlechts war ein Kampf der heiligen Zahl "7" [...] gegen die "16" Strahlen ihres Wappenbilds. Und die Sieben unterlag' (B 21-26, p. 368).

3.3.4 The deification of the beloved: Salomé as abysmal, heavenly companion

Similar to Rilke's star, which only refers its admirer back to himself; in 'Vor Sonnenaufgang', and in a way reminiscent of Nietzsche's definition of 'der Nächste',[376] the self-sufficiency of the 'Selbsteignen'[377] leading to complete independence from others forms the basis of Zarathustra's new, individualist religion, which could, in unfriendlier terms, also be called narcissism, egotism or neurosis. Moreover, the joyous elevation of *amor fati*, associated with terms such as 'selig', 'segnen' and 'getauft' here, to a heavenly, and therefore divine, guiding principle is possibly also yet another treacherous sign of Nietzsche's fear of vulnerability, as demonstrated above. Where does this utopian fantasy of absolute independence from the conventions and responsibilities of human society stem from?

Again, a glance at biographical matters is not only necessary at this point, but also leads to another possibility regarding the identity of Zarathustra's mysterious companion, his 'Himmel'. It blends in with the other suggestions, thereby forming a complex idea of Nietzsche's heaven in 'Vor Sonnenaufgang', and becomes evident upon consulting the philosopher's correspondence. On 24 November 1882, he wrote to young Lou von Salomé – whom he had credited with possessing his sister brain a mere two months before[378] – asking her to dissipate his suspicions concerning her and Rée:

> Und nun, Lou, liebes Herz, schaffen Sie reinen Himmel! Ich will nichts mehr, in allen Stücken als reinen, hellen Himmel: sonst will ich mich schon durchschlagen, so hart es auch geht. Aber ein Einsamer leidet fürchterlich an einem Verdachte über die Paar Menschen, die er liebt – (KSB 6, 281).

Salomé, in turn,

> schilderte [...], wie sie [...], auf den Brief Nietzsches von Ende November mit der Wendung 'schaffen Sie reinen Himmel!', 'die Wolke an unsrem Horizonte lag auf mir!' zurückkommend, zu Rée hinübergefragt habe 'Was kann er damit meinen?' und dieser ihr antwortete 'Weiß Gott...' (Pfeiffer; in: LAS 1998, 243).

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[376] See again the eponymous aphorism from *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*: 'Nah hab den Nächsten ich nicht gerne:/ Fort mit ihm in die Höh und Ferne!/ Wie würd' er sonst zu meinem Sterne?' (KSA 3, p. 359).

[377] It is worthwhile to recall at this point the quotation from Nietzsche's notes given at the beginning of this chapter: '"vom *letzten Glück des Einsamen"* – das ist der, welcher aus dem "Zugehörigen" zum Selbsteignen des höchsten Grades geworden ist: das vollkommene *ego*: Nur erst *dies* ego hat *Liebe*, auf der früheren Stufe, wo die höchste Einsamkeit und Selbstherrlichkeit nicht erreicht ist, giebt es etwas anderes als Liebe' (KSA 9, p. 520).

[378] **'**Meine liebe Lou, Ihr Gedanke einer Reduktion der philosophischen Systeme auf Personal-Acten ihrer Urheber ist recht ein Gedanke aus dem "Geschwistergehirn"' (Nietzsche to Salomé, 16 September 1882; KGB III.I, p. 259).

While, to Nietzsche, God certainly would not have known, Zarathustra – the increasingly isolated philosopher's self-apotheosis-in-progress who, at any rate, constantly refers to his 'Himmel' as pure, bright and sunny – probably would. The cloud Nietzsche mentions in that letter also appears in 'Vor Sonnenaufgang', as mentioned above; but it can clearly be interpreted on more than one level: 'Und wen hasste ich mehr, als ziehende Wolken und Alles, was dich befleckt?' (KSA 4, 208). Speaking on a non-metaphorical level, Werner Ross sees 'diese Wolken-Phobie', along with Nietzsche's longing for a 'Himmel mit monatelanger Reinheit [als] Lebensbedingung',[379] as 'die beiden Grundakkorde seiner Leidensmelodie'. Here, however, the cloud is likely not meant as an actual metereological phenomenon affecting the philosopher's health, nor as exclusively symbolic of Christian morality as argued above, but, rather, also of an issue connected to just that: namely, the suspicion and the slander regarding Salomé and Rée propagated by Nietzsche himself and his sister. Moreover, it also stands for his own hatred which he, in turn, hates, laying open his inner turmoil: 'Und meinen eignen Hass hasste ich noch, weil er dich befleckte!' (KSA 4, 208). Indeed, 'Himmel' is to be understood before precisely this backdrop of discord between him and his closest friends when Nietzsche writes to Overbeck in late March 1883, helpless in, in Rilke's words, his 'Hingestelltsein/ an der Gefühle stürzendes Gebraus' (SW II 260): 'Ich brauche reinen Himmel – sonst gehe ich an meinem gräßlichen Temperament zugrunde' (KSB 6, 354-5).

In this context, a passage from Book I in its motifs very much related to 'Vom Sonnenaufgang' should be consulted, as well. In the chapter 'Vom Freunde', Zarathustra speaks of the longing of 'alle Einsiedler', for whom there are 'zu viele Tiefen', for a friend and the height he can provide: 'Ich und Mich sind immer zu eifrig im Gespräche: wie wäre es auszuhalten, wenn es nicht einen Freund gäbe?' (KSA 4, 71). The friend is seen as the cork keeping the conversation of the hermit with himself, which would otherwise literally sink too deep, or low, afloat. More importantly, however, Zarathustra then admits: 'oft greift man an und macht sich einen Feind, um zu verbergen, dass man angreifbar ist' (ibid.) – this not only lends further weight to the suggestion of Nietzsche's fear of vulnerability made above, but also aptly describes his own ill-advised strategy in coping with the loss of Salomé and Rée.

According to Beatrix Himmelmann's interpretation of 'Zarathustras Weg', 'der Freund als der beste Feind ist derjenige, mit dem schöpferische Auseinandersetzung

[379] From a letter to Gast of 22 September 1881; quoted by Ross (1999), p. 592. The other quotations are from the same page.

möglich ist, [...] die zum Wachstum und zur Steigerung der eigenen Persönlichkeit führt.'[380] One should keep this in mind when reading what Nietzsche has to say about Salomé: first, in November 1883, in the midst of his work on Book III, when he still scornfully writes to his sister of his incredible loss and of 'wie es in mir mitunter schreit nach einem Menschen, der redlich ist und reden kann, sei es selbst ein Scheusal, wie Lou. [...] Ah diese verfluchte "Einsamkeit"!' (KSB 6, 452); and then, in early 1884, after having completed Book III:

> Von allen Bekanntschaften, die ich gemacht habe, ist eine der werthvollsten und ergebnisreichsten die mit L[ou]. Erst seit diesem Verkehre war ich reif zu meinem Z[arathustra]. [...] Lou ist das begabteste, nachdenkendste Geschöpf, das man sich denken kann, natürlich hat sie auch bedenkliche Eigenschaften. Auch ich habe solche. Indessen das *Schöne* an bedenklichen Eigenschaften ist, daß sie zu denken geben, wie der Name sagt. Natürlich nur für Denker (467f.).

It can thus indeed be argued that Salomé was that friend-foe he needed in order to mature who played a direct role not only as inspiration for *Zarathustra*, but also in it: as the heavenly companion addressed as 'du'. This suggestion is supported further by the advice concerning style Nietzsche himself gave to Salomé in Tautenburg: 'Der Stil soll *dir* angemessen sein in Hinsicht auf eine ganz bestimmte Person, der du dich mittheilen willst. (Gesetz der *doppelten Relation*)' (KSA 10, 38).

The images of height and depth, or an abyss, re-appear in a letter to Overbeck from 1 February 1883 concerning the emotional trauma of having been abandoned by his two beloved friends: 'ich war vorher in einem wahren *Abgrund* von Gefühlen [...], aber ich habe mich ziemlich 'senkrecht' aus dieser Tiefe in meine *Höhe* erhoben. Es wird nun wieder 'gehen': hoffen wir's wenigstens!' (KSB 6, 324-5). Alluding to Christ's resurrection, as well as anticipating that chapter's aforementioned vertical trajectory, this choice of words leads directly back to 'Vor Sonnenaufgang', where, again, the mysterious 'Himmel'-companion is Zarathustra's silent interlocutor: 'Und all mein Wandern und Bergsteigen: eine Noth war's nur und ein Behelf des Unbeholfenen: — *fliegen* allein will mein ganzer Wille, in *dich* hinein fliegen!' (KSA 4, 208). Zarathustra is still earth-bound, but longs to weightlessly merge with the sky, his heavenly friend.[381]

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[380] In: Gerhardt (2000), p. 25.

[381] Desire for the Dionysian ecstasy of merging with the beloved, both physically and mentally, is evoked here. However, for an alternative interpretation of the flight into the sky as suggested in the preceding section, see a corresponding passage from the last book of *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft* where Nietzsche demands that anyone attempting to judge moral prejudice must be situated in 'irgendein[em] Jenseits von Gut und Böse, zu dem man steigen, klettern, fliegen muss' themselves, and, in the case at hand, free from everything 'Europa', as the sum of our internalized value judgements (KSA 3, p. 633). Anyone attempting to genuinely liberate himself, or herself, from old value systems needs to be able to renounce

He needed to slowly and painfully make his way up the mountain again after having been in the abyss of his own emotions, but now, on the summit once more, he is close to his 'Himmel' at last. This was anticipated in a passage from Book I in 'Vom Lesen und Schreiben' in favour of a dancing lightness as opposed to the 'Geist der Schwere', which Zarathustra wants to kill by laughing: 'Ich habe gehen gelernt: seitdem lasse ich mich laufen. Ich habe fliegen gelernt: seitdem will ich nicht erst gestossen sein, um von der Stelle zu kommen' (KSA 4, 49-50).[382] Again, Zarathustra's goal is absolute self-sufficiency; he no longer wants to have to rely on anybody having to push him towards his further development.[383]

To conclude, one ought to point to a poem written by Rilke, according to Pfeiffer, 'vermutlich unmittelbar nach dem Abschiedsgespräch' with Salomé in February 1901:

> Du warst das Zarteste, das mir begegnet,
> das Härteste warst Du, damit ich rang.
> Du warst das Hohe, das mich gesegnet –
> und wurdest der Abgrund, der mich verschlang (BW LAS 53).

Here, the beloved, in superlatives and binary oppositions clearly evocative of Zarathustra's vocabulary, is addressed as both blessing height and devouring abyss. As Zinn (SW III 837) and, following him, Stahl (1978, 140) date this poem to January 1899, another poem from that time may help to render the identity of 'das Hohe' with heaven, and that of the abyss with hell, unmistakable:

> Einmal wartet die bange verbannte
> Liebe an jedes Lebens Rand:
> Jeder durchwandert, sein eigener Dante,

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the comfort of gravity, as Zarathustra does not want to create new values, 'sondern eine neue Freiheit [...] zur Überwindung des Glaubens an "letzte" Werte' (Stegmaier, in: Gerhardt, 2000; p. 213).

[382] These sentences were underlined in Z.1, and in *Friedrich Nietzsche in seinen Werken*, they are indeed quoted in the context of the second transition of Nietzsche's philosophy away from 'Réealismus' (the name which he gave to his friend Rée's positivist philosophizing) into its third phase, as 'stillen Seitenweg [, auf dem] er sich wieder dorthin zurückschleichen würde, – wo die Götter und die Uebermenschen [sic] hausen' (p. 170).

[383] This idea of the flight into an inward world inclusive of self-sufficiency and difference to all others, complete with the progression from 'steigen' to 'fliegen', reappears in 'Die Erblindende' from Rilke's *Der neuen Gedichte anderer Teil*, in which a blind woman 'saß so wie die anderen beim Tee', but soon strikes the speaker of the poem as different: first, because she seems to hold her cup in an unusual way, and then, by smiling once in a way almost painful to the spectator, which suggests her lack of control over her outward appearance due to her encroaching blindness. However, only in the second verse, when everyone rises to amble 'langsam und wie es der Zufall brachte' through the house, chatting and laughing, does the speaker of the poem truly see the woman ('da sah ich sie'). Now, he compares her bright eyes to ponds reflecting the light, again drawing attention to her inwardness as opposed to 'den andern', the other guests at the tea party walkig and talking ahead of her: 'Sie folgte langsam und sie brauchte lang/ als wäre etwas noch nicht überstiegen;/ und doch, als ob nach einem Übergang,/ sie nicht mehr gehen würde, sondern fliegen' (SW I, p. 516).

Himmel und Hölle an ihrer Hand (SW III 638).

A year earlier, Rilke had already addressed Salomé as a saint who was everything, and in everything, to him in his *Florenzer Tagebuch*.[384] Fiedler, who concedes that the young poet presents his assertions 'mit der Autorität eines Zarathustra' (1999, 300), further points out that those assertions, more often than not, culminate 'in einer Rhetorik des Verkündens [...], die an nichts so sehr erinnert wie an den Tonfall, aber auch den Inhalt von *Also sprach Zarathustra* (309). It is a distinct possibility that the young poet both borrowed from Nietzsche, as his predecessor in having been abandoned by Salomé,[385] and then transcended that predecessor, as he transcended his bereavement, in finding his very own language: the two-year gap between Salomé's last goodbye and the renewal of their friendship, including Rilke's first year in Paris,[386] is one of the most important periods of development in Rilke's entire poetic life.[387]

Although Nietzsche believed in his ability to ascend into the heights of his thought from his '*Abgrund* von Gefühlen' (KSB 6, 324) concerning Salomé once more; ironically, it was Rilke – who believed he had been devoured by it entirely – who managed to escape the emotional abyss, at least from time to time. However, after 'drei (nichtgekonnte[n]) Monate[n] Wirklichkeit' with Magda von Hattingberg, his 'Benvenuta', for example (which Rilke saw as his personal failure at another attempt to be real, as 'Eigentümer [s]eines Lebens'), he wrote to Lou Andreas-Salomé: 'Hätte ich einen Freund, so würd ich ihn bitten, täglich ein paar Stunden mit mir zu arbeiten, was es auch sei', indirectly asking for her help once more (B I 534). Rather than von Hattingberg's affection, or the attention received in any of his numerous other fleeting romances,[388] it was Salomé's love and friendship – in *constantly* providing 'das rätselhafte Ausruhn, das [meinem eigensten Wesen,...in unerschöpfliches Mitteilen gelöst,] in einem empfangenden Menschen aufs Natürlichste bereitet schien' (ibid.) – which ultimately proved irreplacable. A year before his death, in his third but last surviving letter to her, Rilke wrote: 'Ich sehe nur Dich, aber wie Dich wirklich erreichen? [...] Hätt ich Dich doch längst gerufen' (BW LAS 478). Not only as his

[384] *Tagebücher aus der Frühzeit*, p. 118.
[385] It is helpful to remember at this point that the young Rilke's works, particularly the *Florenzer Tagebuch*, are often considered to be characterized by 'nahezu schülerhafter Aneignung [von Nietzsches] Ausdrucksweise' (Destro, p. 202).
[386] 28 August 1902 – late June 1903.
[387] See *Rilke-Handbuch*, p. 6.
[388] 'Es kommt mir vor, D. S [Dottor Serafico]', Marie von Thurn und Taxis playfully yet insightfully chides Rilke in a letter of 15 January 1915 after having received his confession that, once again, he had not managed to remain single, 'daß der selige Don Juan ein Waisenknabe neben Ihnen war – Und Sie tun sich immer solche Trauerweiden aussuchen, die aber gar nicht so traurig sind in Wirklichkeit, glauben sie mir – Sie, Sie selbst spiegeln sich in allen diesen Augen –' (B II, p. 562).

educator and mediator of such essential experiences as that of Russia or of Nietzsche's thought, then, Lou Andreas-Salomé personified 'das Hohe, das mich gesegnet' (BW LAS 53) to Rilke. Her most important role to him remains that of the friend-foe and deified love he had to lose in order to realize his full potential as artist.

In this aspect, he can indeed be seen as Nietzsche's direct successor. The anti-philosopher wrote to Overbeck on 12 February 1887 about the long gestation period of *Zarathustra*: 'Daß ich diese lange, erbärmliche, schmerzenüberreiche Zeit durchlebt habe, ohne durch eine echte Liebe getröstet worden zu sein. Mein ganzer "Zarathustra" ist aus dieser Entbehrung gewachsen – wie unverständlich muß er sein!' That 'echte Liebe' he so lacked has to be identified as that for Salomé which, had it been reciprocated – provided one takes Nietzsche literally (which, in turn, is always dangerous) – would have impaired the growth of *Zarathustra* as that book's direct competitor for space in Nietzsche's head and heart. Perhaps, it would never even have been written: thanks to a letter of December 1882 never sent to Rée we can, at least, be certain that the 'Einsiedler-Philosoph' '[hat] sich seit Tautenburg die *Tortur* auferlegt [Lou] zu lieben!' (KSB 6, 297). As suggested by Köhler, that torture of a loveless life, however, ultimately also pushed Nietzsche over the edge, into the abyss of insanity: '1889, kurz nach der Einlieferung in die Basler Irrenanstalt, hat Nietzsche den sterbenden Löwen, sich selbst, mit düsterem Strich gemalt. Denn vor dem [Löwen-]Denkmal im Luzerner Gletschergarten holte er sich einen "Korb" [von Lou]' (1992, 334).

3.3.5 Epilogue: from 'Einsiedlers Sehnsucht' to 'Ausgesetzt auf den Bergen des Herzens'. Silence and the cognitive value of art.

This chapter is concerned with two philosophizing poets in crisis; namely, with Rilke during his phase of artistic 'Verstummen' in 1914 as mainly represented by 'Ausgesetzt auf den Bergen des Herzens', and with Nietzsche's cries for help, which curiously always seemed to take the form of poetry, in 'Einsiedlers Sehnsucht' and the *Dionysos-Dithyramben*. While Giorgio Colli, writing about the latter, maintains 'der Dichter Nietzsche ist kein anderer als der Philosoph Nietzsche' (KSA 6, 454), the editor of the *KSA* however simultaneously advises interpreters *in spe* to maintain a respectful distance to the philosopher's lyrical output. According to Colli, Nietzsche's poetry contains 'eindrucksvolles Material', but lacks authentic expression due to its inextricable interconnectedness with the prose work, 'und vielen anderen dahinterstehenden Elementen'. Employing the same adjective Heidegger used regarding the interpretation of Rilke's 'gültigem Gedicht' (see chapter 1.1), Colli's verdict is that any kind of judgement, particularly on the aesthetic level, of Nietzsche's poetry would be 'vermessen' as that poetry represents the philosopher-poet's inner experiences, which cannot be verified, nor repeated (455).

Colli's observations may help to provide a context for the only statement concerning Nietzsche's poetry we have by Rilke which, taken by itself, seems rather obscure:

> Dafür kam der sehr schöne Almanach, mit dem ich nun viel verkehre, – das Nietzsche-Gedicht ist doch möglich und wird in den Zusammenhängen, in denen es sich findet, abwechselnd deutlich und unauffindbar, wie es seinem Dasein und Nichtdasein entspricht…' (*Briefwechsel*, 33).

Rilke wrote this to Katharina Kippenberg on 31 October 1911 with regard to the *Insel-Almanach auf das Jahr 1912*, wherein 'das Nietzsche-Gedicht' 'Einsiedlers Sehnsucht' is reproduced as follows (83-86):

> O Lebens Mittag! Feierliche Zeit!
> O Sommergarten!
> Unruhig Glück im Stehn und Spähn und Warten!
> Der Freunde harr ich, Tag und Nacht bereit:
> Wo bleibt ihr Freunde? Kommt! 's ist Zeit! 's ist Zeit! [1][389]

[389] I have numbered the thirteen verses in order to facilitate interpretation.

Im Höchsten ward für euch mein Tisch gedeckt:
Wer wohnt den Sternen
So nahe, wer des Lichtes Abgrundsfernen?
Mein Reich – hier oben hab ichs mir entdeckt –
Und all dies mein – wards nicht für euch entdeckt? [2]

Nun liebt und lockt euch selbst des Gletschers Grau
Mit jungen Rosen,
Euch sucht der Bach, sehnsüchtig drängen, stoßen
Sich Wind und Wolke höher heut ins Blau,
Nach euch zu spähn aus fernster Vogelschau – – – [3]

Da seid ihr, Freunde! – Weh, doch ich bins nicht,
Zu dem ihr wolltet?
Ihr zögert, staunt – ach, daß ihr lieber grolltet!
Ich bins nicht mehr? Vertauscht Hand, Schritt, Gesicht?
Und was ich bin, euch Freunden bin ichs – nicht? [4]

Ein andrer ward ich und mir selber fremd?
Mir selbst entsprungen?
Ein Ringer, der zu oft sich selbst bezwungen,
Zu oft sich gegen eigne Kraft gestemmt,
Durch eignen Sieg verwundet und gehemmt? – [5]

Ich suchte, wo der Wind am schärfsten weht,
Ich lernte wohnen,
Wo Niemand wohnt, in öden Eisbärzonen,
Verlernte Mensch und Gott, Fluch und Gebet,
Ward zum Gespenst, das über Gletscher geht. [6]

Ein schlimmer Jäger ward ich: seht, wie steil
Gespannt mein Bogen!
Der Stärkste wars, der solchen Zug gezogen –
Doch wehe nun! Ein Kind kann jetzt den Pfeil
Drauf legen: fort von hier! Zu eurem Heil! – [7]

– Ihr *alten* Freunde! Seht! Nun blickt ihr bleich,
Voll Lieb und Grausen!
Nein, geht! Zürnt nicht! Hier – könntet ihr nicht hausen!
Hier zwischen fernstem Eis- und Felsenreich –
Da muß man Jäger sein und gemsengleich. [8]

Ihr wendet euch? – – O Herz, du trugst genug!
Stark blieb dein Hoffen!
Halt *neuen* Freunden deine Türe offen,
Die alten laß! Laß die Erinnerung!
Warst einst du jung, jetzt – bist du besser jung! [9]

Nicht Freunde mehr, – das sind, wie nenn ichs doch?
Nur Freund-Gespenster!
Das klopft mir wohl noch nachts an Herz und Fenster,
Das sieht mich an und spricht 'wir warens doch?'
– O welkes Wort, das einst wie Rosen roch! [10]

Und was uns knüpfte, junger Wünsche Band, –
Wer liest die Zeichen,
Die Liebe einst hineinschrieb, noch, die bleichen?
Dem Pergament vergleich ichs, das die Hand
zu fassen *scheut* - ihm gleich verbräunt, verbrannt! – [11]

O Jugendsehnen, das sich mißverstand!
Die ich ersehnte,
Die ich mir selbst verwandt-verwandelt wähnte –
Daß *alt* sie wurden, hat sie weggebannt:
Nur wer sich wandelt, bleibt mit mir verwandt! [12]

O Lebens Mittag! Zweite Jugendzeit!
O Sommergarten!
Unruhig Glück im Stehn und Spähn und Warten!
Der Freunde harr' ich, Tag und Nacht bereit: –
Der *neuen* Freunde! Kommt! 's ist Zeit! 's ist Zeit! [13]

This a slightly altered version of the original poem, written approximately at the same time as most of the *Dithyramben* (most of which, after all, were taken from Book IV of *Zarathustra*) and sent to Heinrich von Stein in late November 1884.[390] Another variant, inclusive of two additional final verses written in spring 1886,[391] features in *Jenseits*

[390] KGB III.1, pp. 564-567. In a letter of 2 October 1915, Katharina Kippenberg wrote to Rilke of Heinrich von Stein as 'der Freund Nietzsches, wissen Sie und der ihn am ersten ahnte' (*Briefwechsel*, p. 140). Indeed, von Stein replied to Nietzsche on 7 December 1884: 'Kürzlich nannten wir das Künstlerische die Ueberleitung aus der Fülle der Persönlichkeit zum Ueberpersönlichen. Hierbei gedachte ich Ihrer, und meinte, Sie würden an diesem Gespräch Freude gehabt haben' (KGB III.2, 484).

[391] '*Dies* Lied ist aus, - der Sehnsucht süsser Schrei
Erstarb im Munde:
Ein Zaubrer that's, der Freund zur rechten Stunde,

von Gut und Böse as 'Aus hohen Bergen. Nachgesang' (KSA 5, 241-243). As such, the poem had a major impact on the generation after Nietzsche, one example being Schnitzler,[392] who was 'ergriffen' by it, further lauding it rapturously as 'Nietz'sche Sentimentalität! – Weinender Marmor! Stellen, die sogar auf Weiber wirken, ohne daß man den Stellen oder den Weibern bös werden müßte.'[393] In contrast – also, particularly, with Gundolf's enthusiastic judgement ('das ist doch eines der größten Gedichte, die je geschaffen wurden')[394] – Rilke's assessment, uttered the same year as Gundolf's, seems strangely restrained. Two potentially subtly negative remarks regarding Nietzsche as poet are immediately striking: provided, the term 'Nietzsche-Gedicht' is taken as reference to Nietzsche's poetry *per se*, the word 'doch' suggests that, so far, it had been assumed (by whom is unclear – maybe, by Rilke as opposed to the Nietzsche-enthusiast Kippenberg) impossible, and hence, that Nietzsche was no poet. Moreover, in claiming that it cannot be found at times, according to its 'Nichtdasein', Rilke in fact declares 'das Nietzsche-Gedicht' non-existent, at least temporarily.

It is possible that in those problematic categorizations the poet implied the 'lack of authentic expression' as diagnosed by Colli, and therein, the aesthetic limitations of the philosopher's 'Gedicht'. Alternatively, he may simply have found himself unable to creatively repeat the inner experiences mediated in the poem at that point in his life, and hence failed to 'understand' it – it is quite impossible to know for certain. What remains even more open to further interpretation is the precise meaning of the 'Zusammenhänge, in denen es sich findet'. Whilst it would seem too simplistic, and therefore highly unlikely, for that phrase to merely refer to the context of the *Almanach*, it would amount to pure conjecture to suggest an alternative here. Suffice it to add, for the sake of a more balanced view, that the mature poet, at the very least, obviously enjoyed and valued Nietzsche's verse: Marga Wertheimer, briefly Rilke's secretary in the autumn of 1924,

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Der Mittags-Freund - nein! fragt nicht, wer es sei -
Um Mittag war's, da wurde Eins zu Zwei...

Nun feiern wir, vereinten Siegs gewiss,
Das Fest der Feste:
Freund *Zarathustra* kam, der Gast der Gäste!
Nun lacht die Welt, der grause Vorhang riss,
Die Hochzeit kam für Licht und Finsterniss...'

[392] In *Die Entstehung des lyrischen Ich. Studien zum Motiv der Erhebung in der Lyrik* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1970), Karl Pestalozzi lists numerous additional examples (*n*. 198).
[393] From a letter to Hofmannsthal – and not, as wrongly claimed by Meyer-Wendt (1973, p. 18), from a letter by Hofmannsthal to Schnitzler – of 27 July 1891, in: *Briefwechsel*, p. 9.
[394] From a letter to George written on 23 February 1911, quoted in Pestalozzi, *n*. 198.

reports that her employer sometimes recited 'Gedichte [...] von Nietzsche' to her at Muzot, 'bevor wir am Morgen oder mittags zu arbeiten begannen' (13f.). Sadly, Wertheimer does not specify any further which Nietzsche poems exactly Rilke read to her. Therefore, 'Einsiedlers Sehnsucht', 'dem "Zarathustra" sehr nahe' (Pestalozzi 220) and demonstrably known to Rilke, will be examined a little more closely now, as shall selected *Dithyramben* – which, although the last of his works the author prepared for publication himself, actually largely stem from the same period as the tale of the Persian prophet's wanderings.[395] As 'eine Serie unmittelbarer Aufzeichnungen von Seelenzuständen' rather than philosophical abstractions (KSA 6, 458), those works shed a highly focussed, 'verdichtetes' light, as only 'Dichtung' can, on the artist-philosopher's state of mind while composing his *Zarathustra*.

As demonstrated above, 1884 was not a good year for Nietzsche, and loneliness its *Leitmotiv*. In the autumn of that year, he was to write his best known poem, 'Der Freigeist. Abschied', better known as 'Vereinsamt', whose mood of autumnal gloom anticipating the loneliness represented by winter (particularly in the line 'Wohl dem, der jetzt noch – Heimat hat!'; KSA 11,329) is echoed in Rilke's 'Herbsttag': 'Wer jetzt kein Haus hat, baut sich keines mehr' (SW I, 398). Already on 22 February however, after having completed Book III of *Zarathustra*, the philosopher wrote to Rohde:

> Und so, Freund, geht es mir mit allen Menschen, die mir lieb sind: alles ist vorbei, Vergangenheit, Schonung; man sieht sich noch, man redet, um nicht zu schweigen –, man schreibt sich Briefe noch, um nicht zu schweigen. Die Wahrheit aber spricht der Blick aus: und der sagt mir (ich höre es gut genug!) "Freund Nietzsche, du bist nun ganz allein!" (KGB III.1, 478f.)

Here, a typically Nietzschean revaluation takes place: the spoken and written word has lost its meaning; it has become silent, whilst the normally silent glance speaks the truth – as far as the embittered philosopher's subjective perception is concerned, at least ('der Blick […] sagt *mir*'; my emphasis). The wistful nostalgia of these lines mourning the breakdown of communication with those dearest to him finds such numerous echoes in 'Einsiedlers Sehnsucht' that that poem must be seen as distinctly autobiographical.

The middle part of its three-part structure in particular is clearly anticipated in the complaint to Rohde. According to Pestalozzi's accomplished interpretation,[396] verses

[395] Originally entitled 'Lieder Zarathustras', they render evident the secret analogy Nietzsche had been drawing between Dionysos and Zarathustra all along. See further: Sprengel (1998), p. 641.

[396] Op. cit., see pp. 201-208. Pestalozzi remarks 'daß in der […] Kunst der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts […] der Zug in die Höhe ein dominantes Merkmal ist'. He sees 'Einsiedlers Sehnsucht' in

one to three of 'Einsiedlers Sehnsucht' constitute the exposition, setting the scene for the eagerly anticipated arrival of the friends. Alluding, once more, to the Bible ('für euch mein Tisch gedeckt'; '*Mein* Reich'), Nietzsche positions his lyrical I high up on a glacier: traditionally, the top of a mountain has always been the *locus* for divine revelation, and loneliness its necessary precondition. The Nietzschean hermit, however, is not merely passively waiting, he is also an active explorer ('entdeckt' is repeated twice) proudly displaying his new-found empire and longingly wooing his old friends to appreciate its beauty. Still, his particular discovery is not the replacement of the Christian God by himself (as the rather grandiose biblical vocabulary might suggest), but by the community of friends as a part of which, in turn, the 'Einsiedler' defines himself, thereby justifying his hermit status.[397]

However, in the middle part in verses four to nine – pre-emptively summarized, it would seem, by the lines to Rohde – the scenery changes dramatically: the young roses disappear, and the glacier once more becomes what it actually is: deadly and threatening. This is symbolic of the hermit's disillusionment, whose friends have arrived, but fail to recognize him as part of their group. At first, this makes him realize that he is by himself in his inhospitable surroundings, a 'Gespenst, das über Gletscher geht' in icy winds, for no reason. However, the six questions the 'Einsiedler' then asks himself in verses four to six also indicate the chance for a re-positioning of the self as independent and self-reliant ('Mir selbst entsprungen?'), much as that situation is initially scary and loathsome to him. In the seventh verse, Philoktet, hero of antiquity, is alluded to,[398] who united within himself the divine strength of the Heraclitean bow which he guarded and the weakness of the sick and abandoned hermit that he was. This implies that the Nietzschean hermit's strength transcends himself, it is now beyond his control. As a consequence, he now even urges his friends to leave, almost threatening them. In the ninth verse, he addresses his own heart instead, and asks it to let go of old

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that tradition ('in Nietzsche hat diese Motivik innerhalb der deutschen Literatur ihr stärkstes Strahlungszentrum', p. x), setting it in relation to Longfellow's influential poem 'Excelsior!' (1841), which Nietzsche read in translation by Freiligrath (1846) in 1876 (p. 104) – see also the aphorism of that name in *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft* (KSA 3, p. 527), which thematizes the horrors, but also the possibilities, of life without a god. 'Eine Interpretation von Rilkes "Ausgesetzt auf den Bergen des Herzens" war vorgesehen' (p. xiii), but is sadly missing from Pestalozzi's book.

[397] This is reminiscent of the 'Brüderlichkeit' engendered 'im kollektiven Zurücktreten der Vereinzelten in einen gemeinsamen Hintergrund' in Rilke's early notes 'Zur Melodie der Dinge'. See: Mattenklott (1988), p. 23.

[398] See Pestalozzi, p. 205.

memories, to fully let itself in for the painful process of disillusionment, and to look to the future.[399]

In consequence, in the last four verses, the hermit fights his self-pity: although he admits to being plagued by melancholic memories at night, he is no longer willing to regard himself as a spectre. Instead, he now sees his old friends as 'nur Freund-Gespenster!' The hermit's realization of their stagnation symbolized by old age, as opposed to his renewed youth achieved by constant self-transformation, has exorcized them (or so the hermit would want to believe), and he maintains 'nur wer sich wandelt, bleibt mit mir verwandt!', anticipating, it would seem, Rilke's famous *Orpheus-Sonett* II/12.[400] However, in the last verse, a utopia of new friends has replaced the memory of the old ones. According to Pestalozzi, this results in the 'Anschein, als sei das Gedicht platter geworden, als es ursprünglich konzipiert war' (206), because the self is still not defined self-sufficiently, after all. The 'message' of this Nietzsche poem thus remains: 'Wer Freunde will, darf nicht auf hohe Berge steigen. Er muß in den Niederungen bleiben, wo die Menschen wohnen' (219). This is also expressed in the remorse felt by the wanderer in *Zarathustra*, 'wund am Herzen wie noch niemals zuvor' (KSA 4, 195), who cries bitterly when thinking of the friends *he* actively left behind in order to find his self in his lone ascent to his highest mountain top. 'Die Einsamkeit ist, je länger je mehr, etwas Gefährliches', the private person Nietzsche admits, while the philosopher's 'Maske der heiligen Einsamkeit' becomes less and less able to hide this danger, the more often he employs it.[401]

In consequence, Zarathustra finally finds himself no longer amongst humans, let alone friends, but 'Zwischen Raubvögeln'. Following Colli's advice, aesthetic judgement ought to be left aside when considering this *Dithyrambus*. Instead, it is best read as a prominent example of Nietzsche-Zarathustra stripped bare in his own poetry:

> Wer hier hinabwill,
> wie schnell schluckt den die Tiefe!
> – Aber du, Zarathustra,
> liebst den Abgrund noch,

[399] Another fragment from 1884, 'Im deutschen November', reads: 'Dies ist der Herbst: der – bricht dir noch das Herz!' (KSA 11, p. 323), indicating the fruitlessness of Nietzsche's good intentions expressed in 'Einsiedlers Sehnsucht'. Rilke addressed his own heart in a similar fashion in 1914, in a context of isolation brought about by lack of understanding. However, in contrast to Nietzsche – who is saddened by *his* opacity to *others* – he laments the fact that *others* are inscrutable to *him*: 'Wem willst du klagen, Herz? Immer gemiedener/ ringt sich dein Weg durch die unbegreiflichen/ Menschen' (SW II, p. 84). The result is the same in both cases: speechless isolation.

[400] Particularly, the first lines: 'Wolle die Wandlung. O sei für die Flamme begeistert,/ drin sich ein Ding dir entzieht, das mit Verwandlungen prunkt' (SW I, p. 758).

[401] See: Podach, p. 36.

thust es der *Tanne* gleich (KSA 6, 389)?

That fir-tree, whom Zarathustra is literally equated with ('der Tanne *gleich*', my emphasis), is further described as taking root at the edge of the abyss, 'geduldig duldend, hart, schweigsam, einsam'. The only guest who would dare to visit is the bird of prey, who cruelly taunts Zarathustra: 'man muss Flügel haben, wenn man den Abgrund liebt', unlike him, the '*Selbstkenner!*/ *Selbsthenker*' (390) who clings to the edge, having bound and strangled himself with the rope of his wisdom. Once, the bird continues to sneer, Zarathustra was proud, 'der Einsiedler ohne Gott,/ der Zweisiedler mit dem Teufel' (392). Now, however, he is nothing but a tired riddle, a question mark bent inbetween two nothings – by no one's fault but his own: in 'Der Wanderer', Zarathustra had willed the identity of the summit with the abyss ('Gipfel und Abgrund – das ist jetzt in Eins beschlossen!'; KSA 4, 194). This implies that that identity is not a natural one; and his statement 'Aus dem Tiefsten muss das Höchste zu seiner Höhe kommen' already sounds rather forced than convinced. By the time of his arrival 'Zwischen Raubvögeln', the merciless emptying of both heaven above him and the abyss of his self below him – 'die schwerste Last' (KSA 6, 391) – have finally resulted in a total void in meaning bending the philosopher, once 'der scharlachne Prinz jedes Übermuths', double with self-hatred and fatigue. Sick with the snake's venom of knowledge, he is 'ein Wissender' high up on a mountain and simultaneously buried deep within himself, digging away at his very substance, hollowing himself. Indeed, as Sprengel has observed (1998, 642), 'Tanne' is an anagram of 'néant', French for 'nothing'.

The bird at home in surroundings hostile to humans, the silent isolation associated with cognition, the mountain climber facing the abyss – these, and many more, elements from the Nietzsche works discussed so far feature in a well-known Rilke poem. 'Ausgesetzt auf den Bergen des Herzens', separated from 'Einsiedlers Sehnsucht' by three decades – or by a generation – exactly, was written in September 1914. That year saw another turning point in Rilke's development, both personal and poetic. Seven years before, he had been enjoying the beginning of his longest period of sustained creativity. Seven years later he was to be about to enter into the famous, feverish phase of the completion of the *Duineser Elegien* and the outpouring of the *Sonette an Orpheus* in only one month.[402] At this point, which, seen symmetrically and metaphorically,

[402] This was February 1922.

constructs his 'midst of infertility', 'Ausgesetzt...' came into being; three months after 'ein[em] wunderliche[n] Gedicht, das ich unwillkürlich "Wendung" nannte, weil's *die* Wendung darstellt, die wohl auch kommen muß, wenn ich leben soll'.[403] With a nod to his friend Kassner,[404] to whom he was to dedicate his eighth *Elegie* in 1922, the poem which most clearly 'reflect[s] Rilke's grievous confrontation with his inability to love' (Kleinbard 215) bears the decidedly Nietzschean motto 'Der Weg von der Innigkeit zur Größe geht durch das Opfer':

> WENDUNG
> [...]
> Denn des Anschauens, siehe, ist eine Grenze.
> Und die geschautere Welt
> will in der Liebe gedeihn.
>
> Werk des Gesichts ist getan,
> tue nun Herz-Werk
> an den Bildern in dir, jenen gefangenen; denn du
> überwältigtest sie: aber nun kennst du sie nicht […] (SW II, 83).

'Ausgesetzt...' represents an answer to 'Wendung's appeal to drop the cold and technical approach of 'Anschauen' as practiced, under Rodin's influence, mainly in the *Neue Gedichte*, in favour of a loving reflection on the 'geschautere Welt'. Yet, Rilke had already anticipated the crisis which was to befall him in 1914 in a famous poem from that very collection, namely, in the last verse of 'Der Panther' from 1902:

> Nur manchmal schiebt der Vorhang der Pupille
> sich lautlos auf –. Dann geht ein Bild hinein,
> geht durch der Glieder angespannte Stille –
> und hört im Herzen auf zu sein (SW I 505).

Indeed, in the notion of a picture silently entering the caged animal's pupil and progressing through its tense yet immobile limbs, only to cease to be upon its arrival in the panther's heart, 'Wendung's themes are all assembled: looking in relation, or even

[403] From a letter to Salomé of 20 June 1914, written the same day as the poem, in: BW LAS, p. 329.
[404] In 1910, the two friends spent much time together in Paris, and after one of their conversations regarding Kassner's project, *Die Elemente der menschlichen Größe*, he remarked of Rilke 'er verzehre sich vor Innerlichkeit', and wrote down the sentence: 'Wer von der Innigkeit zur Größe will, der muß sich opfern', which Rilke, in turn, discovered in print a year later in the *Neue Rundschau*, realizing immediately it was about him (Klaus E. Bohnenkamp, 'Kassner und Rilke im gegenseitigen Urteil', in: Storck 1986, pp. 127-144; here: p. 131).

direct opposition, to the heart, as well as the interrelated topics of stagnation and imprisonment. Referring to Nietzsche's *Dithyrambus* 'Nur Narr! Nur Dichter!' (nearly identical with *Zarathustra*'s 'Lied der Schwermuth 3'; KSA 4, 371), which states that 'adlerhaft, pantherhaft/ sind des Dichters Sehnüchte' (KSA 6, 379), Gunnar Decker sees the panther, always by Dionysos' side in Greek mythology, as an analogy to the poet caught in a 'Zwischenreich' or 'Gegenwelt, die der Bürger weggesperrt wissen möchte' in the Rilke poem.[405] Similarly, Phelan suggests that 'we may indeed wish to understand the panther of the poem as an analogy for its author', remarking on the self-referentiality of much of Rilke's writing as represented by that particular poem (1992, 45). Such observations would seem to be supported by the poet himself: in a letter to Salomé dating from the same year as many of the *Neue Gedichte*, Rilke 'fällt [es] ein, daß eine geistige Aneignung der Welt, wo sie sich so völlig des Auges bedient, wie das bei mir der Fall war, dem bildenden Künstler ungefährlicher bliebe, weil sie sich greifbarer an körperlichen Ergebnissen beruhigt.'[406] He had failed to differentiate sufficiently between the two art forms, poetry and sculpture; and he had failed to realize that unlike the sculptor's everpresent physical raw material, he had to *create* material to work with from the abstract, slippery things that are words. It was not only vital 'das Werkzeug meiner Kunst zu finden, den Hammer, meinen Hammer' (BW LAS 105), but also that which that hammer could work on.

Thus, Rodin's motto that Rilke admired so that it cannot be repeated too often – 'qu'il faut travailler, travailler *toujours*'[407] – could not be applied to his own art, which had to be more than the disciplined daily application of the self to becoming an objective recording instrument, a human camera, as it were. His poetry, formerly inspired by pure 'Anschauen', now needed 'love' to thrive: 'Und die geschautere Welt/ will in der Liebe gedeihn'. Tellingly, when Rilke himself wrote about other artists, he required of himself not objectivity, but love. The motto of his *Worpswede* book was, 'mit Jacobsens Worten: "Du sollst nicht gerecht sein gegen ihn; denn wohin kämen die Besten von uns mit der Gerechtigkeit; nein; aber denke an ihn, wie er die Stunde war, da du ihn am tiefsten liebtest..."'.[408]

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[405] 'Überschreiten, aber kein Wohin', in: *Neue deutsche Literatur. Zeitschrift für deutschsprachige Literatur* 6, 1996, pp.49-53; here: p. 52f..
[406] in: Lou Andreas-Salomé, *Rainer Maria Rilke*, Leipzig: Insel, 1929, p. 38.
[407] BW LAS, p. 35; and in two letters to Salomé, one, from 12 May 1904 (B I, p. 178): 'Il faut toujours travailler sagte mir Rodin jedesmal sooft ich ihm von des täglichen Lebens Zwiespalt zu klagen versuchte; andere Lösung wußte er nicht und es war ja auch seine gewesen'; the other, from 10 August 1903 (B I, p. 156): 'Il faut toujours travailler – toujours – sagte er mir einmal als ich ihm von den bangen Abgründen sprach die zwischen meinen guten Tagen aufgetan sind'.
[408] *Worpswede*, Frankfurt/M.: Insel, 1987, p. 8.

Some years on – in a passage of a letter to Stefan Zweig from 11 August 1907, which was to become his Cézanne-year, about Emile Verhaeren, the imaginary recipient of his *Brief des jungen Arbeiters* – the poet no longer separates justice from love, but, rather, sees love and admiration as a condition of justice. Criticizing his contemporaries' inclination toward criticism rather than admiration, he writes, already foreshadowing the line from his *Orpheus-Sonett* II/23, 'Wir, gerecht nur, wo wir dennoch preisen' (SW I 767):

> Man übertreibt nicht, wenn man, von Verhaeren redend, alle Liebe, die man für sein Dasein hat, auch an sein Werk wendet, so wie sie ist. Je größer je besser. Ich glaube auch, daß man nie gerechter ist, als wenn man mit aller Hingabe bewundert (B I 263).

This development in Rilke points yet again to Nietzsche, who argues in love's favour in the *Zweite Unzeitgemässe Betrachtung*, a work read by the poet which also advises against false objectivity. In the philosopher's view 'the eternalizing power of art' (which in real life he ironically gave up in favour of theory) joins forces with love (which he, ironically, never enjoyed in the shape of an adult relationship). Together, both are believed to engender the 'Selbstvergessen' (KSA 1, 323) which makes room for honesty and, thus, true cognition.[409] One is reminded once more of Zarathustra's aversion, expressed in 'Von der unbefleckten Erkenntnis', to any pretension to objectivity. Nietzsche connects 'Auf den glückseligen Inseln' to 'Von den Mitleidigen' here by thematizing the problem of cognizance jointly with that of shame:

> Dieses Gleichniss gebe ich euch empfindsamen Heuchlern, euch, den 'Rein-Erkennenden!' Euch heisse *ich* – Lüsterne!
>
> Auch ihr liebt die Erde und das Irdische: ich errieth euch wohl! – aber Scham ist in eurer Liebe und schlechtes Gewissen, – dem Monde gleicht ihr!
>
> Zur Verachtung des Irdischen hat man euren Geist überredet, aber nicht eure Eingeweide: *die* aber sind das Stärkste an euch!
>
> Und nun schämt sich euer Geist, dass er euren Eingeweiden zu Willen ist und geht vor seiner Scham Schleich- und Lügenwege (KSA 4, 156).

As before in the *Historie*-essay, and as Rilke was to do later in poems such as 'Wendung', Nietzsche here states his belief in the superiority of an emotional

[409] Whilst in 'Der Wanderer' it was still valid ('von sich *absehn* lernen ist nöthig, um *Viel* zu sehn'; p. 194), by the time of 'Zwischen Raubvögeln', this equation has been turned on its head: 'Selbsterkenntnis', rather than self-forgetting, is now associated with cognizance *per se*, and considered lethal.

cognizance over that achieved by cold, disinterested looking, giving his violent distaste expression in highly creative and amusing terms such as 'entmanntes Schielen' or 'mit feigen Augen tasten', transporting obvious sexual connotations. In brief, anyone claiming an objective will to knowledge because of a fear of being associated with desire will only achieve less knowledge, along with the stain of dishonesty and shame. In 'Von der Keuschheit', the philosopher's alter ego asks: 'Hat sich nicht nur eure Wollust verkleidet und heisst sich Mitleiden?' (KSA 4, 70). The lesson to be learnt is obvious: sublimated drives can suffocate, as pity managed to kill even God. At the very least, they are hostile to creative processes.

Now, Rilke's response to his new, unfamiliar surroundings, the 'learning ground' of his heart where he has abandoned himself, ought to be examined:

> AUSGESETZT auf den Bergen des Herzens. Siehe, wie
> klein dort,
> siehe: die letzte Ortschaft der Worte, und höher,
> aber wie klein auch, noch ein letztes
> Gehöft von Gefühl. Erkennst du's? [...] (SW II 94)

At first, the poet attempts to apply his old technique to his new-found inner landscape: looking ('siehe'). Despite the reminder given to himself in 'Wendung' that 'Werk des Gesichts ist getan', he is seemingly still trying to grasp such abstract things as language and emotion visually. However, the poem now exactly takes as its theme how that method cannot work anymore since all the experiences he has gathered, all the pictures he has stored away within him have not fermented and developed into imagination yet. They remain foreign to him. Freud might have taken this as evidence for his theory of the resistance of pure 'remembering' to consciousness.[410]

Alternatively, 'Gesicht' can imply something altogether different from mere 'looking'. Especially in the sense of 'das zweite Gesicht', it also stands for the intuition of the visionary or prophet which is not rational, but emotional. However, this approach does not lend itself to the poem in question as Rilke quite clearly differentiates 'Werk des Gesichts' from 'Herz-Werk'; regarding the latter as secondary in chronological order, but primary in importance. Its 'Inhalt […] besteht im Verwandeln des Leids' (Görner 2004, 175); Rilke asking elsewhere: 'Heißt Herz-sein nicht Bewältigung?' (KA 2, 128). Indeed, as a consequence of the isolation resulting from Rilke's flight into an

[410] In: *Jenseits des Lustprinzips* (*Studienausgabe* III, p. 235).

emotional, inward world – which was to come to fruition in the *Elegien* in the perfection of lines such as 'Nirgends, Geliebte, wird Welt sein, als innen. Unser/ Leben geht hin mit Verwandlung' (SW I 711) – there is now the entire notion of communication to be rethought. On the mountains of the heart, only very few words can exist, and they are only barely visible. This, at last, implies Rilke's rejection of his cold, impersonal 'looking',[411] much like Nietzsche had done in *Zarathustra*, remarking in the guise of the 'Wanderer': 'Wer aber mit den Augen zudringlich ist als Erkennender, wie sollte der von allen Dingen mehr als ihre vorderen Gründe sehn!' (KSA 4, 194). The few words the voice of 'Ausgesetzt…' can still make out are of a disappearing smallness – such as that of a couple of houses lost in the vastness of a mountain-range. 'Gefühl' is now equated with 'Worte', it is '[auch] klein'. This levelling out of the two should strike one as very unusual, especially with regard to the commonplace of the heart being the exclusive domain of emotion. Admittedly, Rilke does make a quite literally small concession to this cliché by settling 'Gefühl' higher on the mountain, closer to the moral, true and silent peak. He thus expresses the belief that (silent) emotion lies deeper within the heart than (loud) speech, but it is also harder to recognise and potentially impossible to communicate. Emotion is primary to thought. It outlasts the latter, reaching further than language, as Nietzsche writes in *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft* (KSA 3, 502), once again preempting Rilke: 'Gedanken sind die Schatten unserer Empfindungen, – immer dunkler, leerer, einfacher, als diese.' Accordingly, Storck remarks on the 'Diskrepanz zwischen Ausdruck und Gefühl' which is thematised in this Rilke poem.[412] The critic even maintains that emotion itself '[bleibt zurück] vor der Höhe und Eiseskälte des Unbedingten.' This, in turn, is rather reminiscent of Nietzsche's self-appraisal in *Ecce Homo*:

> Wer die Luft meiner Schriften zu athmen weiss, weiss, dass es eine Luft der Höhe ist, eine *starke* Luft. […] Das Eis ist nahe, die Einsamkeit ist ungeheuer – aber wie ruhig alle Dinge im Lichte liegen! wie frei man athmet! wie Viel man *unter* sich fühlt! – Philosophie, wie ich sie bisher verstanden und gelebt habe, ist das freiwillige Leben in Eis und Hochgebirge – das Aufsuchen alles Fremden und Fragwürdigen im Dasein […] jeder Schritt vorwärts in der Erkenntniss folgt aus dem Muth, aus der Härte gegen sich (KSA 6, 258f.).

[411] Although Rilke had apparently unlearned this again by 1914, his reading of Nietzsche arguably had already taught him the cognitive superiority of emotion over that of the eye back in 1900, as his 'Marginalien zu Nietzsche' demonstrate: 'Wie nun die griechische Cultur durch das Auge kam, so reift die unsere am Gefühl' (SW VI 1165).

[412] This, as well as the following quotes by Storck, are from 'Poesie und Schweigen. Zum Enigmatischen in Rilkes später Lyrik', in Kunle, p. 111.

It is by now clear that Rilke knew how to breathe the air of Nietzsche's writings; after all, he was, at this point in his life, himself settling in the vicinity of that cold and silent peak of true cognition, or perhaps absolute honesty – albeit, unlike Nietzsche, not 'freiwillig',[413] but 'ausgesetzt'. To both, that ice-cold 'Unbedingte', that which is inaccessible to emotion, is equated with 'dem äußersten möglichen Ausschlagswinkel des Herzens' and thus, confusingly, with emotion itself. This, however, would imply that 'Ausgesetzt…' is exclusively a poem representing the inexpressibility of emotional intensity, when in fact it is also its two-fold opposite: a very accomplished expression of sadness and isolation triggered by one's inability to feel.[414]

Theo Meyer assesses 'diese Sprachskepsis Rilkes [als] ein Stück zumindest verdeckter Nietzsche-Rezeption' (206) – without doubt correctly, particularly given the following passage from Rilke's essay *Der Wert des Monologes* (1898):

> Aber man wird einmal aufhören müssen, >*das Wort*< zu überschätzen. Man wird einsehen lernen, daß es nur eine von vielen Brücken ist, die das Eiland unserer Seele mit dem großen Kontinent des gemeinsamen Lebens verbinden, die breiteste vielleicht, aber keineswegs die feinste (SW V 435).

However, the 'Bedienung des Bildungsklischees' of the resistance of certain experiences to the grasp of language (see Lorenz 31) indeed does nothing to dissipate the suggestion that Rilke did not exactly overestimate his own capacity for emotion. Rather, he is abandoned in the vicinity of his last resources of connection to other human beings. Further below – further down the mountains of his heart, down in the valleys which, undoubtedly, represent the less conscious, or even the un-conscious – the speaker must surely assume a wealth of 'villages', maybe even 'cities', of words and feelings. Yet, even if they should exist, he is nowhere near them any longer. He is in the middle of a deep personal crisis which is leaving clear marks (of obscurity, in his case) on his work. Still, he is attempting a contact by asking a 'Thou' whether he or she recognizes, knows, or is able to make out his last farmstead of feeling: 'Erkennst du's?' clearly mirrors 'Wendung's 'aber nun kennst du sie nicht'. He doubts whether he will ever be able to *know* what he sees because he fears that he might not hold the sufficient amount of love needed to achieve this aim. For the moment, he is captured within himself, all alone.

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[413] See KSA 6, p. 390, where the autobiographical lyrical I addresses himself as '*Selbsthenker*'; and KSA 4, p. 193: 'Ich bin ein Wanderer und ein Bergsteiger [...], es scheint, ich kann nicht lange still sitzen.'

[414] It should be noted here that Nietzsche, in contrast, and particularly in his later poetry as discussed in this section, has the opposite problem, namely, *too much* emotion – a fact disguised only thinly by *Ecce Homo*'s pre-insane grandiosity.

It is vital here to point out that the contact with the reader is not only sought explicitly, but also by means of an implicit appeal to our collective unconscious.[415] Rilke uses a language which is fractured and which sometimes chooses to grow silent out of the dark memory of a time in which all words were still available, a time which stood for the experience of totality (see Lorenz 21). Hofmannsthal's Lord Chandos, too, remembers that time when the entire being seemed to possess great unity and he felt nature in everything, and in all nature he felt himself.[416] To the Rilke of 1914, a sense of a mystical communion between everything and everyone remains elusive. He is not familiar with himself at all, he keeps asking ('Erkennst du's?') an apostrophied subject and himself, and thus, also the reader, questions. He uses deictic expressions ('siehe') to point out the remaining landmarks of his heart; he wants someone to recognize them with him, or even *for* him.

The next section of the poem emphasises Rilke's crisis as a poet. While the first section had connected language and emotion with a dialogical structure, there now is a slight thematic shift towards knowledge, or cognition, which has been prepared for by the question 'Erkennst du's?', which immediately precedes this part:

> Ausgesetzt auf den Bergen des Herzens. Steingrund
> unter den Händen. Hier blüht wohl
> einiges auf; aus stummem Absturz
> blüht ein unwissendes Kraut singend hervor.
> Aber der Wissende? Ach, der zu wissen begann
> und schweigt nun, ausgesetzt auf den Bergen des Herzens.

'Aussetzen' has more meanings than merely 'to abandon', and in the sentence-fragment 'ausgesetzt auf den Bergen des Herzens' framing this verse it is precisely the *silence*, or rather, the absence, of both a syntactical subject and a 'non-perfected' verb, which, in a

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[415] It is of little importance here whether the 'Du' is actually intended to be the reader, or Rilke, or somebody else; because the reader will respond to an appealing 'Du', anyway. In contrast, the 'Du' in Nietzsche's poetry unambigiously replaces the first person pronoun: more often than not, the poet-philosopher addresses himself.

[416] With regard to the 'Chandos-Brief' and a letter written by Rilke to Salomé, Ferenc Szász sweepingly maintains, obviously unaware of Nietzsche's actual, painful loneliness behind his mask of superhuman strength and holy 'Einsiedlertum': 'Beide [Hofmannsthal und Rilke] sind durch die Schule Nietzsches gegangen, können aber mit seinen Ideen nichts anfangen [...]. Das Fehlen des Identitätsbewußtseins macht ihnen die Einsamkeit (im Gegensatz zu Nietzsche) zu einer zwar unvermeidbaren, aber doch schmerzhaften Empfindung' ('Nur ein Brief? Rainer Maria Rilkes Brief an Lou Andreas-Salomé vom 25. Juli 1903', in: Schweikert and Schmidt 1999, pp. 329-349; here: p. 343).

On a different note, Rilke expresses his belief in the 'Unspeakable behind all languages' most unmistakably in a poem for Witold Hulewicz (SW III 259), in which he also emphasizes the existence of 'ein heiter Gemeinsames', independent of modes of speech, to all human beings. Otto Lorenz observes (p. 138) that such poems have to have 'einen über sich hinausweisenden und selbstzerstörerischen Gestus.'

truly dialogical fashion, leaves room for an alternative choice. In this case, the context almost unmistakably suggests that of 'to come to a halt'.[417] The now resulting notion of unproductiveness is intensified by the 'stony ground' at the end of the same line, which suggests infertility. Like Nietzsche does in 'Vom Nutzen und Nachtheil der Historie', here, the poet contrasts dead intellectual knowledge with fertile emotionally integrated knowledge. Furthermore, since the first line of this second section is almost entirely a repetition of the first line of the poem, it is legitimate to draw a comparison between the two words that differ; especially since they are linked by alliteration. We have already seen how Rilke has renounced any attempt to grasp the abstract and the invisible (words and emotion) visibly. The equation of 'Siehe' with 'Steingrund' now again clearly denies the former's productivity.

If, indeed, it is not only the lyrical I of this poem (which displays autobiographical features, anyway) who has been abandoned, one wonders who, or what, else has (been) 'ausgesetzt'. Firstly, a process of (emotional) cognition, which implies him getting to know his feelings in the case of this poem, has come to a halt: 'Ach, der zu wissen begann/ und schweigt nun, ausgesetzt [...]'. It seems as if that process has not simply come, but ground to a halt on this dead, stony ground. 'Hier blüht wohl einiges auf' does not necessarily contradict this deadness, especially if the word 'auf' is taken into account sufficiently. The ground itself on the mountains of the heart is, doubtless, infertile. The valley below, however, takes whatever has silently fallen down into its soil, which is so rich that the now singing, blooming herb grows all the way to reach the mountain's peak.[418]

Like *Zarathustra*'s 'Wanderer', 'Der Wissende' seems like a mountain climber – after all, he has 'Steingrund unter den Händen'. And like the 'Selbsthenker' 'Zwischen Raubvögeln', a fellow 'Wissender' who is 'in eignen Stricken gewürgt' (KSA 6, 390), he has been silenced by his very own knowledge in the thin air of increasing mental instability. He is still a stranger up there ('Hier blüht *wohl*/ einiges auf'; my emphasis) who, unlike 'ein unwissendes Kraut', does not sing anymore. He cannot see things the old way any longer, and this makes one wonder along with Rilke's *Malte* whether it is possible 'alles anders zu sehen und doch zu leben.' Malte is afraid of change; like the mountain climber in 'Ausgesetzt...', he would gladly prefer the animal's experience of a 'verwandte Welt' to the constant 'Verwandlung' of a world without names:

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[417] I chose this particular meaning (over either 'to take a break' or 'to break') because it leaves room for the connotations of both 'Freiwilligkeit' and 'Fremdeinwirken', simultaneously.

[418] At this point, one is reminded of Nietzsche's 'Wille zur Zeugung' inherent in his cognizance, rendering it innocent.

> Aber ich fürchte mich, ich fürchte mich namenlos vor dieser Veränderung. Ich bin ja noch gar nicht in dieser Welt eingewöhnt gewesen, die mir gut scheint. Was soll ich in einer anderen? Ich würde so gerne unter den Bedeutungen bleiben, die mir lieb geworden sind, und wenn schon etwas sich verändern muß, so möchte ich doch wenigstens unter den Hunden leben dürfen, die eine verwandte Welt haben und dieselben Dinge (SW VI 755f.).

Possibly both have climbed too high, too far away from that unconscious ('unwissend'), fertile totality of everything down below, there where song is being. The chances of survival are, after all, rather slim for someone who has been abandoned high up on a barren mountain range.

Two contributing factors to the birth of the poem, and indeed of this verse in particular, are by now obvious. Firstly, it is reminiscent of the 'self-flagellation' of the intellectual as well as of the disgust with 'Bildung' which emanates from much of Nietzsche's writing. To the philosopher thinking in 1873, the overly proud European of the nineteenth century is mad, for '[s]eine Art zu gehen [ist] nämlich als Wissender zu klettern.' Having lost touch with both nature and his instincts, 'der Wissende' is always in danger of slipping, for his 'Erkenntnis' is not a support, but 'nur noch Spinnefäden' (all KSA 1, 313). The biblical loss of innocence (before Nietzsche's revaluation of cognizance as innocent in *Zarathustra*) as discussed in section 3.2.4 springs to mind here, and indeed, a deep fall seems inevitable in the light of the duality to be felt in Nietzsche's consideration and, due to a direct influence perhaps, in this poem. This, in turn, mirrors both Nietzsche and Freud's analogous perception of the unsuitability of the traditional reasoning in binary oppositions.[419]

The fragmented self of the, according to Lou Andreas-Salomé, tendentially schizoid Rilke is another obvious analogy, as is his creative crisis at the time of the birth of this poem. According to Salomé, this probably would have been evidence of a lack of (self-) love to Rilke, without which he could not attain knowledge.[420] And indeed, his 'conception of a division in consciousness [between the feeling man and the introspective observer] resembles the psychoanalytic notion of splitting the ego' (Kleinbard 43). The sharp contrast between the state of mind Rilke aspires to and that which he actually inhabits is shown in the last part of the poem, which is also the hardest to grasp:

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[419] My translation of 'Unangemessenheit des traditionellen Gegensatzdenkens', in: Gasser, p. 706.
[420] In modern man, 'who had renounced his own basis in what she called the primal ground of life or, later, narcissism', Salomé located lack, envy, and need (for woman). See: Martin, p. 5.

Da geht wohl, heilen Bewußtseins,
manches umher, manches gesicherte Bergtier,
wechselt und weilt. Und der große geborgene Vogel
kreist um der Gipfel reine Verweigerung. – Aber
ungeborgen, hier auf den Bergen des Herzens . . . .

The speaker obviously envies the mountain animal for its secure sense of 'Dauer im Wechsel'[421] ('wechselt und weilt'). This corresponds directly to a passage of the eighth, also called the silent,[422] *Duineser Elegie*, which presents, in the image of the animal, 'vivid equivalents of genuinely human possibilities' (Lorenz 152):

Wäre Bewußtheit unsrer Art in dem
sicheren Tier, das uns entgegenzieht
in anderer Richtung –, riß es uns herum
mit seinem Wandel. Doch sein Sein ist ihm
unendlich, ungefaßt und ohne Blick
auf seinen Zustand, rein, so wie ein Ausblick.

Und wo wir Zukunft sehn, dort sieht es Alles
und sich in Allem und geheilt für immer (SW I 715).

Especially in the light of this passage, the poem has now moved from an individual's crisis to a lamenting of the human condition in general. The lines in 'Ausgesetzt...' describing the 'Bergtier' are separated visually effectively from the final statement of resignation concerning the fate of the human being by a dash. Whereas the animal is 'heilen Bewußtseins', 'geheilt für immer', we have no 'Ausblick', because or view on 'Alles', on the totality produced by the unity of life and death, is blocked by our 'Reizschutz Bewußtsein'[423]. The animal, however, cannot turn us around with him towards a healthier, a saner approach to life precisely because it lacks 'Bewußtsein unsrer Art'. We can merely try to follow its direction by watching it, and learning from it. Once more, a decidedly Nietzschean presence would seem to be pervading Rilke's thought here: in 'Vom Nutzen und Nachtheil der Historie für das Leben', the artist-philosopher equates both action and happiness (and, in consequence, silence) with the opposite of 'Wissen', or consciousness, namely, the (animal's) ability to forget:

[421] I assume the reader to be familiar with Goethe's poem of the same name.
[422] Lorenz (p. 140) points out Rilke's unpublished note on an envelope in which he calls the sixth, later to become the eighth, *Elegie* 'die stille'.
[423] Freud, *Jenseits des Lustprinzips,* in: SA III, p. 237.

> Der Mensch fragt wohl einmal das Thier: warum redest du mir nicht von deinem Glücke und siehst mich nur an? Das Thier will auch antworten und sagen, das kommt daher dass ich immer gleich vergesse, was ich sagen wollte – da vergass es aber auch schon diese Antwort und schwieg.[424]

This takes us and Rilke back to the original dilemma. Forced to abandon, to silence our longing for wholeness and unity with nature, we remain outsiders of life, condemned to 'look', to be its spectators: '– Aber/ ungeborgen, hier auf den Bergen des Herzens . . . .'. The poem runs out into silence. This, of course, literally points, once more, to 'das Unsägliche [...] hinter allen Sprachen'[425], but also to Rilke's resignation concerning the possibility of a true communion with another human being. He is 'ungeborgen', which implies his not having been found.[426] He realizes that now he has not been recognized by an Other, there is no need for language any longer.

Lastly, a glance at his biography will serve once more to shed some light on Rilke's psychological isolation. In a letter to Magda von Hattingberg written in the same year as 'Ausgesetzt...', 'he complained that his father's concern for him had taken the destructive form of "speechless anxiety", against which Rainer had found it almost impossible to defend himself' (Kleinbard 132). Rilke had already observed in himself his father's emotional sterility, and now it becomes evident why silence and a lack of love are connected so inextricably in this poem. His father's death had not relieved the burden, now Rilke's likeness to him became even more compulsive. 'The self, like the poem, is a place of ambivalence where meanings are not given but must be made; the self, like the poem, reflects what is around it and yet must always be fashioned', Jonathan Hufstader explains his idea of poetry as self-fashioning.[427] The ruptures in this poem reflect all too much what was around the poet by whom, tragically, a truly whole sense of self, as part of a natural totality, was never attained. It was attained only *for* him; in the unconscious silence of his own death. 'Wechsel' corresponds to our earthly life, and – despite the necessity 'Stabiles in der Zeit zu finden und die eigene Identität in ihrem Einfluß zu bestimmen'[428] he felt so urgently – Rilke never experienced any feeling of endurance in it. Thus 'Dauer' must mean death, as Lou Andreas-Salomé wrote to Sigmund Freud in 1927:

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[424] KSA 1, p. 248. See also p. 250: '[es ist] immer Eines, wodurch Glück zum Glücke wird: das Vergessen-können'; and: 'Zu allem Handeln gehört Vergessen'.
[425] From 'Für Witold Hulewicz', in: SW II, p. 259.
[426] See Kleinbard's (p. 54) discussion on Winnicott, who comments that artists often experience both 'the urgent need to communicate and the still more urgent need not to be found.'
[427] Jonathan Hufstader, *Tongue of Water, Teeth of Stone. Northern Irish Poetry and Social Violence*, Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1999, p. 20.
[428] Görner, in: Storck (1986), p. 164.

> Im Moment, wo Rainer dem fließenden Wandel und Wechsel seiner Existenz enthoben war, bekam er eine geschlossene Umrißlinie, seine eigenste Wesenstotalität hob sich, in der innern Beschäftigung mit ihm, heraus [...]. Nein, man schwätzt es sich nicht ins Klare. Aber in mir steckte unbedingt ein Verlangen, seit Rainer's (sic) Tod, Ihnen *davon* zu sagen.[429]

[429] Salomé / Freud, *Briefwechsel*, p. 182f.

CONCLUSION

Once again, Nietzsche proves a gifted prophet by calling himself 'postum'.[430] Although very much a product of his time, he was not understood by the majority of his contemporaries. Indeed, it took a poet thirty-one years his junior – and one of his 'Nachfolgern bei Lou' (KSB 6, 414) – to give the answer he had longed for all his life – in vain. Even in *Ecce Homo*, he still wrote:

> Immer noch vorausgesetzt, dass es Ohren giebt – dass es Solche giebt, die eines gleichen Pathos fähig und würdig sind, dass die nicht fehlen, denen man sich mittheilen *darf*. Mein Zarathustra zum Beispiel sucht einstweilen noch nach Solchen – ach! Er wird noch lange zu suchen haben! (KSA 6, 304).

In the same part of this book, Nietzsche muses coquettishly (and perhaps also already slightly derangedly), contemplating the '*Originalität* meiner Erfahrung': 'Zuletzt kann Niemand aus den Dingen, die Bücher eingerechnet, mehr heraushören, als er bereits weiss' (300). This is echoed in Rilke's draft poem 'Aus einer Sturmnacht', written in his *Zarathustra*-year 1901:

> In solchen Nächten steht in der Bibel nichts.
> Als wäre allen, die drinnen gelesen,
> immer nur *eines* gegeben gewesen:
> das Bild ihres suchenden Angesichts (SW III 728).

To the voice in the poem, to whom God is merely 'ausgedacht', it seems as though the Book of all books remains hard, cold and impenetrable to each of its readers, like a mirror: all they see is their own, individual faces, each questing for an individual answer the book is not able to give if that answer is not already present within themselves, that is, if they do not believe.[431]

Both writers claim, Nietzsche (as so often) more absolutely so than Rilke, that what the reader has not felt before, he will not be able to understand rationally. Particularly to the philosopher, the language in which such experience is retold will mean nothing to the reader; he will literally remain deaf to what Zarathustra has to say. In his embracing of such Nietzschean pathos, which is of course Greek for suffering or passion, Rilke

[430] KSA 3, p. 613. See also Theo Meyer, p. 162: 'In der Tat wird Nietzsche [after his death, KB] immer mehr zum Propheten der neuen Generation. Bis in die zwanziger Jahre huldigt man [...] dem "Propheten" Nietzsche.'

[431] Rilke's criticism of institutionalized religion is of course at the heart of this draft poem. For further discussion of the topic, see my arcticle 'Bibel' in the *Rilke-Handbuch*, pp. 37-43.

was deeply related to Nietzsche; and thought and feeling, as I have argued in this study, were closely related concepts to both men. Thus, and since in 1901 he still believed in Nietzsche, as it were, as in a better version of Jesus Christ, the poet was surely capable of truly hearing Zarathustra, at least in parts.

However, other parts of Nietzsche's experience may in truth have been alien particularly to the young Rilke, in which case he would have belonged to the kind of audience of whom Nietzsche disdainfully writes: 'Wer Etwas von mir verstanden zu haben glaubte, hat sich Etwas aus mir zurechtgemacht, nach seinem Bilde' (KSA 6, 300), merely perceiving his own face in the mirror *Zarathustra*. Both are imaginable scenarios in which, in his poetic work, Rilke might have taken Nietzsche's cue; but despite the continuity of his reception of the anti-philosopher argued for in this study, he only was to truly enrich it, and thereby transform it with the advent of the Great War irrevocably separating his time from Nietzsche's. Now, after his personal and poetological 'Wendung' toward the 'Herz-Werk' in 1914 and his 'Verzicht auf die romantisch-pantheistische Verschwommenheit seines Werks vor der Duineser Krise' (Kohlschmidt 96), at last, he was no longer content 'Bilder zu finden für meine Verwandlungen' (SW III 699); like Zarathustra, in order to achieve true beauty he was prepared 'unter[zu]gehn […], dass ein Bild nicht nur Bild bleibe' (KSA 4, 157).

During the high point of his reception of the philosopher around the *fin de siècle*, Rilke was most obviously interested in the religious aspects of his thought. Soon after, however, Nietzsche was important to him foremost in his capacity as a poet, a 'Sprachkünstler': he explicitly understood the philosopher 'aber nur als Dichter […], als Verwandler, nicht als Festsetzer und Gesetzgeber.'[432] In no other work was this linguistic artistry, this masterful sublimation of suffering into art, more evident than in the book of which Rilke, tellingly, owned two copies. However, the price the artist-philosopher had to pay for it may have been too high: 'Nietzsches Wandlung vom Freigeist zum Verkünder und Erleider des Gedankens der ewigen Wiederkehr [vollzog] sich in jenen Jahren', thus Pfeiffer assesses the time of alienation from Rée and Salomé (1970, 522); while Frenzel maintains in the context of the philosopher lavishly lauding himself in his letter to Rohde from February 1884, in which he compares himself to both Luther and Goethe: 'Mit *Zarathustra* beginnt Nietzsches Selbstapotheose, verzweifelter Ausweg eines an der Welt gescheiterten Lebens' (121). In the end, the 'Dichter' and 'Verwandler' turned into 'den Verwandelten' claimed by his own cognizance, 'den Dichter und Zauberer, der gegen sich selber endlich seinen Geist

[432] From a letter written by Rilke to Ellen Key on 14 February 1904, in: B 92-04, p. 238.

wendet, den Verwandelten, der an seinem bösen Wissen und Gewissen erfriert' (KSA 4, 318); while Rilke never seemed to want a way out from his beloved earth, which he was determined to transformatively praise and affirm even – or rather, particularly – 'dereinst', in the face of death or in the moment of greatest despair, 'an dem Ausgang der grimmigen/ Einsicht' (SW I 721):

> Erde, ist es nicht dies, was du willst: *unsichtbar*
> in uns erstehen? – Ist es dein Traum nicht,
> einmal unsichtbar zu sein? – Erde! unsichtbar!
> Was, wenn Verwandlung nicht, ist dein drängender
> Auftrag?
> Erde, du liebe, ich will. […] (720)

It is evident by now that 'Verwandlung', both as the central aspect of the creative process as well as in the demand for constant 'Selbst-Ueberwindung' (KSA 4, 148), is the most essential Nietzschean idea shared by Rilke. Both men possessed, or were possessed by, a spiritual, 'fragelose Hingabe' and, in their joint capacity as 'Verwandler von Schmerz und Leid', were driven by it to the last consequence: Ernst Bertram's verdict on Nietzsche ('Krankheit und ihre Bejahung ist für [...ihn] ein Stachel hinauf, und Angelhaken der Erkenntnis', 152) could also be applied to Rilke, whose last notebook entry made in mid-December 1926, within a fortnight of his death, reads: 'Komm du, du letzter, den ich anerkenne,/ heilloser Schmerz im leiblichen Geweb' (SW II 511). Once more, however, the human being behind the great artist is testimony to his sacrifice. In his last letter to Lou Andreas-Salomé about 'den Schmerz, den physischen, den wirklich grossen' written at the same time as his last verses quoted above, Rilke lays open the full extent of his desperation: 'Er deckt mich zu. Er löst mich ab. Tag und Nacht! Woher den Mut nehmen? [...] Aber. Die Höllen' (BW LAS 484). This discrepancy mirrors the split tearing Nietzsche from his alter ego: Zarathustra's warning that 'die Dichter zuviel lügen' (KSA 4, 163) indeed applies to Nietzsche, who wrote in the winter of 1882/1883 while creating Zarathustra, a figure who defiantly calls 'da capo!' to life, 'Ich will das Leben nicht *wieder*. Wie habe ich's ertragen? Schaffend. Was macht mich den Anblick aushalten? der Blick auf den Übermenschen, der das Leben *bejaht*. Ich habe versucht, es *selber* zu bejahen – Ach!' (KSA 10, 137).

In the context of such inhuman hardness displayed by both philosopher and poet, Heller asks 'warum sie diese ungeheure Fron des Gedankens und Gefühls auf sich nahmen und das "Herzwerk", wie Rilke es nannte, zu leisten entschlossen waren',

immediately solving the riddle: 'Die Antwort wurde von Nietzsche gegeben: weil Gott tot ist' (1975, 104). Around the time of *Zarathustra*, his creator noted: 'Wer das Grosse nicht mehr in Gott findet, findet es überhaupt nicht mehr – er muss es leugnen oder schaffen' (105); and soon, defining suffering as the purest form of 'Verwandlung', he had devised of a way how: 'Ideal bilden, d. h. seinen Teufel zu *seinem* Gotte *umschaffen*. Und *dazu* muß man erst seinen Teufel geschaffen haben' (KSA 10, 26). Indeed – although his method, typically, is rather more radical than Rilke's, who always assumed for his demons and angels to co-exist within himself – Nietzsche-Zarathustra's demand of himself to ascend 'auf deinen eigenen Kopf und hinweg über dein eigenes Herz!' in 'Der Wanderer' (KSA 4, 194) is mirrored by the demand made by the heart in 'Ausgesetzt auf den Bergen des Herzens': 'Das Ich soll identisch sein mit dem Zustand seiner Selbstentfremdung' (Görner 2004, 176).

Thus, 'Rilke ist der Dichter einer Welt, deren Philosoph Nietzsche ist', as Heller further writes (1992, 173), arguing that they were both driven to create that world as a substitute for the now useless one once made by God. The difference in their approaches, however, is the fact that Nietzsche, the philosopher, believed in illusions much more than in the notion of 'truth' ('Die "scheinbare" Welt ist die Einzige: Die "wahre Welt" ist nur *hinzugelogen*…'; KSA 6, 75); whilst Rilke, the poet, ultimately believed to be a medium for the spirit of truth, and thus, able to render the world's transience transcendent.

Indeed, as Gerok-Reiter writes with regard to the *Sonette an Orpheus*,

> [d]ie Bewegung als Vergehen, durch den wendenden Punkt ins Bewußtsein gehoben, wird so zur Bedingung der Möglichkeit der Vollzähligkeit. Gerade wir als die 'Treibenden/ gelten bei bleibenden/ Kräften als göttlicher Brauch' (II/27). Das 'Gespenst des Vergänglichen' verliert dadurch seine Macht. Die Vergänglichkeit wird umgekehrt Anlaß des Preisens. Von ihr her wird die Verwandlung der Dinge gedacht (1996, 260).

She calls their 'Verwandlung des Sichtbaren ins Unsichtbare' (262), which essentially renders things transparent with regard to their transience, Rilke's 'erlösende Leistung im Spätwerk', assessing it as radically new as opposed to the early and middle phases – a statement already made by Bollnow in 1951.[433] To Gerok-Reiter, the difference of the

[433] 'Ja auch das Tödliche und das Schreckliche wird vom Dichter als etwas zu Bejahendes erkannt, und eben indem er ihm nicht mehr zu entfliehen versucht, und sich ihm rühmend überläßt, geschieht der Umschlag, der es dem Menschen erlaubt, inmitten des Drohenden zu bestehen', in: *Rilke* (Stuttgart 1951), pp. 197f..

In fact, what Gerok-Reiter terms the 'radical novelty' in Rilke's late work had long been present in Nietzsche. In a fragment intended for *Der Wille zur Macht*, the philosopher calls 'das Wesentliche an der

Sonette to, say, the 'Ding-Gedichte' is both poetological and stylistic, catapulting the Rilkean œuvre into new dimensions of quality. What is considered the achievement of Rilke's late works, such as the *Elegien* and *Sonette*, here is actually nothing less than the compensation of the loss of truly human possibilities effected by the death of God by means of an embracing of transience.

Evocative of Nietzsche's definition of 'der *Ewige-Wiederkunfts-Gedanke*, diese höchste Form der Bejahung', as the 'Grundconception' of *Zarathustra* (KSA 6, 335), Rilke himself had attested the quality of 'endgültige *Bejahung*' – along with the rejection of a split between the here and the beyond – to his mature œuvre, or, more specifically, to the *Elegien*, in an important letter to Witold Hulewicz from 13 November 1925. However, he does not seem to see a major break between the essential conditions created in the *Stunden-Buch* and the *Neue Gedichte* and the praise of totality thus achieved in the late phase; rather, he sees the *Elegien* as a mere 'weitere Ausgestaltung' of those preconditions. Thereby, he testifies to the continuity of his œuvre a year before his death in what reads like his poetological testament:[434]

> Ich halte sie [die Elegien] für eine weitere Ausgestaltung jener wesentlichen Voraussetzungen, die schon im 'Stundenbuch' gegeben waren, die sich, in den beiden Teilen der 'Neuen Gedichte', des Welt-Bilds spielend und versuchend bedienen und die dann im Malte, konflikthaft zusammengezogen, ins Leben zurückschlagen und dort beinah zum Beweis führen, daß dieses so ins Bodenlose gehängte Leben unmöglich sei. In den 'Elegien' wird [...] das Leben wieder möglich, ja es erfährt hier diejenige endgültige *Bejahung* [...]: *es gibt weder ein Diesseits noch Jenseits, sondern die große Einheit* (B II 374f.).

As Heller writes, 'Die aufschlussreichste Stelle dieses vielzitierten Briefes aber enthält das Geständnis, daß [...] Maltes Lebensekel und die Rühmung der Neunten Elegie [...]

Kunst […] ihre Daseins-*Vollendung*, ihre Hervorbringung der Vollkommenheit und Fülle [sic] Kunst ist wesentlich *Bejahung, Segnung, Vergöttlichung des Daseins...*' (KSA 13, 241). This theory had already been put into practice in his *Zarathustra*, in the concepts of *amor fati* and the *Übermensch*; for, what really caused human suffering in the context of the death of God was 'der Verlust des sinngebenden Ganzen', along with the resulting impossibility 'zu lieben und sich hinzugeben für etwas, was größer ist als [man] selbst und seine selbstentworfenen Ziele' (Schmitz 1970, 64). Both could be remedied by the Nietzschean idea of man as a mere 'Übergang' towards the *Übermensch*, along with a loving acceptance of our human fate, which is 'Untergang'. As we have seen, that very concept is mirrored in Rilke's image of being ahead of all good-byes. In praising the spectre of transience, the poet made it real and thereby robbed it of its power. As shown in chapter 3.1, Köhler has observed much the same in Nietzsche, who has Zarathustra actively confront, and thereby acknowledge, his demon in 'Von Gesicht und Räthsel', early on in Book III (1992, 531).

[434] Rilke himself excludes his *Malte* from this line of continuous development, as that book very nearly proved the impossibility of a life hung over the bottomless abyss. Bollnow, as paraphrased by Perlwitz, would seem to agree, assessing the poet's development thus: 'Aus dem Dichter der existentiellen Not wird der Hauptvertreter einer neuen ontologischen Zufriedenheit, die trotz allen Elends Bestand hat' (in RHB, p. 157).

derselben Quelle [entspringen]' (1992, 171). Given both the openly acknowledged strong presence of Nietzsche in the *Stunden-Buch* and the *Zarathustra* findings documented here, this poetological self-assessment clearly implies the anti-philosopher's contribution to that source and his share in those essential conditions, as well as the continuity of Nietzsche's 'unterirdischem Einfluß' on Rilke's work. As Görner observes, 'Rilkes Lebenszeugnisse, sein ganzes Werk konfrontiert uns mit etwas, das wir verlernt haben: das Bejahen des Daseins [...], in dem sich bruchlos Nietzsches "Ja zur Erde" fortsetzt' (2004, 301).

Nietzsche himself defines the workings of 'der Geist' as 'ein plötzlich herausbrechender Entschluss zur Unwissenheit, zur willkürlichen Abschließung, ein Zumachen [von] Fenstern'.[435] In that sense, and with a field as vast as the one in hand, this conclusion cannot, nor does it aim to, result in closure – 'das Thema Nietzsche hat kein Ende',[436] after all, nor has the engagement with Rilke's work. Rather than a 'Schlussstein [m]einer Erkenntnis' (KSA 1, 313) reminiscent of the last slab of marble closing a tomb forever, it ought to be a point of departure inviting further engagement with the subject by leaving gaps through which the ghostly presence of Nietzsche in the works of Rilke can continue to escape and inspire. Those gaps are of course most evident in the fact that a selection of material had to be made: some of the *Zarathustra* passages marked by Rilke have not yet been taken fully into account, and there certainly are, in turn, pieces of 'evidence' for Rilke's Nietzsche reception in the poet's œuvre which have not been considered here, either.[437] This selectivity was guided by the natural gravitation towards the topics which, in summary, clearly preoccupied both men the most urgently, in an effort to better outline that elusive spectre that is the artist-philosopher's spirit in, or influence on, 'the most philosophic of poets'.[438]

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[435] In *Jenseits von Gut und Böse* (KSA 5, p. 167).

[436] Heinz Friedrich (ed.), *Im Namen des Dionysos. Friedrich Nietzsche, Philosophie als Kunst*, Waakirchen: Oreos, 1995, p. 10.

[437] Other *Zarathustra* topics found to be echoed in Rilke (such as childhood, the city and its market place, the prophet-artist) have to remain open for future analysis. The child, for example, as the ideal image of the original destroyer-creator, is made by the lovers as something more than the sum of their parts. It is not enough to want to create; they must want to create a creator. Also, particularly in the image of the 'gebrannten Wassern' and 'gefrorenen Geistern', Zarathustra's 'grosse Stadt' is strikingly reminiscent of the 'Leidstadt' in Rilke's *Zehnte Duineser Elegie* and its bitter beer called 'Todlos'. That elegy, 'eine poetisch-metaphorische Form von Kapitalismus-Kritik' (Storck, in: BlRG 4, 1976, p. 46), could equally incorporate the fool's advice in this chapter: 'Speie auf diese Stadt der Krämer und kehre um!' As the parallels between *Zarathustra* and the *Elegien* have been the subject of comparatively numerous scholarly efforts, this study's focus has mainly been on the production from Rilke's middle years; while the Z.2 chapters marked by Rilke not discussed here are the subject of a separate essay.

[438] See again Keith M. May (1988), p. 48.

APPENDIX

Salomé's *Zarathustra* copy: Z.1

1. Beginning with the first of the fragments, Z.1.1, the following passage in 'Von den Hinterweltlern' on page 39 (KSA 4, 36-37) was circled with a pencil:

> Einen neuen Stolz lehrte mich mein Ich, den lehre ich die Menschen: nicht mehr den Kopf in den Sand der himmlischen Dinge zu stecken, sondern frei ihn zu tragen, einen Erden-Kopf, der der Erde Sinn schafft!
>
> Einen neuen Willen lehre ich die Menschen: diesen Weg <u>wollen</u> [Unterstreichung RMR oder LAS], den blindlings der Mensch gegangen, und gut ihn heissen und nicht mehr von ihm bei Seite schleichen, gleich den Kranken und Absterbenden!

2. In the next chapter, 'Von den Verächtern des Leibes', as well as the chapter heading, two sentences were underlined on pages 43 (KSA 4, 39) and 44 (KSA 4, 40), respectively: 'Werk- und Spielzeuge sind Sinn und Geist: hinter ihnen liegt noch das Selbst', and: 'Der schaffende Leib schuf sich den Geist als eine Hand seines Willens.'

   Salomé quotes in her book: 'Werk- und Spielzeuge sind Sinn und Geist!' (LAS 2000, 194).

3. The following chapter, 'Von den Freuden- und Leidenschaften', contains the longest handwritten comment found in either of the two *Zarathustra* copies from Rilke's estate. On pages 46 and 47 (KSA 4, 43), the following part-sentences were underlined: 'Und nichts Böses wächst mehr fürderhin aus dir, <u>es sei denn das Böse, das aus dem Kampfe deiner Tugenden wächst.</u>', and 'Wen die Flamme der Eifersucht umringt, der wendet zuletzt, <u>gleich dem Scorpione, gegen sich selber den vergifteten Stachel.</u>' Judging from the vocabulary, it was more likely Salomé than Rilke who commented in pencil in the left margin below: 'Seine Triebe standen nicht gegeneinander sondern seine Talente und Tugenden'; and on the right: 'Auch unter den Tugenden kann es also jene Anarchie/ geben, von der er früher im Bezug auf die losgelassenen/ Triebe sagte, daß alle sich gegen alle wenden. Und auch/ hier hilft nur das Ziel, in dem man sich aufgibt,/ indem man sich ihm ganz hingibt. (Der Übermensch)'.

   A relatively long passage in Salomé's book corresponds to that comment to such a degree that one ought to deduce she, and not Rilke, wrote that comment in the first

place, and that Z.1 was indeed most likely her working copy: ‘Die Lebendigkeit und der Machtwillen jedes einzelnen Talentes und Geistestriebs führen nothwendig zu einer nie beschwichtigten Nebenbuhlerschaft aller Talente’, it reads (49); and ‘in der Erkenntnis ist ein allen Trieben gemeinsames Ziel gegeben, eine Richtung, der ein jeder von ihnen insofern zustrebt, als sie alle das Nämliche erobern wollen’ (LAS 56).

4. In ‘Vom Lesen und Schreiben’, the reader pencilled the following comment in brackets onto page 53 (KSA 4, 49), after Nietzsche’s sentence ‘Es ist wahr: wir lieben das Leben, nicht, weil wir an’s Leben, sondern weil wir an’s Lieben gewöhnt sind’: ‘(d. h. an’s Schaffen = wollen u. Zeugen)’.[439]

   Furthermore, Salomé or Rilke marked the following passage on page 54 (KSA 4, 49-50): ‘Ich habe gehen gelernt: seitdem lasse ich mich laufen. Ich habe fliegen gelernt: seitdem will ich nicht erst gestossen sein, um von der Stelle zu kommen.’

   In *Friedrich Nietzsche in seinen Werken*, Salomé quotes correspondingly: ‘Ich habe gehen gelernt: seitdem lasse ich mich laufen!’, in the context of the second transformation of Nietzsche’s philosophy into its third phase, as ‘stillen Seitenweg [, auf dem] er sich [weg vom positivistischen “Réealismus”] wieder dorthin zurückschleichen würde, – wo die Götter und die Uebermenschen [sic] hausen’ (LAS 170).
5. On page 86 (KSA 4, 78) the following sentence is partially underlined in ‘Von der Nächstenliebe’: ‘Und wie ihm die Welt auseinander rollte, so rollt sie ihm wieder in Ringen zusammen, <u>als das Werden des Guten durch das Böse</u>, als das Werden der Zwecke aus dem Zufalle.’
6. In the next chapter, ‘Vom Wege des Schaffenden’, the sentence ‘Es giebt Manchen, der seinen letzten Werth wegwarf, als er seine Dienstbarkeit wegwarf’ was underlined on page 88 (KSA 4, 81).
7. In ‘Von Kind und Ehe’, ‘<u>Eure Liebe zum Weibe und des Weibes Liebe zum Manne: ach, möchte sie doch Mitleiden sein mit leidenden und verhüllten Göttern!</u>’ was underlined on page 101 (KSA 4, 91).
8. The concluding chapter of Book I, ‘Von der schenkenden Tugend’, was marked heavily, with three passages circled, one underlined and one marked in the margin

[439] Nietzsche himself likely would have disagreed with that comment, as he wrote in *Morgenröthe*: ‘wir haben zu allem wesentlichen Vollbringen kein anderes Verhältniss, als das der Schwangerschaft und sollten das anmaassliche Reden von “Wollen” und “Schaffen” in den Wind blasen!’ (KSA 3, 322); whilst an earlier version from the summer of 1882 found in his estate modifies his own claim from *Zarathustra*: ‘Wir lieben das Leben, nicht weil wir leben, sondern weil wir an’s Leben gewöhnt sind’ (KSA 10, 57).

with a short handwritten note. The three circled ones are in the second part of the chapter, on pages 110-111 (KSA 4, 100-101):

> [...] Geist wie Tugend. Ach, in unserm Leibe wohnt jetzt noch all dieser Wahn und Fehlgriff: Leib und Wille ist er da geworden.
>
> Hundertfältig versuchte und verirrte sich bisher so Geist wie Tugend. Ja, ein Versuch war der Mensch. Ach, viel Unwissen und Irrthum ist an uns Leib geworden!
>
> Nicht nur die Vernunft von Jahrtausenden — auch ihr Wahnsinn bricht an uns aus. Gefährlich ist es, Erbe zu sein.
>
> Noch kämpfen wir Schritt um Schritt mit dem Riesen Zufall, und über der ganzen Menschheit waltete bisher noch der Unsinn, der Ohne-Sinn.
>
> Tausend Pfade giebt es, die nie noch gegangen sind; tausend Gesundheiten und verborgene Eilande des Lebens. Unerschöpft und unentdeckt ist immer noch Mensch und Menschen-Erde.
>
> Ihr Einsamen von heute, ihr Ausscheidenden, ihr sollt einst ein Volk sein: aus euch, die ihr euch selber auswähltet, soll ein auserwähltes Volk erwachsen: — und aus ihm der Übermensch.

In the chapter's third part, on page 111 (KSA 4, 101), the following sentence was partially underlined: 'Wahrlich, ich rathe euch: geht fort von mir und wehrt euch gegen Zarathustra! Und besser noch: <u>schämt euch seiner! Vielleicht betrog er euch.</u>' Lastly, Salomé (or Rilke) marked those two passages in the margin: 'Ihr verehrt mich; aber wie, wenn eure Verehrung eines Tages umfällt? Hütet euch, dass euch nicht eine Bildsäule erschlage!'; and 'Nun heisse ich euch, mich verlieren und euch finden; und erst, wenn ihr mich Alle verleugnet habt [with the handwritten comment in the margin: 'indem ihr <u>Euch</u> fandet'], will ich euch wiederkehren.'

Salomé quotes both of those passages word for word; except setting *Vielleicht betrog er euch* in italics (LAS 247).

The last page of the second fragment (Z1.2) bears many notes in pencil. Unfortunately, they are but barely legible. However, they are numbered, and it is more than likely that those nine numbers correspond to the Z.1.2 page numbers, as Salomé, in turn, provides page numbers after quotations in her Nietzsche book which, after consultation of the *KSA*, turned out to correspond to the numbered notes in the fragment.

1. '2. Verwundet bin ich von meinem Glück'. This indeed corresponds directly to a sentence on the second page of the first chapter in Book II, 'Das Kind mit dem Spiegel' (KSA 4, 106): 'Verwundet bin ich von meinem Glücke: alle Leidenden sollen mir Ärzte sein!'

Salomé, in turn, describes Nietzsche as ‘verwundet von seinem Glücke’ in the context of his mutually dependent health and pathology, which present ‘eine eigenthümliche Selbstspaltung innerhalb ein und desselben Geisteslebens’ (LAS 59).

2. ‘5. Aus dem Überflusse heraus auf ferne Meere/ Gott ist eine Muthmaassung, <illegible> (dazu, daß er alles <was?> auf die/ Erde wirkend benutzen <würd>’. By way of comparison, see ‘Auf den glückseligen Inseln’ (KSA 4, 109): ‘Seht, welche Fülle ist um uns! Und aus dem Überflusse heraus ist es schön hinaus zu blicken auf ferne Meere. Einst sagte man Gott, wenn man auf ferne Meere blickte; nun aber lehrte ich euch sagen: Übermensch. Gott ist eine Muthmaassung; aber ich will, dass euer Muthmaassen nicht weiter reiche, als euer schaffender Wille.’

   In Salomé, ‘Aus dem Überflusse heraus ist es schön hinaus zu blicken auf ferne Meere’ is related to Genoa: ‘Gebirge [Engadin] und Meer umgeben ihn bei seinen Gedanken-Wandelungen als der wirkungsvolle Hintergrund für die Gestalt dieses Einsamen’ (LAS 159).

3. The (page-) number 6 is given twice:
   ‘6. Wohl zog ich den Schluß, nun aber zieht er mich <3 illegible words>’. Compare this to the identical passage in ‘Auf den glückseligen Inseln’ (KSA 4, 110).

   Rilke or Salomé then added: ‘6. Wenn es Götter gäbe, <4 illegible words> ob/ (dies zu I. dieses [religiösen?] Teils: einerseits/ schrecklich, daß Gott tödlich, aber andrerseits darf er [?] dieses Sichselbstgottseins/ Hochmuth nicht leben’. As this is the passage which was hardest to decipher by far, a glance at its parallel in Nietzsche is advisable once more: ‘w e n n es Götter gäbe, wie hielte ich’s aus, kein Gott zu sein! A l s o giebt es keine Götter’ (KSA 4, 110).

   In turn, this last sentence appears word for word in *Friedrich Nietzsche in seinen Werken* (LAS 67), where Nietzsche’s third and last productive phase, beginning with *Zarathustra*, is commented further thus: ‘Die Gottsehnsucht wird in ihrer Qual zu einem Drang der Gott-Schöpfung, und dieser mußte sich nothwendig in Selbstvergottung äußern’ (LAS 66).

4. ‘7. Schaffen = Leichtwerden, aber’. See Nietzsche: ‘Schaffen – das ist die große Erlösung vom Leiden, und des Lebens Leichtwerden. Aber dass der Schaffende sei, dazu thut Leid noth und viel Verwandelung’ (KSA 4, 110).

   Salomé, however, quotes the next sentence in the text instead: ‘Dass der Schaffende selber das Kind sei, das neu geboren werde, dazu muss er auch die Gebärerin sein wollen und der Schmerz der Gebärerin’ (LAS 268).

5. We are now leaving the ‘glückseligen Inseln’, arriving at note number ‘33. Was Geist ist, – was ins Leben schneidet.’ Compare this to Nietzsche, in ‘Von den berühmten Weisen’: ‘Geist ist das Leben, das selber in’s Leben schneidet: an der eignen Qual mehrt es sich das eigne Wissen, – wusstet ihr das schon?’ (KSA 4, 134).

   This is quoted in Salomé twice (LAS 44-45; 284).

6. ‘40. Zu den Gedanken: die Thorheit’. This corresponds to the ending of the ‘Tanzlied’: ‘“Die Sonne ist lange schon hinunter, sagte er endlich; die Wiese ist feucht, von den Wäldern her kommt Kühle. Ein Unbekanntes ist um mich und blickt nachdenklich. Was! Du lebst noch, Zarathustra? Warum? Wofür? Wodurch? Wohin? Wo? Wie? Ist es nicht Thorheit, noch zu leben?’ (KSA 4, 141).

7. ’49. Sich selbst überwinden <als Lebenssinn> = Definition des Lebens’. Compare this to Nietzsche, in ‘Von der Selbst-Ueberwindung’: ‘Und diess Geheimniss redete das Leben selber zu mir. “Siehe, sprach es, ich bin das, w a s s i c h i m m e r s e l b e r ü b e r w i n d e n m u s s’ (KSA 4, 148).

   In Salomé: ‘Denn gerade die vollendetste und umfassendste Seele muß am klarsten und unwiderruflichsten das Grundgestz des Lebens in sich zum Ausdruck bringen, welches heißt: “Ich bin das, *was sich immer selbst überwinden muss* ”’ (LAS 228f).

Beginning with this chapter – to be more precise, from the line ‘Also lehrte mich einst das Leben’, page 51 in Z.1.2 (KSA 4, 149:8) – the text used by Rilke or Salomé is preserved. Therefore, reading traces found in the surviving text body can be added to the numbered notes again from here.

On page 55 (KSA 4, 152), in ‘Von den Erhabenen’, the following sentence was partially underlined: ‘Ja, du Erhabener, einst sollst du noch schön sein und deiner eigenen Schönheit den Spiegel vorhalten. Dann wird deine Seele vor göttlichen Begierden schaudern; und Anbetung wird noch in deiner Eitelkeit sein!’

In *Friedrich Nietzsche in seinen Werken*, the passage immediately following the above is quoted, after another passage from Z.1, page 55: ‘aber gerade dem Helden ist das *Schöne* aller Dinge Schwerstes. Unerringbar ist das Schöne allem heftigen Willen. – – Diess nämlich ist das Geheimniss der Seele: erst, wenn sie der Held verlassen hat, naht ihr, *im Traume* [Salomé’s emphasis], – der Über-Held’ (LAS 242f).

8. On page 64 (KSA 4, 159), in ‘Von der unbefleckten Erkenntnis’, Salomé or Rilke marked the following passage: ‘Geküsst und gesaugt w i l l es sein vom Durste der Sonne; Luft w i l l es werden und Höhe und Fusspfad des Lichts und selber Licht! Wahrlich, der Sonne gleich liebe ich das Leben und alle tiefen Meere. Und diess heisst m i r Erkenntniss: alles Tiefe soll hinauf – zu meiner Höhe!’
9. In ‘Von den Dichtern’, part of a sentence was underlined on page 68 (KSA 4, 163): ‘“Seit ich den Leib besser kenne, – sagte Zarathustra zu einem seiner Jünger – ist mir der Geist nur noch gleichsam Geist; und alles das “Unvergängliche” – das ist auch nur ein Gleichniss.”’; whilst a longer passage was marked in the margin: ‘Ich gehöre nicht zu Denen, welche man nach ihrem Warum fragen darf. Ist denn mein Erleben von Gestern? Das ist lange her, dass ich die Gründe meiner Meinungen erlebte. Müsste ich nicht ein Fass sein von Gedächtniss, wenn ich auch meine Gründe bei mir haben wollte? Schon zuviel ist mir’s, meine Meinungen selber zu behalten; und mancher Vogel fliegt davon.’ On page 69 (KAS 4, 164) we found a short handwritten comment: ‘Der Glaube macht mich nicht selig, sagte er, zumal nicht der Glaube an mich. Aber gesetzt, dass Jemand [Rilke or Salomé in the margin: ‘Nietzsche contra Zarath’] allen Ernstes sagte, die Dichter lügen zuviel: so hat er Recht, – w i r lügen zuviel.’

   Salomé quotes almost identically: ‘Ich gehöre nicht zu Denen, welche man nach ihrem Warum fragen darf. Ist denn mein Erleben von Gestern? Das ist lange her, dass ich die Gründe meiner Meinungen erlebte. Müsste ich nicht ein Fass sein von Gedächtniss, wenn ich auch meine Gründe bei mir haben wollte?’ (LAS 268); and, from the same page in Z1 and KSA 4, respectively: ‘was sagte dir einst Zarathustra? Dass die Dichter zuviel lügen? – Aber auch Zarathustra ist ein Dichter’ (LAS 246).
10. Page 74 (KSA 4, 168) features in one of the notes on the last page: ‘Mensch und Krankheit’. This corresponds to a passage marked in ‘Von den großen Ereignissen’: ‘Und diess ist die Erzählung von Zarathustra’s Gespräch mit dem Feuerhunde. Die Erde, sagte er, hat eine Haut; und diese Haut hat Krankheiten. Eine dieser Krankheiten heisst zum Beispiel “Mensch”.’ Two sentences on, the following two words were underlined: ‘Diess Geheimniss zu ergründen gieng ich über das Meer: und ich habe die Wahrheit nackt gesehen, wahrlich! Barfuss bis zum Halse.’
11. In ‘Der Wahrsager’, the following passage was marked on page 79 (KSA 4, 172): ‘Alle Brunnen versiegten uns, auch das Meer wich zurück. Aller Grund will reissen, aber die Tiefe will nicht schlingen!’

12. In ‘Von der Erlösung’, Salomé or Rilke commented the following passage on page 86 (KSA 4, 178) with a ‘Wagner’ scrawled in the margin:

> Und als ich aus meiner Einsamkeit kam und zum ersten Male über diese Brücke gieng: da traute ich meinen Augen nicht und sah hin, und wieder hin, und sagte endlich: “das ist ein Ohr! Ein Ohr, so gross wie ein Mensch!” Ich sah noch besser hin: und wirklich, unter dem Ohre bewegte sich noch Etwas, das zum Erbarmen klein und ärmlich und schmächtig war. Und wahrhaftig, das ungeheure Ohr sass auf einem kleinen dünnen Stiele, – der Stiel aber war ein Mensch! Wer ein Glas vor das Auge nahm, konnte sogar noch ein kleines neidisches Gesichtchen erkennen; auch, dass ein gedunsenes Seelchen am Stiele baumelte. Das Volk sagte mir aber, das grosse Ohr sei nicht nur ein Mensch, sondern ein grosser Mensch, ein Genie. Aber ich glaubte dem Volke niemals, wenn es von grossen Menschen redete – und behielt meinen Glauben bei, dass es ein umgekehrter Krüppel sei, der an Allem zu wenig und an Einem zu viel habe.

13. On page 88 (KSA 4, 179) in the same chapter, the following passage was marked:

> Ich wandle unter Menschen als den Bruchstücken der Zukunft: jener Zukunft, die ich schaue.
>
> Und das ist all mein Dichten und Trachten, dass ich in Eins dichte und zusammentrage, was Bruchstück ist und Räthsel und grauser Zufall.
>
> Und wie ertrüge ich es, Mensch zu sein, wenn der Mensch nicht auch Dichter und Räthselrather und der Erlöser des Zufalls wäre!

14. ‘Von der Menschen-Klugheit’ is commented on the last page of Z1: ’92. Abhang’. Indeed, Rilke oder Salomé marked the first paragraph of that chapter on page 92 of their copy (KSA 4, 183):

> Nicht die Höhe: der Abhang ist das Furchtbare!
>
> Der Abhang, wo der Blick h i n u n t e r stürzt und die Hand h i n a u f greift. Da schwindelt dem Herzen vor seinem doppelten Willen.
>
> Ach, Freunde, errathet ihr wohl auch meines Herzens doppelten Willen?
>
> Das, Das ist m e i n Abhang und meine Gefahr, dass mein Blick in die Höhe stürzt, und dass meine Hand sich halten und stützen möchte – an der Tiefe!

Two further paragraphs in this chapter were marked and additionally highlighted by a cross in the margin each: ‘Ich bin selig, die Wunder zu sehn, welche heisse Sonne ausbrütet: Tiger und Palmen und Klapperschlangen’ (page 94; KSA 4, 185); and ‘Aus euren Wildkatzen müssen erst Tiger geworden sein und aus euren Giftkröten Krokodile: denn der gute Jäger soll eine gute Jagd haben!’ (page 95; KSA 4, 185).

15. Lastly, Salomé or Rilke wrote onto the last page ‘Schlußkapitel’. There, in ‘Die stillste Stunde’, four footnote numbers were left (sadly, without their corresponding explanatory notes) and six other marks. Footnote one (page 97; KSA 4, 187) concerns the following passage: ‘Bis in die Zehen hinein erschrickt er, darob, dass ihm der Boden weicht und der Traum beginnt. Dieses sage ich euch zum Gleichniss. Gestern, zur stillsten Stunde, wich mir der Boden: der Traum begann.’ The next paragraph (S. 98; KSA 4, 187f) was marked in the margin and labelled with a ‘2’:

> Der Zeiger rückte, die Uhr meines Lebens holte Athem –, nie hörte ich solche Stille um mich: also dass mein Herz erschrak.
>
> Dann sprach es ohne Stimme zu mir: “D u w e i s s t e s , Z a r a t h u s t r a ?” –
>
> Und ich schrie vor Schrecken bei diesem Flüstern, und das Blut wich aus meinem Gesichte: aber ich schwieg.

The last three words, ‘aber ich schwieg’, were crossed out by Salomé or Rilke, and the first of the following paragraph corrected from ‘dann’ to ‘da’: ‘Da sprach es abermals ohne Stimme zu mir: “Du weißt es, Zarathustra, aber du redest es nicht!”’

The following passage was marked by a cross in the margin (page 98; KSA 4, 188):

> Da sprach es wieder ohne Stimme zu mir: “Was liegt an dir, Zarathustra! Sprich dein Wort und zerbrich!” –
>
> Und ich antwortete: Ach, ist es m e i n Wort? Wer bin ich? Ich warte des Würdigeren; ich bin nicht werth, an ihm auch nur zu zerbrechen.”
>
> Da sprach es wieder ohne Stimme zu mir: Was liegt an dir? Du bist mir noch nicht demüthig genug. Die Demuth hat das härteste Fell.” –

Footnote number three marks the following passage, which was additionally partially underlined, on page 100 (189): ‘Da geschah ein Lachen um mich. Wehe, wie diess Lachen mir die Eingeweide zerriss und das Herz aufschlitzte!’ The passage is followed by the handwritten comment ‘Bergson, “Rire”’.[440]

Footnote number four, also on page 100 (KSA 4, 190), marks the following paragraph: ‘Und wieder lachte es und floh: dann wurde es stille um mich wie mit einer

[440] Henri Bergson (1859-1941), the most important exponent of *Lebensphilosophie* apart from Nietzsche, is mentioned in a letter Rilke wrote to Salomé on 9 June 1914: ‘Ich lese langsam in Deinem Bergson und kann von Zeit zu Zeit folgen’ (BW LAS, p. 324). Perlwitz claims that Bergson – particularly via Proust’s Bergsonian concept of time – was not without effect on Rilke, but suggests that the poet may not have understood him properly, ‘es ist jedoch nicht von der Hand zu weisen, daß sein [Rilke’s, KB] “Weltinnenraum”-Konzept Ähnlichkeit mit der Proust-Bergsonschen Zeitauffassung hat’ (*Rilke-Handbuch*, p. 163).

zwiefachen Stille. Ich aber lag am Boden, und der Schweiss floss mir von den Gliedern.'

The last sentence partially underlined, 'Aber auch diess hörtet ihr von mir, w e r immer noch aller Menschen Verschwiegenster ist – und es sein will!', follows immediately.

Finally, on page 101 (KSA 4, 190), the second-but-last paragraph of the concluding chapter of Book II was marked: 'Ach meine Freunde! Ich hätte euch noch Etwas zu sagen, ich hätte euch noch Etwas zu geben! Warum gebe ich es nicht? Bin ich denn geizig?'

In Salomé's book, the passages marked by the four footnotes are quoted as one continuous paragraph (LAS 282-3).

Rilke's *Zarathustra* copy: Z.2

1. In Z.2, the drawing of a goat on Crown Line Fine paper, titled 'Ziegen Ruh' in an unsteady, untidy hand, was placed between pages 28 and 29, which comprise the end of the ninth and the beginning of the tenth of Zarathustras 'Vorreden' (KSA 4, 26:6-27:24). Hella Sieber-Rilke thinks the drawing stems from Clara Westhoff, who was fond of using that particular brand of paper, and that 'Ruh' may have been intended to read 'Ruth', written by the child herself. The sheet is therefore most likely to have been placed into the book (by Rilke?) at a later date than March 1901, as Ruth was only born in December of that year.

am meisten?

Den, der zerbricht ihre Tafeln der Werthe, den Brecher, den Verbrecher: — das aber ist der Schaffende.

Siehe die Gläubigen aller Glauben! Wen hassen sie am meisten? Den, der zerbricht ihre Tafeln der Werthe, den Brecher, den Verbrecher: — das aber ist der Schaffende.

Gefährten sucht der Schaffende und nicht Leichname, und auch nicht Heerden und Gläubige. Die Mitschaffenden sucht der Schaffende, Die, welche neue Werthe auf neue Tafeln schreiben.

Gefährten sucht der Schaffende, und Miterntende: denn Alles steht bei ihm reif zur Ernte. Aber ihm fehlen die hundert Sicheln: so rauft er Ähren aus und ist ärgerlich.

Gefährten sucht der Schaffende, und solche, die ihre Sicheln zu wetzen wissen. Vernichter wird man sie heissen und Verächter des Guten und Bösen. Aber die Erntenden sind es und die Feiernden.

Mitschaffende sucht Zarathustra, Miterntende und Mitfeiernde sucht Zarathustra: was hat er mit Heerden und Hirten und Leichnamen zu schaffen!

Und du, mein erster Gefährte, gehab dich wohl! Gut begrub ich dich in deinem hohlen Baume, gut barg ich dich vor den Wölfen.

Aber ich scheide von dir, die Zeit ist um. Zwischen Morgenröthe und Morgenröthe kam mir eine neue Wahrheit.

Nicht Hirt soll ich sein, nicht Todtengräber. Nicht reden einmal will ich wieder mit dem Volke; zum letzten Male sprach ich zu einem Todten.

Den Schaffenden, den Erntenden, den Feiernden will ich mich zugesellen: den Regenbogen will ich ihnen zeigen und alle die Treppen des Übermenschen.

Den Einsiedlern werde ich mein Lied singen und den Zweisiedlern; und wer noch Ohren hat für Unerhörtes, dem will ich sein Herz schwer machen mit meinem Glücke.

Zu meinem Ziele will ich, ich gehe meinen Gang; über die Zögernden und Saumseligen werde ich hinwegspringen. Also sei mein Gang ihr Untergang!

10.

Diess hatte Zarathustra zu seinem Herzen gesprochen, als die Sonne im Mittag stand: da blickte er fragend in die Höhe — denn er hörte über sich den scharfen Ruf eines Vogels. Und siehe! Ein Adler zog in weiten Kreisen durch die Luft, und an ihm hieng eine Schlange, nicht einer Beute gleich, sondern einer Freundin: denn sie hielt sich um seinen Hals geringelt.

„Es sind meine Thiere!“ sagte Zarathustra und freute sich von Herzen.

Das stolzeste Thier unter der Sonne und das klügste Thier unter der Sonne — sie sind ausgezogen auf Kundschaft.

Erkunden wollen sie, ob Zarathustra noch lebe. Wahrlich, lebe ich noch?

Gefährlicher fand ich’s unter Menschen als unter Thieren, gefährlicher Wege geht Zarathustra. Mögen mich meine Thiere führen!“

Als Zarathustra diess gesagt hatte, gedachte er der Worte des Heiligen im Walde, seufzte und sprach also zu seinem Herzen:

2. A passport-photograph-sized portrait of Paula Modersohn-Becker lies between pages 88 und 89, at the beginning of the chapter ‘Von der Nächstenliebe’ (KSA 4, 77-78:23):

Von der Nächstenliebe

Ihr drängt euch um den Nächsten und habt schöne Worte dafür. Aber ich sage euch: eure Nächstenliebe ist eure schlechte Liebe zu euch selber.

Ihr flüchtet zum Nächsten vor euch selber und möchtet euch daraus eine Tugend machen: aber ich durchschaue euer „Selbstloses“.

Das Du ist älter als das Ich; das Du ist heilig gesprochen, aber noch nicht das Ich: so drängt sich der Mensch hin zum Nächsten.

Rathe ich euch zur Nächstenliebe? Lieber noch rathe ich euch zur Nächsten-Flucht und zur Fernsten-Liebe!

Höher als die Liebe zum Nächsten ist die Liebe zum Fernsten und Künftigen; höher noch als die Liebe zu Menschen ist die Liebe zu Sachen und Gespenstern.

Diess Gespenst, das vor dir herläuft, mein Bruder, ist schöner als du; warum giebst du ihm nicht dein Fleisch und deine Knochen? Aber du fürchtest dich und läufst zu deinem Nächsten.

Ihr haltet es mit euch selber nicht aus und liebt euch nicht genug: nun wollt ihr den Nächsten zur Liebe verführen und euch mit seinem Irrthum vergolden.

Ich wollte, ihr hieltet es nicht aus mit allerlei Nächsten und deren Nachbarn; so müsstet ihr aus euch selber euren Freund und sein überwallendes Herz schaffen.

Ihr ladet euch einen Zeugen ein, wenn ihr von euch gut reden wollt; und wenn ihr ihn verführt habt, gut von euch zu denken, denkt ihr selber gut von euch.

Nicht nur Der lügt, welcher wider sein Wissen redet, sondern erst recht Der, welcher wider sein Nichtwissen redet. Und so redet ihr von euch im Verkehre und belügt mit euch den Nachbar.

Also spricht der Narr: „der Umgang mit Menschen verdirbt den Charakter, sonderlich wenn man keinen hat.“

Der Eine geht zum Nächsten, weil er sich sucht, und der Andre, weil er sich verlieren möchte. Eure schlechte Liebe zu euch selber macht euch aus der Einsamkeit ein Gefängniss.

Die Ferneren sind es, welche eure Liebe zum Nächsten bezahlen; und schon wenn ihr zu fünfen mit einander seid, muss immer ein sechster sterben.

Ich liebe auch eure Feste nicht: zu viel Schauspieler fand ich dabei, und auch die Zuschauer gebärdeten sich oft gleich Schauspielern.

Nicht den Nächsten lehre ich euch, sondern den Freund. Der Freund sei euch das Fest der Erde und ein Vorgefühl des Übermenschen.

Ich lehre euch den Freund und sein übervolles Herz. Aber man muss verstehn, ein Schwamm zu sein, wenn man von übervollen Herzen geliebt sein will.

3. The chapter ‘Von Kind und Ehe’ (KSA 4, 90-92) was marked in the table of contents.

4. Pages 126 and 127 – singled out by an inlaid pressed cyclamen, according to Hella Sieber-Rilke, an idiosyncracy of Rilke’s – coincide with the latter part of ‘Auf den glückseligen Inseln’ as well as the beginning of ‘Von den Mitleidigen’ (KSA 4, 111:18-113:21):

Nicht-mehr-schaffen! ach, dass diese grosse Müdigkeit mir stets ferne bleibe!

Auch im Erkennen fühle ich nur meines Willens Zeuge- und Werde-Lust; und wenn Unschuld in meiner Erkenntniss ist, so geschieht diess, weil Wille zur Zeugung in ihr ist.

Hinweg von Gott und Göttem lockte mich dieser Wille; was wäre denn zu schaffen, wenn Götter — da wären!

Aber zum Menschen treibt er mich stets von Neuem, mein inbrünstiger Schaffens-Wille; so treibt's den Hammer hin zum Steine.

Ach, ihr Menschen, im Steine schläft mir ein Bild, das Bild meiner Bilder! Ach, dass es im härtesten, hässlichsten Steine schlafen muss!

Nun wüthet mein Hammer grausam gegen sein Gefängniss. Vom Steine stäuben Stücke: was schiert mich das?

Vollenden will ich's: denn ein Schatten kam zu mir - aller Dinge Stillstes und Leichtestes kam einst zu mir!

Des Übermenschen Schönheit kam zu mir als Schatten. Ach, meine Brüder! Was gehen mich noch — die Götter an! —

Also sprach Zarathustra.

Von den Mitleidigen

Meine Freunde, es kam eine Spottrede zu eurem Freunde: „seht nur Zarathustra! Wandelt er nicht unter uns wie unter Thieren?“

Aber so ist es besser geredet: „der Erkennende wandelt unter Menschen a l s unter Thieren.“ Der Mensch selber aber heisst dem Erkennenden: das Thier, das rothe Backen hat.

Wie geschah ihm das? Ist es nicht, weil er sich zu oft hat schämen müssen?

Oh meine Freunde! So spricht der Erkennende: Scham, Scham, Scham — das ist die Geschichte des Menschen!

Und darum gebeut sich der Edle, nicht zu beschämen: Scham gebeut er sich vor allem Leidenden.

Wahrlich, ich mag sie nicht, die Barmherzigen, die selig sind in ihrem Mitleiden: zu sehr gebricht es ihnen an Scham.

Muss ich mitleidig sein, so will ich's doch nicht heissen; und wenn ich's bin, dann gern aus der Ferne.

Gerne verhülle ich auch das Haupt und fliehe davon, bevor ich noch erkannt bin: und also heisse ich euch thun, meine Freunde!

5. The chapter ‘Vor Sonnen-Aufgang’ was underlined in the table of contents, and also features an underlined passage on pages 242-243 of Rilke’s copy (KSA 4, 209:6-15):

Das aber ist mein Segnen: über jedwedem Ding als sein eigener Himmel stehn, als sein rundes Dach, seine azurne Glocke und ewige Sicherheit: und selig ist, wer also segnet!

Denn alle Dinge sind getauft am Borne der Ewigkeit und jenseits von Gut und Böse; Gut und Böse selber aber sind nur Zwischenschatten und feuchte Trübsale und Zieh-Wolken.

Wahrlich, ein Segnen ist es und kein Lästern, wenn ich lehre: “über allen Dingen steht der Himmel Zufall, der Himmel Unschuld, der Himmel Ohngefähr, der Himmel Übermuth.”

6. Another cyclamen was pressed between pages 254 and 255, in the chapter ‘Auf dem Oelberge’ (KSA 4, 218:21-220:19):

Wen ich liebe, den liebe ich Winters besser als Sommers; besser spotte ich jetzt meiner Feinde und herzhafter, seit der Winter mir im Hause sitzt.

Herzhaft wahrlich, selbst dann noch, wenn ich zu Bett k r i e c h e —: da lacht und muthwillt noch mein verkrochenes Glück; es lacht noch mein Lügen-Traum.

Ich — ein Kriecher? Niemals kroch ich im Leben vor Mächtigen; und log ich je, so log ich aus Liebe. Desshalb bin ich froh auch im Winter-Bette.

Ein geringes Bett wärmt mich mehr als ein reiches, denn ich bin eifersüchtig auf meine Armuth. Und im Winter ist sie mir am treuesten.

Mit einer Bosheit beginne ich jeden Tag, ich spotte des Winters mit einem kalten Bade: darob brummt mein gestrenger Hausfreund.

Auch kitzle ich ihn gerne mit einem Wachskerzlein: dass er mir endlich den Himmel herauslasse aus aschgrauer Dämmerung.

Sonderlich boshaft bin ich nämlich des Morgens: zur frühen Stunde, da der Eimer am Brunnen klirrt und die Rosse warm durch graue Gassen wiehern: —

Ungeduldig warte ich da, dass mir endlich der lichte Himmel aufgehe, der schneebärtige Winter-Himmel, der Greis und Weisskopf, —

— der Winter-Himmel, der schweigsame, der oft noch seine Sonne verschweigt!

Lernte ich wohl von ihm das lange lichte Schweigen? Oder lernte er's von mir? Oder hat ein jeder von uns es selbst erfunden?

Aller guten Dinge Ursprung ist tausendfältig, — alle guten muthwilligen Dinge springen vor Lust in's Dasein: wie sollten sie das immer nur — Ein Mal thun!

Ein gutes muthwilliges Ding ist auch das lange Schweigen und gleich dem Winter-Himmel blicken aus lichtem rundäugichten Antlitze: —

— gleich ihm seine Sonne verschweigen und seinen unbeugsamen Sonnen-Willen: wahrlich, diese Kunst und diesen Winter-Muthwillen lernte ich g u t!

Meine liebste Bosheit und Kunst ist es, dass mein Schweigen lernte, sich nicht durch Schweigen zu verrathen.

Mit Worten und Würfeln klappernd überliste ich mir die feierlichen Warter: allen diesen gestrengen Aufpassern soll mein Wille und Zweck entschlüpfen.

Dass mir Niemand in meinen Grund und letzten Willen hinab sehe, — dazu erfand ich mir das lange lichte Schweigen.

So manchen Klugen fand ich: der verschleierte sein Antlitz und trübte sein Wasser, dass Niemand ihm hindurch und hinunter sehe.

Aber zu ihm gerade kamen die klügeren Misstrauer und Nussknacker: ihm gerade fischte man seinen verborgensten Fisch heraus!

Sondern die Hellen, die Wackern, die Durchsichtigen — das sind mir die klügsten Schweiger: denen so tief ihr Grund ist, dass auch das hellste Wasser ihn nicht — verräth. —

Du schneebärtiger schweigender Winter-Himmel, du rundäugichter Weisskopf über mir! Oh du himmlisches Gleichniss meiner Seele und ihres Muthwillens!

7. On page 258, the chapter heading ‘Vom Vorübergehen’ (KSA 4, 222) was underlined in pencil. The chapter also features several underlined sentences:

> Warum giengst du nicht in den Wald? Oder pflügtest die Erde? Ist das Meer nicht voll von grünen Eilanden? [underlined, most likely by Rilke, on page 261 (KSA 4, 224)]

> Diese Lehre aber gebe ich dir, du Narr, zum Abschiede: wo man nicht mehr lieben kann, da soll man — vorübergehn! —

Also sprach Zarathustra und gieng an dem Narren und der grossen Stadt vorüber. [page 262 (KSA 4, 225)]

8. Traces of a flower once pressed there can be found on pages 370 and 371, in ‘Der Zauberer’ (KSA 4, 316:17-318:8):

Grausamster Feind,
Mir — dich! — —

Davon!
Da floh er selber,
Mein letzter einziger Genoss,
Mein grosser Feind,
Mein Unbekannter,
Mein Henker-Gott! —

— Nein! Komm zurück,
Mit allen deinen Martern!
Zum Letzten aller Einsamen
Oh komm zurück!
All meine Thränen-Bäche laufen
Zu dir den Lauf!
Und meine letzte Herzens-Flamme —
D i r glüht sie auf!
Oh komm zurück,
Mein unbekannter Gott! Mein Schmerz! Mein letztes —
Glück!

2.

— Hier aber konnte sich Zarathustra nicht länger halten, nahm seinen Stock und schlug mit allen Kräften auf den jammernden los. „Halt ein! Schrie er ihm zu, mit ingrimmigem Lachen, halt ein, du Schauspieler! Du Falschmünzer! Du Lügner aus dem Grunde! Ich erkenne dich wohl!

Ich will dir schon warme Beine machen, du schlimmer Zauberer, ich verstehe mich gut darauf, Solchen wie du bist — einzuheizen!“

— „Lass ab, sagte der alte Mann und sprang vom Boden auf, schlage nicht mehr, oh Zarathustra! Ich trieb's also nur zum Spiele!

Solcherlei gehört zu meiner Kunst; dich selber wollte ich auf die Probe stellen, als ich dir diese Probe gab! Und, wahrlich, du hast mich gut durchschaut!

Aber auch du — gabst mir von dir keine kleine Probe: du bist h a r t , du weiser Zarathustra! Hart schlägst du zu mit deinen „Wahrheiten,“ dein Knüttel erzwingt von mir — d i e s e Wahrheit!“

— „Schmeichle nicht, antwortete Zarathustra, immer noch erregt und finsterblickend, du Schauspieler aus dem Grunde! Du bist falsch: was redest du — von Wahrheit!

Du Pfau der Pfauen, du Meer der Eitelkeit, was spieltest du vor mir, du schlimmer Zauberer, an w e n sollte ich glauben, als du in solcher Gestalt jammertest?“

„ D e n B ü s s e r d e s G e i s t e s , sagte der alte Mann, d e n — spielte ich: du selber erfandest einst diess Wort —

— den Dichter und Zauberer, der gegen sich selber endlich seinen Geist wendet, den Verwandelten, der an seinem bösen Wissen und Gewissen erfriert.

Und gesteh es nur ein: es währte lange, oh Zarathustra, bis du hinter meine Kunst und Lüge kamst! Du g l a u b t e s t an meine Noth, als du mir den Kopf mit beiden Händen hieltest, —

as well as

9. on pages 450 and 451, in ‘Die Erweckung’ (KSA 4, 386-387:22):

Die Erweckung

1.

Nach dem Liede des Wanderers und Schattens wurde die Höhle mit Einem Male voll Lärmens und Lachens; und da die versammelten Gäste alle zugleich redeten, und auch der Esel, bei einer solchen Ermuthigung, nicht mehr still blieb, überkam Zarathustra ein kleiner Widerwille und Spott gegen seinen Besuch: ob er sich gleich ihrer Fröhlichkeit erfreute. Denn sie dünkte ihm ein Zeichen der Genesung. So schlüpfte er hinaus in's Freie und sprach zu seinen Thieren.

„Wo ist nun ihre Noth hin? sprach er, und schon athmete er selber von seinem kleinen Überdrusse auf, — bei mir verlernten sie, wie mich dünkt, das Nothschrein!

— wenn auch, leider, noch nicht das Schrein.“ Und Zarathustra hielt sich die Ohren zu, denn eben mischte sich das I-A des Esels wunderlich mit dem Jubel-Lärm dieser höheren Menschen.

„Sie sind lustig, begann er wieder, und wer weiss? vielleicht auf ihres Wirthes Unkosten; und lernten sie von mir lachen, so ist es doch nicht m e i n Lachen, das sie lernten.

Aber was liegt daran! Es sind alte Leute: sie genesen auf ihre Art, sie lachen auf ihre Art; meine Ohren haben schon Schlimmeres erduldet und wurden nicht unwirsch.

Dieser Tag ist ein Sieg: er weicht schon, er flieht, d e r G e i s t d e r S c h w e r e , mein alter Erzfeind! Wie gut will dieser Tag enden, der so schlimm und schwer begann!

Und enden w i l l er. Schon kommt der Abend: über das Meer her reitet er, der gute Reiter! Wie er sich wiegt, der Selige, Heimkehrende, in seinen purpurnen Sätteln!

Der Himmel blickt klar dazu, die Welt liegt tief: oh all ihr Wunderlichen, die ihr zu mir kamt, es lohnt sich schon, bei mir zu leben!“

Also sprach Zarathustra. Und wieder kam da das Geschrei und Gelächter der höheren Menschen aus der Höhle: da begann er von Neuem.

„Sie beissen an, mein Köder wirkt, es weicht auch ihnen ihr Feind, der Geist der Schwere. Schon lernen sie über sich selber lachen: höre ich recht?

Meine Manns-Kost wirkt, mein Saft- und Kraft-Spruch: und wahrlich, ich nährte sie nicht mit Bläh-Gemüsen! Sondern mit Krieger-Kost, mit Eroberer-Kost: neue Begierden weckte ich.

Neue Hoffnungen sind in ihren Armen und Beinen, ihr Herz streckt sich aus. Sie finden neue Worte, bald wird ihr Geist Muthwillen athmen.

Solche Kost mag freilich nicht für Kinder sein, noch auch für sehnsüchtige alte und junge Weibchen.

10. Lastly, there is another handwritten entry by Clara Westhoff – addressed, no doubt, to her then fiancé Rainer Maria Rilke, as it bears the same date as the dedication to him – on page 471 (KSA 4, 404), below the twelfth 'Nachtwandler-Lied': 'Ich las es früher oft und/ sprach es in mir und hatte es/ lieb, dieses tiefe Lied – Aber/ heute las ich es neu und zum/ ersten Mal./ 5. März 1901 Westerwede':

Oh Mensch! Gieb Acht!
Was spricht die tiefe Mitternacht?
„Ich schlief, Ich schlief —,
„Aus tiefem Traum bin Ich erwacht:—
„Die Welt Ist tief,
„Und tiefer als der Tag gedacht.
„Tief ist ihr Weh —,
„Lust — tiefer noch als Herzeleid:
„Weh spricht: Vergeh!
„Doch alle Lust will Ewigkeit
„will tiefe, tiefe Ewigkeit!“

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