

**‘CRUSH THE HEAD OF THE SERPENT
AND IT WILL BITE YOU IN THE HEEL’:
A RECONSTRUCTION OF JUNG’S
INTERPRETATION OF THE POISONOUS
SERPENTS IN *ZARATHUSTRA* THROUGH
*LIBER NOVUS***

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PHANÈS • VOLUME 1 • 2018 • PP. 1–27

<https://doi.org/10.32724/phanes.2018.Domenici>

ABSTRACT

The psychological interpretation of Friedrich Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* given by C. G. Jung in a specifically dedicated seminar in years 1934-1934 comes across as obscure, somewhat mysterious and philosophically distant from Nietzsche's work. Such interpretation, however, remains consistent in Jung's later works. One of the most striking aspects of Jung's interpretation of *Zarathustra* concerns the animals: in most cases, Jung delivers long and detailed explanations, drawing on mythological, as well as alchemical material, to analyse some animal figures that do not play any relevant part in Nietzsche's text. This is particularly remarkable in the case of the serpent hanging from the shepherd's mouth in chapter 'Of the Vision and the Riddle', closely related by Jung to the adder biting Zarathustra's throat in chapter 'Of the Adder's Bite'. The same connection will come back later in 1952, in *Symbols of Transformation*. Interestingly, most of Jung's later interpretation of *Zarathustra* can be re-contextualised and understood if compared with Jung's own *Liber Novus*, serving as a proper lens to observe and analyse the evolution of Jung's confrontation with Nietzsche. Reading Jung's marginalia on his own copy of *Zarathustra*, it is clear that he interpreted the work as a sort of Nietzschean *Liber Novus*, so to speak—both being understood by Jung as 'visionary' works. This paper will explore Jung's understanding of *Zarathustra* chapters 'Of the Vision and the Riddle' and 'Of the Adder's Bite' in the 30's and 50's, and will then reconstruct such understanding based on *Liber Novus*.

KEYWORDS

Nietzsche, *Zarathustra*, *Liber Novus*, *The Red Book*, Serpent, Heel, Visionary Works

In 1934-1939, Jung analysed Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* [*Also sprach Zarathustra*, 1883-1885] in a seminar given at the Psychological Club in Zurich. Apparently, the proposal did not come from him, but rather from the enthusiastic participants in his previous seminar on Christiana Morgan's visions, wishing to take on a similar analysis on Nietzsche's work. Jung accepted the challenge and spent five years analysing *Zarathustra* meticulously. The official language was English, and the chosen translation was by Thomas Common, with the only exception of chapter 'The Night Song', which Jung decided to leave in German, quoting from his *Kleinoktav-Gesamtausgabe*, 'because it is of such a musical quality that it expressed something of the nature of the unconscious which is untranslatable' (Jung, SNZ II:1142). The interpretation emerging from such seminar sums up Jung's overall understanding of Nietzsche from the 30's onwards and might be regarded as controversial if directly related to Nietzsche's work. In particular, the parodistic aspect of *Zarathustra* seems to be neglected by Jung (Nill 1988; Liebscher 2002). However, a certain—both conceptual and stylistic—similarity between Nietzsche and Jung has been highlighted in a few studies over the past decades, and must not be forgotten, despite the lack of historical investigation of some of those studies (Bishop 1995b; Dixon 1999; Huskinson 2001). Moreover, as Martin Liebscher has pointed out, in opposition to the reductionism of a purely psychological point of view, from a Nietzschean standpoint, Jung's interpretation can open up a new perspective on *Zarathustra*, keeping loyal to the multiperspectival purpose of the book and enriching its understanding (2012:155-164). For this reason, therefore, Jung's seminar on *Zarathustra* cannot be just dismissed as a misreading of Nietzsche's philosophy.

According to Jung's interpretation, Nietzsche represents a case of 'inflation' with the archetype of the spirit, symbolised by the character of Zarathustra, and the whole story is understood as an example of Nietzsche's failed individuation. In this sense, Jung links *Zarathustra* to Nietzsche's final madness: not being able to break free from his identification with Zarathustra, Nietzsche would not be able to let a new god be born again either (so he would not be able to realise the self), therefore he would be caught by an *enantiodromia* turning his conscious attitude into its very opposite, which would then lead him towards his final *Dionysian* folly. From an introverted, intuitive type, Nietzsche would then become dominated by the Dionysian extraversion, that, from some point around the middle part of *Zarathustra*, would accompany the philosopher through his becoming

mad in January 1889, and then till his very last days in August 1900.

Interestingly, Jung dwells a lot on exploring the meaning of the symbolical constellation of the animals in *Zarathustra*, even when such animals do not play any relevant role for a correct philosophical understanding of Nietzsche's book. This is quite striking in the case of the serpent that bites Zarathustra's throat in chapter 'Of the Adder's Bite', then related by Jung with the serpent hanging from the shepherd's mouth in chapter 'Of the Vision and the Riddle'.¹ In his comment on 'Of the Adder's Bite', Jung claims: 'crush the head of the serpent and it will bite you in the heel' (Jung, SNZ I:755). The same correlation appears again in Jung's re-edition of *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido*, in 1952, alongside the same motif of the heel-biting serpent. Referring to 'Of The Vision and the Riddle', Jung will make the following statement: 'If you want the serpent to bruise your heel you have only to tread on its head' (Jung [1952], CW 5: §586, translation modified). Both statements sound as obscure as they sound fascinating, since there are no references to any heel in either of Nietzsche's chapters.

Many of the peculiarities of Jung's reading of *Zarathustra*—in particular those referring to the animals—can be re-contextualised within the framework of the development of Jung's thinking through the lens of *Liber Novus* (The 'Red Book'). Not only does Nietzsche appear frequently in *Liber Novus*, both implicitly and explicitly; the visions described in *Liber Novus* happened to Jung a few months before, during, and two years after deciding to read *Zarathustra* for the second time (November 1914). Moreover—and above all—in Jung's own personal copy of Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* (available for consultation at Jung's library in Küsnacht)² are several, significant annotations referring to his own *Liber Novus*. In this sense, the reference to the heel in Jung's comments on 'Of the Adder's Bite' and 'Of the Vision and the Riddle' can be contextualised better, when compared with some chapters from *Liber Novus*, which present relevant stylistic similarities with *Zarathustra*. In particular, in 'First Day' and 'The Magician', the heel motif occurs precisely in the sense of Jung's later understanding of *Zarathustra*, and can be considered one of the keys to

¹ Another significant example is given by the constellation 'desert-lion-child', drawn from *Zarathustra*, and used by Jung as a prism to analyse Nietzsche's psychology both in his published writings and in his private annotations on Nietzsche's works (Domenici 2015).

² I would like to take the opportunity to thank the *Stiftung der Werke von C. G. Jung*—in particular Thomas Fischer, Andreas Jung and Bettina Kaufmann—for allowing me to consult Jung's library a few times: without their help, this research would not exist.

interpret such understanding correctly. It should not be forgotten that, in 1930, when Jung defines *Zarathustra* as a ‘visionary’ work in *Psychology and Literature* (Jung [1930], CW 15: §§133-162), he implicitly suggests a common tradition for *Zarathustra* and *Liber Novus*, so his reading of *Zarathustra* four years later can be thought of as a sort of investigation on what Jung would probably define as Nietzsche’s *Liber Novus*.

In following sections, Jung’s interpretation of the serpent motif in regard to Nietzsche will be looked at more closely. Starting from the seminar on *Zarathustra*, Jung’s interpretation in *Symbols of Transformation* will be explored, and compared with *Liber Novus*, in which Nietzsche’s presence will be also investigated.

JUNG’S SEMINAR ON NIETZSCHE’S ZARATHUSTRA

The Logos, The Anima And Nietzsche’s Inflation: ‘Of The Adder’s Bite’

Also sprach Zarathustra (1883-1885) is composed of four parts, each of them published as separate ‘books’, plus a ‘prologue’ published with the first ‘book’ and functioning as an introduction. In the ‘prologue’, *Zarathustra*, a fictional representation of the historical character of Zoroaster, the inventor of Mazdayasna—hence representing the creator of moral dualism and therefore the only person entitled to bring it to an end by spreading the opposite message—struggles to find the right audience for his ‘discourses’ and the right disciples for his ‘doctrine’. Such discourses, however, are delivered throughout the four ‘books’ and heard by an audience sometimes called ‘disciples’ [Jünglinge], other times ‘brethren’ [Brüder] or ‘friends’ [Freunde]. On top of that, *Zarathustra* is constantly awaiting his ‘kids’ [Kinder].³ In the middle of the first ‘book’, we read that *Zarathustra* gets his throat bitten by an adder while asleep. Towards the beginning of the third ‘book’, *Zarathustra* has a vision of a sleeping shepherd, from whose mouth a serpent is hanging. In his vision, *Zarathustra* invites the shepherd to bite the head of the serpent; the shepherd obeys, the serpent is killed, its head spat out. The shepherd is ‘no longer a man—a transformed being, surrounded with light, *laughing!* Never yet on earth had a man laughed as he laughed!’ (Nietzsche 1969:180).

On 11 December 1935, in his analysis of ‘Of the Adder’s Bite’, Jung

³ As I have shown elsewhere, the tension between *Zarathustra*’s ‘doctrine’ and his apparent failing as a ‘teacher’ has to be contextualised in the broader discourse of Nietzsche’s ‘transvaluation’ (Domenici 2016).

points out that ‘the anima is represented as woman above and serpent below, as the serpent in paradise is often represented with a woman’s head; the snake element is always connected with the anima problem’. Then he adds: ‘It is a coldblooded animal with a non-human psychology; one can establish a sort of *rapport* with almost any warmblooded animal but with snake there is no parallel feeling’. In fact, due to its representing our sympathetic system, to fear a serpent means to have troubles with the acceptance of one’s own body:

And that is the secret of the anima, human on the one side and that most paradoxical and incomprehensible thing on the other. On the one side she is an inferior woman with all the bad qualities of a merely biological woman, an intriguing and plotting devil who always tries to entangle a man and make a perfect fool of him; yet she winds up with the snake’s tail, with that peculiar insight and awareness. She is a psychopompos, and leads you into the understanding of the collective unconscious just by the way of the fool. So wherever you touch upon that anima business you will have a paradoxical picture [...] (Jung, SNZ I:748-51).

Following this interpretation, Jung proposes to link the ‘bite’ to Nietzsche’s *inflation*. According to Jung, Nietzsche appears identified with the character of Zarathustra, namely a representation of the archetype of the wise old man, one of the figures of the *spirit*. In his identification, Nietzsche, an introverted, intuitive thinker, tends to constantly deny and repress his inferior functions, namely sensation and feeling, that, remaining on an unconscious level, try to be accepted and integrated throughout the book. In addition, by affirming the ‘death of God’ (see *The Gay Science* 125, Nietzsche 1967— vol. 3:480), Nietzsche appears to Jung as denying the independence of the unconscious over the ego, thus denying any possibility of a realisation of the self. *Zarathustra* is indeed understood by Jung as a literary representation of Nietzsche’s faulty individuation; Jung sees continuity between the second half of *Zarathustra* and Nietzsche’s last works, letters and final madness. In accordance with this idea, Jung portrays the anima as the only prospective source for the overcoming of Nietzsche’s inflation. By letting the viper kill Zarathustra, the identification with the spirit could be indeed ended. Drawing on the Egyptian myth of Ra, ‘the sun god, the king of the two Egypts’ that ‘was making his way over the heavens’ and got bitten by a ‘sand viper’ sent by Mother Isis to weaken him, Jung concludes:

It is a dangerous catastrophe when a man falls into a trap laid by the anima. To be caught by the heel is the usual fate of a man.
Crush the head of the serpent and it will bite you in the heel.
 This is a regular occurrence and it can finish a man's career, his hopes, or even his life (Jung, SNZ I:754-755, italics added).

The throat is said to represent the *logos*, and by getting it bitten, Zarathustra would lose his speech skills, thus permitting Nietzsche to interrupt the inflation. 'The same motif comes again later', Jung adds, in 'Of the Vision and the Riddle', 'so we must assume that the throat region is the active organ'. In fact, 'Zarathustra is very obviously the *logos*, and you cannot reach the *logos* with the feet because it has none; you can only reach it by the throat where the words come from' (ibid:755-756).⁴ In 1932, in his seminar on Kundalini Yoga, Jung had defined *Viśuddha*, the throat *chakra*, as the divide between our collectivity (represented by the first four *chakras*), and the sense of individuality coming about through the expression of psychical experiences (Jung 1996:42-52). Precisely in this sense, Jung's comment on 'Of the Adder's Bite' is to be understood: the adder's bite could bring Nietzsche back to the collectivity of the material world, interrupting his identification with the spirit, by allowing him to reunite with his inferior functions, made accessible through the anima.

The Hero As The Ouroboros: 'Of The Vision And The Riddle'

On 18 May-15 June 1938, Jung analyses *Zarathustra* chapter 'Of the Vision and the Riddle' (Jung, SNZ II:1256-1311). In the May sessions, the first part of Zarathustra's vision is analysed, namely, Zarathustra's dreamlike, uncanny encounter with a dwarf that suggests the hypothesis of the 'abysmal thought' of the eternal return for the first time in the book. Jung interprets the dwarf as another unconscious attempt to compensate for Nietzsche's unilateral attitude, stop the inflation and reveal the self, so that his individuation can be accomplished. Nietzsche's rejection of the dwarf and the truth he is revealing is understood as another case of Nietzsche's negation of the unconscious and refusal to interrupt his inflation. Throughout the rest of the sessions, Jung and the participants of his seminar dwell upon the second part of Zarathustra's vision, and its riddle to be solved. In Nietzsche's text, this starts off

⁴ In *The Significance of the Father in the Destiny of the Individual*, Jung interprets the dreams of a boy, where a black serpent bites his face. He explains: 'The serpent's attack on the boy's face, the part that "sees", represents the danger to consciousness (blinding)'" (Jung [1909/1949], CW 4: §737, translation modified).

with the serpent hanging from the shepherd's mouth, and ends with wondering who the shepherd is and what the whole scene represents.

On 8 June 1938, Jung's focus is on finding a parallel of the vision of the serpent hanging from the shepherd's mouth, in order to interpret its psychological significance. Quite interestingly, Mrs. Jung asks her husband whether one could 'say that Christ crushing the head of the snake was a similar motif'. Even more interesting is the answer provided by Jung: 'Crushing the head is similar to biting off the head, but it is not quite the idea of swallowing it or the interpenetration of the two. The descent into hell would be a parallel if hell were represented by a dragon's belly' (Jung, SNZ II:1281). Jung's opinion is indeed about Zarathustra's unique vision, turning the traditional symbol of the hero upside down: typically it is the hero that gets swallowed by the serpent or the dragon; in *Zarathustra*, the serpent is partially swallowed by the shepherd. After making comparisons with the Hindu and Buddhist *Nagas*—the protective serpents—, the Hopis snake dance—in which the dancers 'put the snakes into their mouths'—and the symbolic interpretation of the Greek rituals of *Aischrologia* during the Eleusinian mysteries—which 'have never been quite understood because we have no text or any other exact evidence of what happened there' but were represented with the initiates 'kissing or fondling a pretty big snake'—Jung explains that 'the serpent represents the magic mana in the earth which has to be brought up for man to again establish communication with that fertile power'. So, all of the serpent cults or rituals were 'originally fertility rites' (ibid:1284). However, '[t]he hero himself has qualities of the snake'. In *Zarathustra*, the 'interpenetration' of the two opposite aspects of the symbol of the hero—namely, its original form and its serpentine inversion—can be thought of as a representation of the *ouroboros*, the alchemical symbol of the self-devouring serpent, or of two animals eating each other simultaneously: the shepherd 'is apparently swallowing the snake, but the snake is attacking him at the same time, penetrating him' (ibid:1285-7).

The *ouroboros* is also linked to the figure of the dwarf at the beginning of Zarathustra's vision and explained in relation to the eternal return: just as the dwarf was part of Zarathustra himself, trying to reveal the truth concerning the centrality of the moment, so too the serpent represents another unconscious appendix of Zarathustra's, which attempts to steer him towards the same conclusion. However, according to Jung, Nietzsche always fails to read the signs brought in front of his eyes by the unconscious: 'if he takes this moment that has been emphasised by both the dwarf and himself in mutual collaboration, as a unique moment, with

no return, no repetition, then he would be forced to realise it completely', but Nietzsche gets rid of the content of the revelation and keeps its form only. Jung's understanding of Nietzsche's idea of the eternal return is all about Nietzsche's skipping his main responsibility: 'So when Nietzsche says that the moment will repeat itself and has already repeated itself many a time, he makes it into a thing we are used to; it is an ordinary day, an ordinary hour, so why bother about?'. By contrast, 'the full realisation of the here and now is a moral accomplishment which is only short of heroism: it is an almost heroic achievement' (ibid:1288-9).

Similarly, the final vision of the shepherd and the serpent represents 'the whole impossibility of Nietzsche's situation': the 'black disgusting' serpent is seen by Jung as Nietzsche's 'other side', and the shepherd's obligation 'to bite off the serpent's head' seems to be pointless, since, as Jung remarks, the 'head had bitten itself fast in the sleeper's throat. The snake bit first and has such a hold that Zarathustra cannot pull it out of the shepherd's mouth'. Also, although Nietzsche does not inform his readers that the serpent is poisonous, 'one is almost forced to assume that such an awful black serpent would be poisonous', indeed 'the poison seems to belong to this picture'. Quite interestingly, Jung points out that despite all the questions that Zarathustra asks himself about the meaning of the vision and the sense of the riddle to be solved, 'there is no question of what the serpent may be. [...] The serpent is the other side and he is not interested in that other side'. Finally, the transformation of the shepherd into *Übermensch*, after biting off the serpent's head, is regarded by Jung as corresponding to the transformation into a god, to be placed on the same tradition as the Egyptian mythological accounts, since 'the serpent represents also the god'. After proclaiming God's death, Nietzsche's 'god appears here as a demoniacal power in the old way—when the god appears from below he is a snake. Even the lord Jesus is a serpent, as you know from the Evangel of John [...] ' (ibid:1293-6).

What has emerged from Jung's seminar on *Zarathustra* is Jung's association between these two different chapters and linking of them with Nietzsche's inflation. At this stage, Jung refers to the biblical motif of the heel while commenting on 'Of the Adder's Bite' only; however, in *Symbols of Transformation*, Jung will apply the same hermeneutics to 'Of the Vision and the Riddle'. As will be explored in the next section, in 1952, Jung will merge these two chapters from *Zarathustra*, and interpret them in relation to Nietzsche's failed individuation, as anticipated in the seminar.

**FROM WANGLUNGEN UND SYMBOLE DER LIBIDO TO
SYMBOLS OF TRANSFORMATION**

The Serpent As ‘Introverting Libido’

In the chapter ‘The Dual Mother’ of *Symbols of Transformation*, Jung describes a few dreams of his patients’, concerning serpents. The last one he talks about consists of a ‘serpent [...] stuck in [his patient’s] throat’. Jung comments by stating that ‘Nietzsche uses this symbolism in his “vision” of the shepherd and the serpent’, and quotes the final part of ‘Of the Vision and the Riddle’ entirely. Here is how Jung interprets the text, based on what he has previously argued, as follows:

[T]he serpent represents the unconscious psyche which, like the serpent-god in the Sabazio mysteries, crawls into the mouth of the celebrant, i.e. Nietzsche himself as the ποιμήν or ποιμάνδρης, the shepherd of souls and preacher, firstly to stop him from talking too much, and secondly to make him ἔνθεος—“‘enthused’, filled with God”. The serpent had already bitten fast, but fear was swifter and more violent: it bit off the serpent’s head and spat it out. *If you want the serpent to bruise your heel you have only to tread on his head.* The shepherd laughed on getting rid of the serpent—a wild hysterical laughter, because he had dished the compensation from the unconscious. He could now reckon without his host, and with the well-known consequences: one has only to read the passages in Zarathustra where Nietzsche speaks of laughing and laughter. Unfortunately, everything happened afterwards just as if the whole German nation had paid heed to Nietzsche’s sermon. The unconscious insinuates itself in the form of a serpent if the conscious mind is afraid of the compensating tendency of the unconscious, as is generally the case in regression. But if the compensation is accepted in principle, there is no regression, and the unconscious can be met half-way through introversion. It must be admitted, however, that the problem as it presented itself to Nietzsche was insoluble, for nobody could expect the shepherd to swallow down a serpent under such circumstances. We are confronted here with one of those fatal cases, by no mean uncommon, where the compensation appears in a form that cannot be accepted and could only be overcome by something that is equally impossible for the patient. Cases of this kind occur when the unconscious has been resisted for too long on principle, and a wedge violently driven between instinct and the conscious mind (Jung [1952], CW 5: §§585-587, italics added, translation modified).

In this comment, the reference to the serpent biting the heel which is crushing its head—that was originally directed towards ‘Of the Adder’s Bite’—is now referred to ‘Of the Vision and the Riddle’, which is again understood by Jung as another unconscious attempt to stop Nietzsche’s inflation and help him realise the self. The link between this chapter and ‘Of the Adder’s Bite’ is made clear by Jung in his statement ‘the serpent [...] crawls into the mouth of the celebrant [...], firstly to stop him from talking too much, and secondly to make him ἐνθεος—“‘enthused’, filled with God”’. As previously mentioned, in his seminar on *Zarathustra*, Jung had interpreted ‘Of the Adder’s Bite’ as a possibility of Nietzsche interrupting his identification with the logos by letting Zarathustra be killed by the serpent: due to his propensity for making speeches, Zarathustra was indeed regarded as a symbol for the logos itself. On that occasion, Jung had also anticipated that ‘the same motif [would come] again later’, implicitly suggesting a common thread with ‘Of the Vision and the Riddle’ (Jung, SNZ I:756).

In 1912, in the first draft of *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido*, however, Jung’s comment on ‘Of the Vision and the Riddle’ was quite different, as the serpent was regarded as representing the ‘introverting libido’; there was no mention of compensation or of Nietzsche’s final madness. Only the inspirational element of introversion was highlighted by Jung: ‘through introversion one is fertilised, inspired, regenerated and reborn from the God’ (Jung [1912]:415).

In both versions, continuing his discourse, Jung makes an interesting parallel with the Hindu myth of Prajapati, ‘the unknown creator of all things’. Based on Nietzsche’s friend and famous Indologist Paul Deussen’s interpretation, Jung states that ‘As Hiranyagarbha (the Golden Gem), Prajapati is the self-begotten egg, the cosmic egg from which he hatches himself’. This perfectly incarnates Jung’s idea of introversion, for ‘self-incubation, self-castigation, and introversion are closely related ideas. Immersion in oneself (introversion) is a penetration into the unconscious and at the same time asceticism. The result, for the philosophy of the Brahmanas, is the creation of the world, and for the mystic the regeneration and spiritual rebirth of the individual, who is born into a new world of the spirit’ (Jung [1952], CW 5: §§588-591).

Jung’s discourse on the serpent motif is far more complex than this and cannot be fully understood without looking at its evolution from the 1912 version to the 1952 one. In order to do that, the same analogy hero-serpent that Jung presented in the seminar on *Zarathustra* will have to be examined in the context of *Wandlungen*. This time,

however, Jung's interest will concern Nietzsche's *Dionysos Dithyrambos*.

The Hero, the Anima and the Mother-Image

After the comparison with the myth of Prajapati, already in the 1912 version of this text, Jung had made use of a few dithyrambos by Nietzsche, to explain the process of the libido withdrawing inwards during introversion. At that time, Nietzsche had sounded like a prophet, as well as a forerunner of Jung's idea; some 40 years later, Jung will instead stress the pathological side of Nietzsche.⁵ In both versions, Jung describes the path of the hero 'renewing the world' as a personification of 'the world-creating power which, brooding on itself in introversion, coiled round its own egg like a serpent, threatens life with its poisonous bite, so that the living may die and be born again from the darkness'. To find a precursor of such vision, Jung quotes from Nietzsche's poem 'Glory and Eternity' [Ruhm und Ewigkeit]: 'How long already have you sat on your misfortune? / Give heed, lest you hatch me / An egg, / A basilisk egg / From your long travail' (Nietzsche 1967— vol. 6: 402; translation by thenietzschechannel.com). So Jung states that 'the hero is himself the serpent, himself the sacrificer and the sacrificed, which is why Christ rightly compares himself with the healing Moses-serpent, and why the saviour of the Christian Orphites was a serpent, too' (Jung [1952], CW 5: §§592-593; translation modified).⁶ In 1912, to stress the 'divine mystery of renewed rebirth in the maternal world', Jung had quoted an entire stanza from Nietzsche's dithyramb 'On the Poverty of the Richest' [Von der Armut des Reichsten], which was then ejected from his revisited version in 1952 :

⁵ However, Jung's opinion on Nietzsche as a prophet will persist not only in *Symbols of Transformation* but in all of Jung's later works. At the core of Jung's interpretation from the seminar onwards is indeed the idea of Nietzsche representing a prophet of WWII and European totalitarianisms. Such an idea recurs in all of Jung's later writings—the most popular ones being *Wotan* (1936) (CW 10: §§370-399) and *After the Catastrophe* (1945) (ibid: §§400-443; see Liebscher 2001).

⁶ This is an implicit reference to another of Nietzsche's *Dionysos Dithyrambos*, namely, 'Between Birds of Prey' [Zwischen Raubvögeln], just mentioned by Jung in a previous section of *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido*, to argue that the image of the 'sacrifice of God'—that can also be found in the idea of the crucified Christ—'is not a torment which comes from without, which befalls mankind'; rather '[Zarathustra] himself is the hunter, murderer and sacrificial knife' (Jung [1912]:327-8). In 1952, Jung will make a similar comment on the same poem: 'That the torment which afflicts mankind does not come from outside, but that man is his own huntsman, his own sacrificer, his own sacrificial knife, is clear from another poem of Nietzsche's, where the dualism is resolved into a psychic conflict' (Jung [1952], CW 5: §446).

Ailing with tenderness, just as the thawing
 wind,
 Zarathustra sits waiting, waiting on his hill,
 Sweetened and cooked in his own juice,
 Beneath his summits,
 Beneath his ice he sits,
 Weary and happy,
 A Creator on his seventh day.
 Silence!
 It is my truth!
 From hesitating eyes—
 From velvety shadows
 Her glance meets mine,
 Lovely, mischievous, the glance of a girl.
 She divines the reason of my happiness,
 he divines me—ha! What is she plotting?
 A purple dragon lurks
 In the abyss of her maiden glance.
 Woe to thee, Zarathustra,
 Though seemest like some one-sidedness
 Who has swallowed gold,
 Thy belly will be slit open (cited in Jung
 [1912]:418).

So, Jung had argued, ‘in this poem nearly all the symbolism is collected which we have elaborated previously from other connections’, and he goes on listing various myths where ‘the primitive identity of serpent and hero are still extant’ (ibid:418-9).

Finally, in both texts from 1912 and 1952, Jung considers Nietzsche’s dithyramb ‘Amongst the Daughters of the Desert’ [Unter der Töchter der Wüste] as another example of the identity hero-serpent. However, whereas in the 1912 version, Jung had emphasised only the universal character of Nietzsche’s symbology, in the 1952 text, major focus will be directed towards Nietzsche’s incapability to compensate for his unilateral attitude. Both in 1912 and 1952, in the following lines by Nietzsche, Jung sees a rephrasing for the eternal image of ‘the mother who secretly lays a poisonous serpent in [the hero’s] path to undo him’:

[...] Here I am swallowed down
 By this smallest oasis.

Yawning it opened
 Its lovely lips—
 All hail to that whale
 If he provides thus
 For his guests's welfare!

Hail to his belly,
 If it is
 Such a lovely oasis belly!

The desert grows; woe to him who hides
 deserts!
 Stone grinds on stone, the desert gulps and
 strangles.
 Monstrous Death, glowing under his tan,
 Stares and chews ... his life is his chewing
 ...
 O man burnt out by lust, do not forget:
 You are the stone , the desert, and the
 death's— head (cited in Jung [1952], CW
 5: §§596-597, translation modified).

In both comments, Jung draws a parallel with Wagner's *Siegfried*. Here, as Jung puts it, 'it is not the mother who lays the poisonous worm in our path, but life itself, which wills itself to complete the sun course, to mount from morn to noon, and then, crossing the meridian, to hasten towards evening, no more at odds with itself, but desiring the descent and the end' (ibid: §598). However, whereas in *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido*, Nietzsche's and Wagner's images seem to go hand in hand and to complete each other, in *Symbols of Transformation*, Wagner seems to somehow redeem the pathology of Nietzsche's unilateral interpretation of the mother-image. Albeit similar to Nietzsche's concept of the *amor fati*, Wagner's approach to Siegfried's relationship to Brünnhilde seems to suit Jung's idea better. Indeed, Siegfried appears to Jung 'more cautious' than Nietzsche's *Übermensch*: whereas the latter 'tries to be always one jump ahead of fate', the former acknowledges the identity of the 'mother-*imago* [...] with the *anima*', representing 'the feminine aspect of the hero himself'. The mother does not just represent destruction but also love, depths and rebirth (ibid: §§598-611).

Interestingly, while interpreting Miss Miller's fantasies in 1912,

Jung had written that ‘the serpent which killed the horse and the hero voluntarily sacrificing himself, are primitive figures of phantasies and religious myths streaming up from the unconscious’ and had put in a footnote the following quotation from Genesis 49:17: ‘Dan will be a snake by the roadside, a viper along the path, that bites the horse’s heels so that its rider tumbles backward’ (Jung [1912]: 456-7, footnote 17). In *Symbols of Transformation*, the footnote misses, although Jung’s comment remains (Jung [1952], CW 5: §645).

What such a confrontation between Jung’s making use of Nietzsche’s images in 1912 *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido* and 1952 *Symbols of Transformation* can clearly show, is Jung’s shifting his interpretation of Nietzsche from an interesting forerunner of some of his own ideas—or, more generally, one of those poets capable of recreating and putting into words universal motifs of the human mind—to a case study representing a failed attempt at individuating. To answer the question as to where such a shift comes from, a quick look at *Liber Novus* is essential. Here, not only does Jung implicitly and explicitly refer to Nietzsche and *Zarathustra* throughout, Nietzsche appears as a real character in a fantasy from January 1914. Even more, if in all of Jung’s fantasies prior to January 1914 Nietzsche recurs in the second layer of *Liber Novus*—namely in Jung’s retrospective comments or stylistic choices—exclusively; from January 1914, Nietzsche appears in both layers of fantasies and style, and his appearance is more and more important for the development of *Liber Novus*. 1914 is also the year of Jung’s second reading of *Zarathustra*, and has to be considered as the actual divide within Jung’s understanding of Nietzsche. What is documented by *Liber Novus* around that time, is indeed Jung’s confrontation with Nietzsche and his madness. Before 1914, Jung was both fascinated and scared by Nietzsche—he was fascinated with Nietzsche’s insight and creativity and scared by the possibility of ending up in a lunatic asylum like Nietzsche, due to the seeming closeness of Jung’s inner experiences with *Zarathustra*. After a 2-year inner confrontation with Nietzsche (with a one-year gap from summer 1914 to summer 1915, during which Jung read *Zarathustra* for the second time), from 1916 onwards, Jung was no longer scared by Nietzsche, as he thought he had found the way to avoid madness. Jung’s remedy against folly, as will be explored in the next section, lies in what Nietzsche had been incapable of doing after killing his god: allowing a new god to be born again.

JUNG'S CONFRONTATION WITH NIETZSCHE IN *LIBER NOVUS***The Encounter with Nietzsche: 'Divine Folly', 'Nox Secunda', 'Nox Tertia'**

As anticipated, around January 1914, Jung meets Nietzsche in one of his fantasies, documented in *Liber Novus* throughout three chapters: 'Divine Folly', 'Nox Secunda', 'Nox Tertia'. Firstly, Jung's 'I'—namely the protagonist of Jung's visions—enters a library and asks for a copy of Thomas à Kempis's *The Imitation of Christ (Imitatio Christi)*, thus engaging in a conversation with the librarian on Nietzsche and 'the collapse of religion'. The librarian's point of view is that of Nietzsche interiorising 'man exceptionally well', thus providing a perfect substitution 'for the loss of opportunity for prayer' caused by such collapse. By the side of Nietzsche, the librarian places Goethe and his *Faust*. Jung's 'I' disagrees on such judgement on Nietzsche, for he 'can't help feeling that Nietzsche speaks to those who need more freedom, not to those who clash strongly with life, who bleed from wounds, and who hold fast to actualities'. As opposed to the librarian's position, Jung's 'I' argues that some people 'need inferiority, not superiority', or maybe 'resignation, a word that one used to hear a lot of, but seldom anymore'. As the librarian points out, 'resignation' also 'sounds very Christian', to which Jung's 'I' replies: 'there seem to be all sorts of things in Christianity that maybe one would do well to keep. Nietzsche is too oppositional. Like everything healthy and long-lasting, truth unfortunately adheres more to the middle way, which we unjustly abhor' (Jung, RB:293).

Here begins Jung's actual confrontation with Nietzsche, understood as one of those 'prophets' of our contemporary area, in which Christianity seems to be lost and hard to restore (*ibid*). Jung's vision continues and he sees himself entering another room, apparently a kitchen, willing to read his book, but in reality falling asleep after a few pages. Here another vision starts, in which Jung's 'I' finds himself in an asylum, surrounded by doctors diagnosing his disease as a case of 'religious paranoia': 'nowadays, the imitation of Christ leads to the madhouse'. There seems to be nothing left for Jung's 'I' but facing madness, arguably his biggest fear: 'The problem of madness is profound. Divine madness—a higher form of the irrationality of the life streaming through us—at any rate a madness that cannot be integrated into present-day society—but how? What if the form of society were integrated into madness? At this point things grow dark, and there is no end in sight' (*ibid*:295). Jung's 'I' is now ready to start his confrontation with the other, forgotten side of religion, i.e. what is refused

and condemned by modern Christianity, in opposition to its origins. By so doing—so Jung interprets his vision—all *the dead*, namely all those who cannot find their place in a Christian living, could be finally redeemed. The number of the dead has now become greater than that of the living, i.e. of those who can be considered saved by Christ and his teaching. It is highly significant that, in the *Draft* version of *Liber Novus*, Jung implicitly refers to Nietzsche as a ‘prophet’ who on the one hand has tried to defend and revalue the dead’s rights, and on the other hand has been driven mad by being ‘their blind spokesman’. Since Jung realises, however, that the dead are a part of himself, he also recognises the importance of being ‘alone with the dead’, to accept the lowest and the ‘chaos’—therefore his madness (ibid:297-8; Shamdasani 2009: footnote 183).

What happens next is accounted in chapter ‘Nox Tertia’ and dated 18 January 1914. Jung’s ‘I’ is still in the asylum, and the patient sleeping next to him suddenly stands up and cries out: ‘Something worse happened to me, it’s five years now that I’ve been here. [...] But I am Nietzsche, only rebaptised, I am also Christ, the Savior, and appointed to save the world, but they won’t let me’. So the dialogue goes on:

I: “Who won’t let you?”

The fool: “The devil. We are in Hell. But of course, you haven’t noticed it yet. I didn’t realise until the second year of my time here that the director is the devil.”

I: “You mean the professor? That sounds incredible.”

The fool: “You’re an ignoramus. I was supposed to marry the mother of God long ago. But the professor, that devil, has her in his power. Every evening when the sun goes down he gets her with child. In the morning before sunrise she gives birth to it. Then all the devils come together and kill the child in a gruesome manner. I distinctly hear his cries.”

I: “But what you have told me is pure mythology.”

The fool: “You’re crazy and understand nothing of it. You belong in the madhouse [Irrenhaus]. My God, why does my family always shut me in with crazy people? I’m supposed to save the world, I’m the Saviour!” [...] (ibid:298).

It can be helpful to notice what Nietzsche has written at the beginning of *Zarathustra*, in the fifth paragraph of the ‘prologue’, and Jung has marked in his own copy: ‘No herdsman and no one herd. Everyone wants the same thing, everyone is the same: whoever thinks otherwise goes voluntarily into

the madhouse [Irrenhaus]' (Nietzsche 1969:46). Returning to *Liber Novus*, after saying these words, the fool returns to his usual apathetic state, leaving Jung's 'I' alone and with a new vision. Now he sees a red sun rising above the horizon line, with a cross from which an undefinable animal-shaped figure (serpent, bull or an ass) is hanging. Looking at the symbol more carefully, Jung's 'I' wonders whether that might not represent himself, as Christ crucified, who is actually hanging down from the cross and wearing a crown of thorns: 'The sun of martyrdom has arisen and is pouring bloody rays over the sea'. The higher the sun rises, the hotter it 'burns down white on a blue sea', whose 'salty smell' reminds Jung's 'I' of a 'charitable and quiet summer'. Suddenly a wave 'breaks on the sand with a dull thunder and returns incessantly, twelve times, the strokes of the world clock—the twelfth hour is complete. And now silence enters. No noise, no breeze. Everything is rigid and deathly still' (Jung, RB:299). This significant passage offers a multitude of themes recurrent in *Zarathustra* and elsewhere in Nietzsche's writings, that cannot be exhausted here—due to the brevity of the paper—but that show how relevant Nietzsche's presence in *Liber Novus* becomes from this very moment onwards. Nietzsche as a character is gone, Jung's 'I' will soon wake up, realising that he has never left the library and everything was just a dream; however, Nietzsche as an element of confrontation will recur increasingly until the end of Jung's fantasies.

Poisonous Serpents and Heels: 'Resolution', 'First Day', 'The Magician'

As already stated, Nietzsche does not appear in layer 1 of *Liber Novus* until 1914. However, in Jung's retrospective comments on his fantasies, references to Nietzsche and stylistic similarities with *Zarathustra* are quite recurrent from the very beginning. One of such cases concerns the image of the serpent, as used at the very end of *Liber Primus*, one month before the asylum fantasy. Interestingly enough, the final chapters of *Liber Primus*, and in particular chapters 'Resolution' and 'Mysterium Encounter' share a variety of symbolical elements with 'Of the Vision and the Riddle', such as the presence of a dwarf, the 'gloomy' [düster] atmosphere, the allusion to 'dreadful riddles' (Jung, RB:246), and the presence of a 'crater' [Krater] (ibid:248).⁷

⁷ The 'Blissful Islands' from where Zarathustra is leaving on board of a ship are characterised by the presence of a 'volcano' [Feuerberg], as accounted in chapter 'Of Great Event' (Nietzsche 1969:152). Jung referred to 'Of Great Events' in his doctoral thesis, indicating it as an example of *cryptomnesia*. To support his hypothesis, Jung had a brief correspondence with Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche, Nietzsche's sister, that

Towards the end of *Liber Primus*, Jung's 'I' comes across the characters of Elijah and Salome. Elijah is an old man, namely the biblical prophet, and Salome, a blind girl, is said to be his daughter. The former is said to represent 'forethinking'; the latter 'pleasure', and it is also revealed that she loves Jung's 'I'. A 'third principle' is then represented by a serpent, necessary to keep these two principles united; for the 'earthly' element of serpents is 'a stranger to both principles although it is associated with both'. It 'has the weight of the earth in itself but also its changeability and germination from which everything that becomes emerges', and through its connection with 'longing', reminds one of life and reunifies the opposites (Jung, RB:247).

However, serpents have a double meaning and double colour in *Liber Novus*: by the side of their healing power, they also preserve the destructive force of their poison; next to the 'black' serpent, the 'white' one is always necessary to solve the tension. Besides the similar tone of these two episodes, what seems to really link Nietzsche with the serpent symbol in *Liber Novus*, is its poisonous aspect indeed, recalling Jung's later understanding of 'Of the Adder's Bite' and 'Of the Vision and the Riddle'. Precisely this aspect recurs in *Liber Secundus* significantly. On 8 January 1914, in chapter 'First Day', Jung's 'I' has a dialogue with Izdubar, coming from the East and ignoring most of the Western costumes and values. Later in the book, Jung will find out that this strange figure was his god. In the aforementioned dialogue, Izdubar compares science to a poison and adds: 'You call poison truth? Is poison truth? Or is truth poison? Do not our astrologers and priests also speak the truth? And yet theirs does not act like poison'(ibid:278). Interestingly, in *The Gay Science* 113, 'On the doctrine of poisons', Nietzsche expresses the same analogy between scientific thinking and poison. According to him, the former is originated by the union of different impulses which, each of them being unilateral, act exactly like poisons on the whole organism of life. In fact, they prevent the organism from realising how important a cooperation of science with 'artistic energies' and 'practical wisdom of life' would be (Nietzsche 1967 — vol. 3:473-474). Furthermore, again during the same *Liber Novus* dialogue, Jung explains that because of the importance given to science in Western culture, Western man remains 'dwarfish' [zwerghaft]—therefore suggesting another allusion to 'Of the Vision and the Riddle'. Even more important, the same reference

confirmed his idea (Jung [1902], CW 1: §§140-142; [1905], ibid: §§180-184; Bishop 1993; Bishop 1995a:280-281). In Jung's own copy of *Zarathustra*, the chapter presents some reading marks and annotations.

becomes clearer through another couple of passages. The first one is this:

I: “Now you perhaps see that we had no choice. We had to swallow the poison of science. Otherwise we would have met the same fate as you have: we’d be completely lamed, if we encountered it unsuspecting and unprepared. This poison is so insurmountably strong that everyone, even the strongest, and even the eternal Gods, perish because of it. If our life is dear to us, we prefer to sacrifice a piece of our life force rather than abandon ourselves to certain death” (Jung, RB:279).

Science is not only poisoning but also to be swallowed; similarly, the serpent in the shepherd’s mouth described by Nietzsche in ‘Of the Vision and the Riddle’ has to be bitten, or, according to Jung’s interpretation, swallowed.⁸ Moreover, the capacity of killing ‘the eternal Gods’ through the poison of science can be thought of as another implicit allusion to Nietzsche. The other passage to be noticed appears in Jung’s retrospective reflection on the same vision:

So the path [Pfad] of my life led me beyond the rejected opposites, united in smooth and—alas!—extremely painful sides of the way which lay before me. I stepped on them but they burned and froze my soles. And thus I reached the other side. *But the poison of the serpent, whose head you crush, enters you through the wound in your heel;* and thus the serpent becomes more dangerous than it was before. Since whatever I reject is nevertheless in my nature. I thought it was without,

⁸ The swallowing motif in relation to Nietzsche has fascinated Jung in several occasions. Nietzsche had indeed a dream of his hand becoming transparent and a toad resting on it. In his dream, he then felt an irresistible impulse to swallow the toad, which is what he did. Jung recalls that dream in both editions of *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido* (Jung [1912]:490; [1952], CW 5: §47, footnote 1), in *On the Psychology of the Unconscious* (Jung [1917-1943]: §37), as well as in the seminar on *Zarathustra* (Jung, SNZ I:255). In all of these occasions, Jung relates the toad with Nietzsche’s inner self. In both editions of *Wandlungen*, Jung identifies the dream with a revelation of Nietzsche’s syphilis: ‘Sitting beside a young woman, he tells her that something terrible and disgusting has happened to his transparent hand, something he must take completely into his body. We know what disease caused the premature ending of Nietzsche’s life. It was precisely this that he had to tell his young lady, and her laughter was indeed out of tune’. In his other writings, it is Nietzsche’s incapability to swallow what the toad represents in his concrete life to be emphasised by Jung—namely his darkest instincts, what Jung calls the ‘shadow’ in his more technical vocabulary.

and so I believed that I could destroy it. But it resides in me and has only assumed a passing outer form and stepped toward me. I destroyed its form and believed that I was a conqueror. But I have not yet overcome myself (ibid, italics added).

The meeting with the dwarf happens to Zarathustra on a mountain ‘path’ [Pfad]. The same path will then be used to exemplify the traditional view of time, and to introduce the idea of the eternal return: a ‘gateway’, representing the present ‘moment’, divides the ‘long lane’ into two paths, symbolising both sides of eternity, namely past and future. Recognising the eternal return means to stop considering time as a continuative line, giving value and responsibility to the moment instead. For what is happening right now, not only has already happened infinite times in the past, but has still to be eternally *repeated*. In order not only to admit that possibility, but also to accept it, Zarathustra’s vision goes on with the shepherd scene, where ‘a heavy, black serpent’ is hanging from the shepherd’s mouth, causing him convulsions and torment. As anticipated, the only solution for him to be safe is to bite the serpent’s head and tear it off. From Nietzsche’s perspective, the serpent symbolises the heaviest and darkest side of the ‘abysmal thought’, i.e. the initial ‘disgust’ [Ekel] to life of the eternal return; once accepted, however, it offers a redeeming, lighter view. Exactly in this sense, the shepherd turns himself into ‘a transformed being, surrounded with light, *laughing*’ (Nietzsche 1969:180, translation modified).

All these elements collected together create a strong link between *Liber Novus* ‘First Day’ and *Zarathustra* ‘Of the Vision and the Riddle’. In particular, the sentence ‘But the poison of the serpent, whose head you crush, enters you through the wound in your heel; and thus the serpent becomes more dangerous than it was before’ explains Jung’s later understanding of ‘Of the Vision and the Riddle’ and ‘Of the Adder’s Bite’: 20 years later, Jung will arguably interpret *Zarathustra* in the same way that he interpreted his own *Liber Novus*. So the serpents represent the opposites, to accept and unite, but to whose poison it is impossible not to succumb. However, it is necessary to incorporate such poison in order to reach ‘the other side’, which, translated into Jung’s later technical vocabulary, means individuation.

Towards the very end of *Liber Secundus*, in chapter ‘The Magician’, the biting-heel-serpent motif occurs again, in a quite similar context. Here Philemon states:

I continue on my way; accompanied by a finely polished piece of steel, hardened in ten fires, stowed safely in my

robe. Secretly; I wear chain mail under my coat. Overnight I became fond of serpents, and I solved their riddle. I sit down next to them on the hot stones lying by the wayside. I know how to catch them cunningly and cruelly; those cold devils that prick the heel of the unsuspecting (Jung, RB:317).

Again, the serpent motif is accompanied by the riddle motif, suggesting another allusion to 'Of the Vision and the Riddle'. Most significantly, the importance of embracing a balanced (non-one-sided) vision is stressed, as it was in 'First Day', and as it will be in Jung's seminar on *Zarathustra*: serpents are symbols of wisdoms but also poisonous creatures, 'cold devils that prick the heel of the unsuspecting'.

Ultimately, it is important to stress the biblical component of the symbolical constellation heel-serpent-bite. As is often the case in *Liber Novus*, Jung makes use of specific biblical images to pursue his psychological victory over Nietzsche and, hence, over his own fear of becoming mad. Many times he chooses indeed to quote from Luther's Bible in the same way that Nietzsche did; several biblical elements are drawn directly from Nietzsche and not from the Bible itself. What emerges from Nietzsche's presence in *Liber Novus* is his duple link with folly and the 'death of God': by refusing the possibility of a rebirth of God, one inevitably falls into madness. Jung's confrontation with Nietzsche is thus centred on proving him wrong on the one hand and, consequently, saving himself from the fear of mental illness on the other. Such an abundance of biblical quotations, therefore, belongs to a silent, yet consistent, dialogue with Nietzsche, aiming at transvaluing Nietzsche's own transvaluation by promoting a return to a certain form of Christianity.

CONCLUSION

Starting from a seemingly unfit comment of Jung's on Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*, the history of such a comment has been reconstructed through *Liber Novus*, serving as a lens to explore Jung's confrontation with Nietzsche. What has emerged is a shift in Jung's opinion on Nietzsche, from a like-minded poet—gifted with prophetic insight into the human mind—to the most effective example of the consequences of a failed individuation process. *Liber Novus* can be considered a long war between Jung and his daemons; the predominant battlefield of Jung's war concerns religion, which ends up becoming not only Jung's

lifeline but also the explanation provided to justify Nietzsche's failure. In Jung's opinion, Nietzsche's refusal to let a new god be born after killing the old one would lead him to his madness; by contrast, Jung's very own new born god would save him from madness, by allowing him to make peace with reality. At the end of his life, Jung will define his counterbalancing the horror of succumbing to his fantasies as a necessity to 'return wholly to reality' (Jung/Jaffé [1962]:188), and will make a comparison between his experience of *Liber Novus* and Nietzsche's:

It was most essential for me to have a normal life in the real world as a counterpoise to that strange inner world. My family and my profession remained the base to which I could always return, assuring me that I was an actually existing, ordinary person. The unconscious contents could have driven me out of my wits. But my family, and the knowledge: I have a medical diploma from a Swiss university, I must help my patients, I have a wife and five children, I live at 228 Seestrasse in Küsnacht these were actualities which made demands upon me and proved to me again and again that I really existed, that I was not a blank page whirling about in the winds of the spirit, like Nietzsche. Nietzsche had lost the ground under his feet because he possessed nothing more than the inner world of his thoughts which incidentally possessed him more than he it. He was uprooted and hovered above the earth, and therefore he succumbed to exaggeration and irreality. For me, such irreality was the quintessence of horror, for I aimed, after all, at this world and this Me. No matter how deeply absorbed or how blown about I was, I always knew that everything I was experiencing was ultimately directed at this real life of mine (ibid:189).

After *Liber Novus*, Nietzsche will appear to Jung as someone that succumbed to the unconscious and rejected the realisation of the self. This is why, thinking about *Liber Novus*, Jung adds the allusion to the heel when commenting on the serpents of 'Of the Adder's Bite' and 'Of the Vision and the Riddle': such a realisation of the self has to get through the acceptance of the opposites first, but Nietzsche's one-sidedness prevented him from accepting and incorporating his opposite, so he could never cope with the poison of the serpent, which eventually took over. Translated into archetypes, this opposite to be integrated is the anima, as thoroughly pointed out by Jung during the seminar,

with Jung drawing on alchemical and mythological symbolism to enrich his interpretation even more. In his seminar on Kundalini Yoga, Jung introduces Kundalini—represented as a serpent—as ‘the anima’ indeed. Referring to *svādhiṣṭhāna*, the second *chakra*, he adds: ‘[t]hat is the very reason why I hold that this second centre, despite the Hindu interpretation of the crescent being male, is intensely female, for the water is the womb of rebirth, the baptismal fount’ (Jung 1996:22). Similarly, in *Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious* (1934/1954), Jung introduces the anima as ‘the serpent in the paradise of the harmless man with good resolutions and still better intentions’ (Jung [1934/1954], CW 9, 1: §59).

Eastern and Western, as well as pagan and spiritual motifs merge together in Jung’s depiction of the anima as a serpent. However, archetypes become effective only when projected onto that concrete world that Jung calls ‘reality’. So one could now wonder whom Nietzsche might have projected the anima onto according to Jung; that is, who might have saved Nietzsche from his inflation, or caused that very inflation instead, as a reaction to the uncontrollable power of the archetype. Quite ironically, when analysing ‘Of the Adder’s Bite’ in the seminar, Mrs. Sigg stated that ‘When Nietzsche wrote this part of *Zarathustra* he had just had five months of daily discussion with Lou Salomé’, to which Jung responded: ‘Ah, there he met the serpent, that is quite certain’ (Jung SNZ I:755).

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