

Annalisa Caputo

The Urgency of the Untimely

This issue constitutes the Proceedings of the First International Conference organized by “Logoi” (with the *Disum Department* of the University of Bari and the *Società filosofica italiana*) in Bari (May, 16-18 2016)¹.

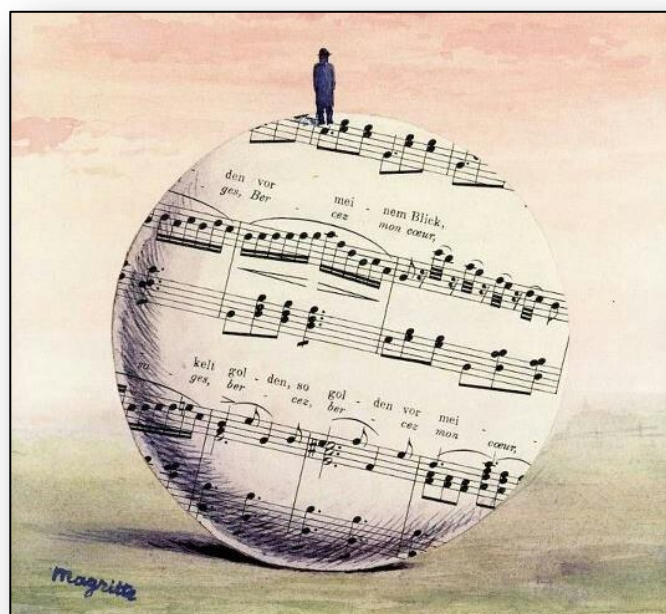
In order to present the topic explored in the Conference and in this issue (*On Untimely. From Nietzsche to us*), I would like to make a 'thinking' introduction. I will not introduce this Issue in a technical way. Allow me to do so. I did not imagine this presentation as the preface to a book that others will then write, like the beginning of something external and different from its point of departure. No. I thought of it as an *Einleitung* or *Einführung*, as the Germans would say, emphasizing the *Ein* (in). Therefore, something that is already 'in', already inside, and guided or led (*-leiten, -führen*) by, the 'thing itself' that it is part of. And the thing that it is part of (the *Leit-Frage, Leit-Wort*) is the *Untimely*.

So... what I would like to try to do in this Introduction is to let resonate some problems and some provocations contained within our keyword/ topic.

1) Let the Untimely Resonate

Resonate. A bit like what happens when you play a chord and all the harmonic sounds vibrate, sounds that cannot even be perceived distinctly, but they are there, and they mix together with the fundamental sounds. A bit like that. In our title we have the three notes of our fundamental chord: the base (*Untimely*) and then the other two: *Nietzsche and us*. I would like to point out some implied harmonic sounds in this chord. I can only choose a few. On the other hand, all the essay collected in this issue will help us to explore others. Aware, however, that the issue will remain open like all true philosophical questions. Which we do not cease to examine (from the past up to the present) because they never stop resonating.

And that's why – according to M. Heidegger –

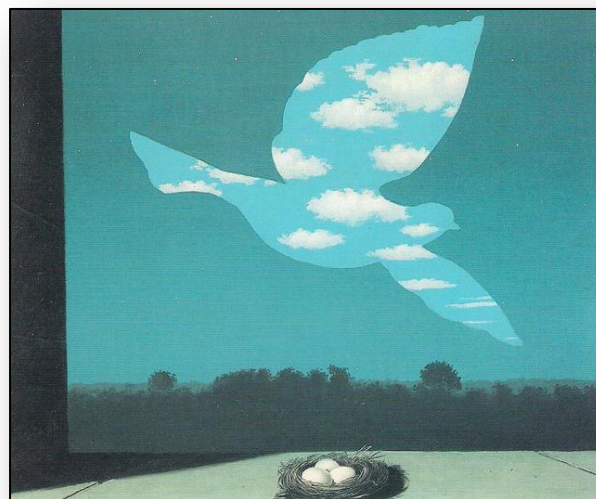


R. Magritte, *La Reconnaissance Infinie*, 1961
(detail)

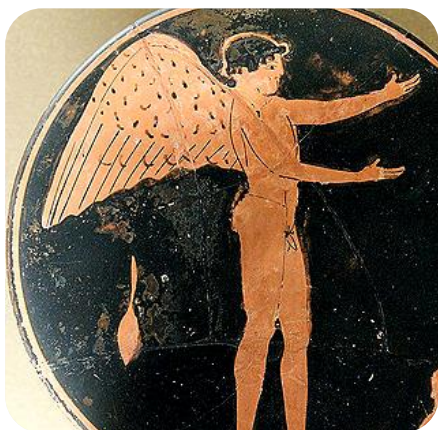
¹ Some speakers did not send us their papers for publication: G. Campioni (*L'inattualità di Nietzsche versus l'attualità di Wagner*), G. Ferraro (*Esercizi di inattualità: le Considerazioni come ontologia critica*), K. Hay Rodgers (*Experience of Time in Schelling and Tarkovsky*), M. Bracco (*Inattualità e solitudine*), S. Venezia (*L'inattualità del ritorno. Nietzsche e l'eterno*), J. Backer (*Putting time out of join from Kant to Nietzsche*); L. Lupo (*Epifanie del demone*), A. G. Leach (*The Role of the Untimely in Nietzsche's Moral*); M. Settura (*Il 'filosofo cometa': inattualità e creazione in Nietzsche e Deleuze*); J. P. Cachopo (*On Philosophy as Untimely Critique*); A. Cera (*Dall'inattualità all'antiquatezza. G. Anders 'erede' di Nietzsche*). However, we thank them for their presence at the Conference Abbiamo inoltre raccolto in una sezione a parte (*L'inattuale e le arti*) i contributi da seminari e incontri precedenti o seguenti il Convegno stesso.

All essential questioning in philosophy necessarily remains un timely and this is because (...) philosophizing always remains a kind of knowing that not only does not allow itself to be made timely but, on the contrary, imposes its measure on the times. Philosophy is essentially untimely because it is one of those few things whose fate it remains never to be able to find a direct resonance in their own time, and never to be permitted to find such a resonance. Whenever this seemingly does take place, whenever a philosophy becomes fashion, either there is no actual philosophy or else philosophy is misinterpreted and, according to some intentions alien to it, misused for the needs of the day. Philosophy, then, is not a kind of knowledge which one could acquire directly, like vocational and technical expertise, and which, like economic and professional knowledge in general, one could apply directly and evaluate according to its usefulness in each case. But what is useless can nevertheless be a power—a power in the rightful sense. (...) What is untimely will have its own times (...). Nietzsche once said: 'A philosopher: that is a human being who constantly experiences, sees, hears, suspects, hopes, dreams extraordinary things'².

I will return, in concluding, to this quote from Nietzsche and Heidegger. In the meantime, I want to play our fundamental chord in its theoretical power of resonance. Because the Untimely is first of all a theme, a theoretical adjective. Even before saying something about Nietzsche or about us, it tells us something about philosophy. Untimely is philosophy's way of being. This has always been true, but perhaps now more than ever. Un-timely (*Un/fashionable*) because *use-less*, outside of the 'timely' (current) logic of utilitarianism. Outside the 'current' logic, said Nietzsche, that makes men 'current', like current coins (the essays of F. De Natale and F. Abbate will return in this theme).



R. Magritte, *Le retour* (1940)



Eros, 450-470 b.C.

Philosophy is useless. Unproductive. It is not a technique, a job. Socrates did not even believe it was a trade and refused to be paid. Today, in a different way, in a sad way, we once again believe that you cannot work in the field of philosophy. Ask the graduates in philosophy: unemployed. Just ask those people with a certification in philosophy, thanking heaven if they can work as special needs educational assistants. Ask the majority of PhDs and researchers who wrote for this Issue of "Logoi", and who strive to seek grants and contracts to survive. Philosophy is useless. It does not attract funds like the technical and scientific disciplines. It has no immediately appreciable utilitarian implications. Yet, in its untimeliness, it remains a power. A power that continues to enroll 100 freshmen each year here in Bari. A power that can set up a conference like this one *On Untimely*, without funding; a power that attracted a lot of people (almost 500) to an event that was, all things considered, specialized and

academic. A power that has driven many non-tenured researchers from different parts of Italy and Europe to come here today at their own expense. Why? If not for the power, for the passion, for that demon that - from Socrates to Nietzsche to us - unsettles. And does not satisfy us. It forces us not to be content with the present, the timely, the current, the

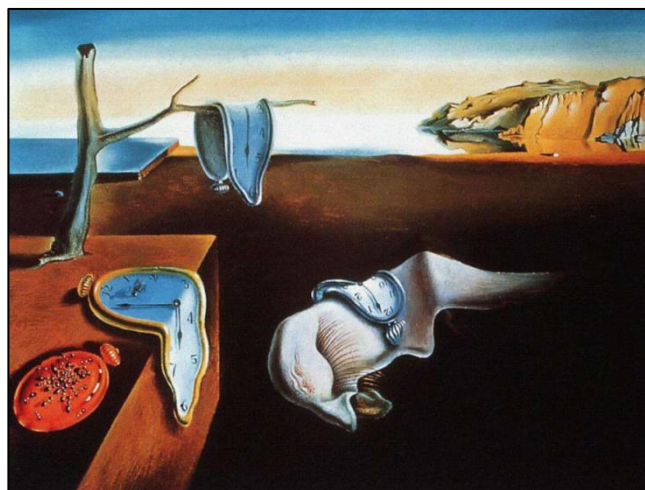
² M. Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, new translation by Gregory Fried and Richard Polt, Yale Univ. Press, New Haven and London, 2000, pp. 9-13. The quote is from F. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, §292.

status quo. It forces us to deconstruct. First of all, ourselves. And to never stop «dreaming extraordinary things»; things for that there is not a fitting time today. And perhaps there never was. And who knows if there ever will be. For this reason they are untimely. And, therefore, 'we' are untimely. But proudly untimely. Consciously and deliberately untimely. To paraphrase Nietzsche and applying to ourselves what he says about himself :we must be able to allow ourselves this, because «For I do not what meaning classical philology <and philosophy> would have for our age if not to have an untimely effect within it, that is, to act against the age and so have an effect on the age to the advantage, it is to be hoped, of a coming age»³.

This is the quote that we have chosen as the motto for our conference. Both for its power (I would say explosive) and because it is one of the few places where Nietzsche gives us (let's not say a 'definition' of the untimely, because Nietzsche is not a philosopher who defines, as we know), gives us a presentation of the untimely. Which is clearly something that has to do with time.

2) The Untimely as a Deconstructive 'Articulation' the Current Time

In German this is obvious: *un/zeit/gemäß*; *un-*, which in German means the 'not' (like the Greek alpha privative); *Zeit*, the time at the center and *gemäß* (appropriate, suitable, in agreement with), a term related to measuring (*messen*) and measure (*das Maß*)⁴: the untimely is that which is not measured by time, which is not suited to time, in accordance with the measurement of time, which is not crushed by the current time, the existing time. In this quote, taken from the *Second Untimely Meditation*, Nietzsche plays with articulating the prepositions 'around' time: and, articulating it, he upsets it. From the present time, linear, present-past-future, which crushes us (like the *Es war* boulder in Zarathustra), to a time that can be deconstructed and rethought in an untimely way: namely:



S. Dalí, *Persistenza della memoria*, 1931

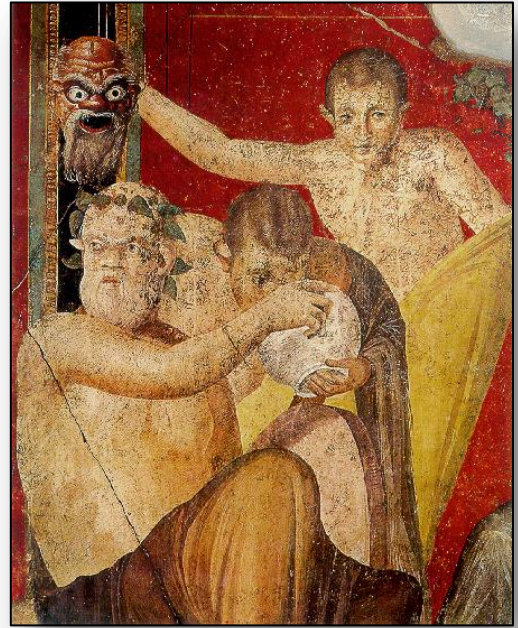
- *in unserer Zeit*, 'in our age' (not in an abstractly metaphysical or romantic eternity); and this is the premise for untimeliness; it is never disconnected from the actual.
- But also: 'in opposition to the age' (*gegen die Zeit*), against time, as it is commonly understood, lived and, most of all, as it ordinarily 'behaves' (because for Nietzsche the untimely is never only a way of thinking, but, first and foremost, a different way of behaving).

³ F. Nietzsche, *On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life, Foreword*, tr. by P. Preuss, Hackett Pub., Indianapolis – Cambridge, 1980, p. 8.

⁴ On this topic see Cfr. D. Brazeale, *Introduction* a F. Nietzsche, *Untimely Meditation* (ed. by D. Brazeale, engl. tr. by R. J. Hollingdale), Cambridge Univ. Pr, Cambridge, 1997, p. xlv: «*Die 'Zeit'* is a noun meaning both 'time' and 'the time' (as in 'the times', 'the age' or 'the era'); '*gemaess*' is either an adjective that . means 'appropriate' or 'fitting', or a preposition that means 'in accordance with' or 'in compliance with' . Accordingly, something is '*zeitgemaess*' when it is 'timely', not in the sense of being 'punctual' or 'opportune', but rather in the sense of being 'appropriate to the time' or, more figuratively, 'up to date', 'in fashion' or 'modern'».

- And thus 'on the age' (*auf die Zeit*): which is less common expression in German and is used only four times in Nietzsche, two in this *Second Untimely Meditation*⁵; in general it is used to indicate precisely the possibility of working on time, to create *an effect*, to exert *an action* on time, a possible *change*. We are in time, but we do not take it as it is, we take it 'on', on us ... to change it...
- And we work this way 'for the benefit of a coming time' (*zu Gunsten einer kommenden Zeit*) - and this expression is a *hapax* in Nietzsche; it appears only here. We are in favor of a 'coming time'. We are 'future'. Looking ahead.

The untimely, therefore, has to do primarily with a certain way of living time and living our relationship with the present, with society (as you'll read in the essay by F. D'Achille, C. Rosciglione, F. Massari Luceri, L. Romano). And thus the untimely



Pompei, Villa dei misteri, fresco with Dionysian scene

⁵ Using [Nietzsche Source](#), you can see where Nietzsche uses this expression:

1) *HL-Vorwort – Nutzen und Nachteil der Historie für das Leben: Vorwort. Erste Veröff. 22/02/1874.*

So viel muss ich mir aber selbst von Berufs wegen als classischer Philologe zugestehen dürfen: denn ich wüsste nicht, was die classische Philologie in unserer Zeit für einen Sinn hätte, wenn nicht den, in ihr unzeitgemäss – das heisst gegen die Zeit und dadurch *auf die Zeit* und hoffentlich zu Gunsten einer kommenden Zeit – zu wirken.

2) *HL-10 – Nutzen und Nachteil der Historie für das Leben: § 10. Erste Veröff. 22/02/1874.*

Diese Zweifler *auf die Zeit*, die alles an's Licht bringt, verweisend, wende ich mich zum Schluss an jene Gesellschaft der Hoffenden, um ihnen den Gang und Verlauf ihrer Heilung, ihrer Errettung von der historischen Krankheit und damit ihre eigne Geschichte bis zu dem Zeitpunkt durch ein Gleichniss zu erzählen, wo sie wieder gesund genug sein werden, von Neuem Historie zu treiben und sich der Vergangenheit unter der Herrschaft des Lebens, in jenem dreifachen Sinne, nämlich monumental oder antiquarisch oder kritisch, zu bedienen.

3) *BVN-1874,404 – Brief AN Carl von Gersdorff: 16/11/1874.*

Seufzen behalte ich mir vor, *auf die Zeit*, wo ich dazu Zeit haben werde. Heute ist des muthigen Freundes und Bruders Overbeck Geburtstag; er ist 37 Jahre geworden. – Wie glücklich waren wir alle zusammen bei Deinem Hiersein!

4) *NF-1875,12[26] – Nachgelassene Fragmente Sommer–Ende September 1875.*

Man würde Plato's Meinung treffen, wenn man mit einiger Härte darauf bestünde, daß es gleichgültig sei, was ein Künstler in socialer und politischer Hinsicht denke: daß es z.B. für die Athener ohne Gewicht sein mußte, ob Aeschylus sich für oder gegen die Beschränkung des Aeropag erklärte; ja ich glaube sogar, erst dadurch, daß man in dem Künstler gerade etwas Überzeitliches verehrt, wird man sich gegen das Gefährliche, was in seiner direkten Wirkung *auf die Zeit* liegt, einigermaßen schützen können. Ich will in diesem Zusammenhange darauf aufmerksam machen, daß es überaus nahe liegt und deshalb gefährlich ist, Wagner nicht als Künstler zu verstehen oder anders ausgedrückt: aus seinen Kunstwerken bestimmte Winke über die Gestaltung des Lebens entnehmen zu wollen.

5) *NF-1881,11[263] – Nachgelassene Fragmente Frühjahr–Herbst 1881.*

Wichtig ist jedenfalls, daß die anreizende Kraft eines Menschen nach seinem Tode übrig bleiben kann, durch seine Werke oder durch die Fabel, die von seinem Leben sich bildet: darauf sollen die denken, welche *auf die Zeit* keinen „Reiz“ üben. Zuletzt: wir irren ebenso über die Dinge, weil wir sie nach den Wirkungen in uns beurtheilen: wie verschieden scheint uns Blau und Roth, und es handelt sich um etwas mehr oder weniger Länge des Nerven!

6) *NF-1881,11[297] – Nachgelassene Fragmente Frühjahr–Herbst 1881.*

So bereitest du dich *auf die Zeit* vor, wo du sprechen mußt! Vielleicht daß du dich dann des Sprechens schämst, wie du dich mitunter des Schreibens geschämt hast, daß es noch nöthig ist, sich zu interpretiren, daß Handlungen und Nicht-Handlungen nicht genügen, dich mitzutheilen.

has to do with history (as you'll read in the papers by F. D'Achille, C. Rosciglione, F. Massari Luceri, L. Romano). It is no coincidence that this long quotation comes from the most famous of the four *Untimely Meditation* (though perhaps not the one that Nietzsche himself considered most important).

3) Nietzsche and the *Untimely Meditations*, then.

I have only reached this issue in the third point of my introduction. Both in part because I assumed that all of us know that the term untimely became famous in philosophy thanks to these four Nietzschean writings (composed between 1873 and 1876), entitled *Untimely Meditation*. And in part because this will not be a issue on the *Untimely Meditation*, understood as a Text or set of Texts. Although it cannot leave these texts out of consideration.



Nietzsche and the *Untimely Meditation*, then. We all know that Nietzsche considered the *Untimely Meditation* to be a real 'Cyclus'⁶ (we could also discuss this: why a 'cycle'? Why this term specifically?); a cycle of texts, that, in the original intentions of Professor Nietzsche – who was 29 years old when he began to write them – were supposed to be a total of 13. We have numerous drafts of hypotheses for the title: a book for each subject that, according to Nietzsche, was to be deconstructed⁷: culture, history, philosophy, philology, art, high schools and universities, religion, the state and war, the press, science, society, people. All things of which – writes

⁶ See, e. g.: (1) *BVN-1874,381 – Brief AN Carl von Gersdorff: 26/07/1874.*

Zwar hatte er auch die Nr. 3 wieder angenommen, aber mit dem sauersten und verdrüsslichsten Gesicht von der Welt: so dass ich bereits meinen *Cyclus* von *Unzeitgemässen* beschlossen und verpfuscht sah.

2) *BVN-1875,414 – Brief AN Malwida von Meysenbug: 02/01/1875.*

Dabei aber weiss ich gar nicht mehr, wann ich wieder dazu kommen soll, meinen *unzeitgemässen* *Cyclus* fortzusetzen. Mein geheimes aber hoffnungsloses Tichten und Trachten geht auf ein Landgut.

3) *BVN-1874,378 – Brief AN Ernst Schmeitzner: 15/07/1874.*

Noch im August denke ich Ihnen ein Manuscript zuzenden zu können, ungefähr des Titels: „Arthur Schopenhauer“ Darf ich voraussetzen, dass Sie meine zuletzt veröffentlichten Schriften kennen, so werden Sie auch die Frage erlauben: Wären Sie eventuell im Stande, die Fortsetzung meines *Cyclus* von „*Unzeitgemässen* Betrachtungen“ zu übernehmen?

⁷ See *BVN-1874, 360 – Brief AN Carl Fuchs: 28/04/1874*: «Bis dahin muss jeder von uns kräftiglich allein kämpfen: ich habe mir durch meine 13 *Unzeitgemässen*, die ich hinter einander herausgebe, eine gute Waffe geschmiedet, die ich den Leuten um die Köpfe schlage, bis dabei etwas herauskommt. Ich wollte, Sie machten es ebenso und schafften alles, was von Negativem, Polemischem, Hassendem in Ihrer Natur ist, auf diesem Wege aus sich heraus, um dann später Ruhe zu haben und sich durch gar nichts mehr „zum Widerspruch verleiten zu lassen»

See also *BVN-1874,398 – Brief AN Malwida von Meysenbug: 25/10/1874*: «Denn es ist gewiss ein hohes Glück, mit seiner Aufgabe schrittweise vorwärts zu kommen – und jetzt habe ich drei von den 13 Betrachtungen fertig und die vierte spukt im Kopfe; wie wird mir zu Muthe sein, wenn ich erst alles Negative und Empörte, was in mir steckt, aus mir heraus gestellt habe».

NF-1875, 1[4] – Nachgelassene Fragmente Winter-Frühling: «800 Seiten in 24 Monaten, 24: 800 72 33, d.h. alle Tage eine Seite, alle drei Monate 1 *Unzeitgemässe*. 33 Jahre alt bin ich dann mit den *Unzeitgemässen* fertig».

Regarding instead the titles hypothesized by Nietzsche for his books, see for example *NF 19 [330], 1872-'73; NF 29 [163-4], 1873; NF 30 [38], 1873-'74; NF 32 [4], 1874; NF 16 [12-15], 1876*. In particular see 16 [12]: «Später: Nachträge zu den *unzeitgemässen* Betrachtungen (aphoristisch)».

Nietzsche in *On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life* – «our age» [his era, but undoubtedly also ours] «is proud», precisely because they are considered useful, timely ... and which, instead, Nietzsche intended to unmask as «disgraces». The 'transvaluation of values', if you will, is already all here.

As we know, only the first four of these *Untimely Meditation* were published.

The 5th (*Wir Philologen*) remains a draft. In the summer of 1876 there was a reconsideration of the plan⁸, but, when the publisher (Schmeitzner) asked Nietzsche for the 5th Meditation, on January '77, Nietzsche responded (on February 2) wondering whether it would not be better to consider the series completed⁹. In retrospect, with his usual irony, Nietzsche wrote to Brandes: «thankfully my health has said 'no' to the others»¹⁰.

Nietzsche never wrote the others. And here we could address a second matter. Did he never write them? Or did he write them differently? Do not his subsequent texts, although in a different form, perhaps present the content that Nietzsche had initially and programmatically wanted to treat? Are the *Untimely Meditation* a failure? Or is the passage to *Human all too Human* (and to all of his subsequent works: although they undoubtedly represent a 'turning point' in the Nietzschean path) a passage of continuity?

Did Nietzsche 'go beyond' the *Untimely Meditation*, leaving them behind, or are many of Nietzsche's mature themes a development of the contents of the *Untimely Meditation* (in those written and those remaining in Nietzsche's mind)? Is 'untimely' only an adjective used in these *Untimely Meditation*, or a Nietzschean style? Is the untimely a method? If so, not only these essays of the early 70s, but also the later writings and their deconstructive-genealogical method would effectively continue to be 'untimely': not only for the continuity of the contents but much more for the continuity of radicalism of the style (and when I speak of style, clearly, I am not talking about writing style, but a style of posture towards the world and life).

We could find confirmation of our hypothesis in the letters¹¹ or photos¹² in which Nietzsche signs with the



⁸ See NF 16 [13], 1876.

⁹ BVN-1877,593 – Brief AN Ernst Schmeitzner: 02/02/1877: «Wollen wir nicht die Unzeit<gemässen> Betr<achtungen> als a b g e s c h l o s s e n betrachten?»

¹⁰ BVN-1888,1014 – Brief AN Georg Brandes: 10/04/1888: «Die „Unzeitgemäßen Betrachtungen“ zwischen 1872 und Sommer 1875 (es sollten 13 werden: die Gesundheit sagte glücklicher Weise Nein!)».

See BVN-1888,997 – Brief AN Georg Brandes: 19/02/1888: «Zwischen den „unzeitgemäßen Betrachtungen“ und „Menschliches, Allzumenschliches“ liegt eine Krisis und Häutung. Auch leiblich: ich lebte Jahre lang in der nächsten Nachbarschaft des Todes. Dies war mein größtes Glück: ich vergaß mich, ich überlebte mich... Das gleiche Kunststück habe ich noch einmal gemacht. — So haben wir also einander Geschenke überreicht: ich denke, wie zwei Wanderer, die sich freuen, einander begegnet zu sein?»

See also BVN-1888,997 – Brief AN Georg Brandes: 19/02/1888: «Zwischen den „unzeitgemäßen Betrachtungen“ und „Menschliches, Allzumenschliches“ liegt eine Krisis und Häutung. Auch leiblich: ich lebte Jahre lang in der nächsten Nachbarschaft des Todes. Dies war mein größtes Glück: ich vergaß mich, ich überlebte mich... Das gleiche Kunststück habe ich noch einmal gemacht. — So haben wir also einander Geschenke überreicht: ich denke, wie zwei Wanderer, die sich freuen, einander begegnet zu sein?»

¹¹ See e. g. BVN-1886,680 – Brief AN Heinrich Köselitz: 27/03/1886: «Im Zeitalter der „Operette“ und des choreographischen Poëms (heißt es nun Amore oder Parsifal) gehöre ich wahrscheinlich unter die „Unzeitgemäßen“. Offenbar will man heute im Theater etwas ganz Andres als im vorigen Jahrhundert, — und „die Oper“ scheint mir überlebt. — Es fällt mir ein, daß die Wiener ein neues Operetten-Talent haben, Hrñ»

self-attributed '*Unzeitgemässe*' instead of his surname (Friedrich der *Unzeitgemässe*)¹³. But even more we could find a confirmation when, rereading the *Untimely Meditation* retrospectively, he clearly says, those writings «only spoke of me»¹⁴. And we find confirmation of our hypothesis in Nietzsche's letters, when he defines himself again as untimely, recommending the reading of those texts (only apparently 'youthful errors')¹⁵, as fundamental to understanding his development. Is, then, the untimely a possible cipher of all Nietzschean existence and thought? Regarding this question, you can read the essay by S. Zacchini, G. B. Adesso e V. Brugiattelli in this issue of "Logoi".

However, if so, at the very least, then, we should ask why has untimeliness been so little studied in Nietzsche? I wrote on this topic in my essay '*L'Unzeitgemäß in Nietzsche. Questioni critiche ed ipotesi etimologiche*'.

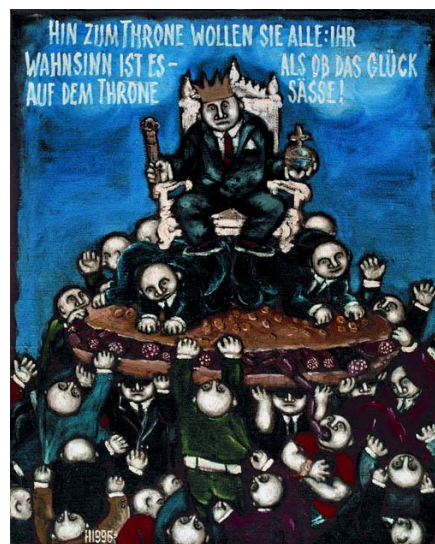
However, of course, in any case, for this reason I want to thank all those who – during the conference and in this issue - have helped us, showing the different facets of the untimely-theme: all original contributions, that make this issue of "Logoi" really important for the Nietzschean scholars.

However, allow me to close as I started. Stressing the relevance of the theme of the Untimely, not only from the historical point of view (within Nietzschean history of criticism), but also from the theoretical point of view.

5) The Urgency of the Untimely

Untimely has an ethical and educational urgency (in our opinion); an urgency which becomes 'existential' for those of us who choose to live, and hope to work, with philosophy.

Why is it worth it to lose 20 hours at an untimely conference on the untimely (and to lose also more hours now to read this issue)? Time... that will not earn us anything and where we may even lose something? That will be useless and unproductive in terms of calculative, scientific-technical, economic-production thinking? That does not give us anything valuable and usable in a utilitarian sense? Do we really believe that with a conference or with a philosophical Journal we can act in time, against time, on time, in favor of a coming time? Do we really believe that doing philosophy can help



L. Hades, *Zarathustra* (1996)

¹² See D. Breazeale, *Introduction - F. Nietzsche, Untimely Meditation*, p. xxix: «There is a familiar and frequently reproduced photograph of Nietzsche, taken at Basel around 1874, which bears the inscription, 'Friedrich the Untimely One'. Nothing testifies more poignantly to his rapidly growing awareness of his own, distinctive 'task' than this presumptuous inscription; for when he wrote these books and signed this photograph Nietzsche was still an 'academic labourer', a Professor of Classical Philology».

¹³ See also *BVN 1873, 326. An G. Krug, 14/11/1873*.

¹⁴ See NF 41 [2], 2, 1885: «(...) Ohne daß ich es wußte, sprach ich nur für mich, ja im Grunde nur von mir (...)».

¹⁵ See ivi: «Was ich selber einstmals, in meinen „jungen Jahren“, über Schopenhauer und Richard Wagner schrieb und weniger schrieb als malte – vielleicht in einem allzuverwegenen übermüthigen überjugendlichen al fresco – das will ich am wenigsten heute auf „wahr“ und „falsch“ hin ins Einzelne prüfen. Gesetzt aber, ich hätte mich damals geirrt: mein Irrthum gereicht zum Mindesten weder den Genannten, noch mir selber zur Unehre! Es ist etwas, sich so zu irren; es ist auch etwas, gerade mich dergestalt zum Irrthume zu verführen. Auch war es mir in jedem Falle eine unschätzbare Wohlthat, damals als ich „den Philosophen“ und „den Künstler“ und gleichsam meinen eigenen „kategorischen Imperativ“ zu malen beschloß, –meine neuen Farben nicht ganz in's Unwirkliche hinein, sondern gleichsam auf vorgezeichnete Gestalten aufmalen zu können».

(ourselves and perhaps others, perhaps our present or future students) to build a different present?

Do we really believe that philosophy (and then maybe even more so an untimely philosophy and philosopher like Nietzsche) can help us «to experience, see, hear, suspect, hope, dream extraordinary things»?

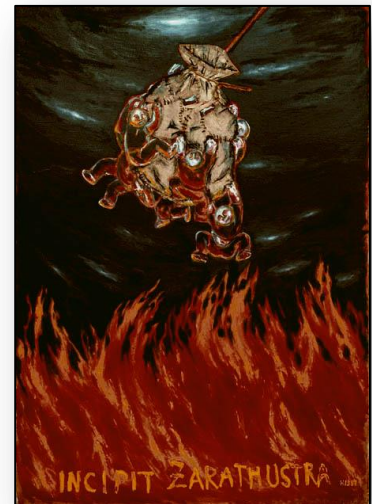
For this question and this reason, I strongly wanted the conclusion of this conference to be entrusted to school children: from second-grade children to young people in the 5th year of high school: to hear what they have to say to us and how they see their present and their future; and whether and how philosophy helps them (or doesn't help them) to think and live in untimely manner. You can read their answers in the Section 'School at Play'.

For what in my small way I can say here and now, with tragic, and therefore great, hope, I want answer this question by saying: yes; despite it all, it may be worth thinking about the untimely in an untimely way. It may be worth spending time with philosophy and, more generally, with the Humanities. The untimely has a tragic, and thus urgent, timeliness.

Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*:

«Why do you amuse yourself with consolatory fables?» – Kublai Khan asks Marco Polo. «I know well that empire is rotting like a corpse in a swamp».

Marco Polo: Yes, the empire is sick, and, what is worse, it is trying to become accustomed to its sores. This is the aim of my explorations: examining the traces of happiness still to be glimpsed, I gauge its short supply. If you want to know how much darkness there is around you, you must sharpen your eyes, peering at the faint lights in the distance. When you know at last the residue of unhappiness for which no precious stone can compensate, you will be able to calculate the exact number of carats toward which that final diamond must strive. The inferno of the living is not something that will be; if there is one, it is what is already here, the inferno where we live every day, that we form by being together. There are two ways to escape suffering it. The first is easy for many: accept the inferno and become such a part of it that you can no longer see it. The second is risky and demands constant vigilance and apprehension: seek and learn to recognize who and what, in the midst of the inferno, are not inferno...; then make them endure, give them space.



L. Hades, *Zarathustra* (1996)

This is our space. Useless. Untimely. ... To give space to what we hope, we believe, is not 'inferno'. And to cultivate it. Maybe.

Happy Reading!



L. Hades, *Zarathustra* (1996)