L.S.R a paraphilosophical project

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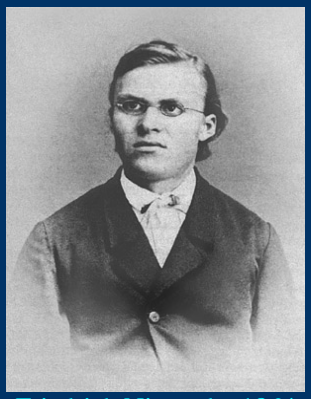
Nietzsche's Initial Crisis

New Light on the Stirner/Nietzsche Question

by Bernd A. Laska



Friedrich Nietzsche 1864

"When I was young, I encountered a dangerous divinity, and I do not wish to give an account to anyone of what, at that time, ran across my soul -- of good things as well as bad things. Thus, I learned at times to keep silent, and also that one has to learn to speak, in order to be silent the right way; that a man with backgrounds has to have foregrounds -- be it for others, be it for himself -- for the foregrounds are necessary, in order to recover from oneself, and to make it possible for others to live with us."

Friedrich Nietzsche 1885 (1)

1 Introduction and abstract

Friedrich Nietzsche put a period to his life as a philosopher, as is well-known, with a spectacular collapse in Turin at the beginning of January 1889. This final crisis, in which Nietzsche mentally left the world for good, has been examined many times -- and very carefully -- as to its possible causes, however inconclusively. (2) Though less spectacular, the commencement of Nietzsche's life as a philosopher was likewise marked by a profound life crisis. Nietzsche overcame it in October of 1865 by means of the strictest self-discipline and, above all, by becoming a devoted adherent of Schopenhauer's philosophy. This 'initial crisis', in contrast to the final one that echoes it, has been scarcely considered, let alone seriously studied, even by Nietzsche experts.

Nietzsche's life and work has been investigated with a thoroughness second to that of no other philosopher; (3) however, when it comes to that crucial phase of his development in which the young Nietzsche transformed himself into a philosopher, his biographers have uncritically accepted the story he himself has provided. (4) Nietzsche's sudden embrace of (Schopenhauer's) philosophy at the end of October 1865 is usually seen as a result of the "accident" he himself related, and is not regarded as warranting further investigation. Nevertheless, I examined this scarcely-considered period in Nietzsche's life carefully and made a surprising discovery: Eduard Mushacke, with whom Nietzsche in the first half of October 1865 had an intense (though brief) relationship was many years before a close friend of Max Stirner, the author of *Der Einzige und sein Eigenthum* (October 1844; Engl. trans. 1907 *The Ego and Its Own*).

This discovery makes possible a critical new view of this early phase of Nietzsche's development. But a historical accumulation of assumptions, built upon incomplete assessments, stands in the way of any new perspective, and tends to obstruct any serious examination of the hypothesis that Nietzsche's encounter with Stirner's book provoked his initial crisis, and led to his emergence as a philosopher.

The most significant of these is the assumption that the Stirner/Nietzsche 'question' itself is of decidedly marginal importance. Whether Nietzsche knew Stirner's book, and the question of its possible influence on his thinking, was widely discussed in the years around 1900. The result of this discussion, generally speaking, was that the answer was thought to be of no real importance, mainly because Stirner himself was considered a figure of little significance in the history of ideas. The intellectual 'sediments' of this discussion solidified over the course of a century, at the end of

which Nietzsche has come to be highly regarded world-wide, while Stirner remains an obscure figure, even in Germany.

It is therefore necessary to apply 'retro-chronological' methods, breaking through 'archaeologically', as it were, to the issues that underlie Nietzsche's initial crisis. We must first analyze the recent accounts of the Stirner/Nietzsche question, then -- after an indispensible consideration of Stirner's clandestine reception -- we will review the period discussions of the 1890s in the context established. Finally, we will turn to the situation of young Nietzsche in October of 1865. The important emerging questions regarding whether this reconstruction of Nietzsche's 'initial crisis' opens new perspectives on his further development as a philosopher, and whether it has any bearing on the causes of his final crisis, are not discussed here.

2. The current state of the Stirner/Nietzsche question

A Stirner/Nietzsche 'question'? Any such question would today elicit little more than a shrug of indifference. Of course everyone knows Nietzsche, or in any case everyone thinks they know him. But Stirner? Few have heard of him, and fewer still are inclined to openly recognize any significance in this peripheral figure, unless perhaps as a footnote to Nietzsche, or to Marx, who by 1846 had already devoted considerable energy to a comprehensive attack on Stirner's ideas, only to mysteriously suspend publication of the resulting work. What value -- beyond the merely historiographical -- can there be in raising again that most marginal question which, above all, is thought to have been settled long ago: whether or not Nietzsche had knowledge of Stirner's *The Ego and Its Own*? This article is offered by way of an answer.

The name of Max Stirner, if not altogether forgotten (as it was until the 1890s, and again from around 1910 onwards) has always had a very bad reputation in the world of philosophy, as well as in the world of culture in general. Stirner was considered a barbarian, an outcast, an untouchable, a pariah of the mind. This went without saying; giving a reason would have been a lapse of taste. Alois Riehl, who in 1897 was one of the first philosophy professors to devote a monograph to Nietzsche, expressed this attitude with appropriate casualness, without even mentioning the frowned-upon name, "it shows a still greater lack of the ability to differentiate between minds, if one puts together Nietzsche with the involuntary parodist of Fichte, with the author of the book *The Ego and Its Own* -- this, however, is the same as putting together writings of a nearly unparalleled power of language and a fatal strength of the genius with a literary curiosity." (5) Nietzsche, on the other hand, was usually respected even by his enemies as a brilliant author, an eminent stylist, and a shrewd psychologist. Therefore, as we shall see, the Stirner/Nietzsche question, which of course had first been raised based on purely polemical considerations, was highly-charged in the years around 1900.

Nowadays Stirner, if he is known at all, is of course no longer regarded as a pariah, but simply as an insignificant and marginal figure. Therefore, in most Nietzsche studies he

is not even mentioned anymore. Only occasionally does an author raise the issue of the Stirner/Nietzsche question briefly, and usually only in order to quickly abandon it again as irrelevant. The question of whether or not Nietzsche had knowledge of *The Ego and Its Own* is no longer of interest, regardless of whether answered with a yes or a no. Henning Ottmann summarizes, "Nietzsche's mental horizon, from antiquity up to modernity, is always of a much larger extent. He was in no way mentally related to that petty bourgeois species anarchistica [Stirner]." (6) Rüdiger Safranski also closes his Stirner chapter with the remark that Nietzsche must have felt the petty bourgeois Stirner as abhorrent. (7) Nevertheless, a strange ambivalence is noticeable in both Nietzsche experts. Safranski speaks of Nietzsche's "remarkable concealment" of Stirner, while Ottmann for no obvious reason assesses the influence story as "one of the more intelligent Nietzsche legends." Neither of them, however, really gets involved with the subject matter -- an attitude that only becomes comprehensible if one knows about the 'clandestine reception' of *The Ego and Its Own*.

Stirner's marginal status, firmly established over decades, entailed an atrophy in knowledge about him and his ideas which, in any case, was already in short-supply. As a consequence Stirner is routinely and thoughtlessly labeled as a 'Young Hegelian', an 'anarchist', a 'nihilist', or a 'solipsist', which in all cases is hardly justified. Nevertheless, in the case of Stirner, a lack of understanding or interest in his ideas is often considered pardonable, if not a sign of a mature philosophical position.

One interesting example of the effects of these superficial assessments of Stirner is to be found in the authoritative three-volume Nietzsche biography by Curt Paul Janz, a work generally very thoroughly researched, and corrected several times in new editions. (8) Janz treats the Stirner/Nietzsche question in a half-page section with three pages of documentation, and therein he made four errors, some quite serious. To top it all off, these errors in the most widely used standard work on Nietzsche have not been noticed thus far, after more than two decades, neither by the highly-regarded Nietzsche experts who assisted Janz (among them Karl Schlechta and Mazzino Montinari), nor by a large scholarly and general public. They are still present in the latest, again revised (9) edition of the work. Therefore it is worth briefly addressing them here:

1. In some of the reproduced letters from Köselitz to Overbeck concerning the Stirner/Nietzsche question (III, pp. 343 ff), a certain Markay is repeatedly mentioned. The person referred to is definitely Stirner's biographer and publisher John Henry Mackay, whose name is familiar to everyone whose knowledge of Stirner is based upon more than hearsay. Janz transliterated incorrectly, could not identify this Markay, and therefore was unable to give his full and correct name in the index.

2. Another person, obviously unidentified by Janz, is Lauterbach, a name occuring in a letter from which he quotes. Janz could not find his first name and therefore gives simply "Herr" in the index. The person in question is Paul Lauterbach, the editor of the widely distributed Reclam edition of Stirner's *The Ego and Its Own*.

3. When he enters briefly into the issue of the Stirner/Nietzsche question (III, pp. 212 f), Janz himself paraphrases an article by Resa von Schirnhofer, in which a publication concerning Stirner is erroneously dated to 1874 instead of 1894. Janz does not notice

this obvious misprint and develops from this incorrect date a very doubtful conjecture.

4. Janz uncritically accepts Nietzsche's account of how he, as a young man, came to philosophy, and of how he almost overnight became an enthusiatic adherent of Schopenhauer. In this respect he takes the same view as all the Nietzsche biographers known to me. Therefore, he indicates the critical transformation in Nietzsche's mental life as occurring at the time of his move from Bonn to Leipzig, and fails to take into consideration the obvious cause for it: the intense two-week encounter with Eduard Mushacke Senior that immediately preceded it. Janz viewed Eduard Mushacke as a figure so completely without significance that he carelessly indicates his first name in the index as "Eberhard". (10)

3. Parenthesis: The clandestine reception of Stirner's 'The Ego'

Given the widespread contempt for, and the still more prevalent ignorance regarding Stirner some pronouncements about him, voiced by prominent thinkers, are worth our attention. Ludwig Klages for instance, does not believe that Nietzsche knew of Stirner. Nevertheless in his study of Nietzsche, he was prompted to commemorate the author Stirner as a "sheer demoniacal dialectician." He concedes to him that his thinking, in comparison to Nietzsche's, is "often more radical, less circumlocutory, analytically more exact", and that he "gives ultimate conclusions, for the most part, with more conciseness." Klages regards Stirner as that "antipode of Nietzsche, who in any case should be taken seriously." Stirner, he says, is the reason why Nietzsche is of paramount importance, because "the day on which Stirner's program becomes the will-guiding conviction of all, this alone would suffice for it to be the 'doomsday' of mankind." (11)

A philosopher of completely different intellectual background, the Marxist Hans Heinz Holz, expressed a quite similar view. He warned that "Stirner's egoism, if practically realized, would lead to the self-destruction of mankind." The ex-Marxist Leszek Kolakowski develops a similar apocalyptic vision when confronted by 'The Ego'. The "destruction of alienation", that Stirner aims for, he says, amounts to "the return to authenticity", and this would be "nothing else than the destruction of culture, the return to animality [...] the return to the pre-human status." Even Nietzsche appears, according to Kolakowski, "weak and inconsistent compared to him [Stirner]." (12) And Roberto Calasso, laureate of the "Premio Nietzsche" of 1989, writes: "From certain quarters is to be heard, that it goes without saying that a professional philosopher does not deal with such a matter as Stirner [...] from the realm of culture Stirner still remains sequestered [...] Stirner's presence is particularly perceptible [...] in authors who are completely silent about him or who talk about him in unpublished texts, which is to say, in Nietzsche and Marx." Calasso too regards Stirner's "Egoist" or rather "Owner" as an "artificial barbarian", an "anthropological monster" etc.. 'The Egoist' is the "writing on the wall", signalling the doom of occidental culture. (13)

It is remarkable that these authors did not find Stirner worthy of any argumentative criticism, that their strong words about him were usually uttered in rather remote places, in an apparently casual or accidental way. The small selection of material reviewed above should be sufficient to substantiate the phenomenon of an obviously intensive -- though nevertheless largely clandestine -- Stirner reception. It articulates itself *sotto voce*, reckoning that the educated audience already knows what is meant when insinuations are voiced regarding Stirner's demoniacal antagonism to culture and his absolutely malignant ideas.

In some authors who worked more carefully and were more disciplined, mention of Stirner looks like a (Freudian) slip. For example, Edmund Husserl does not name him in any of his texts, letters etc.; this, however, not on grounds that he did not know Stirner's ideas or that he considered them insignificant. No, the intrinsic reason, which was passed down probably by accident, was that he wanted to protect his students (and perhaps himself?) against their "temptational power". (14) Another case is that of Carl Schmitt, who was ready to disclose something of his secretive relationship to Stirner, kept since his youth, only after being detained in 1946 in a prison of the Allies (which he experienced as an existential affliction). (15) Theodor Adorno once admitted to his inner circle that it was Stirner alone who had "let the cat out of the bag". However, he took care to avoid arguing such ideas or even mentioning Stirner's name. (16) The never-revealed motivations of such partisans -- whose clandestine number is difficult to estimate -- are presumably similar to those of the apocalyptic visionaries mentioned above.

Other authors (for instance, from recent times, the aforementioned Ottmann and Safranski) display an attitude of soberness and superiority; nevertheless, opposite Stirner a puzzled ambivalence is noticeable in them, which they endeavor to overcome -- and young Marx was the prototype for this -- by deploying the previously discussed *petit bourgeois* thesis.

There can be no doubt regarding the absolute enmity felt by these thinkers towards Stirner. It is limited or obscured only insofar as they found it necessary to take care that it did not augment Stirner's value in any way. This enmity is evinced much more frequently among philosophical authors than among theologians, but seldom does a member of either group allow himself to go so far as to phrase such unambiguous words as that early admirer of Nietzsche and professor of philosophy, Karl Joël. In his opus magnum Joël writes: 'The Ego' is the "most rampant heretic book a human hand has ever written", and Stirner laid with it the foundation for a veritable "devil's religion." (17) Joël was forthright: "Stirner" is for many non-theological philosophers a code word for what theologians call "the devil". This explains why they usually reveal the reasons for their absolute enmity -- if they do so at all -- only vaguely or inadvertently. It also reveals why establishing their reasons -- to say nothing of justifying them -- never enters their minds; their reasons for employing such defensive strategies, for their concealment, private remarks, repulsion and circumlocutions -- accompanied when necessary by highly-developed theories adapted for popularity (again, Karl Marx sets the standard here) -- are not given. Finally, it sheds light on why no one bothers to inquire regarding these reasons. (18)

Hence, in my book, *Ein dauerhafter Dissident (A Durable Dissident)*, I presented the authentic history of the impact of Stirner's work -- buried under a tangled mass of conventional secondary literature -- as "a history of re(pulsion and de)ception".

This history begins with Feuerbach, Bauer, Ruge and Marx, covers a considerable number of philosophers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and stretches up into our times as far as Jürgen Habermas. (19) Whether or not Friedrich Nietzsche should also be included among these prominent names will have to be considered in the conclusion.

4. The Stirner/Nietzsche question -- previous discussion

Questions about whether, and how, Stirner's 'The Ego' may have had an impact on Nietzsche were posed for the first time at the beginning of the 1890s. It appears this came to pass in a rather complicated historical context. On one hand there was Nietzsche's final crisis succeeded by his sudden emergence and rapidly increasing fame. On the other, there was the early reception of 'The Ego', which -- apart from the sensation generated by its appearance in 1845 -- took place, nearly without exception, across half a century in the literary underground. Even the publication of a new edition of the 'The Ego' in 1882 failed to break the silence that had enveloped Stirner's book. A Stirner renaissance became possible only ten years later, and then solely as an epiphenomenon of Nietzsche's popularity. Obviously one dared to speak of Stirner, 'forgotten' for so long, only after one had discovered Nietzsche, who was regarded as the thinker who had rendered him obsolete.

In any case the question of Nietzsche's relationship to Stirner was pressing, and we shall see that as soon as it was posed it aroused lively interest. Striking similarities between both philosophers were exposed, and it was naturally assumed that Nietzsche, who lived later, must have known Stirner, even though he had not mentioned his name anywhere. After an extensive examination, which turned up very little in the way of unambiguous evidence, the matter was laid to rest. This was entirely in keeping with Riehl's dictum quoted above, as one was prone to consider further research as a rather dispensable effort. A hundred years of Nietzsche research embodied in historical-critical editions of the philosopher's writings, letters, notes and fragments did not throw any new light on his relationship to Stirner; today the actual body of acquired knowledge relevant to the Stirner/Nietzsche question is about the same as it was in 1910. It is, as Janz states, "to this day undecided", though this in no way means it is considered a significant or urgent issue for Nietzsche research.

Perhaps the above sketch of the clandestine impact of Stirner on prominent philosophers from Marx to Habermas -- as well as the biographical discovery regarding the young Nietzsche to be presented below -- will be instrumental in arousing anew the vestiges of interest in this question; for it is to be expected that a plausible answer to this very question would be far more than a mere clarification of a

detail in the history of philosophy. (20) It is therefore necessary to reopen this question, and to critically examine its earliest origins.

4.1 'The Ego' in the underground

It is a curious fact (and mentioned here for no other reason) that the appearance of Stirner's book *Der Einzige und sein Eigenthum* (often translated as *The Ego and its Own*) in mid-October of 1844 nearly coincided with Nietzsche's birth. Max Stirner (the pseudonym of Johann Caspar Schmidt, 1806-1856) lived at that time in Berlin and kept company with a circle of the so-called *Junghegelianer* (Young Hegelians). Their theoretical leaders were two former Hegelian theologians who had been removed from university office because of their criticism of religion: Bruno Bauer in Berlin and Ludwig Feuerbach in Franconia. Bauer tried, for the first time in Germany, to establish a connection with the ideas of the atheist faction of the French enlightenment. Feuerbach, drawing from German sources, had likewise struggled to arrive at an atheist position. Suddenly Stirner, the "artificial barbarian" (Calasso), entered the scene and took up a position that enabled him to mock the two atheists as "pious people". However, Stirner did not launch his devastating criticism at the prominent Young Hegelians in order to harm the post-Hegelian movement of enlightenment; rather, he wanted to radicalize and lift it up to a higher level. Later historians ignored the singular position of Stirner and subsumed him without further analysis within the Young Hegelians, and classified these philosophers altogether as nothing but a "product of decomposition" of Hegel's school. Nevertheless, as shown above, 'The Ego' did not disappear entirely.

Stirner's criticism came as a shock to the Young Hegelians. The beleaguered Feuerbach -- who called Stirner in a private letter the "freest and most ingenious writer I've ever known" (21) -- soon published a written defense. Stirner's superior response to it pushed the young Marx, at that time a follower of Feuerbach, into a situation which rightfully can be called his own "initial crisis". He separated from Feuerbach, but did not side with Stirner. He instead wrote with feverish zeal a furious attack on Stirner, in which he executed sentence after sentence. During this process Marx conceived his original idea of "historical materialism", the framework of which he sought to fill out in a lifelong effort of economic study. But Marx probably felt that his attack on Stirner might lead him to suffer the same fate as Feuerbach. In any case he decided to leave the manuscript unpublished. (22)

Already in 1847, long before the coming revolts of March 1848 could be discerned, Stirner's shocking book was 'forgotten'. And after the historical break of 1848 there followed a political climate in which the atheist enlightenment initiated by the Young Hegelians was considered taboo, which held doubly so for its radicalization by Stirner. Furthermore, its most important protagonists (Feuerbach, Bauer, and Marx) no longer represented it and adjusted themselves in one way or another to the new political conditions.

Stirner rapidly sank into poverty, and died in 1856. At this time he had already become

a non-person, an untouchable one, a pariah in the philosophical community. Up to the end of the 80's, a time which approximately coincides with Nietzsche's lifetime in awareness, Stirner was rarely discussed in public. Instead philosophers such as Schopenhauer, Hartmann and Lange gained fame in the 1860's. Nietzsche refers to all of these men in his writings and letters. Could he have come to know Stirner from their writings?

Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860) did not mention the name of Stirner anywhere. Eduard von Hartmann (1842-1906) treats Stirner in his successful firstling *Philosophie des Unbewussten* (1869) only briefly, but in a significant way. He gives the attentive reader to understand that he, after all, once shared "Stirner's point of view" and abandoned it by writing this work. (23) Friedrich Albert Lange (1828-1875) mentions Stirner in his famous *Geschichte des Materialismus* (1866) with few, but carefully chosen words. He assesses Stirner's book as "the most extreme, that we have knowledge of", referring to its "ill fame" before quickly coming to an end by maintaining the lack of any closer relationship to materialism. (24)

The mention of Stirner in these books of Hartmann and Lange are the most important ones in those four decades of underground obscurity. They are particularly important for our topic because Nietzsche studied precisely these two works with exceptional thoroughness. Apart from these brief discussions of Stirner, the observation of a little-known contemporary would seem to be accurate: "Max Stirner -- what a vilified and hated name ! [...] Yes, if anyone can complain of being hushed up, then this is not Schopenhauer, but Stirner." (25)

At the beginning of the 1880s the mental climate gradually began to change. A new generation of writers, who called themselves "naturalists" or "realists", appeared before the public and wanted to take up the radicalism of the pre-1848 years which had, until this time, remained proscribed and repressed. A first booklet, *Kritische Waffengänge*, edited in 1882 by Julius and Heinrich Hart, sent a clear signal of this trend. At the same time, and from the same publishing house, there appeared the second edition of Stirner's 'The Ego'. The reissue of the "ill famed" book, suppressed for decades, proved to be premature: the public remained silent. Even the young literary rebels did not dare to so much as touch Stirner. Stirner was brought into discussion only some years later, characteristically at first as a bugaboo in the propaganda quarrels of the *Weltanschauungen*. In 1886 Friedrich Engels tried to foist Stirner onto the anarchists as their "prophet". (26) And Eduard von Hartmann exploited him somewhat later in his fight against Nietzsche. These are clear indications that Stirner, at the time, was generally held in a disrepute nobody felt it was necessary to justify. Engels and Hartmann both relied upon such an assessment of Stirner when, in order to strike decisive blows, each portrayed their respective opponents as mental 'descendants' of the ill-famed pariah. (27)

Beginning in the mid-80s Nietzsche, whose writings up to then had been barely known outside a close circle of friends, also achieved greater public recognition. In some private circles of Nietzsche admirers, Stirner's 'The Ego' -- or more precisely Nietzsche's silence regarding it -- must have been a source of a vague confusion. This resulted, for example, in a remark revealing as much caution as prying curiosity,

almost hidden in a lengthy letter from a Viennese admirer full of diverse questions addressed to Nietzsche's friend Overbeck: "A connoisseur of N.'s writings, who is not a member of our circle, has expressed the conjecture that Max Stirner's pamphlet *Der Einzige und sein Eigenthum* may have been not without influence on the later conceptions of N." He went on to ask if this could be correct. (28)

We know that during the whole of his productive period of mental health, Nietzsche was never himself confronted with the question so often posed later: whether he knew Stirner's 'The Ego'. And when at last the time had come, when approaching fame was within easy reach, then, at the beginning of 1889 -- as if he had anticipated such questions, addressed to him as a famous figure -- he absconded from intellectual life without leaving a single word about his relationship to Stirner.

4.2 The discovery of 'The Ego'

Nietzsche's new followers were of course quite perplexed when Eduard von Hartmann broke the precarious silence and denounced Nietzsche as plagiarist of Stirner on an essential point. Nietzsche's much-admired "new morals", he wrote in a sensational article, in the end yields "by no means something new, since it was already presented in 1845 by Max Stirner [...] in a masterful fashion and with a clearness and frankness which leaves nothing to be desired." (29)

This blast set off by Hartmann (an adversary of Nietzsche) led to broad discussion about the Stirner/Nietzsche question and, in turn, to the Stirner 'renaissance'. After nearly half a century in the literary underground Stirner's 'The Ego' appeared -- due to the determined efforts of Paul Lauterbach (an ardent follower of Nietzsche, discussed further below) -- in 1893 in the popular *Reclams Universalbibliothek*, and was thereby assured immediate and widespread distribution.

The respective backgrounds for the activities of both Hartmann and Lauterbach are markedly instructive as regards the Stirner/Nietzsche question, because both were instrumental in making 'The Ego' public, and yet neither man could be said to support Stirner's ideas in any way. Their motives and activities can be addressed here, however, only in a summary way.

Eduard von Hartmann was, during the 70's and 80's, unlike Nietzsche, a very successful philosophical writer. His firstling, the *Philosophie des Unbewussten*, appeared in 1869 and immediately became a best-seller, which reached a total of 12 editions. The book covers approximately 700 pages, and only 3 of them are dedicated to Stirner: these are remarkably few, if one considers, as discussed above, that this book was by Hartmann's own admission the result of his efforts to overcome Stirner's ideas.

Nietzsche's reaction to this book testifies to his keen psychological sense as well as his firm grasp of the basics of a matter; it also sheds valuable light on his reaction to any encounter with Stirner. He could not possibly have missed Hartmann's discussion of

Stirner, when in 1874 -- Hartmann's book was already in its 5th edition -- in his *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen (Untimely Meditations)* he attacked the "trendy little philosopher" ("*Mode-Philosöphchen*") with caustic-ironical polemics. Nietzsche here resolves to criticize exactly that chapter of the tome containing the three pages on Stirner. The most remarkable feature of this text is that Nietzsche does not mention Stirner with a single word; he reads, quotes, polemicizes and argues with virtuosity closely around him. This, in turn, Hartmann must have realized at once, since only a few years before he himself had held "Stirner's point of view" and had overcome it with considerable effort. He certainly must have perceived the same effort by Nietzsche. This intimate solidarity of Hartmann with Nietzsche -- in addition to Nietzsche's lack of success in terms of public attention -- may have caused Hartmann to refrain from fighting back against Nietzsche at that time. He only reached for this opportune weapon of counter-criticism fifteen years later, when he felt sufficiently threatened by Nietzsche's sudden fame. (30)

Paul Lauterbach (1860-1895) was, together with Hartmann and Stirner's biographer Mackay, one of the men who promoted the 'renaissance' of Stirner most effectively. Lauterbach was, thanks to his friend Heinrich Köselitz (as "Peter Gast" for many years a kind of secretary to Nietzsche), one of the first enthusiastic Nietzscheans. He saw his energetic commitment to Stirner's 'The Ego', and its widespread diffusion as a *Reclam* book as the first stage of a strategically planned campaign in favor of Nietzsche. Hartmann had seized upon Stirner in order to discredit Nietzsche, and to recommended himself as the thinker who had overcome the "dangerous" Stirner. Lauterbach, however, wanted to present Nietzsche as the thinker who had definitively accomplished this, referring to him as "the great successor, developer and [above all] creative transformer" of Stirner. Lauterbach wanted to expose the tremendous mental danger he too had detected in 'The Ego', in order to recommend to the public Nietzsche as the only force able to banish Stirner. In a letter to Köselitz he wrote "My introduction [to 'The Ego'], has only that one objective, to protect innocent people against it and to mystify and paralyze the malevolent, substantially with assistance of Nietzsche." (31)

Mainly due to these activities of Hartmann and Lauterbach -- which were directed one against the other -- a violent discussion of the Stirner/Nietzsche question developed, mostly in cultural magazines and *feuilletons*. Comparisons of the writings of both philosophers often showed identical and similar ideas and, just as often, serious, irreconcilable contradictions. Some people were perplexed that the name of Stirner could not be found anywhere in Nietzsche's books or papers; others understood well that Nietzsche did not want to unnecessarily compromise himself through any association with Stirner. The latter, the majority, agreed with the philosophy professor Friedrich Heman of Basel, who wrote that Nietzsche, as compared to Stirner, was "a much more sensitive, more distinguished, more ingenious philosopher, whose views were broader and superior, whose last purposes and goals towered far above the thoughts of Stirner, which were creeping down at the bottom of life." (32)

4.3 The Stirner/Nietzsche question -- no conclusion

Nietzsche's closest friends and other people near to him were perplexed. No one could remember ever having heard the name of Stirner from Nietzsche's mouth. There are dozens of letters in the archives that bear witness to the confusion of his friends. They understood well enough why Nietzsche had been publicly silent about Stirner, but why did he, given his "habitual communicativeness" (Overbeck), never mention him even in the most familiar circles? Only Overbeck's wife Ida remembered in 1899 a discussion she had with Nietzsche about twenty years earlier, during which he unintentionally let escape the remark that he felt a mental kinship to Stirner. "This was accompanied by a solemn facial expression. While I attentively observed his features, these changed again, and he made something like a dispelling, dismissive movement with his hand, and spoke under breath: 'Well, now I have told you, even though I did not want to speak of it. Forget about it. They would talk about a plagiarism, but you will not do that, I'm sure.'" (33)

One other statement was taken: that of Adolf Baumgartner, who had been Nietzsche's favourite pupil in his early years at Basel, though he had soon become alienated from him. Baumgartner, at the time a professor of Ancient History in Basel, recalled that he had borrowed Stirner's 'The Ego' from the Basel university library in 1874. He stated that he had done this at Nietzsche's recommendation. It was possible to confirm his borrowing of the book by checking the old lending registers. Baumgartner said nothing about his reading of the book, however, nor about any subsequent events, for instance discussions about it with Nietzsche. In any case, after a period of twenty-five years he remembered clearly the book and Nietzsche's words of recommendation, "this is the most consistent, which we possess". Baumgartner's later enigmatic statement that Nietzsche had, "for the first time [...] turned the big wheel" inside him may be related to this event. (34)

Nietzsche's sister Elisabeth, however, never tired of seeking out "counter evidence" to contradict these claims. She went to great trouble to get written confirmation from all Nietzsche's friends and from persons near to him that Nietzsche never had spoken about Stirner in their presence. (35) Mazzino Montinari, who from his thorough knowledge of the Nietzsche archives knew about Elisabeth's intense efforts, helplessly spoke of her 'inexplicable reasons', because he had never overcome conventional notions of Stirner's status (36) and therefore would never entertain the suspicion that Elisabeth's eagerness may have been energized by her secret knowledge regarding the role Stirner's work had had in young Nietzsche's development. In any case, in various articles she vehemently denied Nietzsche was acquainted in any way with 'The Ego'. Furthermore, she was clever enough to drop the subject just as soon as public interest in the question faded away.

Franz Overbeck, probably Nietzsche's most understanding, most reliable and most judicious friend, after a painstaking examination of all aspects of the question, came to the following conclusion: "There cannot be any doubt that Nietzsche behaved peculiarly in consideration of Stirner. With him he obviously did not allow his habitual communicativeness to prevail unrestrained. But this certainly did not come to pass in

order to obfuscate any influence [Stirner may have had] upon him (which in the exact sense is not at all present) but because he received an impression from Stirner, with which he might have preferred generally to cope with just on his own [...] Accordingly I assert that Nietzsche did read Stirner. For opponents of his books this may easily justify the conclusion that he was a plagiarist. [Those] who knew him personally will think of this only as the very last possibility." (37)

5. Nietzsche's initial crisis

5.1 The Berlin euphoria

When confronted with the Stirner/Nietzsche question, Overbeck -- in marked contrast to Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche's apodictic response -- gave a diplomatic answer. He conceded that Nietzsche had read Stirner, but deduced no particular consequences; neither from Nietzsche's reading of the work, nor from the "peculiar" concealment of this fact. This answer was widely accepted as the last word on the topic after the controversy had faded away. It was an answer with no real consequences for the interpretation of Nietzsche, and it disappeared quickly along with the question, escaping the attention of most Nietzsche researchers. Like Overbeck, subsequent Nietzsche experts, if they mentioned Stirner at all, did not explain Nietzsche's relationship to him, but instead gave a short historical account and regarded the topic as settled. However, some passages, like those reviewed above (in particular the peremptory *petit bourgeois* designation) point to an ambivalence that could not be entirely suppressed. (38) Even in more sophisticated treatments, as for instance that of Hermann Schmitz, (39) the topic is seen as settled without any consequences. Regardless, precisely what the authors of Stirner's clandestine reception (including Nietzsche?) saw as the flagrant, the monstrous, the barbaric and diabolical in 'The Ego', precisely that is what these later researchers neither fathomed nor rejected with arguments, instead choosing to indirectly 'overcome' it.

To make of Stirner's work a bagatelle, or to attribute to it demonic power, to carelessly talk it to pieces, or to maintain a careful silence: anyone familiar with the history of the re(pulsions and de)ceptions of 'The Ego' has identified this pattern, and will therefore not be satisfied with Franz Overbeck's accommodating answer. Instead, one takes it as a challenge, as stimulus to further investigate the Stirner/Nietzsche question. But not by way of unsuccessful roads, however well-traveled, not by isolating yet again the numerous traces of 'The Ego' which are to be found more or less concealed in Nietzsche's work. Even if it could be shown plausibly that Nietzsche plagiarized ideas from Stirner, this alone would today be of very little importance. However, if it is possible to confirm the possibility that Nietzsche's encounter with Stirner led to an 'initial' mental crisis, from which he emerged as a philosopher, the consequences would be significant. Therefore, two questions which belong together will be posed:

1. At what time did Nietzsche most likely become acquainted with Stirner's 'The Ego'?
2. What direct consequences of this encounter can be reconstructed and supported by

evidence?

Setting aside any consequences they may entail, only these two questions will be pursued here.

Judging from the reports of Ida Overbeck and Adolf Baumgartner, Nietzsche's encounter with 'The Ego' took place before 1878 or 1874, according to their respective accounts. The usual assumption is that Nietzsche was led to read the book when he came across the passages on Stirner in Hartmann (1869) or Lange (1866). More exact studies of his published work, letters, and other biographical material suggest, however, that Nietzsche at that time already had knowledge of 'The Ego' and took care to keep this private. Such a conclusion can be compared with the way various philosophers -- thinkers from Marx to Habermas -- reacted to Stirner. Their encounters with him stood at the beginning of their philosophical careers and were clearly accompanied by a crisis. All this serves to direct our attention to October of 1865. Most of the Nietzsche biographers report that he was in the midst of a deep crisis at this time; however, they refrain from closely examining it, and narrate its features based on an autobiographical text they have failed to view critically. (40) At this point it is necessary to turn our attention to this specific period, to view it critically and in detail. Can the suspicion be justified that Nietzsche became acquainted with 'The Ego' at this time? Did this event trigger within him a life crisis?

First of all, we should ask: could Nietzsche have encountered Stirner's book before October 1865, perhaps during his year in Bonn? Théophile Droz (1844-1897), a fellow student during these two terms, recalled that at that time Stirner's "notorious" book circulated among the students. (41) Nevertheless, any acquaintance Nietzsche may have had with 'The Ego' at that time could only have been superficial. Otherwise David Friedrich Strauss's "Life of Jesus", which he read during the 1865 Easter semester break, could not have made the enormous impression upon him that it did, fortifying him for a confrontation with his pious family and the abandonment of theology. Furthermore, from the beginning of this time until the end of September there is not a single indication hinting at any concern Nietzsche may have had with Stirner.

However, young Nietzsche seems to have been secretly fascinated by the critical spirit of the years before 1848, anathematized following the suppression of the revolution. He had already shown an earlier interest in Feuerbach. Now, in a letter to his friend Raimund Granier, penned in September 1865, he criticizes the "senility" and "philistinism" of his generation and praises the "lively spirit" of twenty years ago.

He spends the semester break before his move from Bonn to Leipzig at first with his family in Naumburg. But he already anticipates with pleasure a two-week stay at the family of his friend Hermann Mushacke in Berlin: "My current life is filled with preparation for Berlin, like our earthly existence is for a future heaven", he writes to Hermann; "at coffee time I eat a little piece of Hegelian philosophy and if I have bad appetite, I take Straussian pills." (42)

We will soon see why Nietzsche was so keenly awaiting his visit to the house of

Hermann's parents. From the 1st to the 17th of October 1865 he is a guest of the Mushacke family in Berlin. His experiences there are passed down to us only in fragments. He obviously was so enthralled that he could not write home. Only some days after he had left Mushacke's house, on the 22nd of October in Leipzig, does he report to his mother, briefly at the end of a letter: "The life in Berlin was exceptionally pleasant and enjoyable. The old Mushacke is the most loveable man I ever met. We are on first-name terms." [Saying "Du" to each other, very exceptional in those days] And in high-spirits he adds: "On my [21st] birthday we have raised champagne glasses to your well-being."

The two weeks in Berlin had shifted Nietzsche, after his discontented departure from Bonn, directly into euphoria. The cause for this is to be found in his meeting with Hermann Mushacke's father Eduard, which he had anticipated with such tension, because he knew that Eduard was a veteran of those times with "lively spirit" before 1848. He cannot write to his mother about his real feelings as regards this meeting, particularly after the shock he had given her earlier that year during Easter. Instead, perhaps, he writes them down in his diary, which he will soon burn, to guard against any further recollection of those days. In any case, today his experience with Mushacke can only be reconstructed in its general outline.

The Berlin euphoria on all accounts still sustains him during his first days in Leipzig. Right after his arrival, on the 19th of October, he writes a letter to Eduard Mushacke, his newly-acquired, "highly-esteemed friend", to whom he was allowed to say [the intimate] "Du" and to whom, as he wrote, he would have wished to say "my father". He begins by expressing his "grateful and cordial feeling" towards his recent host, shifts then to a rather light conversational tone, and ends with words which, though now loose and ironic, are still charged by the elation brought on by his meeting with Eduard Mushacke: "One hundred years ago right on this day the student Wolfgang Goethe matriculated. We have modest hope that one hundred years from now one will commemorate our matriculation too." Nietzsche seems to have brought along from Berlin some ambitious project, and Eduard Mushacke must have been the inspiration, because Nietzsche continues: "Enough that your name will become immortal thereby..." This was not just a matter of fun, and the young enthusiast certainly was not referring to the philological studies into which he would soon plunge.

5.2 The Leipzig depression

The euphoric effects of the two weeks in Berlin, the causes of which are still to be determined, were not to last. On the 20th of October Nietzsche was still in good spirits, and finally mustered the guts to put his long-delayed plan to resign from his fraternity, Frankonia, into practice. But shortly thereafter all his exaltation and all his strength evaporated, and Nietzsche suddenly sank into a heavy depression.

Unfortunately no reliable evidence exists -- letters and diaries, for instance -- regarding the nature of this crisis. The only account passed down to us is an autobiographical sketch "Survey on my two Leipzig years, 17th October 1865 until

10th August 1867". Therein Nietzsche first describes his two weeks in Berlin before the 17th October, but only in a very general way, and with a retrospective coloring that does not fit the picture suggested by the (few) other pieces of reliable evidence available.

According to this account the period was entirely bleak. Already upon arrival in Berlin he had been in ill-humour. "Moreover our conversations fed my embittered mood. There were the sarcasms of the splendid Mushacke [Senior], his insider knowledge of the high school administration, his anger over Jewish Berlin, his memories from the time of the Young Hegelians, in short, the whole pessimistic atmosphere of a man who had looked much behind the curtain. All this gave new supply to my already ill-humour. I learned at that time to see black with complacency".

Nietzsche then describes how at the end of October 1865 he discovered Schopenhauer and turned to philosophy: "I lingered at that time, with painful experiences and disappointments, without any aid, and lonely, without principles, without hopes and without any pleasant memory." Purely by coincidence, he says, in a second-hand bookshop he stumbled across Schopenhauer's opus magnum. A daemon had whispered to him that he must purchase the book of this "dark genius", who had heretofore been "completely unknown" to him.

Schopenhauer had gripped him immediately, had driven him to exercises of "grim self-contempt" and excesses of "self-torture" and "self-hate": "I also tormented my body. Thus for fourteen days in succession I forced myself to go to bed as late as two o'clock a.m. and to get up again at six o'clock a.m." He saw himself in danger of madness: "I was seized by a nervous excitedness, and who could tell to what degree of foolishness I had progressed". These self-mortifications, the strict regimen of study, and Schopenhauer's thoughts finally helped him to get himself out of this terrible situation. In the subsequent weeks and months he was "born to be a philologist". (43) It seems, however, that he was instead driven to philology by inner misery and circumstantial determinants. In fact, at this time Nietzsche was born to become -- a passionate philosopher.

As is so often the case with Nietzsche, this report is a mixture of frankness and obfuscation, candor and masquerade. It is written from a safe distance, after personal stabilization in a human environment of Schopenhauer worshippers and friends in the philological association. Nevertheless, Nietzsche later wanted to burn this document as well, and was prevented from doing so only by the efforts of his sister. (44) He certainly did burn the "disturbed melancholic diary sheets of that time" from October through November 1865, when he had feared insanity. Perhaps these documents could have clearly revealed what his later report camouflages with hasty communicativeness and the presentation of a few embarrassing details: clues to the real causes of his mental collapse, which perhaps brought him to the edge of a very real psychosis; clues to the underlying forces behind his first profound life crisis, the initial crisis of Nietzsche the philosopher.

We may suppose that this clarification of Nietzsche's initial crisis lends itself to an interpretation of his work that is "Nietzsche adequate" (as demanded by H. J.

Schmidt), and, further, serves to guide Nietzsche researchers through the "labyrinth of his illness" (P. D. Volz). If one knows the details of the attested reactions of many philosophers to Stirner, mentioned above only very briefly, one will not stand shocked and perplexed before a "daemon", a "messenger from that realm, he [Nietzsche] will enter 20 years later", as Nietzsche's biographer Curt Paul Janz (45) did after having read an erratic note penned by Nietzsche at that time: "What I am afraid of, that's not the terrible shape behind my chair, but his voice: it's also not the words, but the dreadfully inarticulate and inhuman sound of that shape. Yes, if he only could talk like humans talk !" (46)

All Nietzsche biographers known to me, provided they are even aware of Nietzsche's precarious personal condition at that time, for some strange reason fail to see it as posing any sort of problem. The first half of October 1865 remain a blank area on the biographical map. One has seen, and still sees, Nietzsche's crisis of the end of October characterized as an after-effect of his problems during the two Bonn terms, of his loss of faith, and of his subsequent decision to study something besides what his family had come to expect: theology. Even Werner Ross, who regards Nietzsche's "enormous dramatisation" of his 'Schopenhauer revival' experience with psychological skepticism, (47) does not entertain any suspicion or ask any questions. Like Nietzsche biographers in general, his senses are not pricked up by mention of the keyword "Young Hegelians", nor by the strangely intense and abruptly terminated relationship between Nietzsche and Eduard Mushacke.

5.3 Eduard Mushacke ?

An empathetic scrutiny of existing biographical material yields many details indicating that the direct cause for Nietzsche's initial crisis as a philosopher is to be found in events that occurred during his stay in Berlin in the first half of October 1865, or more exactly: in the meeting with Eduard Mushacke. We must therefore ask who this man was.

Eduard Mushacke is a figure unrecognized and never seriously considered in Nietzsche research. The only exception is his occasional appearance in some indexes of Nietzsche books or journals: Janz mentions him inattentively as "Eberhard"; the new, comprehensive anniversary Nietzsche chronicle (DTV) does not even provide his basic life data. Biographical encyclopedias do not register him. Following one of Nietzsche's notes, Janz calls him a schoolmaster. That is probably correct, but does not account for the enthusiasm Mushacke's personality roused in the young Nietzsche, who was at that time in the process of freeing himself from his earlier, restrictive relations.

The fact that Mushacke is consistently ignored by Nietzsche researchers is connected with the general ignorance regarding Stirner already discussed. Through my Stirner studies I found a trace leading to Mushacke in John Henry Mackay's Stirner biography. There a seminar teacher Mussak is briefly mentioned twice: He is said to belong to the "inner circle" of the Berlin Young Hegelians and to have been "a good

friend" of Stirner. (48) This is information Mackay had received through an intermediary, from another member of that circle, from Friedrich Engels. Is it possible that this "Mussak" without a first name is identical to Eduard Mushacke?

Extensive searches in directories and other period lists of names revealed that the name "Mussak", at that time, is not verifiable in the greater Berlin area. Further archival investigations established that Engels' information must have been a phonetic transcription. Finally, on the basis of several pieces of evidence, it could be verified that the friend of Max Stirner described by Engels was in fact the seminar teacher Dr. Eduard Mushacke (1812-1873). This solid result was further confirmed by an investigation conducted nearly at the same time by an independent researcher whose studies were unrelated to Nietzsche. (49)

The impact his meeting with Eduard Mushacke must have had on Nietzsche can also be deduced easily from the few pertinent documents that have been passed down to us. In his previously-mentioned letter from September 1865 to Granier, Nietzsche, who had just escaped the "hooting bleakness, this empty abundance, this senile youth" of the world of his fellow students in Bonn, had still complained: "Humans, who can be loved and esteemed, still more, humans, who understand us, are ridiculously rare. But that's our fault, we arrived around 20, 30 years too late in this world". He had anticipated for some time meeting one such human being, who had lived during those Young Hegelian times. This was a period frowned upon since about 1850, even taboo, but admired by Nietzsche because of its "lively spirit". He had prepared himself for this meeting with extensive reading during the semester break in Naumburg. Nietzsche then spent a period of two weeks with Eduard Mushacke, a veteran of that time, who immediately made friends with the young iconoclast and offered him the intimate "Du" address.

It is hardly conceivable that Mushacke did not tell Nietzsche, who showed a keen interest in the pre-1848 intellectual epoch, of his friend Stirner; that he did not have Stirner's 'The Ego' on his book shelf; that Nietzsche did not devour this book on the spot. Immediately after he had struggled towards atheism with the help of critiques of religion written by Feuerbach and Strauss -- perhaps also Bauer's critique of the Gospels -- he here must have read of how, why, and in what sense these atheists are still "pious people". Here he read about the death of God, about immoralism, nihilism etc. He saw how someone might take up a position "beyond of good and evil" and "philosophize with a hammer". For a man as highly sensitive as Nietzsche this was a mental overdose he could hardly cope with. He lived through an extreme mental exaltation. The aftermath of this state was a veritable collapse, followed by self-therapy. The initial crisis was followed by a hasty flight: on the one hand to Schopenhauer, on the other "into the dull unfeelingness [...] the consequence of my philological wood-chopping." (50) Although Nietzsche would never again speak of the "lively spirit" of earlier times he had once admired, he nevertheless carried out his great project, foreshadowed in his still-euphoric letter of October 19th to Eduard Mushacke. But the project took an inverted form: Nietzsche did not continue the radical atheist enlightenment initiated by the Young Hegelians and catapulted forward by Stirner -- instead, he "overcame" it. (51)

After this twofold flight from Stirner, Nietzsche was anxious to terminate his friendship with Eduard Mushacke that had begun with such enthusiasm. He did it in a brusque, but nevertheless unspectacular way. He stopped writing letters to him; he just sent him casual regards when writing to his son Hermann, regards using the same empty formal phrase used in earlier times, before they had become close friends, just as if they had never met: "regards to your dear family" or "regards to your beloved parents". When he later sometimes travelled to Berlin he did not visit him. In turn, this veteran of Young Hegelian days, who after his wild years had entered the safe port of the national school service, may not really have taken this amiss. And Mushacke Junior, referred to by Nietzsche as an "amiable human", obviously had not even realized his fellow student's grave personal crisis which very likely marked a defining moment in Nietzsche's development, and one that set the course he was to follow later in his life.

6. Epilogue

The answer to the still-pendant Stirner/Nietzsche question given here in concise form is based on the discovery that Eduard Mushacke, the father of Nietzsche's fellow student Hermann Mushacke, was a personal friend of Max Stirner, the author of the "ill famed" (according to F. A. Lange) book *The Ego and Its Own* (1844). It consists in the assumption which naturally follows: that young Nietzsche, who had shown a keen interest in the proscribed criticisms of religion produced in the period before March 1848, was confronted with Stirner's 'The Ego' during a two-week stay in Mushacke's home in October 1865. Hence, I propose the thesis that it was this experience which drove Nietzsche into a grave psychological and intellectual life crisis, during which his future course as a philosopher was established. Positing this initial crisis is justified foremost by biographical evidence (including 'negative evidence' in the form of obliterated traces of Stirner in Nietzsche's works and literary remains), and by analysis and comparison of the reactions of other philosophers: treatment of the Stirner/Nietzsche question; reactions of other important philosophers to Stirner; etc.

It is certainly possible to dismiss as irrelevant the discovery that Eduard Mushacke was a close friend of Max Stirner. Such a characterization could be seen as justification for rejecting as speculation any consequences this fact might entail. The heuristic value of my reconstruction, the new perspectives on Nietzsche's life and work that it opens, and its value in any consideration of his final crisis will perhaps only be recognized by a person free from the rather conventional contempt for Stirner, and aware of the clandestine history of re(pulsions and de)ceptions of 'The Ego' which, in a peculiar way, disclaims such contempt. (52)

Notes:

(1) Nietzsche, Friedrich: *Aus dem Nachlass 1884-85, Fragment Nr. 34 [232], April-Juni 1885*. In id.: *Sämtliche Werke, KSA* (Hg. Colli/Montinari), Band 11, S. 498

(2) From recent times are noteworthy:
Volz, Pia Daniela: *Nietzsche im Labyrinth seiner Krankheit*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann 1990; Schain, Richard: *The Legend of Nietzsche's Syphilis*. Westport CT (USA): Greenwood Press 2001 (Contributions in Medical Studies, Number 46).
Volz whose study is particularly valuable as a compilation of all relevant documents holds the view prevalent since Möbius (1902): that Nietzsche's collapse was due to exogenous causes (Syphilis in the tertiary stage, progressive paralysis). The neurologist and psychiatrist Schain, after critically sifting the past literature, considers this diagnosis as "untenable" and argues for endogenous causes, as does his colleague Louis Corman (*Nietzsche, Psychologue des Profondeurs*. Paris: Presses Universitaires 1982).

(3) Nietzsche's childhood and youth have been and still are scrutinized in the most minute detail, in recent years in particular by Hermann Josef Schmidt, a professor of philosophy. He published four voluminous books with 2500 (!) pages in order to ferret out the (after one hundred years of Nietzsche research obviously still) "concealed" Nietzsche (*Nietzsche absconditus, oder: Spurenlesen bei Nietzsche*. 4 Bände. Aschaffenburg: IBDK 1991-1994). Unfortunately Schmidt stops short exactly in the year 1865, some months before Nietzsche's initial crisis. In further studies he investigated with habitual meticulousness Nietzsche's possible relationship with the poet Ernst Ortlepp (*Der alte Ortlepp war's wohl doch, oder: für mehr Mut, Kompetenz und Redlichkeit in der Nietzscheinterpretation*, Aschaffenburg: Alibri 2001, 440 pp.).
The restriction to the years before 1864 that Schmidt imposed on his research for Nietzsche absconditus is all the more remarkable, as I had presented my biographical discovery regarding Nietzsche's initial crisis of October 1865 already at the *Erstes Dortmunder Nietzsche-Kolloquium* on 5 July 1991, organized by Schmidt himself.

(4) Nietzsche, Friedrich: *Rückblick auf meine zwei Leipziger Jahre (17. Oktober 1865 bis 10. August 1867)*. In: idem: *Werke in drei Bänden*, hg. v. Karl Schlechta, München: Hanser 1954ff. Dritter Band, pp. 127-148

(5) Riehl, Alois: *Friedrich Nietzsche - der Künstler und der Denker*. Stuttgart: Frommann 1897, p. 81

(6) Ottmann, Henning: *Philosophie und Politik bei Nietzsche*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 1982, p. 309

(7) Safranski, Rüdiger: *Nietzsche. Biographie seines Denkens*. München: Hanser 2000. pp. 122-129
(An English translation appeared 2001ff at W. W. Norton, London / New York)
On the motive for inclusion of the Stirner chapter in Safranski's book cf. Laska, Bernd A.: *Den Bann brechen! - Max Stirner redivivus. Teil 2: Über Nietzsche und die Nietzscheforschung*. In: Der Einzige. Vierteljahresschrift des Max-Stirner-Archivs Leipzig, Nr. 4 (12), 3. November 2000, pp. 17-23

(8) Janz, Curt Paul: *Friedrich Nietzsche. Biographie in drei Bänden*. München: Carl Hanser 1978-1979

(9) Already volume 3 of the first edition has pp. 443-446 a section "Addenda and Corrections" to the volumes 1 and 2. For the second edition (publisher: Hanser, München) further corrections and additions were made, because, as Janz wrote in a separate essay *Addenda to the Nietzsche Biography* (Nietzsche-Studien 18(1989), pp. 426-431), the public welcomed his work with great interest and sent to him numerous "texts from otherwise hardly accessible or until then unknown private collections."
Janz's work has appeared since 1981 in several editions (publisher: dtv) and lastly 1999 (publisher: Zweitausendundeins, Frankfurt/M)

(10) These errors remained again in the last edition (Zweitausendundeins), in spite of further corrections and addenda. For the corrections in these and earlier editions see the short review of Richard F. Krummel in: Germanic Notes and Reviews, 32,2 (Fall / Herbst 2001), p. 200

(11) Klages, Ludwig: *Die psychologischen Errungenschaften Nietzsches*. 1925. 3. Aufl., Bonn: Bouvier 1958, pp. 58-61

(12) both quoted from Laska, Bernd A.: *Ein dauerhafter Dissident. 150 Jahre Stirner "Einziger". Eine kurze Wirkungsgeschichte.* Nürnberg: LSR-Verlag 1996 (Stirner-Studien, Band 2), pp. 88f

(13) Calasso, Roberto: *Der Untergang von Kasch*. (it. Orig. 1983) Aus dem Italienischen von Joachim Schulte. Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp-Verlag 1997, S. 312-314;
(English translation available: The Ruin of Kasch, 1993)
Here, in addition, Ronald Paterson should be mentioned, the author of the first (1971) -- and to date the only -- monography on Stirner from the anglophone world. He also arrives at the conclusion: "A society in which Stirner's self-centred indifferentism became a generally held attitude would be a society on the brink of dissolution."
Cf. Paterson, Ronald W. K.: *The Nihilistic Egoist Max Stirner*. London: Oxford University Press 1971, p. 316

(14) Husserl-Archief te Leuven, Manuscript F I 28, p. 118

(15) Cf. Laska, Bernd A.: *"Katechon" und "Anarch". Die Reaktionen Carl Schmitts und Ernst Jüngers auf Max Stirner.* Nürnberg: LSR-Verlag 1997 (Stirner-Studien, Band 3)

(16) quoted from Helms, Hans G.: *Die Ideologie der anonymen Gesellschaft*. Köln: DuMont Schauberg 1966, p. 200

(17) Joël, Karl: *Wandlungen der Weltanschauung. Eine Philosophiegeschichte als Geschichtsphilosophie*. 2 Bände. Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr 1928/34, S.II/636, 648f; Joël was incidentally involved in the closed controversy over the Stirner/Nietzsche question between "Weimar" and "Basel" (Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche and Franz Overbeck). He therefore was well informed about its background.

(18) Laska, Bernd A.: *Den Bann brechen! - Max Stirner redivivus. Teil 1: Über Marx und die Marxforschung.* In: Der Einzige. Vierteljahresschrift des Max-Stirner-Archivs Leipzig, Nr. 3 (11), 3. August 2000, pp. 17-24;
cf. also *Teil 2: Nietzsche und die Nietzscheforschung.* In: ibid., Nr. 4 (12), 3. November 2000, pp. 17-23

(19) to the history of impact: Laska: *Dissident,* op.cit. (n. 12);
Habermas started his philosophical career with a furious condemnation of the "absurdity of Stirner's rage", which nevertheless is worth studying. (Habermas, Jürgen: *Das Absolute und die Geschichte*. Diss. Bonn 1954, pp. 16-34).
Later on he always took pains to stay away from Stirner, even in works on Young Hegelianism. He has never since mentioned his name, not even in listings like "Feuerbach, Ruge, Marx, Bauer and Kierkegaard" (Habermas, Jürgen: *Drei Perspektiven - Linkshegelianer, Rechtshegelianer und Nietzsche*. In: idem: *Der philosophische Diskurs der Moderne*. Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp 1985, pp. 65-103). Thus he testified an intuition, which gives him a place within the clandestine Stirner reception.

(20) The insinuation of a potential importance of Stirner in the history of philosophy, and thus of the Stirner/Nietzsche question, can be read in the writings of many authors -- in most cases only 'between the lines'; so far, however, authors are reluctant to get to the bottom of the question. At the most one sees defamations ("petty bourgeois stuff"), condemnations ("devil's religion") or whispering apocalyptic visions (see above). Remarkable in this is the anxious effort apparent in attempting to make such remarks look incidental.

(21) cf. Laska: *Dissident*, op.cit. (n. 12), p. 23f

(22) cf. Laska: *Bann, Teil 1*, op.cit. (n. 18)

(23) von Hartmann, Eduard: *Philosophie des Unbewussten*. (1869). 12. Aufl. Leipzig: Alfred Kröner 1923, p. 373

(24) Lange, Friedrich Albert: *Geschichte des Materialismus*. (1866). Nachdruck Frankfurt: Suhrkamp 1974 (stw, Doppelband 70), p. 528f

(25) Anhuth, Robert Otto: *Das wahnsinnige Bewusstsein und die unbewusste Vorstellung. Ein Ant(h)elogikon der Hartmann'schen Philosophie*. Halle: Fricke 1877, p. 52

(26) cf. Laska: *Dissident*, op.cit. (n. 12); Laska, *Bann, Teil 1*, op.cit. (n. 18)

(27) For some persons, however, Stirner became an idol. So John Henry Mackay, Stirner's later biographer, propagated in the name of Stirner a kind of ultra-liberalism of North American provenance labeled "individualist anarchism", which was directed against the collectivist anarchism based on ideas of Proudhon, Bakunin and Kropotkin.

(28) Letter of Heinrich Hengster, 24. Juni 1889, quoted in: Janz, *Nietzsche*, op.cit., p. III/336

(29) Hartmann, Eduard von: *Nietzsches "neue Moral"*. In: Preussische Jahrbücher, 67. Jg., Heft 5, Mai 1891, S. 501-521; augmented version with more express reproach of plagiarism in: idem: *Ethische Studien*. Leipzig: Haacke 1898, pp. 34-69

(30) von Rahden, Wolfert: *Eduard von Hartmann "und" Nietzsche. Zur Strategie der verzögerten Konterkritik Hartmanns an Nietzsche*. In: Nietzsche-Studien, 13 (1984), S. 481-502. Rahden is the only author in thirty years of "Nietzsche-Studien" who addresses the Stirner/Nietzsche question -- summarily in a long footnote. (pp. 492f)

(31) As to Lauterbach cf. Laska, Bernd A.:*Ein heimlicher Hit. 150 Jahre Stirners "Einziger". Eine kurze Editionsgeschichte.* Nürnberg: LSR-Verlag 1994 (pp. 18-28).
Lauterbach's introduction appeared in all Reclam editions of *Der Einzige* from 1893 to 1924.
It may appear strange that so determined an opponent of Stirner was the most effective driving force behind his rediscovery. But also the so-called second Stirner renaissance starting from the mid-1960s -- Stirner had been again in oblivion for nearly a half century -- got off the ground by the same pattern. The great man to overcome the "dangerous" Stirner this time, however, was not Nietzsche, but Marx. (cf. Laska: *Hit*, op.cit.)

(32) Heman, Friedrich: *Der Philosoph des Anarchismus und Nihilismus*. In: Der Türmer, 9. Jg., Band I, Okt. 1906, pp. 67-74

(33) Overbeck, Franz: *Erinnerungen an Friedrich Nietzsche*. In: Neue Rundschau, Feb. 1906, pp. 209-231 (227-228); quoted from Carl Albrecht Bernoulli: *Franz Overbeck und Friedrich Nietzsche -- eine Freundschaft*. 2 Bände. Jena: Eugen Diederichs 1908, p. I/238f

(34) cf. Janz: *Nietzsche*, op.cit., p. I/646

(35) cf. Resa von Schirnhofer's report on her "interrogation", quoted in Janz: *Nietzsche*, op.cit., p. III/212. In a letter to Karl Joël of 12th May 1899 Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche asserts to be in possession of corresponding declarations of Rohde, Gersdorff, Seydlitz and Köselitz-Gast. (Nietzsche-Archiv Weimar).

(36) Montinari, Mazzino: *Friedrich Nietzsche. Eine Einführung*. Berlin: Walter De Gruyter 1991, p. 135 (it. orig. 1975)

(37) quoted in Bernoulli: *Overbeck...*, op.cit., p. I/136f

(38) cf. Ottmann: *Philosophie...*, op.cit., p. 309; Safranski: *Nietzsche*, op.cit., p. 129

(39) Schmitz, Hermann: *Philosophie als Selbstdarstellung*. Bonn: Bouvier 1995, pp. 83-89)

(40) Here a remarkable parallel to research on Marx has to be pointed out. Even if in the case of Marx -- as is not the case with Nietzsche -- the encounter with Stirner's *Der Einzige* is evident beyond any doubt (through the giant manuscript *Saint Max* found in his literary remains) Marx scholars of all backgrounds -- there are only very few exceptions -- have been inclined to ignore this stage of his biography and theoretical development. Hard to believe, but true: cf. Laska: *Bann... Teil1*, op.cit. (n. 18)

(41) Droz, Théophile: *La revanche de l'individu -- Frédéric Nietzsche*. In: La Semaine Littéraire (Gen?ve),

Année 1894, No. 44, 3 novembre 1894, pp. 517-520; German extract in: Zürcher Post, 7. November 1900

(42) Letter from Friedrich Nietzsche to Hermann Mushacke of 20th Sept 1865.
Nietzsche was just reading the newly published book by Strauss *Die Halben und die Ganzen*; when he said "Hegelian philosophy" he in all likelihood did not mean texts by Hegel or orthodox Hegelians, but rather those by the Young Hegelians.

(43) Nietzsche, Friedrich: *Werke in drei Bänden*. Hg. v. Karl Schlechta. München: Hanser 1954ff, Band 3, p. 133f

(44) Förster-Nietzsche, Elisabeth: *Der junge Nietzsche*. Leipzig: Alfred Kröner 1912, p. 171

(45) Janz: *Nietzsche*, op.cit, Band I, p. 265-267

(46) Nietzsche: *Werke*, op.cit., Band III, p. 148

(47) Ross, Werner: *Der ängstliche Adler*. Stuttgart: DVA 1980, p. 158

(48) Mackay, John Henry: *Max Stirner. Sein Leben und sein Werk*. 3. Aufl. Berlin-Charlottenburg: Selbstverlag 1914, p. 90

(49) Kliem, Manfred: *Wer war der im Engels-Brief vom 22. Oktober 1889 genannte, bisher nicht identifizierte Junghegelianer "Mussak"?* In: Beiträge zur Marx-Engels-Forschung, Band 29, Berlin 1990, pp. 176-185

(50) Letter from Friedrich Nietzsche to Hermann Mushacke of 14th March 1866

(51) I proceed here from the assumption that Nietzsche for a short time was inspired by the idea to reanimate and develop Stirner's radical enlightenment. His philosophical work, however, although numerous traces of Stirner are to be found therein, aimed at the suffocating of Stirner's ideas without any discussion, in a way that can be characterized as an "overcoming". His work was usually understood in this way (cf. the clandestine Stirner reception sketched above). In this respect also, a clear parallel is to be recognized with the development of Marx. Cf. Laska: *Bann, Teil 1: Marx und Marxforschung*, op.cit. (n. 18); *Teil 2: Nietzsche und Nietzscheforschung*, op.cit. (n. 18)

(52) Stirner's *Der Einzige* is in print since 1972 in Reclam's Universalbibliothek; as to its reception cf. three volumes of *Stirner-Studien* (Laska: *Hit*, op.cit. (n. 31); Laska: *Dissident*, op.cit. (n. 12); Laska: *Katechon*, op.cit. (n. 15)) and some printed articles, most easily accessible via http://www.lsr-projekt.de/ms.html.

A critical view of this article by Helmut Walther.

German original: Nietzsches initiale Krise

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