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Araştırma Makalesi

ON SLEEPLESSNESS: NIETZSCHE’S ZARATHUSTRA

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Abstract¹

Here, we aim to examine the notion of sleeplessness in Nietzsche’s thought, especially focusing on his famous character, Zarathustra. By following the narrative in Thus Spoke Zarathustra (Z), we present how the sleeplessness is a productively crucial element in Zarathustra’s journey. Throughout this journey, it becomes obvious that for him, his sleeplessness is not a problem that he needs to solve, but on the contrary, it enables him in his path to overcome himself and self-actualization. First, we shape a framework for the meaning of sleeplessness to present it as a medium that makes it possible to experience some elements of reality which are otherwise unattainable. Then we make a detailed reading of the subsection titled On the Teachers of Virtue which is the part of Z that deals with the notion of sleep and sleeplessness in extent. Here, we examine the remarks of the character, wise man, regarding the sleep and its connotations. In this section, we make a comparative reading between the wise man’s advocacy of sleep and Zarathustra’s critique of this advocacy. Later, we continue towards explaining how this element of sleeplessness can be considered as the source for a specific sense of lucidity which is not reachable by sleep or being awake. In conclusion, sleeplessness (and the notion of insomnia as taken not medically but philosophically) can be thought as an inseparable part of Zarathustra’s character which enables him in overcoming himself. Zarathustra is becoming who he is becoming on his path, through his sleeplessness.

Keywords: *Lucidity, Sleep, Overcoming, Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Wakefulness.*

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UYKUSUZLUK ÜZERİNE: NIETZSCHE'NİN ZERDÜŞT'Ü

Öz

Bu makalede, özellikle ünlü Zerdüşt karakterine odaklanılarak, Nietzsche düşüncesinde uykusuzluk kavramının incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Böyle Buyurdu Zerdüşt eserindeki anlatı takip edilerek, Zerdüşt'ün yolculuğunda uykusuzluğun nasıl üretken ve kritik bir öge olduğu sunulmuştur. Bu yolculuk boyunca onun için yaşadığı uykusuzluğun çözülmesi gereken bir sorun değil ama tam tersine kendisini aşma ve kendisini gerçekleştirme patikasında ona olanak sağlayan bir öge olduğu açık hâle gelir. Makale boyunca ilk olarak uykusuzluğu, uykusuzluk olmadan erişilmesi olanaksız olan gerçeklik öğelerini deneyimlemeyi olanaklı kılan olası bir ortam olarak sunmak için uykusuzluğun anlamına dair bir çerçeve çizilmiştir. Sonra, Böyle Buyurdu Zerdüşt içinde uyku ve uykusuzluk ile etraflı bir şekilde uğraşan kısım olarak Erdem Kürsüleri Üzerine başlıklı alt kısmın detaylı bir okuması gerçekleştirilmiştir. Burada bilge karakterinin uyku ve uykuya ilişkin çağrışımlar hakkındaki sözleri incelenmiştir. Bu kısımda bilgenin uykuyu savunan görüşleri ile Zerdüşt'ün bu savunuya dair açık ve üstü kapalı eleştirisi karşılıklı bir şekilde ele alınmıştır. Daha sonra, uykusuzluk ögesinin uyku ya da uyanıklık ile erişilebilir olmayan spesifik bir berraklık için nasıl kaynak olarak düşünülebileceğine yönelinmiştir. Sonuç olarak uykusuzluk (ve tıbbi olarak değil ama felsefi olarak ele alınan insomnia kavramı) Zerdüşt karakterinin, kendisini aşmasını olanaklı kılan ayrılmaz bir parçası olarak düşünülebileceği ortaya koyulmuştur. Zerdüşt'ün, kendi patikasında dönüşmekte olduğu kişiye dönüşmesi, uykusuzluğu sayesinde.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Berraklık, Uyku, Aşma, Böyle Buyurdu Zerdüşt, Uyanıklık

INTRODUCTION

I can remember when I first realized

Dreams were the only place to see them

The lyrics above are from a song titled “The Great Disappointment” by the band A.F.I. This line, when it is taken for its surface value, successfully reminds about the special relation between perception and reality. It is true that some elements of reality are only perceivable in their own environments, only through suitable and conditional mediums. If the right conditions are not met, or the necessary instruments are not used, then it would be impossible to experience some things or events in some specific manner. One can remember how William Herschel accidentally discovered in his experiment with prism and thermometer, that there exists an invisible light (which called infrared radiation today) beyond the visible ones, because of the heat that invisible light produces. As an experience that one can try at home, one might see the infrared light that the remote control of the television produces when a button is pushed, by looking at the front of the remote control through the camera function of a cell phone. This means, some things are

experienceable, only with the right environment and right instrumental settings. That is also valid for the lyrics above, as it might be true that there are some things which can be seen only in dreams. Through following the same premise, is it possible to say that maybe there are some elements of reality that one can experience only when in a severe state of sleeplessness? Is there a truth that can only be uncovered when within the state of insomnia where senses and mental faculties of a human are working, rather differently?

It goes without saying that, since insomnia can be a life-threatening situation, better half of this questioning belongs to scientific and medical studies on sleep (see, Gillespie, 2002, pp. 201–204). Here, the article will deal with this notion of sleeplessness through a hermeneutical examination, especially focusing on how it was depicted in Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (Z). This is mainly because the relation between sleep and Zarathustra in Z is particularly problematic and dilemmatic on different layers. This situation between sleep and Zarathustra might provide us a path that deals with the relation between sleeplessness and sense of truth. Can it be said that Zarathustra is who he is, because throughout his whole journey, he always suffers from some level of sleeplessness? Is Zarathustra able to think the way he thinks because he is in some state of insomnia? Is he always a little bit sleepless because he is an awakened one? Moreover, does he seek his own down-going, to finally be able to sleep? Or does he seek his own down-going to finally not need sleep at all?

FRAMEWORK OF SLEEPLESSNESS

When one talks about sleeplessness, it is also necessary to talk about being awake. If Zarathustra is awakened one, then the question is this: What was he awakened from? Awakened from sleep? What kind of sleep did Zarathustra have to awaken to be the Zarathustra? What is meant here is not directly the physiological and biological slumber that most of the living creatures have daily or from time to time. The awakening here might be understood as wakefulness that ends an unawareness of reality itself, or the reality of human life, of being human. But alongside this metaphorical sense, can these “gaining awareness” and “wakefulness” be thought in relation to physiological sleeplessness, in the central meaning of this word, meaning lacking sleep? Does Zarathustra have a deeper awareness of reality itself, because he is always in the state of needing some amount of sleep? To answer this, one also must examine the narrative of *sleeplessness* in relation to this kind of *wakefulness* and *awareness*.

Here, what one needs to ask first is clear now: What does sleeplessness mean? Does it refer to the state where one is always in need of some sleep, like a state of drowsiness where one is lethargic and apathetic? Does it refer to a mental state of torpor that is lacking alertness and perceptual, cognitive activeness? Does it refer to a state where one is enervated, weary, somnolent, and suffering fatigue? Or

does it refer to a mental state where one was able to bypass this need for sleep one way or another? A highly stimulated state (which comes only after not sleeping for a long period of time) where one is hyper-sensitive and overly energetic? The mental state where it is impossible for one to sleep, with being hyper-perceptive towards everything around? The mental state where even though there has not been any sleep for a time, there is not any sense of lacking sleep? Or does sleeplessness cover both these mental states? Can there be other mental states (other than these two) which are covered only by some further durations of sleeplessness? Is it possible that one cannot experience the inner truth of reality, just because one cannot stay sleepless enough to reach it?

It is a well-known fact that, for living beings, not needing any sleep at all is impossible after some time. Maybe one can go two or three days without any sleep, but then, that is it. The more one exists, the more one's need for sleep enhances. The more one is alive, the more one cannot escape sleep. The more one survives, the more sleep is settling in them. There are some animals who can get by with non-conventional forms of sleep, such as unihemispheric slow-wave sleep, microsleeps, or state of dormancy where there is no cycle of sleep and wake, but a continuous resting condition in between. And it can be said that there are beings such as sea sponges, sea urchins, and jellyfish which do not sleep, but that is unrelated context here, because the notion of sleeplessness dialectically necessitates the possibility of sleep. Since those animals do not have the brain or nervous system that produce the state of sleep, they can never be sleepless, even though they never sleep. Therefore, it is not like those animals are overcoming the urge to sleep, because that urge to sleep is not there to begin with. One cannot be deprived of something that is impossible for one to have in the first place. But, that state of dormancy where sleep and wake are intertwined with each other reminds that sleeplessness as a phenomenon can be also considered like a state of ecstatic trance where one is half conscious and half sleep. One can remember the medical practice of ἐγκοίμησις [enkoimesis] in Ancient Greece here and how it can be considered as a way opening to the meditative and deeper state of consciousness which goes beyond waking, dreaming, and sleeping.

If you look at the old accounts of incubation you can still read the amazement as people discovered that the state they'd entered continued regardless of whether they were asleep or awake, whether they opened their eyes or shut them. Often you find the mention of a state that's like being awake but different from being awake, that's like sleep but not sleep: that's neither sleep nor waking. It's not the waking state, it's not an ordinary dream and it's not dreamless sleep. It's something else, something in between [...] And there the state glimpsed or experienced by Greeks—the state that could be called a dream but isn't an ordinary dream, that's like being awake but isn't being awake, that's like being asleep but isn't (Kingsley, 1999, pp. 110 and 115).

Now the question is this: Can there be some deeper state of consciousness which can occur only through and within sleeplessness? And a second question: Can Zarathustra in Z be considered in this context?

ZARATHUSTRA'S SLEEP

Throughout the work, sleeping is periodically encountered several times under different contexts in Z. Even at the beginning, Zarathustra's *going under* begins with an awakening. To be more precise, his going under begins with him being awakened and going among the sleepers (Nietzsche, 2006, p. 2). With Zarathustra pounding on the door of a lonely house, he interrupts an old man's sleep (or more correctly, Zarathustra comes to this old man's sleep). He loves to look at the faces of sleepers in nights (Nietzsche, 2006, p. 13), he walks with a young man who is sleep-deprived and over-awake (Zarathustra thinks this young man is not free, because he still seeks his freedom) (Nietzsche, 2006, p. 30). Zarathustra sometimes sleeps at noon and when the weather is hot. At one time, he did not drink or eat for three days and without any rest, he lost his speech before he fell into a deep sleep (Nietzsche, 2006, p. 106). Sometimes his sleeping resembles the sleeping of a sick person (Nietzsche, 2006, pp. 124–125) and so on.

Furthermore, sleeping in Z is not just related to Zarathustra himself. There are numerous other elements which are mentioned alongside the concept of sleeping. A sea sleeps, a worm is sleepy, a sleeping shepherd is bitten by a snake which crawled into his throat (Nietzsche, 2006, p. 127). Some people talk and think about good and bad before going to bed in order to have a good sleep (Nietzsche, 2006, p. 157). In a context that also covers these details, the focus now is on the fact that Zarathustra often falls asleep and thinks about sleep. Once, he falls asleep somewhere, he wakes up, and he sleeps again. When he wakes up and realizes that he is (was) sleeping, he tries to get himself up from sleep one way or another.

Still – (and here Zarathustra stretched and felt that he was sleeping). ‘Get up!’ he said to himself, you sleeper! You noon sleeper! Well then, well now, you old legs! It's time and overtime, many a good piece of road is still waiting for you – Now you've slept yourself out, for how long? Half an eternity! Well then, well now, my old heart! How long after such a sleep will it take you to wake yourself out?’ (But then he fell asleep anew, and his soul spoke against him and resisted and laid itself down again)” (Nietzsche, 2006, pp. 224–225).

The relation between Zarathustra and sleeping is obviously problematic and this problem shows itself periodically throughout the text again and again. It seems like he does not like sleeping. Nevertheless, he still cannot help himself but to fall asleep at every convenient chance. Is it because he is old or tired? But even the young and energetic ones might not be able to resist falling asleep when they are really asleep. What is known here is that there is a special subsection in this work which

specifically tells Zarathustra's opinions about sleep and sleeplessness. It is crucial to examine this subsection to understand why Zarathustra does not like himself when he finds himself sleeping.

In the subsection titled *On the Teachers of Virtue*, one can find one aspect of Zarathustra's take on sleeping, even though this subsection is hardly about sleeping itself. By only according to the title itself, one can reason that this subsection would probably include a criticism towards the mainstream understanding of virtues and morality during his (Nietzsche's) era. Ones who are familiar with Nietzsche's works, are already aware that this criticism towards Western understanding of morality is characteristic and fundamental for most of his works.

This task follows necessarily from the insight that humanity has *not* put itself on the correct path, that it has absolutely *no* divine, that instead, the instinct of negation, of corruption, the decadence-instinct, has been seductively at work, and precisely under humanity's holiest value concepts. The question of the origin of moral values is a question of the *first rank* for me because it determines the future of humanity (Nietzsche, 2005, p. 121).

For the ones who are familiar with Nietzsche's critical and satiric expressions, what this subsection will include is predictable by its title. Nietzsche, through Zarathustra, criticizes an understanding of morality and virtue which was dominant in the Western world during his lifetime (Bittner, 1994, p. 134). Nietzsche criticizes the ones who preach and defend that kind of *rotten* understanding.

But, in this subsection, there is a trick, just like there are plenty of them in other subsections. This is a sad and disturbing trick for some. It is that Zarathustra does not talk until the very end of the subsection. The readers who are waiting to read Zarathustra's thoughts here first need to sit through the discourse of another person, namely, *the wise man*. In this subsection, the wise man talks, Zarathustra listens. And as all the readers of the work expected from him, he listens skilfully. So, since Zarathustra himself chooses to listen this wise man, one can also pay attention to what this wise man has to say, if it is related to sleep in some way or another.

The beginning of the subsection says that the wise man was praised regarding his speaking well about sleeping and virtue. Now, this is the first problematic that the reader encounters. What does sleeping have to do with the notion of virtue? Are they somehow related to each other on a basis that one is expected to know already? Or is there virtually no relation between them but sleeping and virtue are the only two things that the wise man is able to speak well of? It remains to be seen. The wise man says: "Have honour and bashfulness for sleep! That is the first thing! And avoid all who sleep badly and remain awake nights!" (Nietzsche, 2006, p. 18). Now, the wise man hints his approach towards interrelation between sleeping and virtue. The ones who stay awake at nights (i.e., in the times

that one *should be* sleeping instead) should be avoided as if they carry a sense of negativity and malignancy.

Now, one might remember the famous epic of Gilgamesh and the connection between his insomnia and his negative, disruptive energy. Gilgamesh, as being *la salihu*, literally means *not sleeping day and night*. And his insomnia is directly related to his destruction of the environment. And his involvement with Enkidu is precisely what transforms the character of this disruptive energy (Summers-Bremner, 2008, pp. 19–26). Before Enkidu, Gilgamesh is the one who is *not sleeping* and who is *not having any virtue*. And these two are deeply connected to each other in Gilgamesh's temperament. In the sense which belongs to the beginning of Epic of Gilgamesh, insomnia or sleeplessness is associated with what is primitive, uncivilized, barbaric, savage, uneducated, untamed, inhuman, bestial, wild, etc. And the wise man in Z uses this sense of association all the way through. In his mind, the one who has virtues is also the one who sleeps, especially the one who sleeps well and who sleeps at nights.

But there is an important point in the text which should not be overlooked. The point where Zarathustra goes to the wise man and sits at his feet. Now, this is a problematic scenery to imagine. It is an ironic touch which otherwise would not suit the character of Zarathustra. Young people sit at the wise man's feet and the wise man talks. Is Zarathustra a young person who can blend in with the rest of the group? Surely, he is not. Moreover, who is this person now talking and with people sitting at his feet? He is the one who *preaches*. He is the one who *sermonizes*. The wise man does not just talk, chat, speak, converse, but he preaches. Now, as Nietzsche readers already know, this preaching, or any preaching for that matter, is something that Zarathustra does not or would not like. Maybe, it is even something he detests. This is not only because Zarathustra thinks the content of what is preached is sickening, corrupting, and degrading the potentiality of humanity and preventing humanity from becoming something more essential, more above, and better than what humanity already is. For Zarathustra, the content of what is preached is indeed not suitable for the social, individual, cultural etc. improvement of humanity. This is what Nietzsche hints by *décadence*. But besides that, Zarathustra also does not like the form or model of preaching itself. Even in the hypothetical case where something good for humanity is preached, Zarathustra would still find it problematic, since the preaching passivates the singular and peculiar characteristics in humans. Preaching is not like advising and that is why it has the potential power to destroy the sense of individuality in the person. Preaching is the model of the deed that puts humans into a herd morality and mentality. Because a preacher is a preacher only when he is a shepherd or herder. For Zarathustra, the notions like "being responsible in making decisions by oneself" and "autonomy" are important, therefore he does not like the formative structure of preaching, at all.

You say you believe in Zarathustra? But what matters Zarathustra! You are my believers, but what matter all believers! You had not yet sought

yourselves, then you found me. All believers do this; that's why all faith amounts to so little. Now I bid you lose me and find yourselves; and only when you have all denied me will I return to you (Nietzsche, 2006, p. 59).

Zarathustra wants every single human to find their own paths by themselves, that is why preaching and following a preacher without any individual questioning are harmful for humanity. Therefore, it is not welcomed in the eye of Zarathustra. But nevertheless, Zarathustra sits at the wise man's feet as an ironic act. He sits at the wise man's feet, but he actually has already lost interest in what the wise man has to say, just because the wise man chooses to say it through preaching. But Zarathustra plays along and chooses to listen.

THE WISE MAN'S SLEEP

The wise man warns about the ones who sleep badly and who remain awake nights. In myths and folk tales, there are already monsters, evil creatures and demons who emerge at night and hurt sleeping people who are unable to protect themselves. The most famous ones are *incubus* and *succubus* who rape, hunt, and eat people during their sleep. Alongside the possible harm that can come from living, ordinary people (like thieves, murderers etc.), the night is dangerous for sleeping people, because what is dangerous in the night precisely never sleeps. Being awake during sleeping time is a problem.

Medieval Europeans did have other nocturnal foes to worry about [...]. Perhaps the most feared of all at night, though, were the Devil and his minions. Demonic appearances were associated with liminal regions and atmospheres: moonlight, twilight, fields, and forests. Unexplained wakefulness, when not for the purposes of prayer or a by-product of other activities, was, like these environments, morally suspect" (Summers-Bremner, 2008, p. 38).

The wise man denigrates and discredits the ones who are awake during the nights, because they are more likely to cause harm and damage to the sleeping people who are vulnerable. Now, one does not know Zarathustra's main approach to all this discussion of *being awake at nights*, but one knows that he does not like sleeping too much. He sleeps on different occasions, but he does not like himself about his sleeping. As said before, he loves to look at the faces of sleepers at night, and he is a practiced nightwalker. He walks at night as long as he is able to. Moreover, he does not like sleeping during daylight either. Once he thanked an adder for biting him in the neck, because the pain of that biting awakened him. He likes to be awake as much as possible. He likes it not just because he has a long way to go, but rather he prefers to be *awake* as long as it is possible. If Zarathustra were able to be *la salilu*, he would definitely choose to be that. But he is not. He falls asleep from time to time like any other normal human being. But let's move slower and go back to the wise man for a while.

For the wise man, Zarathustra might fall into the category of dangerous people, because Zarathustra chooses to be awake in the nights, when it is possible for him. Zarathustra, from the perspective of the wise man, might not or does not have any honour or bashfulness for sleep. The wise man continues his talking: “Even the thief is bashful toward sleep; he constantly steals through the night, silently. But the watchman of the night is shameless, and shamelessly he carries his horn” (Nietzsche, 2006, p. 18). Now, this is probably the trickiest part of the subsection because the metaphorical discourse in this remark is definitely something that Zarathustra *can* and *cannot* agree with, at the same time. On one side, Zarathustra can indeed agree with the idea that watchman is shameless, but on the other side, he cannot agree with the thought that this shamelessness is something bad and negative. Because Zarathustra might see something worthy of human in the personality traits which are condemned by the decaying social authority, church or moral powers which constitute rotting dynamics and mechanism in society. That is why in elsewhere Zarathustra says: “Instead their faith commands: ‘Up the stairs on your knees, you sinners!’ Indeed, I would rather see the shameless than the rolled back eyes of their shame and devotion!” (Nietzsche, 2006, p. 70).

This is mainly related to his (both Zarathustra’s and Nietzsche’s) bigger project, famously known as *revaluation of all values* or *transvaluation*. For Nietzsche, Christianity, not merely as a religion, but also as the predominant moral system of the Western world during his era, inverts nature and values upside down. In this predominant moral system, what is (or should be) natural is deemed unnatural; what is worthy for human life is considered valueless. Moreover, this system is *hostile* to life itself and everything worthy of living. That is why the shamelessness which is condemned by the decadent might be celebrated by Zarathustra. This is in part related with Nietzsche’s understanding of perspectivism where he openly criticizes any type of substantialism and foundationalism (Cartwright, 1984, pp. 85–89). Concerning with the first part of wise man’s words, the part about the thief stealing, Zarathustra’s stance is again dilemmatic. Zarathustra does not just disagree with the *even* in the beginning of the sentence *even the thief is bashful toward sleep*, but he also glorifies the act of stealing when it is considered in a specific context.

And be blissful for your gift of light. But I live in my own light, I drink back into myself the flames that break out of me. I do not the know the happiness of receiving; and often I dreamed that stealing must be more blessed than receiving. This is my poverty, that my hand never rests from bestowing” (Nietzsche, 2006, pp. 81–82).

For Zarathustra, stealing might be something more blessed when it is considered as the disruption of the hierarchic positioning between the giver and the receiver. When the giver creates a sense of superiority over the receiver, by giving, then the giver has the power over the receiver. Therefore, when stealing happens, this domination and hierarchy between the parts (giver and receiver) are ruptured, and this is something that Zarathustra might wish to see, as this rupture might bring

the destruction of the process of decadence. Surely, it is better to think of this stealing as more of a metaphorical and philosophical discourse to break the power relations between different societal roles, and less of an actual act of stealing. Even though Nietzsche is for the revaluation of all values, he is not an advocate of an anarchy where the lack of societal order causes what is civil in society to collapse onto itself.

Let's go back to the quote including watchman. This reminds a fragment of Heraclitus, namely the DK B63: ἔνθα δ' εὐντὶ ἐπανίστασθαι καὶ φύλακας γίνεσθαι ἐγερτὶ ζώντων καὶ νεκρῶν [éntha d' eónti epanístasthai kaì fúlakas gínesthai egeriti zónton kaì nekrôn] [... that they rise up and become the wakeful guardians of the living and the dead]. Even though the fragment is problematic in a grammatical way (in the ἔνθα δ' εὐντὶ, there is a linguistic mistake or a lack), this article is not interested in the interpretation of this fragment, but rather, the only interest is in the fact that the guardians are *wakeful*. There is a high chance that these guardians are the Erinyes, helpers of the goddess of justice, Dike. Therefore, just like these wakeful and shameless guardians are not negative elements for Heraclitus; the wakeful and shameless watchman is also not someone negative for Zarathustra. The fact that the watchman is shameless and without bashfulness for the night is precisely a matter of honour by itself. Because when the situation may require, one might want the watchman to break the silence of the night. For Zarathustra, a good watchman is the watchman who wakes up everyone from their sleep when the situation has called for it. For Zarathustra, the watchman is the one who is not ashamed to wake people up with loud noises in the middle of the night, to protect them from the possible harm. So, while for the wise man, honour goes hand in hand with bashfulness; for Zarathustra, it is the opposite. Zarathustra sees the honour in the lack of bashfulness of the watchman.

The next line seems easy to interpret, but it is still important, because it precisely completes the opinion of the wise man towards the sleeping. He says: "Sleeping is no mean art; it is necessary to remain awake the entire day for it" (Nietzsche, 2006, p. 18). For the wise man, a proper person should sleep at nights and be awake during the days. This calling for being awake during the days, at first glance, seems like something that Zarathustra can also defend. Since, in every single time, Zarathustra likes himself more when he is not sleeping, regardless of the time being daytime or nighttime. But with a more comprehensive and detail-oriented glance, this parallelism might be shattered, because *the wakefulness that the wise man preaches* and *the wakefulness that Zarathustra likes* are *different from each other*. For the wise man, being awake serves the sleeping. If it does not bring a wellness into sleeping, then there is no significance of being awake during days. For the wise man, the passivity of humans during the sleep is the main projection which being awake during the days should accord itself towards. For the wise man, being awake is something collateral and secondary to the sleeping. But, for Zarathustra, it is the opposite. Zarathustra falls asleep here and there, *but only to wake up and continue being awake*. The wise man wakes up and keeps himself awake only to sleep well during nights. Zarathustra wakes up and keeps himself awake to be awake

and he tries to stay away from sleeping as much as he can. The wise man cherishes the sleeping well. If there were a chance for him to sleep all the time, he would definitely choose it. On the contrary, Zarathustra cherishes being awake. If there were a chance for him to be awake all the time, he would definitely choose it. And this difference between the wise man the Zarathustra concerning the sleeping comes by itself in the end of the subsection, by the very words of Zarathustra himself: “The meaning of his wisdom is: wake in order to sleep well. And truly, if life had no meaning and if I had to choose nonsense, then to me too this would be the worthiest nonsense I could choose” (Nietzsche, 2006, p. 19).

In continuing sentences, the wise man keeps saying the number ten in different contexts and occasions (ten times, ten truths). He also talks about bearing false witness, committing adultery, coveting neighbour’s maid. These are probably direct references to the Ten Commandments or Decalogue (especially the seventh, ninth and tenth). So, is the wise man a symbolization of Moses? Or is the wise man a symbolic advocator of Judeo-Christian tradition that shapes the moral and spiritual essence of the western world? Answer to both these questions can be a simple yes. But that answering would be something which both Zarathustra and Nietzsche dislike. Zarathustra is after something else, something above and different than criticizing the wise man. It seems like the wise man wants to save the humanity as a good servant (servant to God, to state, to government, to society etc.) with obeying to what has been put forward as rules and prohibitions.

But Zarathustra wants humans to save themselves by themselves and as themselves, through being pro-life. This is one of the most characteristic themes for Zarathustra’s story throughout the whole text: The affirmation of life. Zarathustra affirms the life. He wants humans to experience and live the life they have, to the fullest sense. According to Zarathustra, Judeo-Christian tradition in western world impedes people to fulfil their own individuality. This tradition blocks them from living their own life in a way which is more peculiar and singular for each of them. This tradition gathers people in crowds (herds) and then annuls the sense of subjectivity and individuality in the person, rendering them all similar and same to each other. For Zarathustra this is one of the most hostile damages that there is to life itself and people. The remark concerning ten truths being sought by night might also refer to the historical times of Ancient Greek and Hellenistic era where there was no dominant monotheistic structure in social religions and where polytheism was still intact. In these polytheistic religions and believes, truth is more associated with the darkness and night, contrary to monotheistic religions where truth is more associated with light and brightness. And the wise man might be condemning these pagan rituals and understanding (Summers-Bremner, 2008, pp. 24–25).

In the end of these passage which focuses on the number of ten and references to the *Decalogue*, the wise man says “And even when one has all the virtues, one must understand one more thing: how to send the virtues to sleep at the right time. So that they do not quarrel with each other, the good little women! And

quarrel over you, wretch!" (Nietzsche 2006, 18). Now, it is indeed possible that virtues can contradict with each other from time to time, depending on the context. So, the ability to choose rightfully and wisely between two contradicting virtues is indeed important. This is mainly related to the idea of *phronesis* [φρόνησις] which has always been cherished in the western mentality, even from the times of Plato and before. Therefore, knowing when to suspend virtues is also something of a virtue. But this remark can also be read within the context of pride, as one of the seven deadly sins within the Christian tradition. Having all the virtues all the time can cause pride in one's character and which is problematic from the Christian perspective. Therefore, this narrative of *sending virtues to sleep at the right time* perfectly suits to the Judeo-Christian tradition (Avci, 2021, p. 269).

WHAT IS SLEEPING FOR?

The next line points toward an understanding where the parts of that traditions differ from each other. The wise man says: "At peace with God and neighbor, thus good sleep demands. And at peace too with the neighbor's devil! Otherwise, he will be at your house at night." (Nietzsche, 2006, p. 18). The remark of *being at peace with the neighbor's devil* is probably a reference to the famous Christian thought of *turning the other cheek* which is best described in Matthew 5: 38–42: "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also [...]" The principle of eye for an eye (or law of retaliation) is generally related to the Old Testament, but, as an alternative for that, the Christ brings the *turning the other cheek*. This makes Judeo-Christian tradition more Christian and less Judaic. This type of transformation is also traceable within linguistic field, namely in the first translation of the bible into English and other European languages. One can clearly see this kind of shift in the hermeneutical sense of the word *witch* in the bible. Throughout this historical transitioning from Judaic sense of mentality to a Christian one, there happens a change within the connotations and associations of the word. While it once had also meant *poisoner* (the Greek term *pharmakeia* has also its connotations with preparing, harmful or not, drugs or poisons using herbs etc.) alongside *sorceress*, which makes it related with legality and civil or criminal laws (although the sense of *sorceress* is still dominantly traceable in Aramic *charasha* and Hebrew *m'khashepah* or *m'khaseph*, depending on the gender). Then with the changing of the cultural and religious backgrounds and sensitivities, it started to have more of a sense of *witch*, related to magical, cultic and religious applications and regulations which are against the established social morality, belief system and order (Adu-Gyamfi, 2016, pp. 19–26; Bretherton, 2005, pp. 146–150). With these etymological and terminological traces, the sentence *you shall not suffer a witch to live* can mean: (1) You shall not keep a poisoner (alive) who had poisoned and killed someone; (2) You shall kill someone who practices witchcraft against the Judaism or Christianity; (3) You shall not support a witch

(which means more or less, do not support financially and socially the livelihood of a witch who falsely claims to have supernatural powers and lives in your village or town, and do not believe in those claims); (4) You should not live off from witchcraft (which means more or less, do not put witchcraft at the centre of your life, livelihood and financial income). These four interpretations all have their own merits and ground with changing the linguistic emphasize and inclinations accordingly.

Then, the preach of the wise man says that, to have a good sleep, one needs to be a good Christian, a good Christian who has the approval of the Catholic Church as being a *decent* person. Seeing the virtues as *good little women* and seeing the human as a *wretch* fit perfectly to the general approach of Christianity, or at least to the way Nietzsche criticizes it as such. From this point on, the difference between Zarathustra and the wise man becomes obvious. All the affirmative and validating remarks of the wise man regarding honouring the authorities (even when the authorities are crooked), obedience, obeying them as they are the best shepherd, a Christian reference to Christ again (*The Holy Bible*, Psalms 23: 1–2) are definitely not acceptable or suitable within Zarathustra's conception of human, or to be more precise, of overman. For Zarathustra, the wise man is just another preacher, another priest who degrades the life and everything in it.

The wise man is someone who renders life secondary and insignificant in comparison to the idea of an afterlife. He lies to the poor people that they can already rest their hearts and heads because having great treasures in life is already not important in the eye of what is most essential and true (meaning, afterlife). He lies to the ordinary people that they can already rest their hearts and heads because having many honours is already not important in the eye of what is most essential and true. Or maybe he actually believes what he preaches. In any way, the wise man preaches the characteristics of a decent Christian through the discourse of good sleep. And Zarathustra does not like this sense of sleep. For the wise man, disrupting sleep means disrupting being a proper believer, a proper citizen, a proper human etc. Contrary, for Zarathustra, these are the very elements that need to be disrupted when there is a decadence. One continues to encounter with the opinions of the wise man, until the Zarathustra laughs inwardly in his heart, which is the tipping point of this passage. This is where Zarathustra actively breaks away from the narrative of the wise man.

That wise man there with his forty thoughts is just a fool to me, but I believe that he well understands sleep. Happy the one who lives even near this wise man! Such a sleep is infectious, and it infects even through a thick wall. In this teacher nothing less than magic resides, and not in vain did youths sit at the feet of this preacher of virtue. The meaning of his wisdom is: wake in order to sleep well. And truly, if life had no meaning and if I had to choose nonsense, then to me too this would be the worthiest nonsense I could choose (Nietzsche, 2006, p. 19).

Zarathustra does not like the hierarchy between being awake and sleeping whereas for the wise man, the main aim of being awake is to sleep well. In here, Zarathustra wants to remind the reader all the negative passivity that is associated with the sleep. Zarathustra does not find any meaningful insight for the non-decided human nature in glorifying being passive. The negativity of this kind of passiveness reminds Zarathustra the slave mentality. A kind of negative passivity that the old saint had warned Zarathustra a little while ago. "Zarathustra is transformed, Zarathustra has become a child, an awakened one is Zarathustra. What do you want now among the sleepers?" (Nietzsche, 2006, p. 2). This is the strongest emphasize that Zarathustra overcame sleeping, metaphorically. And again, metaphorically, this means that he belongs to the realm of sleeplessness. Zarathustra is awake and he brings the choice of being awoken to the sleepers, at least he means to. But the wise man who is powerful and influencing enough to gather the youths around praises the sleep, praises not being awoken. The youth disappoint Zarathustra because they choose to listen to that praise of sleep. For them, being awake is only important when it serves to a sound sleep. For Zarathustra, this is not acceptable. Because for Zarathustra, there is a better meaning of life which is possible.

Now I understand clearly what was once sought before all else when teachers of virtue were sought. Good sleep was sought and poppy-blossomed virtues to boot! For all these highly praised wise men and teachers' wisdom was the sleep without dreams: they knew no better meaning of life. And still today there are a few like this preacher of virtue, and some not so honest. But their time is up, not for long will they be standing, and soon they'll be lying. Blessed are these sleepy ones, for they shall soon nod off" (Nietzsche, 2006, p. 19).

If the reader is to create and follow a chiasmus, then the equation is simple: Being awake should not be for a sound sleep, but quite the opposite: A sound sleep should be for being awake, in every sense of these words. Or maybe, the reader is to destruct the imperative relation between these two. Then, it should be that being awake and having a sound sleep have really nothing to do with each other. One should *not be for* the other, at all. Therefore, in short, there are two other alternatives: (I) Sleep should be for awakening and (II) Sleep and awakening have nothing to do with each other. Zarathustra probably means both arguments. Regarding this, it can be said that, for Zarathustra, being awake is not only related to an inner enlightenment about the better meaning of life; but it is also related to all the sociological, political, ideological, and cultural aspects of life belong to. For Zarathustra, being awake necessarily brings the state of being an independent subject with a sense of agency. By being awake, one steps away from herd morality and mentality. By being awake, one realizes oneself as an individual and earns a personal, singular autonomy over their own lives. By being awake, the person starts to define oneself on their own merits, and value of that person is finally being determined (again and again) accordingly to that process. The ones who are awake are the ones who are (succeeded to become) themselves and nothing / no one else. As in sleep,

everyone is the same; but in being awake, everyone is different from each other. In being awake, everyone is just themselves, they are who they can personally be. But this is not the agenda of the wise man. The wise man *infects* like the sleep he talks about. The more he talks, more everyone around becomes sleepy. The more he talks, more everyone around becomes someone like him. The wise man is on a mission of creating himself in everyone, creating the same person and personality in everyone. But Zarathustra is quite the opposite. Zarathustra wants everyone to be individually who they are, as different from each other.

This is the reason why it is important to lose Zarathustra, why it is critically important that they deny him (to find themselves as they truly are). The wise man's wisdom is not suitable for Zarathustra. Surely, it can be assumed and suggested that the *sleep* which the wise man talks about and the sleep that Zarathustra talks about are not always the same. They (the wise man and Zarathustra) do not necessarily have to be talking about the same sleep. And moreover, even though Zarathustra does not like the sleep in the context the wise man talks, there might be another context where Zarathustra might advocate sleep. But still, it is obvious that Zarathustra loathes sleep when sleep is lack of mindfulness, awareness, personal illuminations, autonomy, intellectual enrichments, mental liberations, individual takes on life and self-realizations. Because that kind of sleep also has a role in the emergence of the last man (or the happiness of the last man) which is the antithesis of the *Übermensch*. Sleeping brings about the last man. This means that, overman also probably does not like sleeping much.

LEAVING SLEEPING AND BEING AWAKE BOTH BEHIND

Through the section with the wise man, especially at the quoted passage above about “sleep without dreams”, Zarathustra hints that there can be a context in which he can take sleep as something positive. And this is through dreams. Even though he does not like sleep, it is hinted that he prefers “sleep wherein one dreams” over “sleep without dreams”, as dreamless sleep is his greatest evil (Nietzsche, 2019, p. 188). This is not only because there is a sense of activity in dreams (compared to the passivity in dreamless sleep), but also because sleep with dreams has a meditative effect on him.

And Zarathustra values the dreams that come to him during his sleep, because sleep itself does something to him — it compels him to ‘stretch out’ his soul. In ‘On the Great Yearning,’ Nietzsche clarifies that stretching out the soul is an extraordinary ecstatic event, the release of the past and the future within the body in the present, or the kinetic enactment of the eternal return, which is an instant of gaining power over time. Thus, it should be clear that, even if a specific praxis such as ‘stretching out the soul’ is not explicitly delineated in such moments, sleep is a deeply meditative activity — whenever Zarathustra is ‘sleeping,’

it is imperative to remember that part of him remains active and alert [...]” (Hanshe, 2013, p. 145).

Now, with this context, one can start to understand the character of the relation between Zarathustra and sleep. Maybe it is true that Zarathustra always tries to stay away from sleeping, and he also does not like the dreamless sleep that the wise man describes (Lampert, 1986, p. 36), but these do not mean that he is not aware of the transformative power of dreams and sleep on him. Zarathustra welcomes sleep only when and if sleep enables him. The idea that sleep being the medium for the revelation of truth already has its place in Western world, as it was mentioned before about practice of mystic, ecstatic and oneiric incubation in Ancient Greek culture. And Nietzsche is aware of this tradition (Nietzsche, 2005, p. 282). For Zarathustra, this sleep (which brings truth) is also dangerous, because under the sense of the *unio mystica*, especially within the context of seeking redemption, this sleep would lead to a “collective hypnotizing and stillness”, which might cause passive nihilism in people (Braak, 2011, p. 111). Therefore, how Zarathustra takes sleep is fundamentally related to what sleep does to the person it comes to. But one might ask: why then does not Zarathustra just sleep and wake up in a normal cycle, like everyone else in a society? Why does Zarathustra try to stay away from sleep this much, if there is stretching out his soul in sleep? Why does Zarathustra walk around sleepless? Maybe it is because even at its peak sense of enabling, sleep can only do so much.

Throughout the Z, one encounters that as long as sleeplessness enables Zarathustra in one way or another, he deliberately chooses to stay awake, until the point he no longer can. This means that Zarathustra would find something worthy of human and life in some sense of sleeplessness. Then, in what ways can sleeplessness enable him?

Even though one might cherish the importance of dreamless sleep (Anton, 2006, pp. 190–195), for Zarathustra, if the dreamless sleep symbolizes the lack of the struggle against oneself for improvement and independence, and if it is also not for sure that every sleep would come with a dream manifesting some sense of truth (Higgins, 1987, p. 91), then it is understandable that if Zarathustra had any way to not sleep at all, then he would not sleep at all. That is the reason why he almost always falls asleep. He does not go to sleep; he precisely falls asleep, almost against his will. And for one to fall asleep, one must be already sleepless. But this “falling asleep against his will” should not be understood as Zarathustra is man of being awake. Because he is not.

Zarathustra does not choose sleep, and Zarathustra does not choose being awake. Because choosing being awake would necessitate some amount of sleep there. It is only possible to be fully awake, not only when the presence of sleep is not there, but also, when the lack of sleep is not there. If one is sleepy (from sleeping too much and being just woken up; or from not sleeping for a long time and being on the edge of falling to sleep), one cannot be considered fully awake. The one who wants to be

fully awake needs to know perfectly when to sleep and when to wake up (see, Nietzsche, 2019, p. 561). And Zarathustra is not that person. For most of the day, Zarathustra walks around sleepless, and he does not seem to find any problem with this. It is because even at its peak sense of enabling, being awake can only do so much. This is probably because Zarathustra values the state of immense lucidity that which might come through sleeplessness.

This sleeplessness is not a sleep deprivation or insomnia. Because sleep deprivation is about wanting to sleep but not getting any. Zarathustra does not want to sleep. Therefore, in this sleeplessness, falling asleep only occurs when there is the lack of conscious and voluntary choice of it. It is true that, sleeping is always something that happens without a full conscious control over it. None of the living beings can enter the sleep with a full control over the process of entering the sleep. Even when people go to sleep and want to sleep, they passively wait for the sleep to come and take them. So, when one talks about falling asleep, one needs to talk about not the conscious and voluntary going towards sleep, but the very opposite. Falling asleep might be more related to the impossibility of not sleeping. Zarathustra falls asleep because it is impossible for him to not sleep any longer, which means to not be awake any longer. He stays in sleeplessness, because he wants to stay away from the sleep and being awake at the same distance. He does not prefer a night of sound sleep without dreams, at all. This might seem like a reference to Socrates (Loeb, 2010, p. 42), and he does not want to be fully awake. Zarathustra is himself only when he dwells in sleeplessness.

Therefore, one can say that Zarathustra is always on the edge of falling asleep, he is always sleepless. Zarathustra does not sleep, but when the inevitability of the sleep comes, he no longer manages to not sleep, therefore, he falls asleep. This is his stance against not only to sleep, but also to being awake. This is his voluntary and preferred stance in sleeplessness. The main source of his enlightening and lucidity is not sleep or being awake, but it is sleeplessness. When Zarathustra says “You are still not free, you seek freedom. Your seeking made you sleep-deprived and over-awake” (Nietzsche, 2006, p. 30), he openly hints that he is not on either side of these two. It seems like he falls asleep in a way that he wants to be awoken again as soon as it is possible, because he does not want his sleeplessness to disappear completely. Zarathustra’s sleeplessness is what he asks for, what he chooses, what he prefers. When one talks about the sleeplessness of Zarathustra, there is not any sound reason to talk about this sleeplessness as if it is something that Zarathustra is trying to get rid of, or something that he does not want. It is closer to that he just does not like sleeping and being fully awake, and he tries to stay away from both on every chance he has. Or it might be that, Zarathustra’s sleeplessness is directly related with his cyclical illness (that is caused by his teaching, eternal return of the same), and his impossible recovery from it. Zarathustra is walking around sleepless, because his illness does not allow him to sleep most of the time.

In any way, sleeplessness is the path that shapes Zarathustra's wending. That is where his lucidity comes from. On one side, sleep is ascetic; on other side, being awake is the enslaving attachment to things. One side, sleep is the giving up desires and conditioning the self into not wanting; other side, being awake is losing the self under the fake sense of agency which disables the chance of overcoming oneself. Sleeping is the life-denigrating, self-negating, life-denying mentality and morality (*entselbstungsmoral*, he calls it, "unselving morals"); being awake is the decadence of the last human being who is the passive nihilist (Nietzsche, 2006, pp. 9–10). Sleep is for the herd mentality, being awake is for the ones who are lost in the oblivion of a false sense of awareness. According to Zarathustra, both are unable to build a self-actualization. Both are unable to overcome themselves. What happens in sleep, continues in being awake (Nietzsche, 2002, pp. 68 and 82–83). In sleep, there is the impossibility of building a self; in being awake, there is the enslavement to the self; in sleeplessness, there is the overcoming of the self. This is the liberating path of sleeplessness. Moreover, if life can be understood under the terms of will to power (Heidegger, 1991, pp. 213–217), then this liberating path of sleeplessness becomes also crucial for the life itself.

CONCLUSION

Sleeplessness, as the alternative for both sleep and being awake, can be seen as cherishing the value of life by being in a meaningful interaction with it. There is the possibility of a sense of self-realization and overcoming oneself. This is a personalized and individualizing path. In sleep and in being awake, people are more or less same. But in sleeplessness, people are inclined to be who they are. On the path shaped by sleeplessness, people can find the chance to build their personal and individual selves. This is because the lucidity and wakefulness that comes only with sleeplessness are impossible to be gained with sleep or being awake. Sleep and being awake can also have some sense liberation (Hulin, 1999, pp. 67–70), but not on the level of sleeplessness. This is the reason why sleeplessness is not ritualistic for Zarathustra, sleeplessness (as contemplating) is embedded in his existence and everyday life. Zarathustra does not really feel the need to organize his chores, time and day, in order to create a suitable space and time interval for a focused and atomized meditation, but he just lives his life in a mindful way, and contemplation (as sleeplessness) comes to him more naturally. Sleepless is what and who Zarathustra is, even without being the focal point of his life. Sleeplessness is the way Zarathustra overcomes himself.

Through Zarathustra, now it is more possible to claim that, there is a deeper sense of lucidity which is intrinsic and autochthonic to sleeplessness. This deeper sense of lucidity cannot be reached through deep sleep or being awake and fully conscious. Therefore, there is this sense of enlightenment in sleeplessness. Zarathustra knows about this and acts accordingly. If there will be a cultural and social revolution against decadence, then this can happen only through every single

person overcoming themselves by themselves, probably through embracing this sense of sleeplessness which brings lucidity. There is a sense of wakefulness that only comes through the lucidity of sleeplessness. And being fully awake can only experience a dim and dull version of this wakefulness and lucidity. The last human beings are awake, but they are not wakeful. This is why there is also a sense of cognitive and spiritual enlightening in Zarathustra's sleeplessness which brings a holistic awareness of all reality and existence. In the lucidity of sleeplessness, there is a deeper sense of mindfulness, wakefulness, intuitive awareness, cognitive illumination, spiritual enrichment, mental liberation, and self-realization.

This self-realization is at the heart of overcoming oneself for Zarathustra, and for the self-realization, the lucidity that comes from sleeplessness is the crucial element. So, the presence of this essential relation between lucidity and sleeplessness means there can be a specific truth which manifests itself only in sleeplessness. There is a sense of self-realization and overcoming of the self only through sleeplessness. That is the reason why Zarathustra always walks around sleepless.

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