

# The European of the Future as a “New Synthesis”: Nietzsche and the Ethnological Task of the West

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From a hermeneutic and comparative perspective, the purpose of this paper is to discuss investigative paths of ethnological and ethnographic aspects in Nietzsche's writings that became relevant for different elaborations of the concept of *synthesis* in specific thought cycles of his work. In a first step, these aspects are verified in his school, philological and philosophical texts, described in relation to his studies on ancient Greek culture and compared under the parameter of the different conceptions of synthesis developed by him in each identified phase. Subsequently, the concept of synthesis is discussed as physiology (considering *body*, *consciousness*, and *language*), explaining human life as a creative expression of nature itself. With this explanation, it becomes possible to understand the processes related to the concept of synthesis as the task of those he terms as *good Europeans*, and the *great politics* in his *philosophy of the future*. The identification between the feeling of resistance (*Widerstandsgefühl*) and the imminence point of the preliminary stage of dominion structures (*Herrschafts-Gebilde*) in the last analyzed conception of synthesis is the logical and ethical path towards the demonstration intended here. The article concludes by demonstrating the creative and dynamic character of the metaphilosophical scope of the task proposed by him in the mid-1880s and the possibilities opened up from then on for future discussions of culture, aesthetics, knowledge, logic, ethics, and politics.

**Keywords:** good European, synthesis, ethnology, ethnography, metaphilosophy

## Introduction

In the mid-1880s, Nietzsche identified a kind of *compulsion* (*Zwang*) to the modern transformations that, as he saw it, *could* expand the European horizon in the world. If guided in a truly broad trend, such a move would require even more expansive forms of human life, which *should* be endowed with increasingly more open visions about their realities, *in contemplation of becoming* able to see beyond exclusive ethical, cultural and political issues. Thus, it was about the *ascertainment* of what he would characterize

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Western modernity in his century and, stemming from it, the *proposal* of an ideal worldview scaled in ever-widening levels of comprehensiveness. In this sense, his goal was heading: “towards the men of the future who in the present tie the knots and gather the force that compels the will of millennia into new channels”<sup>1</sup>.

This progressively broader worldview was defined by him as a “new synthesis” for the human type, so that his ideal would therefore be,

step by step become more comprehensive, more supranational, more European, more supra-European, more eastern, finally more Greek—for the Greek was the first great bond and synthesis of everything eastern—: and therewith the very beginning of the European soul, the discovery of our “new world”<sup>2</sup>.

Undoubtedly, this could be understood as a liberation of the spirit, a theme somewhat anticipated, although on a different track already in *Human, all too human* (1878). If at that time this liberation was identified in isolated forms of human life, within communities, from the time of the writings around *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886), it is a liberation of thought itself, an observation of the creative and amplifying potential for future, new and distinct liberations.

Delving deeper into the philosophical methodology of such a project, it could be seen in Nietzsche’s attempt to problematize Europe from a perspective outside the *national-supranational thought paradigm*. As will be shown, it is an attempt because the European condition of that time is also for him a destiny, something that is reflected in his proposal’s demonstrations in the book published in 1886. And this paradigm is evidenced in these writings as *essentially European*. Recognizing himself as part of this condition with the Europeans of his time, he differentiates himself from them, however, by such self-observation that manifests itself in combination with a compulsion to broaden Western horizons. In view of this, he opposes the *mediocre European* standardized by local and nationalistic structures to the *good Europeans*, human types who, like him, *feel compelled* to aggrandize the world of culture to which they belong by receiving foreign cultural elements. The proposal would be, then, to expand the limits of this look towards what was not European. With this, the non-European level of vision would be called “*Eastern*” (or “*Asian*”).

Between being *European* and *Eastern*, there would be a transitional state of vision, the *supra-European* (*das Übereuropäische*) level. As a starting point, this could be understood as a perspective, a spirit, and a cultural expression with the operational function of thinking the conditions for the future European’s emergence. This consists of both a logical-strategic negation and an effective assimilation of some of the fundamental Eastern values. In turn, this negation is followed by the ideal of an extreme affirmative process, “a new synthesis” that could make it possible to overcome what is being negated.

Once this dynamic equilibrium full of distinct cultural content is established, the European of the future would reach the *Greek* level of vision. This would be the maximum condition where, *besides receiving* cultural material, completely new cultural phenomena with new values and visions *would be created*. In relation to the ancient Greeks who would have synthesized European culture from Eastern cultural elements, this *future synthesis* of the Nietzschean proposal would be *new*. And as new, it would produce a socio-cultural reality that,

<sup>1</sup> JGB 203, KGW VI 2, p. 128. In English, *Beyond Good and Evil* (2002), cf. Judith Norman’s translation.

<sup>2</sup> Nachlaß 1885, KSA 11, p. 682; 41[7]. In English, *Unpublished Fragments—Spring 1885–Spring 1886* (2019), cf. Del Caro’s translation.

according to him, *should be progressively supra and transnational*<sup>3</sup>, inasmuch as it would result from the work of individuals endowed with “stateless” and “homeless views” on Western culture.

From this introductory exposition, some questions arise: given that the ancient Greeks understood *πολίτης* as the form of life *par excellence*, would not an identity between the Hellenes and the “more stateless and cosmopolitan” level of Nietzsche’s “scaling” be antinomic? How would a way of life that was founded on the idea of local citizenship welcome foreign civilizations and, moreover, recreate its own values and cultural goods *from them*? And yet, since foreigners were not even considered citizens and nomadic behavior was taken as a civilizational opposite to life in the *πόλις*, would Nietzsche have characterized this so-called Greek level only with an ideal hypothesis of Greek creativity? In what way would this not be as polemical as his first book of 1872?

In fact, this hypothesis has been already discussed by specialized research<sup>4</sup>, and the present paper welcomes it as a basic premise. In order to contribute to the further development of the topic, however, we are interested in *identifying intermediate elements* that link it to the image of the Greek citizen at the height of the ancient *Ελλάδα* to then briefly compare them to philosophical Western views on the West itself in both of Nietzsche’s immediate future centuries, which have been experienced by us as our past and present, and simultaneously summon us to reflect on the future too. And the keywords for such views in this contribution are *ethnography* and *metaphilosophy*.

Thus, here it is important to start from Nietzsche’s first encounters with such views, demonstrating *methodologically* the ethnographic paths through which he developed his interpretation. During this demonstration, some issues can then be observed concerning the problematization of philosophy itself in a *prescriptive* way. At last, a metaphilosophical understanding is expected in the expansive vision project of Nietzsche’s “prelude to a philosophy of the future”, as well as its challenges for its heirs.

<sup>3</sup> As will be seen below, the prefix *über* is used by Nietzsche in different concepts related to this project. At the time he wrote his texts, this term already possessed the broad power of meaning of today, assuming, therefore, the meaning of *beyond* (*jenseits*) both in or states and processes (directions and senses). Although *over* is a proto-Germanic cognate of the prefix *über*, here we choose the terms *supra* (from Latin *suprā*, “above”, “over” “beyond”) and *trans* (from Latin *trāns*, “across”, “over”, “beyond”) because the purpose of this paper is to denote comparatively the potential consequences of the German prefix for the future, that is, the legacy of these ideas for contemporaneity. Considering that contemporarily we *already* experience realities too different from Nietzsche’s times, it occurs to us pleonastic to discuss here the modifying and intensifying term *over*. The transformations are already a fact to be problematized from now on. However, it is important to explain that the most recent and general studies leave ample translation possibilities for such terms in the English language: “‘Über-europäisch’ (sometimes written ‘übereuropäisch’) is one of the many terms that Nietzsche builds putting the famous prefix ‘über’ (over, super, supra) before what he thinks must be overcome. To the multifarious uses of the prefix correspond heterogeneous figures of overcoming. The ‘Übermensch’ proclaimed by Zarathustra is undoubtedly the best known and most radical of them; but there is indeed a whole series of adjectives, mostly neologisms, constructed similarly to ‘übermenschlich’ [overhuman/superhuman]: ‘supra-German’ [überdeutsch], ‘supranational’ [übernational], ‘supra-Christian’ [überchristlich], ‘supra-European’ [übereuropäisch] and even ‘supra-Asian’ [überasiatisch]. None of these terms stand for an increase or a radicalization, but rather for an overcoming: thus ‘übernational’ does not mean ‘extremely national,’ but, on the contrary, ‘supranational’; it stands for what is beyond the national and/or leaves it behind” (Brusotti, McNeal, Schubert, & Siemens, 2020, p. XXII).

<sup>4</sup> Brusotti (2004) problematized the aesthetic character of the Greek level as a “panoramic view”, a “view from a distance” on Europe. Regarding the fragment 1885-41[7], the researcher states: “The synthesis achievements of the Greeks remained exemplary for him to the end” (Brusotti, 2016b, p. 259, *our translation*).

### Philological-Ethnographical Trails

It is already known in Nietzsche research<sup>5</sup> that between the years 1860 and 1861 he was confronted at Schulpforta with conceptual and structural questions concerning the theme of development (*Entwicklung*). The following subjects would be part of his syllabus: the historical development (*Entwicklungsgeschichte*) of the German language; syntax and versification in Cicero's speeches and Ovid's *Fasti* in Latin classes; the first two chapters of Arrian's Ἀλεξάνδρου Ἀνάβασις and Sections XVII and XVIII of Homer's Ὀδύσσεια in Greek language; Middle Ages in History classes. In “themes for free elaboration work” from that time, there are topics directed to descriptions of experiences and/or ways of life in specific geographical conditions (*Ist das Leben auf dem Lande oder das in der Stadt vorzuziehen?*<sup>6</sup>; *Mein Lebenslauf?*<sup>7</sup>; *Jäger und Fischer*<sup>8</sup>). Also noteworthy among these thought units is a letter from the summer of 1860, in which he asks his mother to send him “Burmeister, Naturgeschichte”<sup>9</sup>.

Analyzed as a whole, this content studied from school reveals that Schulpforta's interdisciplinary program<sup>10</sup> presents an educational project in line with the context of mid-19th-century thought, with a notable *focus on the objects of study's processes of development* (*Entwicklung*). It is certainly beyond the scope of this paper to demonstrate that this program remains throughout Nietzsche's school curriculum, but the case at hand already offers a sample of what stands out in this regard. That the then future author of *Beyond Good and Evil* responded positively to this syllabus, demonstrating methodological and creative learning, can be seen in part in the school texts cited. Here this is exemplified in the free text *The childhood of peoples* (*Die Kindheit der Völker*, 1861) which was presented in *Germania* and is in evident dialogue with the aforementioned *Jäger und Fischer*.

He conceives as “childhood of peoples” *the imminent condition of human civilization within its process of development*. His text starts discussing some hypotheses about such a process. As a first hypothesis, he ponders whether man innately would have been “endowed by God with the first germs of all education, with language and religion”, would have lived a “golden age” of civilization on Earth and then, would have “gradually sank down” and “fell into an animalistic, unrestrained state”. In this line of thought, the student further ponders whether man would have preserved “his spiritual education and thus, although with a violation of original

<sup>5</sup> Bohley, 2007, pp. 221-228. At the end of the fourth part of his detailed study of the Schulpforta from Nietzsche's time, where he deals with his teachers and colleagues, Bohley (2007) presented a list of appendices, among which have been used here the Appendix No. 4, about the contents which were taught in classes (*Anlage Nr. 4: Unterrichtsgegenstände*) and the Appendix No. 5, which describes themes for free elaboration work (*Anlage Nr. 5: Themata zu freien Ausarbeitungen*). “The compilation of the appendix”, “Taught Contents” and the appendix “Themes for free elaboration” is based on the annual reports published at Easter on Pforta's programs from 1859 to 1865. In them, it is stated that the subjects taught and the themes are given for the respective past year (Easter to Easter), where, however, only in part a distinction is made between the winter semester (W) and the summer semester (S)” (Bohley, 2007, p. 221, *our translation*).

<sup>6</sup> BAW I, 1994, p. 190. This text is incomplete in this edition.

<sup>7</sup> *idem*, pp. 276-284.

<sup>8</sup> *idem*, pp. 232-235.

<sup>9</sup> KGB I/1, April-Juni. 1860 (p. 105). Hermann Burmeister was a German-Argentine scientist dedicated to the studies of zoology, botany, paleontology, geology, meteorology, and geography, who was a natural history teacher at the Joachimsthal Gymnasium in Berlin from 1831. During his time, in Berlin, he had published some works, such as the *Grundriss der Naturgeschichte* (1833) and the *Handbuch der Naturgeschichte* (1837). We assume that Nietzsche refers in his letter to the *Grundriss der Naturgeschichte. Für Gymnasien und höhere Bürgerschulen*, because it is a book intended for *Gymnasium* students. Closer to this time at Schulpforta is the ninth edition of the book, from 1857, published by the Verlag von Georg Reimer in Berlin. The theme of *natural history* (*Naturgeschichte*) in dialogue with Hellwald's culture history (*Kulturgeschichte*), as well as another work by Burmeister, will be relevant in Nietzsche's reflections from the early fall of 1885. Cf. Nachlaß 1885, KGW IX 2, p. 194; 39[21].

<sup>10</sup> Bohley, 2007, p. 226.

purity" would have *formed from himself* "the most educated, most artistic peoples" as well as "the most significant peoples for world history". Another hypothesis he raises is whether man slowly would have ascended "from an animalistic state to high perfection".

To both known assumptions he raises his questionings. Regarding the first, he considers a "civilizational reversion" phenomenon, so that "the culture of many peoples would be something original, the coarseness and spiritual baseness of other nations would be a decadence of the previous civilization"<sup>11</sup>. As for the second hypothesis, on the other hand, he questions "with strangeness how the noblest flowers of culture can develop from what is low and crude"<sup>12</sup>.

Despite being juvenile reflections, their relevance to this paper consists in Nietzsche's initiation to *methodological distancing* and the *comparative method*. In this free text, he reveals an analytical learning about the inconsistency of any consideration of civilizations whose point of view is fixed only in themselves and/or in their golden moments. This can be verified in his incipient understandings that development processes would include decadence as well as ascension, while favorable civilizational transformations would often prescind from relations with other peoples. On these, the experience of war seems to be absorbed by the then Schulpforta's student as the cultural encounter in which foreigners among themselves bring their own civilizational advances and decadences to the battlefields.

It is possible to infer that about this era from this 1860-1861 syllabus, especially the image of the foreigner would have been taught as it seems to be produced in the old Greek *imaginarium* by the Medical Wars. As such, the "barbarians" would have been characterized as "uncultured", "savage", "primitive", and "uncivilized" from the parameter of the Greek way of life. It is plausible that the well-known thesis that *πας μη Ελλην βαρβαρος* at this school moment had been constituted in "non-fictional" terms on the basis of this warlike encounter of the Greeks with the Persians, and in a "fictional" one, that Greek myths about beings who terrorized humans with the threat of death by violence and cruelty could be seen as transfigured ideas of these supposedly violent adversaries' savage behavior.

Hermeneutically it is possible that those texts by Cicero, Ovid, Homer, and Arrian may have provided potential images, experiences, and feelings that, combined with the descriptive, comparative, deductive, and creative skills developed in school activities, may have prompted some demand for greater freedom and criticism in the context of the discussions with Pinder and Krug in *Germania*.<sup>13</sup> In this line of reasoning, there are even those who consider that *The childhood of peoples* (1861) is already a veiled proposal for criticism of Christian culture that precedes the considerations of *Destiny and History* (*Fatum und Geschichte*, 1862)<sup>14</sup>.

In the case of our reflection, which focuses precisely on *the writing form*, privileging the *method*, as well as on *the education of thinking* that the syllabus potentially elicits, we could consider that the classical

<sup>11</sup> BAW I, 1994, p. 235. In this paper all express quotations from the *Frühe Schriften* (BAW I: Jugendschriften 1854-1861; 1994) are our own translations.

<sup>12</sup> *idem*, p. 236.

<sup>13</sup> Schmidt, 1993, pp. 518-519. Schmidt related the hypotheses discussed by Nietzsche to the problem of the origin of good, to which the Judeo-Christian theory of creation is connected. The researcher highlights that the structural text approach "is not quite as Christian as it might seem; rather, the Christian interpretation is a special one that is compatible, but not identical, with this approach" (*our translation*).

<sup>14</sup> Schmidt, 1994, p. 40. For Schmidt, *Fatum und Geschichte* (1862) is a text "whereby the novelty seems to consist less in the content than in the fact that Nietzsche now expresses many things quite clearly, which until now could only be read between the lines or inferred from the context. The line runs primarily from 'Kindheit der Völker' through the more intellectual of the three *Lebensläufe* in an explicit way (and in partial quotations) and through the two previous 'Germania' lectures rather indirectly to this new text" (*our translation*).

themes developed in the studies of the languages (German, Greek, and Latin) structures, as well as the study of history itself, presented to the adolescent Nietzsche *the figure of the foreigner* as the different one who brings difference to the civilization he encounters—be it the foreign poet Licinius Archias, defended by Cicero, or the mythical images of the Odyssey, which invariably pointed to foreigners<sup>15</sup> (“barbarians”, “savages”), or even Alexander’s confrontations with the Persians in Arrian’s text. From this, it can be deduced that, despite the tendency to value the traditional Greek view of the *foreigner*, he would have been provided with other images and ways of dealing with this *form of life* in the ancient world at this stage of his schooling.

It also should be noted that, given his school age and Schulpforta’s goals, he still seems to lack clarity in this text about the relationship between the differences in civilizational processes and the concept of *natural history*. We conjecture that this seems to have occurred to him at this stage in part because of Burmeister’s scientific text—more oriented to studies of living organisms themselves than properly to the ideas of *development* strictly considered as *evolution*. In spite of the juvenile limits of the considerations, the attempt at methodological distancing of this writing is interesting: The propositions are launched, compared, and even the position in front of both conflicting visions is presented in a descriptive way—in line with the aforementioned activities from Pforta.

[...] that men with culture create by accident and then turn to barbarism, partly through the influence of great world events and revolutions, partly through the ways of culture that began to develop later. This reversion (*Umkehren*) is not so unnatural as it seems to us at first, especially if one considers how people gradually separated and scattered over the immense area of the Earth, and how the former culture, of which the first emigrants still had remembrances, had to progressively dwindle and cease with a spread out descendant population; until again new impressions, brought about by contact with foreign nations already civilized, awakened in them, as it were, a memory of something long gone in them and taught them again the first grades of culture.<sup>16</sup>

Here we could point the beginning of education for the *view from a distance* that will be refined by different routes in the following decades until it becomes a philosophical project of vision on Europe in 1885. If this formal and material vision can later contribute to the Nietzschean critique of Christianity and even modernity, it could be pointed out that it would be, at this time, also for the same reason: that the differences in development processes between distinct cultures can produce new mores or bring back ancient phenomena that had been lost in the dispersion of peoples of the same trunk or in the expansions of their lineages. The *foreigner* already occurs here as an agent of transformation in present, past, and future processes of cultural transmission.

After these considerations, Nietzsche continues his text by discussing language, religion, commerce, politics, and art. His young interpretation, however, still seems to be guided by the repetition of the classical sense: Nomadic behavior, level of development of language, cruelty and lack of self-control in the face of passions are characteristics thought to be further from the idea of civilization. We can feel a veiled evaluative charge whose parameter of civilization coincides with the idea of life in the πόλις as a public expansion of the experience of the οἶκος. In other words, the young Pforta’s student relies at this time on the Greek *esoteric view*—he still lacks many theoretical and practical experiences to come up with the *exoteric task* that titles the

<sup>15</sup> Woortmann, 2000, p. 18.

<sup>16</sup> BAW, I, 1994, pp. 236-237.

present work. In this vein, he concludes *The Childhood of the Peoples* without deepening his reflection “about the decadence of culture among individual peoples”<sup>17</sup>, leaving this to be done at a later opportunity.

Later, in 1869, this question reappears in a transversal and involuntary way in the course of two completely different investigations that will occupy Nietzsche until the middle of the following decade: his studies on tragedy which culminated in the polemical book of 1872, and philosophy as a Greek invention which he discusses in two investigative tracks: one general and descriptive in the lectures on *The Pre-Platonic Philosophers* (*Die vorplatonischen Philosophen*, 1872) and another one more specific, ethnological and ethnographic, in the analysis of some philosophical ways of life in *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks* (*Die Philosophie im tragischen Zeitalter der Griechen*, 1874). It is worthwhile here to briefly demonstrate the involuntary crossing of this theme, which had been left in abeyance at the youthful time of Germania, insofar as two fundamental premises of the scaled project of 1885 derive from it: I—Dionysus’s image as a foreign god and II—the interpretation of the ancient Greeks as producers of cultural syntheses.

When reflecting on Aristotle’s thesis of Περὶ ποιητικῆς, that the dithyramb is the starting point for the birth of tragedy and comedy, Nietzsche highlights the importance of mysteries in the cult, comparing the *religious mysteries effects* (lights and enclosures) with the *theatrical effects*, suggesting the possibility that drama has emerged as a “public mystery”, as a reaction against the priests’ obscurantism in defense of democracy<sup>18</sup>. Developments of this relationship between theater and religion will then be part of his interpretation that religious festivals would be experienced by the Greeks as artistic transfiguration of religious motifs and practices, as well as fictional discharge of brutality and suffering in *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872).

Hence comes his conception of Chthonic mysteries and the identification of Dionysus as the one who artistically brings barbarism to the civilized world with the exasperation of cruelty impulses, but, simultaneously, confers wholeness to the spirits individuated by suffering through the liberation of impulses. Amidst these reflections, the hypothesis of the ancient Greeks’ demand for tragedy pointed to the coexistence of impulses opposed to the civilizing order. Art and religion would operate here as the means of purification and creation of new visions about reality. Considering that this book resorts to speculation for its reflections, the hypothesis of the Greek demand for decline is expressed neither by the ethnological nor the ethnographic route, but by resorting to metaphysics. In any case, Nietzsche’s view of the “Greek problem” occurs in parallel with pessimism about reality and its practical consequences in the patterns that determine a civilization way of life.

Moving forward, however, in the analysis of his writing methodology from the mid-1870s, a new aspect can be found: The use of scientific content to substantiate broader interpretations—which, as is well known, are on his philological-historical-ethnographic trails towards philosophy. This is confirmed in his lectures on *The Pre-Platonic Philosophers* (1872), where he sought: (a) to demonstrate that the Greeks *practiced* philosophy; (b) what they did it for; (c) how the figure of *the philosopher* appeared among the Greeks—and not simply how philosophy appeared; (d) what the philosophers’ relations with the people were like; and finally (e) to examine the originality of the conceptions that came to satisfy posterity<sup>19</sup>. Based on descriptions and comparisons, he hypothesizes that this “extemporaneous” task could only have been accomplished by artifice, since there is no starting point in the midst of the movement. Admitting that there were already wise men in Asia and Egypt,

<sup>17</sup> *idem*, p. 243.

<sup>18</sup> Nachlaß 1869, KSA 7, p. 31; I[67].

<sup>19</sup> KGW II 4, pp. 212-213.

what the ancient Greeks analyzed by him would have done of originality would have been to transform *the wise man type*—already present at that time—into *the philosophical type* that became known.

In comparison to the moderns, who were already under the limited vision defined by the philosophers that preceded them, the Greeks would have felt the need to expand their own worldview in the face of the multiplicity that was at the origins of their culture in order to “give shape” to their own era:

The Greeks created the philosopher types: think of such an individually different society as Pythagoras, Heraclitus, Empedocles, Parmenides, Democritus, Protagoras, Socrates. This inventiveness distinguishes the Greeks from all other peoples: usually a people produces only one permanent type of philosopher. Even the Germanic peoples cannot compete with this wealth.<sup>20</sup>

From this text, therefore, it is useful for the present discussion that Greek multiplicity *generated the need* to understand the very ways of life, the dynamics of which were somewhat frequently transformed as a result of expansion and relations with other peoples. The need to identify and characterize themselves in a time of constant appropriation/reappropriation of customs would have been awakened in these citizens, who, according to Nietzsche, as practical people, would have sought, in elements proper to where they lived, that which constituted them, the determining principles of their own ways of life.

As such, the pre-Platonic philosophers’ study had revealed to him, at this time, *why* the conditions for the emergence of the philosophical way of life *par excellence* had happened. Continuing, then, the present analysis: If at the beginning of the decade the philologist already had in mind the relation between *expansion*, *multiplicity* and *utility*, concerning his “Greek problem” and if methodologically he would have found in *description and comparison* his way of demonstrating his interpretations, it remains to be evidenced in this paper *how*, keeping such methods, Nietzsche would have built his thesis that the Greeks were a *creative* people, who would have developed a significant cultural synthesis for the West.

In the lecture, *The Greek cult of the gods* (*Der Gottesdienst der Griechen*, 1875-1876) persists the premise that “their ‘classical literature’ with chorus, tragedy, comedy has grown up on the ground of the cult or as an appendix to it”.<sup>21</sup> However this relation between art and religion is now relevant to his interpretation of the Greeks’ thinking, their world perspective. In this sense, the *Greek way of thinking* that underlies their rites would follow a different logic than that of scientific thinking, characterized by inexact observation, false concept of causality, exclusive memory for strange cases, tendency to analogies and idleness<sup>22</sup>.

Such characteristics would be potential conditions of the Greeks for the direct or indirect absorption of barbarian elements in their religious cults—which, by means of comparative philology, Nietzsche tries to demonstrate a direct way *via* Thracian and Greco-Latin influences, and another indirect way, *via* Celtic and Phrygian-Babylonian influxes<sup>23</sup>—and the submission of older peoples by war would be the strongest reason for the transmission of the conquered peoples’ original mores.

Returning to the main issue now discussed, namely, the Nietzschean thesis that the Greeks would be creators out of foreign heritage, this lecture on the Greek worship of the gods enlightens us. He now turns to the essence of Greek life aforesaid, namely, life in the πόλις. Taking Greek credulity as factual, it would be up to the individual not to anger the gods by violating their just rights to cult, under penalty that an offense would

<sup>20</sup> *idem*, our translation.

<sup>21</sup> KGW II 5, p. 364. In this paper all express quotations from these *Vorlesungsaufzeichnungen* are our own translations.

<sup>22</sup> *idem*, pp. 365-366.

<sup>23</sup> *idem*, pp. 385, 387.



provoke the merciless wrath of a deity who would take revenge on the entire tribe. “To allow a deviation from religious precepts would be madness, for it would mean putting the luck (*Glück*) of the majority at stake”.<sup>24</sup> Therefore, the public consciousness of citizens endowed with the kind of superficial thinking described by Nietzsche would compel them to integrate these gods into their cultural dimension. In practical terms, for him, the cultural integration of foreign cults was a consequence of their expansion.

From the state’s point of view, this detail is extremely relevant to the present discussion, the pragmatic task of operationalizing these new gods’ reception would remain, according to the principle of stability proper to political-institutional activity. It would be up to the state, thereby, to observe the rites, to the extent that “one does not believe to be sure of the deity’s favor, if all traditional mores are not accurately observed”.<sup>25</sup> As the places of cult and their respective norms and rites were specific to each god, it fell to the state to institutionalize the logistics of temples and calendars, according to criteria of antiquity and/or requirements of the respective divinities, for example, some cults shared common temples at different times, others required their own temples, others still, whose divinities required esoteric rituals or were incompatible with each other or with the values of the city, were moved to distant places with mystery practices etc.

That Nietzsche sought historical sources of ethnographic traces, as well as comparative philology to support in detail his analysis of the Greek religious integration process at that time, is decisive for the thesis of Greek creation not now coinciding with the idealizing tone of *The Birth of Tragedy*. Now the philology professor seems to propose to *demonstrate ethnographically and ethnologically* how such a cultural transmission would have occurred. And here the process that was only superficially hinted at in the incipient writing *The childhood of peoples* is transversally and objectively evidenced, namely, the coexistence of conditions arising from distinct civilizational processes within the same culture. Even the crudeness (*Rohheit*) that he identified as a characteristic of “civilizational infancy” in 1861 is now understood as integrated to the Greek state management, with the objective of guaranteeing the common existence of such distinct religious cults. Even those coming from civilizations considered “crude” would thus be included in this cultural dimension, by institutional means.

In the course of history, the incessant struggle of the tribes and poleis, and again of the parties in the poleis, of the sexes, demes, families, persons: It is a strange spectacle to see the countless cults living on, everywhere spared as *the most delicate and captious part*, and yet continually shifted, regrouped, developing most vividly, infinitely manifold: and nowhere does the violence, the crudeness (*Rohheit*) of superiority, the momentary passion prevail in the development (*Entwicklung*) of the cult. It is a carefully preserved life, amid all violence: and of the highest fruitfulness!<sup>26</sup>

The thesis of Greek creation presupposes the dual attempt to conserve what traditionally already existed in their culture, as well as what foreign cultures traditionally brought with them. It is noteworthy that, in logical terms, this is the same methodology of thinking—albeit “filled” with completely different content—as in his first book on tragedy, namely, *an agonal synthesis of two extremely strong poles*. If once these poles were metaphysical and metaphorical considerations under the figures of two gods, now in this lecture the poles are the very religions of gods, experienced by diverse peoples—therefore, phenomena of social “reality”. And the merit that Nietzsche identifies in the Greeks is the fact that, according to him, they seem to seek to maintain as much of each of the cultural traditions in play as possible, facing the practical challenge of adequacy and

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<sup>24</sup> *idem*, p. 412.

<sup>25</sup> *idem*, p. 411.

<sup>26</sup> *idem*, p. 415.

adaptation. And in such a challenge would consist what, in the context of his “Greek problem” he calls *creation*: A positive synthesis arising from supreme attempts to conserve traditional elements of Greek culture and the foreign cultures juxtaposed to it.

Moving towards Nietzsche’s encounter with philosophy, it is already exhaustively known that *Freigeisterei* begins with a “chemistry of concepts and sensations” (HH/MA, 1), taking human phenomena case by case, reducing them to the condition of elements. He goes on to investigate moral feelings as the *binding energies* of these phenomena (D/M, 111-113), reorganizes them into distinct systems by comparison (GS/FW, 14; 23; 62) and prepares a synthesis of progressive distancing (GS/FW, 276; 334). Interestingly, he begins in HH with kind of analysis reactions and although in the following works he no longer uses the metaphor of chemistry, single and double exchanges of elements can be identified in them. Physiology seems to coincide with the proximity required for the analysis of human phenomena, while *amor fati* seems to be the synthesis that anticipates the philosophical vision of detachment about the realities they constitute.

### Synthesis as Physiology: Body, Consciousness, Language

Nietzsche understands *physiology* as that which somatically determines individuals, as the foundation of their respective self-understanding<sup>27</sup> and interpretation of effectiveness. In this context, the *body* is a multiplicity of impulses, “the struggle of *quanta* of power that ‘interpret’”<sup>28</sup>, so that *consciousness*, or even the *will* cannot be elucidated as autonomous, independent and unconditioned units, once they are reflections of a plurality of “unconscious” processes that are not controlled by a “self”.

In this sense, terms as “subject” and the “soul” should be better conceived as “multiple subject” or “social structure of impulses and affections”. Thereby, the unity of the subject would be sustained only as an appearance and fiction, whereby it is possible to satisfy stronger inclinations at the expense of weaker impulses in the organism. This satisfaction could only occur if there were a unity that (superficially) could cancel out the conflicting state that exists in the organism. Thus, the intellect arises only as an instrument of deception, for “we are a multiplicity (*Vielheit*) that has imagined a unity (*Einheit*)”<sup>29</sup>. To this genesis of human organism’s unity, Nietzsche attributes the appearance of consciousness as the last and ultimate “development of the organic”, therefore, also what is most “unfinished” and “unrobust”<sup>30</sup>. Nevertheless, the consciousness appears in the perception of the philosophical tradition as the “unity of the organism”, under the belief that in it lies the “kernel” of the human being, “what is abiding, eternal, ultimate, most original in him”<sup>31</sup> and in this way its development and its intermittencies are denied.

Regarding the consciousness, physiology and language are essential concepts. According to Nietzsche, *language* generates symbols and its function is constituted for the purpose of communication, so that it simplifies the plurality of affections that is the man and reduces it to a set of signs. From this perspective, most of the organic activity is unconscious, and what is taken as self-consciousness is only a limited reflection of what is assimilated by the body<sup>32</sup>. For this reason, consciousness cannot be understood in Nietzsche’s philosophy neither as a (just) “judging unit” of disputes between the body’s affections and impulses nor as a

<sup>27</sup> Müller-Lauter, 1999, pp. 21-22.

<sup>28</sup> Müller-Lauter, 1999, p. 22, *our translation*.

<sup>29</sup> Nachlaß 1881, KGW V 2, p. 480; 12[35], *our translation*.

<sup>30</sup> FW 11, KGW V 2; p. 56 *et seq.*

<sup>31</sup> *ibidem*. In English, *The Gay Science* (2008), cf. Josefine Nauckhoff’s translation.

<sup>32</sup> Paschoal, 2018, p. 110.

“conciliator” of these conflicts, but only as an imperfect portrait of the relations between the instincts, incapable of translating the complexity of the physiological processes in the assimilation and interpretation of the world. In such a context, it would be more appropriate to approach it from the point of “becoming conscious”, problematizing it as a secondary and late aspect of physiological processes. In this way, it would be possible to reach understanding about the conditions of thinking, feeling, wanting, remembering, acting, and yet none of this would need to “enter our consciousness”.<sup>33</sup>

For Nietzsche, life could happen without the need to look in a “mirror”, as it is for various bodies and, in this way, all thinking and willing life would be possible without a mirroring in the consciousness. This type of proposition leads him to point out that the strength of consciousness does not reside among the most “primitive” vital aspects of the organism, but it is related to a person’s (or animal’s) *communication ability* and, in turn, *to the need for communication*<sup>34</sup>. This corresponds precisely to the need to communicate one’s needs and urgencies to one’s fellows, but to do it in a way that is obligatory to be understood in a quick and subtle way. Assuming that his observation is correct, Nietzsche presents the conjecture that “*consciousness developed only under the pressure of the need to communicate*”<sup>35</sup> and developed only in proportion to the degree of its usefulness in the relationship between one person and another.

The fact that every action, thought and feeling (or part of it) pervades consciousness is a consequence of a long obligatory sense in which the human being, as the most threatened animal, *needed* help and protection, so that he had to know how to express his predicament and make himself understandable<sup>36</sup>. Consequently, the human being *needed* beforehand to “know” what he thought and felt, that is, to translate the set of affections and feelings into unison form. Thus, he would have come to think continuously, but only the smallest and most superficial part of his thoughts would have come to consciousness, “for only that conscious thinking *takes place in words, that is, in communication symbols*; and this fact discloses the origin of consciousness”.<sup>37</sup>

Following this propositional line, it becomes possible to understand that, for Nietzsche, language and consciousness have developed simultaneously and represent the chain of association between people, in which the awareness of sense impressions grew according to the *need* to fix, situate and transmit these impressions to *others* by means of symbols. Consciousness would not belong to “individual human existence”, except for what corresponds to its gregarious nature, since its development had happened according to communal utility. Thus, in disposing oneself to self-understanding at the most individual level possible, it is necessary to bring to consciousness what has nothing individual about it, but what has been supplanted through it back into the perspective of what is collective.<sup>38</sup> Feelings would be subsequent aspects that would result from judgments and valuations transmitted in the form of inclinations and aversions, as instincts would be also transformed by moral judgments.

That these reflections on body, consciousness, and language belong to the fifth book of the *Gay Science*, from 1887, is something that makes possible their pertinence to the project of the “good Europeans”, since the body itself becomes thought in a synthetic condition. Hence its broad potential for expansion to the widest and most diverse dimensions possible. Thus, it can then be stated in this Nietzsche’s specific philosophical project

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<sup>33</sup> FW 354, KGW V 2, p. 272.

<sup>34</sup> *ibidem*.

<sup>35</sup> *ibidem*.

<sup>36</sup> *ibidem*.

<sup>37</sup> *idem*, p. 274.

<sup>38</sup> *ibidem*.

that biological-physiological determinations should also be considered within the framework of cultural, historical, and geographical interactions.

We understand this physical and cultural framework as the foundation and constitution of the idea of *synthesis* that part of Nietzsche’s research connects to the theme of *good Europeans*<sup>39</sup>. For Nietzsche, the will, reason, and sensation compose, in the corporeal sphere, an activity of synthesis, which structures and organizes the plurality of organic forces in a single direction without, however, stabilizing internal conflicts between energetic impulses. On the contrary, it catalyzes and maintains the flow of these activities in a continuous curve of wanting, thinking, and feeling<sup>40</sup>, so that the self-organization of the body does not renounce the multiplicity of impulses that compose it, just as it does not eliminate the existing conflict that produces the synthesis.

Conceived as an “organic being” (*organisches Wesen*), the corporeal constitution *naturally* develops a complete process *within the framework of culture*, which allow us to infer that what is called “body” is *in itself* a full and integrated process. After all, what is usually named as “consciousness” or as “spirit” is only a tool with the function of promoting and maintaining a struggle that *needs* to preserve itself. Struggle is, thus, the synthesis *par excellence* which *demand*s “to be preserved”, “to grow”, and also “to be aware of itself”.<sup>41</sup> Thus, the body as an organic being is something given and defined by its extension in space with its functional structures, as well as all the processes that occur in it. Its character of “unity”, however, lies in its “organization” (*Organisation*) and “interaction” (*Zusammenspiel*), as “a *dominion structure* (*Herrschafts-Gebilde*) that *means* one, but *is not* one”.<sup>42</sup> That Nietzsche singled out the verbs “to mean” (*bedeuten*) and “to be” (*sein*) in this quoted fragment is significant: Beyond internal processes, this dominion structure promotes inventions and constructions of bodies amid linguistic and socio-cultural relations. *Extended-aesthetic bodies* (*corpus extensum* and *productum corpus*), are produced in this sense, simultaneously natural and cultural.

The analysis about the self-consciousness formation, immersed in gregarious perspectives, as well as his study about the organic constitution that determines the weakness and fortification of the body also underlies his critique of the Platonic/Christian tradition and modernity. If the socio-cultural processes are vectors for “body formation”, which can build or corrupt the individual physiologically, it is in this direction that he performs his diagnosis of modernity and, thus, of European culture. This analysis clashes with thoughts of an “atom subject” that deliberates, thinks, and wills in an unconditioned and autonomous way.

Therefore, Nietzsche also starts from the philosophical tradition’s logical-metaphysical postulates, such as the belief of the “subject-substance”. Subject’s conception as *agent* and cause of all doing was built on the linguistic habit ingrained in the culture that considers “all our doing as a consequence of our will.”<sup>43</sup> In contrast, for Nietzsche, the subject does not remain unchanged, apart from the configurations that present themselves before it. This entire organization necessarily modifies and transforms itself, so that even the very notion of “subject-substance”, as a historical construction, reflects these transformations.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Boffi, 2019, p. 86. Boffi pointed out that the link between the two terms, “good European” and “*synthesis*”, in the published Nietzschean text appears only in *Beyond Good and Evil*, *Genealogy of Morals*, and in the concomitant “attempt at self-criticism”, given to the new edition of *The Birth of Tragedy*. And in his posthumous work, the two terms correspond to a restricted period between the years 1883 to 1887.

<sup>40</sup> *idem*, p. 87.

<sup>41</sup> Nachlaß 1885, KSA 13, p. 40; 1[124], *our translation*.

<sup>42</sup> Nachlaß 1885, KGW VII 3, p. 302; 37[4]. Nachlaß 1885, KGW VIII 1, p. 102; 2[87]. Here is a notable resignification of the Emersonian elements of *organization* and *interaction* contained in the juvenile text *Fatum und Geschichte* (1862).

<sup>43</sup> Paschoal, 2018, p. 107, *our translation*. Nachlaß 1887, KGW VIII 2, p. 55; 9[98].

<sup>44</sup> *idem*, p. 108.

Subject's *sphere* is constantly *enlarging* or *diminishing*, since the center of his *organization* is constantly *shifting*. If a subject is unable to organize its acquired mass, splits in two<sup>45</sup>. If we understand this mass as the organic ensemble of multiple drives and energetic forces, such inability culminates in progressively weaker expressions of this subject. These fragmented configurations are momentary or provisional units with relative stability, so that cannot be referred to a “substance” anymore. They are the result of a *synthesis*.

We verified two completely different processes from the idea of *synthesis* in the specialized research literature: *decomposition (analysis)*<sup>46</sup> and *conservative mediation*<sup>47</sup>. In both cases, Nietzsche does not seem to limit himself only to the moderns in noting the psychological, and physiological phenomena of decline, but philosophy itself, since Socrates, becomes thought of in these terms.<sup>48</sup> In Socratic philosophy, he identifies a process of physiological “decomposition”, which unfolds in physiological *decadence* in modernity. Wagner's music appears in this context as a symptom of “the will's disintegration”. With Socrates would have begun a long process of weakening of the bodies; with his dialectics founded on morals, a war would have been waged against the “dark desires” inside men. In such a process, *ratio* would have expanded in an irregular way against instincts weakening them, disrupting “the organic cooperation of the physiological functions”<sup>49</sup>, destabilizing and corrupting the particular “dominion structure” (*Herrschaft-Gebilde*) of each body. Although Nietzsche may note that this conceptual apparatus has served moralists for centuries and worked to some extent for a long time, he considers that it does not eliminate the instincts conflicts and its “cure” is only appearance, inasmuch as it means only delay the decline and perishing of individuals. The constriction of impulses and inclinations does not produce any *synthesis*, but only mediates and tames contradiction.<sup>50</sup> In either case, neither *decomposition* necessarily implies dichotomization nor *conservative mediation* implies conciliation. This leads us to conclude that, since there is no synthesis in such cases, the human type produced becomes incapable of dealing with the plurality of thoughts and affections that constitute him and, with that, of constituting its dimensions of existence and belonging.

Thus, it becomes possible to state that Nietzsche intends to demonstrate how European culture, since Socrates and Plato, moves in the opposite direction, making it impossible for individuals to grow and, therefore, become stronger. This statement can also be found in his objection to Spencer's progressive evolutionary theories<sup>51</sup>: Heredity does not indicate a propensity for continuous transformation of the species—as in the idea of the process of “preservation” of advantageous characteristics in the struggle for existence—but the transmission of frequent characteristics between animals of the species that indicate a conservation of “type”.

In a conservative standard dimension, it should be emphasized that “people who represent more nobly

<sup>45</sup> Nachlaß 1887, KGW VIII 2, p. 55; 9[98].

<sup>46</sup> Müller-Lauter, 1999, p. 18.

<sup>47</sup> Boffi, 2019.

<sup>48</sup> Müller-Lauter, *ibidem*.

<sup>49</sup> Müller-Lauter, 1999, p. 19, *our translation*.

<sup>50</sup> Boffi, 2019, p. 91.

<sup>51</sup> It seems relevant to us to make a brief comment about Nietzsche's critical position to Darwin's studies, identifying in him “ideas of progress”. Given the indirect readings he did, through authors like Spencer, Oscar Schmidt or even Paul Reé. Thus, he tends to reject Darwin's concept of species transformation from the process of *preservation* of advantageous characteristics in the struggle for survival. For him, there is no *preservation of favorable variations*, since heredity is casual and indicates the conservation of *type*, that is, the preservation of common variations, whether advantageous or disadvantageous. In objective terms, his criticism seemed directed only at Spencer. Cf. Nachlaß 1880, 7[56]. There would be, according to Nietzsche, a transmission of frequent characteristics in the species, which soon demonstrates the conservation of the common “type”.

bred types are less likely to *turn out well*”.<sup>52</sup> They are exceptions, with very different, complex and delicate living conditions. On the other hand, there is a surplus of unsuccessful, degenerate, sickly, weak and suffering-oriented people, who are easily captured by religions in order to live in self-denial and to attribute to their lives a supreme meaning and value. There Nietzsche identifies the danger of religions. Christianity, “Platonism for the people”, would have taken this process further by fixing a kind of already existing life and customs as a rule for a “*disciplina voluntatis*”<sup>53</sup>. Under such conditions, Christianity seeks to conserve and preserve life; but as a “religion for sufferers”, it takes their side on principle.

Nietzsche warns that however much one may esteem this thoughtful and conservative care of life promoted by religion, its method applies to those “higher individuals”, corrupting them and turning them into the most suffering among men. Hence, Christianity is the cause that kept the “type” man on a lower rung, because it preserved “too much of what should be destroyed”, that is, all that was sick and suffering<sup>54</sup>.

This is a demonstration of Nietzsche’s thesis that Christianity had “worked” Europe in a *degenerative* sense, suppressing all the growth qualities of the “spirit” and undermining the individual health. The greatest fault of religion would lie in the fact that it selectively worked against the “strong” and destroyed all the instincts proper to the highest and most accomplished “type of man”, allowing the conservation of the weakest natures, thus producing the “*degradation of the European race*”<sup>55</sup>. From this, it could be inferred that this discussion about the physiological decline of the “Christian European” presents itself as the axis of Nietzschean task of transvaluation of European morality, since his philosophical project intends to restore the European “health” and to work on a cultivation of higher “natures” of the human type: *the philosophers of the future*.

And that is where the *good Europeans*’ project comes in: the attempt to understand European culture from the task of a “panoramic vision”<sup>56</sup> (*Fernsicht*) with all its potential implications. In order to consolidate a stance on which the European phenomenon could be understood beyond national narrowness (by the *good European*’s vision) and as a condition for overcoming it (by the *supra-European*’s vision), as such, nationalism, that in the first moment was embraced under the German perspective, becomes in his late texts the starting point for a deeper analysis of modern European way of thinking’s construction, which presented itself, according to Nietzsche, through hostility and degenerative aspects. With this concern, he recognizes the need to oppose the “madness of nationalities”, which would be approaching its peak with the self-destruction of Europe. This would consist in the *fact* that European morality and its social-political standards built an *imaginary* cultural superiority that only isolated it and developed a process of cultural and, consequently, physiological homogenization. This essentially would characterize its decline.

This reflection now turns to a political sense. Modern thought is constituted by the idea of rationality and civility as an inherited product of Christian moral values, which at that time were perpetuated under the sign of democracy. This set of values, from the perspective of Nietzschean “European view”, involves an unfolding of the already known problem here, namely, European fragmentation—headed to an inevitable collapse due to the fragility of will in individuals. “This is the age of the masses: They lie prostrate in front of anything massive. And the same in *politics* too”.<sup>57</sup> Under such circumstances, he “diagnoses” the “paralysis of the will”,

<sup>52</sup> JGB 62, KGW VI 2, p. 79.

<sup>53</sup> FW 353, KGW V 2, p. 271.

<sup>54</sup> JGB 62, KGW VI 2, p. 79.

<sup>55</sup> *ibidem*. Also, Gori & Stellino (2015, p. 54).

<sup>56</sup> Brusotti, 2004.

<sup>57</sup> JGB 241, KGW VI 2, p. 189.

irregularly widespread in Europe, as the “cause” of the “European disease”. This “disease” shows itself most intensely in regions where cultural heritage exerts more rigorous bonds “and it becomes increasingly faint to the extent that “the barbarian” still—or once again—asserts his rights under the sagging robes of occidental cultivation”.<sup>58</sup>

In such an environment, *paralysis of the will* could be understood as a reflection of morality, as “moralization itself”, as a “*decadence*”.<sup>59</sup> His task of a view from a distance implies the need to overcome the prevailing European morality as a factor of physiological sickness. Precisely on this problem lies his “new vision” against the “herd instinct”, for Europe “has become unanimous in all major moral judgments; and this includes the countries under Europe’s influence”.<sup>60</sup>

He considers his critique of morality to be a “new vision”, because he does not identify in the European scientific and intellectual effort the claim to discuss and work on “the question of morality” “as a problem”, that is, as an aspect of affliction and misfortune, when analyzing the results of studies on morality and its genesis. Exactly the opposite: Every effort applied among European theoreticians, especially the English, would be focused on maintaining tradition, as well as reinforcing the elements of self-denial, sacrifice, and compassion that act vehemently on popular prejudices, inferring the unconditional obligation of these judgments to everyone. Modernity would have become fixed as a disguise for dogmatic/religious models in the European social sphere, the construction of new socio-political signs or the European identity itself obeys the canons of Christian morality.

A kind of a “resurrection” of the Christian faith in his contemporaneity could then be observed here: “Christianity, it seems to me, is still needed by most people in old Europe even today; hence it still finds believers”. This resurgence (or conservation) of some moral models, such as the “metaphysical necessity” in Schopenhauer has repercussions both in political relations and among scientific productions, since “metaphysics is still needed by some, but so is that impetuous demand for certainty that today discharges itself in scientific-positivistic form among great masses”.<sup>61</sup> Thus, there would still be, even among the most intelligent contemporaries, such phenomena as “patriotism”, aesthetic “French naturalism” or “St. Petersburg model” of nihilism<sup>62</sup>. In this context, Nietzsche does not seem to intend to turn to other political organizations as an alternative to replace the democratic movement, but to point to the permanence of a decline process perpetuated by European morality. He considers a transvaluation of these values to make possible a “counter-movement” capable of restoring the conditions of European “health”.

There is still an important point to note there: His task must consider that, opposed to the stagnation in which the Europe of his century finds itself, the great possibilities in the human type have not yet been exhausted.<sup>63</sup> The *good Europeans*, those “very free spirits”, Nietzsche’s interlocutors in this mission, should confirm such possibilities in “human types” at the slightest sign of a favorable moment for concentration and intensification of forces for the *cultivation* (*Zucht und Züchtung*) of new paths *within man*.<sup>64</sup> The circumstances for their undertaking should need to be partly created or reused in favor of stimuli of opposite valuations, in the

<sup>58</sup> JGB 208, KGW VI 2, p. 143.

<sup>59</sup> Nachlaß 1886, KGW VIII 1, p. 227; 5[89].

<sup>60</sup> JGB 202, KGW VI 2, p. 126.

<sup>61</sup> FW 347, KGW V 2; p. 268.

<sup>62</sup> *ibidem*.

<sup>63</sup> JGB 203, KGW VI 2, p. 128.

<sup>64</sup> *ibidem*.

preparation of great enterprises and global attempts at discipline, so that it could be possible for a soul to grow with the feeling of compulsion for this task.<sup>65</sup> Here are the consequences of such a process: The “philosophers of the future” will not be led astray from their course or shaken by the constriction of impulses that herd morality imposes on everyone preventing the emergence of a *new synthesis*.

### Synthesis as a Task: The “Europeans of the Future” and the “New Synthesis”

In the context of criticism and diagnosis of Europe in the 19th century, no matter how worrying Western European culture is regarding the factor of man’s diminishment, Nietzsche, on several occasions, does not fail to observe favorable aspects for the realization of his philosophical pretensions. He considers the double situation of contexts that must be created and cultivated, as well as on the possibilities of directing and reusing the decadent processes in favor of the effectiveness of his task. Although one must fight the “sick state” that the current European is in, by considering the *decadents* as “excrement of society”, Nietzsche always considered them as indispensable for the human possibilities of growth.<sup>66</sup>

From the texts that follow *Zarathustra*, Nietzsche goes on to describe, in some passages, a “Western world” that is opening up to a new consciousness that should lead to a distinct existential attitude governed by the transvaluation of old principles<sup>67</sup>, yet still moving slowly. He hypothesizes that the nineteenth century could be characterized as “stronger” than the century that preceded it, as he observes the loosening of Europeans’ conformity to European morality.

In *Peoples and Fatherlands*, he criticizes the democratic movement as a physiological factor of Europeans’ homogenization, to follow up on the conjecture that, involuntarily, the democratic movement has made possible the “slow rise of a type of man who is essentially supranational and nomadic, who physiologically possesses, as a distinctive mark, the maximum in strength and art of adaptation”<sup>68</sup>. He is careful in presenting his hypothesis regarding the democratic movement, since does not abandon his examination of the ongoing process of the human type “mediocrization”, but points out that the same conditions that promote the leveling of men and drive herd morality are, in large measure, also important in giving rise to men of exception<sup>69</sup>.

This statement is based on the social context that gradually brought people from different regions of Europe together, in a growing process of “liberation” of individuals from the conditions in which races linked to climate and class emerge. These individuals are more independent with respect to the *given*<sup>70</sup> environment; they submit themselves less and less to the hardness of the human “type” form and gradually begin to assert their uniqueness. This scenario of stimulation of the *plastic* force is favorable to the emergence of people who manifest their own synthetic forms as a “variation of the type”<sup>71</sup>. Nevertheless, there is still a surplus number of people who remain stuck in European morality. Herein lies the tension of the “good” Europeans’ task: Since they constitute themselves as a “guide” in the process of self-overcoming European morality, it is up to them to produce themselves as the variation of the type *par excellence*.

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<sup>65</sup> *ibidem*.

<sup>66</sup> Müller-Lauter, 1999, p. 18.

<sup>67</sup> Gori & Stellino, 2015, p. 54.

<sup>68</sup> JGB 242 *apud* Gori & Stellino (2015).

<sup>69</sup> Nachlaß 1885, 35[10] *apud* Gori & Stellino (2015, p. 55).

<sup>70</sup> *ibidem*.

<sup>71</sup> JGB 262, KGW VI 2, p. 224.



*Ethics* and *politics* become dynamically merged in *culture* in such a project, so that the challenge of these heirs of Europe is to favor conditions of ethical and political synthesis on the external plane from internal physiological processes to produce increasingly distinct mutations. And the very fact that in this inheritance relation is also included the decadence of herd morality is integrated into the synthetic process, so that the ethical self-overcoming already proposed in *The Gay Science* (1882) is here integrated into the broad and comprehensive prelude of the man of the future. Such an integration between *Synthesis* and *Überwindung* makes even understandable the dialogue between *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886) and the fifth chapter added in 1887 to the 1882 book. Therefore, the “new synthesis”, could be understood as a process of *assimilation*, *appropriation*, *incorporation* and *transformation* where “the individual dares to be individual and different”.<sup>72</sup>

*Inheritance*, as a constitutive aspect of “good Europeans” implies the tension that propels them to new ways of life<sup>73</sup>. Towards the good physiological constitution, the “strengthening of the type” requires a “great synthesis” that gathers the maximum of contrary experiences, including those of *decadence*<sup>74</sup>. For this purpose, it would still require learning to separate the “healthy” and the “degenerate” parts into the organisms (hierarchization of forces). This includes also eliminating the unhealthy ones from the “synthetic bodies”, lest it perish by them.<sup>75</sup>

Such an exercise in self-observation and self-mastery could be exemplified by the aphorism BGE §241, where sometimes Nietzsche admits a “beautiful patriotism” in good Europeans. This demonstrates not only the multiplicity of “forms of life” that they must accumulate within themselves in order to succeed in their elevation (including the nationalistic aspects), but also to demonstrate the continuous demand of the task of “spiritual” cultivation on European territory, problematizing the social context of the century to which he addresses with suspicion and high expectations. Given the physiological and creative variations, “heavier spirits”, “slow and apathetic races”, need more time “to overcome such atavistic fits of fatherlandishness, to unglue themselves from the soil and return to reason”, that is, for Nietzsche, “good Europeanism”.<sup>76</sup>

So, the theme of *atavism* resurfaces here<sup>77</sup>. In this context, it means the retroactive movement of the forces discharge that is engendered from European history itself for the emergence of the “good Europeans” and marks the chaotic explosion of instincts that characterizes the moments of historical transition as physiological deviations. As far as morality and psychology are concerned, he also thinks of atavism as the return of psychological and behavioral traits that in past historical moments would have attributed as virtues of a

<sup>72</sup> JGB 262, *ibidem*.

<sup>73</sup> JGB 224, KGW VI 2, p. 163.

<sup>74</sup> Müller-Lauter, 1999, p. 26.

<sup>75</sup> *idem*, p. 27.

<sup>76</sup> JGB 241, KGW VI 2, p. 188.

<sup>77</sup> Although we have shown a hint of atavism’s problematization in the course of cultural transmissions already in *Kindheit der Völker*, the term appears explicitly in Nietzsche’s texts from the year 1881 (Nachlaß 1881, 11[101]), after his readings of Herbert Spencer and Vetter Benjamin (*Die Thatsachen der Ethik*, 1879), as well as after some readings about philosophy and psychology, especially the *Revue philosophique de la France et de l’étranger* and the journal *Mind*. In Nietzsche’s library is the second volume of *Mind* magazine, an issue with articles by Darwin, Ribot, Tylor, and correspondence from Spencer about E. Tylor’s article (*Mr. Spencer’s Principles of Sociology*). Nietzsche mentions his interest in these authors in his correspondence with Paul Reé in 1877 (BVN 1877, 643) and mentions Bagehot. There are also in his library the works *Les maladies de la volonté* (1883) by Théodule Ribot and *Natürliche Schöpfungsgeschichte* (1873) by Ernest Haeckel, both authors who have discussions on psychic atavism (Nina-Rodrigues, 1902). *Atavisme psychique et paranoïa. Criminologie et de Psychologie Normale et Pathologique*, year 17, n. 102, pp. 325-355, Lyon). Due to the actual absence of any source that proves the direct relationship of Nietzsche’s borrowing of the term *atavism* from these authors, we can only assume the conceptual relationship from the definitions that are developed by both about atavism and notions of heredity as definitions that influence physiological characteristics and, consequently, psychological and behavioral traits.

people<sup>78</sup> but that would have been reinterpreted and to a great extent constrained and repressed during the transitional periods when these peoples would have suffered socio-cultural changes.

That being so, much of what the prevailing morality interprets as “bad”, that which contradicts its ideal, under a historical view we could see it only as that which was the ideal of an ancient morality. In any case, each “sin” reflects a people heritage<sup>79</sup>, so that the Europeans who live within themselves the tension of their century, and the “historical sense”, *must affirm new synthetic forms of life*, as a consequence of the “enchanted and crazy half-barbarism into which Europe has been plunged through the democratic mixing of classes and races”<sup>80</sup>.

Specifically, the importance of atavism in this project is, thus, the exposition of 19th century Europe to the confrontation with its past, which was founded on the coexistence of diverse cultures.<sup>81</sup> In the general scope, on the other hand, this concept is an integral and decisive part of cultural transmission processes, since Nietzsche understands moments of historical transition from the tensions between *present forces* and *atavistic forces*. The chaotic charge of instincts that influence his contemporaneity due to its own past, as well as the coming together of people from different regions *give form* to synthetic types of life.

In the first edition of *The Gay Science*, he had already understood the men of exception as a reflection of ancient cultures’ strength that suddenly emerge in late periods, as a kind of “atavisms of a people and its mores”<sup>82</sup>. As an expression of a culture no longer in force, these “rare” individuals now appear as “extraordinary” because they seem to be out of step with their own time. For him, it is noteworthy that they are led to synthetic forms between these atavistic and present influxes and that they confront their time and distance themselves from the herd in a process of differentiation with respect to heritage: “whoever feels these powers in himself must nurse, defend, honor, and cultivate them against another world that resists them”<sup>83</sup>. In the context of *Beyond Good and Evil*, this premise remains in order to understand the *good Europeans*, as *deviations* and *results of atavisms*, who experimentally *must* mark the movement of differentiation and place themselves as expressions of transition.

Another aspect about the relation between synthesis, atavism and *the task* can be found in the aforesaid *posthumous fragment* 41[7] from 1885<sup>84</sup>. It begins with an exaltation of Ancient Greece’s culture from the idea of existence transfiguration that Nietzsche associates with a Dionysian nature. In the face of Dionysus, everything that came subsequently seems short, poor, and cramped, for all the *plastic force* of Greek culture would have come from its Dionysian experiences. Here this god is shown as a model for a countermovement to Christianity; he overturns and overcomes all limits and bonds, transcends all delimitations. But this agonal movement does not coincide with the full destruction of Christianity, since Christianity itself was the “counter-doctrine” that denied the Dionysian. Hence, *overcoming* means “rediscovering the *South* itself”, recovering the southern health and gradually becoming “more and more superficial, supranational, European, supra-European, Eastern, in short, *Greek*”<sup>85</sup>.

<sup>78</sup> Nachlaß 1881, KGW V 2, p. 375; 11[101].

<sup>79</sup> JGB 149, KGW VI 2, p. 99.

<sup>80</sup> JGB 224, KGW VI 2, p. 163.

<sup>81</sup> *ibidem*.

<sup>82</sup> FW 10, KGW V 2; p. 381.

<sup>83</sup> *ibidem*.

<sup>84</sup> Nachlaß 1885, KSA 11, p. 682; 41[7].

<sup>85</sup> *ibidem*.

In this context, Greek means, therefore, the origin of the “destiny of the Greek soul” that is the Dionysian—*barbarian* Dionysus; *foreigner*. As the first great *synthesis* of all that was *Eastern*, the Greek is also the origin of the European soul<sup>86</sup>. There is here, thereby, a complete reversal of the relationship between Europeanism and nationalism which prevailed at the time of Nietzsche and his expansive project: he highlights an origin of Europe that has nothing pure and absolute, but a *synthesis* of what is completely impure and creative.

Now under this aspect, these transformations include even atavisms to the embryonic types of Europe that were essentially deviations and *foreign synthesis*. *Appropriation* and *overcoming* are, thus, the initial mark of the “European soul”, with which Nietzsche creates an imperative for his task of “good Europeans”, namely, preparing the conditions to the “Europeans of the future” in a progressive process of *synthesis*. According to an increasingly broad process, he not only intends to have the atavism of a non-European origin in this preparation, but to cultivate a space of open differentiation for the *new synthesis*. Atavistic forces *only* ensure that *good Europeans* are rare expressions (the “men of exception”) in European culture. But it is necessary to go further and promote the uninterrupted inclusion of what is different in order to be able to think of ever higher levels of overcoming. The aggregation of diverse customs and the traffic of people (nomads or foreigners) could promote physiological variability in order to appear more and more deviations. And these deviations must not only to be a rarity, but to become increasingly *frequent*.

Regarding European spiritualization, there are few experimental traces considered by Nietzsche. In his contemporaneity, he mentions France as the current “seat of the most spiritual and sophisticated culture in Europe”<sup>87</sup>, a statement that is followed in his text with characterizations of declining cultures. However, this contradictory aspect of French culture in the 19th century brings together the set of ideas involving the production of new synthesis-forms. Nietzsche describes a France steeped in Schopenhauerian pessimism and Wagnerian music, which “in spite of any voluntary or involuntary Germanization or vulgarization of taste”, as well as its ancient and complex moralistic culture, are enduring marks “of an old cultural superiority over Europe”<sup>88</sup>. This could be found in the nature of the French, endowed with a “semi-logical synthesis of North and South” with which they understand many things, attracted and repelled by the South.<sup>89</sup> He idealizes a description of the French landscape as a space for cultivating and welcoming the *good Europeans*, who “know how to love the south in the north and the north in the south, —the born Mediterraneans, the ‘good Europeans’”<sup>90</sup>. This example reveals that his point is not exactly in the origin of the assimilated aspects, be it German nationalism for the French or the Orient for the Greeks.

Such an overcoming requires a creative impulse that necessarily also goes progressively through a form of *migration*, both in new procedures of differentiation and in retroactive movements<sup>91</sup> also to become “supra-European”. Not a few times Nietzsche supports the migratory procedure as a way of spiritual expansion. The best example of that is in GS/FW, 380, where *the wanderer* who wants to know how high the towers of a city are, “must leave the city”<sup>92</sup>. Indeed, to look at European morality with distance and to measure it against other

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<sup>86</sup> *ibidem*.

<sup>87</sup> JGB 254, KGW VI 2, p. 206.

<sup>88</sup> *idem*, p. 207.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>91</sup> Brusotti, 2016, p. 39.

<sup>92</sup> FW 380, KGW V 2, p. 314.

morality, he must look for new parameters and countermeasures. Against the superficial in one culture, he must seek depth in another and subjects both to an agonal process.<sup>93</sup>

In order to direct the discussion to the political field, we could search for a methodological route. *Good Europeans*’ task starts from the diagnosis and problematization of historical and cultural conditions of 19th century Europe. Considering that it relates many different socio-cultural factors, which have connections to a broad perspective of political transformations, it is understandable that we may be summoned at an early stage to a reflection of political traits. However, that the aforementioned task is endowed with potentially political elements and stems from political effects, does *not necessarily* imply that it *must* be thought of in strictly political ways. And this is verifiable, even in the research dedicated to the theme, which presents very different perspectives on it.<sup>94</sup>

*Our position*, on this debate, is that one could arrive at different interpretations depending on the methodology of approach. If we develop an exclusive historical investigation, it becomes difficult to sustain a strictly political conclusion; either because in his time political phenomena were, as a rule, studied by the institutional way, or because Nietzsche would have treated the question in an open and broad way, so that *comprehensiveness* became the main word of this 1885 project. If, by another route, we approach the question in dialogue with contemporaneity through comparative ways—given that the task is a summons to philosophers “*of the future*”, and therefore, after Nietzsche—then we will have both possibilities that include and exclude political problematizations. After all, this will depend on *how a philosopher understands the political phenomenon*: in legal-institutional, anthropological, cultural, or even aesthetic (and logical) senses.

Thus, *to demonstrate our interpretation*, we assert a *full methodological and conceptual breadth*. As far as method is concerned, while the historical approach grounds its own scope, the comparative-dialogical investigation reveals a profoundly different world from Nietzsche’s era, *extremely connected*, in which no “line of force” or “thought” should be given up. As far as the concepts themselves are concerned, we think that in the centuries that separate us from Nietzsche, political philosophy itself has become so comprehensive that even juridical-institutional questions are no longer raised as the “atomic nuclei” to which he referred in *On the prejudices of philosophers*.

Indeed, contemporary political philosophy has become multiple—even at the institutional level. In fact, when thought of under the challenges that the most diverse forms of life have imposed on the modern model of the nation-state, it is that Nietzsche’s task becomes still worthy of attention in a world so different from his. However, since his premises were formulated in another world that no longer exists, we claim that they could be taken *exclusively in their form* within the framework of contemporary issues. And among such, *undoubtedly*,

<sup>93</sup> JGB 241, KGW VI 2, p. 189.

<sup>94</sup> The constitution of a “political thought” in Nietzsche’s philosophy is developed from reflections that are not based on categories well established by thinkers that, unlike Nietzsche, treat the problem from institutional implications of government and social structures. But by a special way of approach, the theme requires issues that are not traditionally seen as political categories, among which we could list aesthetics, language, physiology and morality as key elements for such understanding. Ottmann (1999, pp. 124-129) dissolved the political into the general plane of culture with greater emphasis on the goal of overcoming. In Brusotti’s work (2004; 2016, p. 38), the context of the “good Europeans” in the late Nietzsche configures a political and/or apolitical manifesto, because the philosopher does not think, from the statelessness of the good Europeans in a confederation of European states. Just as Nicodemo (2014, p. 389) argued, Nietzsche’s concern is with power relations rather than law. In Gori and Stellino (2015, p. 47) considerations, the political dimension is secondary, since the importance of the “good European” discussion should be thought of in all cultural instances. For Boffi (2019, p. 99), the good Europeans’ task must be thought from various perspectives, both aesthetic, gnosiological, logical and political; the last is analyzed properly by the dimension of conflicts and the configuration of the individual and his relationship with the community.

politics—in the wide and multiple conditions, demands its philosophical considerations.

As parameters of comparative analysis, the propositions and limits of this Nietzschean project have potential political value, for, as seen above: “All unity is unity *only* as *organization and interaction*: not different from how a human community (*menschliches Gemeinwesen*) is a unity: thus *contrast* of atomistic *anarchy*; thus a *dominion-structure* (*Herrschafts-Gebilde*) which *means* one, but *is* not one”.<sup>95</sup> The term itself is already presented as an effect of the relations of its own properties and the set of properties of a given context. But we cannot *logically* ground an assertion of the political problematization of the task on a relation of similarity alone. In the posthumous fragments of Group 2 from 1885, which appear in Nietzsche’s notebook *W 18* (fall/1885-fall/1886), the term *Herrschafts-Gebilde* appears yet twice before this fragment 2[87]. In fragment 2[69], Nietzsche makes a preamble of a physical-physiological tone with a question: “The mechanical force is known to us only as a feeling of resistance (*Widerstandsgefühl*): and this is interpreted with pressure and push only sensuously, not explained. What is the nature of the compulsion which a stronger soul exerts on a weaker one?”<sup>96</sup> This question coincides with the deduction above, that is, the force that highlights the properties of a term or a set of terms in a context. Seeking to find it in a mental event (*seelisches Geschehen*) or in the smallest possible units of the structures of life (*Lebens-Gebilde*) would be known paths of natural science in Nietzsche’s time. Both would be, respectively, a process and an object. But his answer integrates these two paths into a single dynamic entity in the imminence of the domination movement: “The preliminary stage of the dominion structures (*Herrschafts-Gebilde*)”. There are two easy conclusions from this fragment: (a) an identity between the structures (of life and of dominion) and (b) that the interaction between the terms of a context has an ambivalent nature that cannot be explained by the two univocal paths known to natural science. But such *structural ambivalence* does not yet explain the nature of force as interaction *in a context*—and neither does it explain its *political character*. The context is the place of interactions between terms, their properties and structures. The qualitative question remains.

Among the fragments from Group 2, thus, in the same notebook, the term *Herrschaft* and its variations always occur with the same polyvalence of meanings as its corresponding Latin noun, *dōmīnium*<sup>97</sup>: “property, right of ownership”, “paramount ownership, eminent domain”. In this sense, it is as much about the *ownership* (domain) that gives a nobleman the right to legislate in a *land* and to dominate those who live there as it is about *this right itself* and *its consequences* (power, rule). And in the contexts where the term occurs in this notebook, words like *kingdom* (*Reich*), *land* (*Land*) and *Earth* (*Erde*) often appear<sup>98</sup>. Although we recognize the strong metaphorical character of most of them, we are convinced that *politics* as a problem should not be excluded in this whole analysis. We consider that such metaphors reside there *not only* to confer reference to *history* and *power mechanisms*. In fact, because we admit both references as valid, we base ourselves on them to consider the project as a potential possibility of reconsideration of the very idea of politics for the Europeans of the future. The metaphorical dimension of these terms would therefore assume a *potential function of emphasis*, as a means to maintain the *potential dynamics of the structures of dominion* in a present and intermittent dialogue between diverse historical eras.

Thereby, in order to demonstrate quickly and concisely this “potency” of the *task*, we need to quote

<sup>95</sup> Nachlaß 1885, KGW VIII 1, p. 102; 2[87].

<sup>96</sup> Nachlaß 1885, KGW VIII 1, p. 90; 2[69].

<sup>97</sup> Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short (1879).

<sup>98</sup> Cf. Nachlaß 1885, KGW VIII 1, [104]; 2[179]; 2[190]; 2[195].

fragment 2[57]:

From now on there will be favorable preconditions for **more expansive dominion structures** (*umfänglichere Herrschafts-Gebilde*), the like of which has not yet existed. And this is not yet the most important thing; it is made possible the emergence of international lineage associations, which set themselves the task of raising up a master-race, the future “**masters of the Earth**” (*Herren der Erde*);—**a new, immense aristocracy, built on the hardest self-legislation** (*eine neue, ungeheure, auf der härtesten Selbst-Gesetzgebung aufgebaute Aristokratie*), in which the will of philosophical men of violence and artist-tyrant will be given duration over millennia: —a higher kind of man, who, thanks to their preponderance of will, knowledge, wealth and influence, made use of the democratic Europe as their most docile and agile tool to get the destinies of the Earth into their hands, **to shape** (*gestalten*) on “man” himself as an artist. Enough, the time is coming **when one will re-learn about politics.**<sup>99</sup>

We marked in bold the terms of our demonstration. Because of atavisms and encounters of different cultures in Europe, Nietzsche lives the moment when the feelings of resistance (*Widerstandsgefühle*) of exceptional individuals to the standardized European heritage will determine the imminence of the movements of interaction between the constituent forces of more expansive structures of dominion (*umfänglichere Herrschafts-Gebilde*) that will *reshape* everything known about politics up to that point. This new nobility will thus establish, even philosophically, new foundations and ways of operationalization that make it possible to maintain demands for expansion for creative feedback of the structures of dominion as well as the interactions between them. If the Greek level is the highest level of the task, taking into consideration what has been demonstrated about the reception of cults, Nietzsche would have no way to exclude political mechanisms in his project for the Europeans of the future. After all, creating presupposes restructuring fundamental institutions from new horizons.

That these very free spirits of the future will be a *new aristocracy* has already been demonstrated in research.<sup>100</sup> Furthermore, this task has practical guidelines opposed to the nationalistic excesses and racial hatred, which is also already well-known<sup>101</sup>. In its scope, *we affirm* that migration<sup>102</sup> is a desirable and a very important factor in this project, inasmuch as it expands cultures and adds new elements to it. Philosophically, it works in the cultivation and development of new methods of sharing and dialogue. And if there are political developments in this, it is certainly according to progressively broader movements of openness and conceptual transfigurations. And the West *needs to be radically open* to these ends.

### “New Synthesis” as “Great Politics”?

It was shown that the project of a new synthesis of man can be understood as a great political project insofar as it is based neither on a dogmatic conceptual validity foundation (idealisms), nor on the presumption of a natural superiority of European man, nor on teleological projections of strict historical sense, nor on institutional and legal structures whose ballasts are any of these foundations. In view of what has been demonstrated, the levels of comprehensiveness are not “stages of development” as the young Nietzsche had

<sup>99</sup> Nachlaß 1885, KGW VIII 1, pp. 85-86; 2[57].

<sup>100</sup> Cf. Brusotti, 2004.

<sup>101</sup> FW §377, KGW V 2, p. 242: “No, we do not love humanity; but on the other hand we are not nearly ‘German’ enough, in the sense in which the word ‘German’ is constantly used nowadays, to advocate nationalism and racial hatred and to be able to take pleasure in the national scabies of the heart and blood poisoning with which European peoples nowadays delimit and barricade themselves against each other as if with quarantines.”

<sup>102</sup> *Idem*, p. 243: “The hidden Yes in you is stronger than all Nos and Maybes that afflict you and your age like a disease; and you must sail the seas, you emigrants, you too are compelled to this by—a *faith!*”

known in the early 1860s. The scaling of the project consists of levels of expansion of the vision on Europe, which can occur either concomitantly or gradually in different situations.

The synthesis is, thus, linked to the relationship between value and power, and this is so because the limits of politics are not excluded by ethics. Nietzsche bases his project on the premise that man—including philosophical man—has lost throughout history the ability to live authentically, that is, to experience history through the lens of life (of what is useful and, above all, intensifying). It is precisely such a diachronic disconnection that occurs to the philologist on the way to philosophy in the 1870s, invariably, as one of the fundamental factors of civilizational *decadence*, given the progressive generational loss of the ability to discern between what is a mere historical vestige with no practical function in a culture and what really contributes to the fullness of a civilization. That philosophers have lost the ability to “live philosophically” is a symptom that denounces the limits of perception of cultural transmission as a present and dynamic phenomenon in a whole people. Hence the need for a history that expresses itself as an anthropology of daily life, of ethnologies, of ethnographies.

This observation, which already underlay the texts of the *Untimely Meditations* (1873-1876) cycle, as well as all the ethical reflections of the *Freigeisterei* context, reappears in the second half of the 1880s “partly” as insight into the political phenomena prevailing in Europe at the time. We speak “partly”, because such phenomena are, in fact, one aspect among the “new synthesis” considerations. Of course, we are not arguing here that this was a systematic project already thought out since the 1870s. Quite the contrary, in the course of his research up to 1885, he confronted questions about art, culture, metaphysics, religion, knowledge, and ethics—which were investigated and resulted together in *Beyond Good and Evil*—, is something that produces immediate and distant effects on the vision of his entire work, on politics (as a phenomenon and as a problem), and on philosophy itself.

As far as the vision about his own writings is concerned, this is demonstrable by the prefaces he writes in this context to earlier works. Such a view on himself reveals itself, in such terms, as extensive, comprehensive, encompassing and integral; especially if thought of as discovery and as part of a visionary program. If, on the one hand, Nietzsche is *evidently not* a systematic philosopher, on the other, he *seems to try to present* an integrated broad view of what he has written and of the world in which he lives in the second half of the 1880s. And more than that: that such an overview is still a limited view. That is why his thought is still a “prelude” to a philosophy that goes “beyond” the system view, “beyond” the values of “good and evil” that integrate systems. For such a philosophy still more free, “very free” views are *needed*. Even more free than his own. Hence this project is a dialogue with the “philosophers of the future”.

In such an instance, we could wonder: what is the relationship between these visions and the new synthesis? Also, why is the so-called “great politics” part of such a project? And finally, in what way would such politics, in this context, be greater? In the face of all that has been demonstrated here, we can affirm that this new synthesis coincides, in practical terms, with the way in which the ancient Greeks would have received foreign cultures, namely, with the supreme effort to conserve what they received and what they already had as civilization, as they presented themselves in the circumstances of those encounters of cultures.

We could speak, therefore, of a strong synthesis, insofar as it possesses vectors in supreme condition of strength and that, in the encounter, produce a result endowed with strong tension. For the European of the future, the challenge would be to proceed precisely in this way. In political terms, it is a vision focused on relations and not on the vectors of power, which does not disregard any of the forces that might integrate this

(cultural) space of power relations. This great and free politics would be part of a project for the future of the West to the extent that it identifies itself as one more among the vectors of a progressively broader and more dynamic system, whose limits are constantly subject to new breaks (analyses) and/or junctions (syntheses). Thus, this politics would be greater than that one diagnosed by Nietzsche in his time, since it would consist of a permanent vision about itself, about the other fundamental phenomena of human life (culture, art, religion, law, knowledge, etc.) as fields of power relations—which also establish *other* power relations among themselves, and, ultimately, about its future prospects.

As a *task*, it is, therefore, a demand of the time. This is confirmed in the writings of 1887, to which we refer as the last concluding quotation. Entitled “*We who are homeless*”, aphorism GS/FW, 377 reveals that good Europeans understand their epoch as a “fragile, broken time of transition”, whose “realities” do not seem to “*last*”. The metaphor he uses in this passage is that there is a very thin ice upon which people stand: “we ourselves, we homeless ones, are something that breaks up the ice and other all too thin ‘realities’...”<sup>103</sup> Far from secure, this condition is insecure and dangerous, as the well-known German idiom “*sich auf dünnes Eis begeben/wagen; sich auf dünnem Eis bewegen*” suggests. These “realities” could be understood as any of the ideals of communities and associations:

We “conserve” nothing; neither do we want to return to any past; we are by no means “liberal”; we are not working for “progress”; we don’t need to plug our ears to the marketplace’s sirens of the future: what they sing—“equal rights”, “free society”, “no more masters and no servants”—has no allure for us.<sup>104</sup>

As transitional ideals both in the sense of changing historical conjuncture and in terms of the temporal fugacity, they are weak ideas, whose fragility does not consist only in their conceptual foundations, but also and mainly in the fallibility of their implementation due to the spiritual condition of modern man. In this sense, they are “small politics”.

The actuality of “great politics” consists in *the fact that it remains a project*—either because this transition is fleeting according to the great dimensions of human history, or because of the very ambition of the proposal. Western man’s state of ethical and political *slackening* (*Erschlaffung*) is modern (GS/FW, 23) and the fear that afflicts him in the face of the problems arising from dynamic processes of differentiation inclines him toward the petty politics of nationalism, protectionism, and the intensification of action. There is no point in discussing issues like “equal rights”, “free society”, “national sovereignty”, or, as in today’s times, whether democracy or the sovereign state are in decay or whether human dispositions in political terms are null and void. Any political reflections in institutional terms and the ideals that correspond to them tend to constitute vicious circular arguments as to effectiveness because modern man has progressively lost the inclination for creative action. A paralysis of political will ensues. It is man’s own dispositions that compel him into the circles of the same ideals. Conversely, good “homeless”, “stateless” Europeans would reflect about in new terms. But this undoubtedly would take generations.

Thereby, if on the one hand Nietzsche’s proposal seems ambitious and even inapplicable, on the other hand, the realization that this is a problem involving generations and heritage can be a starting point for a kind of “immanent ideal”. Although in stating that “Europe wishes to become one” the philosopher did not seem to have in mind a political and technocratic movement of union among states, the stateless/transnational way of

<sup>103</sup> FW 377, KGW V 2, p. 242.

<sup>104</sup> *ibidem*.



life as an ideal property of the man of the future seems to go beyond: “We who are homeless are too diverse and racially mixed in our descent, as ‘modern men’”. This property concerns the modern condition, and as such, demonstrates the metaphilosophical character of this permanently unfinished project of vision about culture. The task of the West thus requires, as a starting point, a Delphic vision of itself and of the future. And, in the realm of men of knowledge, this is an ethnological, metaphilosophical task that expresses itself ethnographically with the ideal of reaching ever broader visions, with the greatest possible amplitudes.

### Conclusion

Having concluded the above considerations, it has been demonstrated among the ethnographic and conceptual trails of Nietzsche’s different cycles of thinking that the idea of *Synthesis* can occur to him as realizations of socio-cultural processes, as a physiology and as a task. In the first case, it is about a *description*; in the second, about a *prescription*. In both of the first cases, it is a process of constitution in which human action on an original condition, and in the face of influencing factors, produces a new condition. That facts *have left* traces, that *there is* a physiological synthesis of the human body and that *should be* a synthesis in the ethnological task of the West, are observations of different moments of the same type of process, namely, the observation of a condition arising from a synthesis based on its result (body, consciousness, language, history) and the observation of what is expected from a synthesis. Thereby, the main conclusion of this article is identified and based on three partial conclusions.

Hence, the first partial conclusion that can be drawn is the following: whether from a past or future perspective, what seems to be special about the Nietzschean conception of synthesis is the detailed concentration of the philosophical vision *on the process itself*, from which an identity can be deduced between what he understood as life at the time of the *Untimely Meditations* and a permanently present vision of processes of synthesis. Cultural transmissions are for him actual, ephemeral, everyday phenomena—like the biological evolution proven in archaeological and embryological findings of evolutionists. In fact, they begin in the immediacy of encounters between people from very different worlds and spread in people daily lives. Some would perceive them at the moment they would be living them, like the good Europeans cited in the aphorism BGE/JGB, 256 or the initiates of the Dionysian Mysteries he refers in the context of his studies on Greek tragedy—having recorded them in history or not. Others would only have absorbed or misunderstood each subtle or evident transforming element in their daily lives, such as the people in the spectacle of Greek tragedy or representatives of theoretical, cultural and political movements of the 19th century, such as Wagnerians or anarchists and revolutionary socialists criticized at various times in his works. As such, human lives would always be parts of syntheses, differentiating themselves only between *vita contemplativa* and *vita activa* according to their degrees and moments of perception and affirmation of the respective syntheses’ instances in which they participate and/or are involved—as can be deduced from the comparison between what has been demonstrated here and, for example, the aphorisms D/M, 41-43.

A second relevant partial conclusion, and arising from the first one, is the fact that this *present, daily and practical understanding of cultural transmission processes*, that he demonstrated by scientific-ethnographic grounds, conflicts directly with the concept of development (*Entwicklung*) that is usually present in the foundations of the natural sciences of Darwinian evolution and, as far as the humanities are concerned, in the nineteenth century’s way of thinking as whole. Hence, neo-Darwinian moral theories oppose Nietzsche’s task of moral overcoming, since he recognizes in them a process essentially of conservation and not of

overcoming, as well as identifies in these theories the need for scientific justification of a “moral truth” that suggests altruism in European civilization models as the fittest and most developed kind of morality. Nietzsche, therefore, despite receiving important premises from these trends of thought, differs from them in part by the *contemplative concentration* that seemed to speculate and seek at many moments, with too much technical and imaginative effort, in order to try to reduce the inevitable effects of diachronism and treat historical phenomena as if they were present facts. He further differentiated himself from them by the experimental way of philosophizing that he had developed, since his perceptions, feelings, values and concepts were thought through and problematized in the course of his life’s events. One more differentiation is about his methods, given the writing methodology that develops historical and ethnographic descriptions in much of his work up to the late 1870s—with which he directly or indirectly dialogued in the following decade of his maturity. Reinforcing the present conclusion, here it does not seem redundant about such methodology to reiterate his *methodological influences*: still in his school texts, possibly by contact, already in the early 1860s, with old authors writing descriptive texts and/or ethnographic (dissertative or fiction)<sup>105</sup>; detailed philologists in the philological writings of the 1870s<sup>106</sup>; and from learning from historians who established historical methods<sup>107</sup>, whose influences are felt at different times throughout his work.

Subsequently, a third partial conclusion would highlight the multifactorial essence of any of the syntheses under discussion. If they are thought of as cultural phenomena, it is evident that both the intrinsic and extrinsic factors to the exchange processes and the cultural objects exchanged are multiple. Indeed, depending on how much time and generations are involved, it would not even be possible to measure them with objective perfection. Also multifactorial is a synthesis considered as physiological processes constituting the body, consciousness and language, given the physical actions of nature and the “all too human” phenomena that make the boundaries between what is natural and cultural progressively more blurred—to the point of blurring them in some phenomena.

There is yet another sense in which this synthesis can be understood as multifactorial: If the first Greek synthesis was characterized as resulting from the need of constitution of the Greek spirit itself in face of the encounter of different cultures, it is obviously a cultural synthesis. In this sense, the “new synthesis” from 1885 project derives from even more factors, since the world is even larger and more connected in Nietzsche’s time than in the age of the ancient Greeks. Moreover, the very demands of modern man are even more manifold than in the ancient world, given the differentiations of ways of life, the goals and objects to be pursued in the dynamics of modernity. Finally, when considered as “great politics”, the multiplicity of factors that determine the synthesis becomes even greater, and, therefore, even more difficult to measure, since it involves not only factors in themselves, but *scopes of thought* and their effectuation—which, respectively, already contain their own internal and direct influence sub-factors that will invariably have indirect reflections on the synthesis as a great politics as a whole.

Once this last partial conclusion has been demonstrated, it is still worth discussing an important detail about it. It seems to be the consensus of specialized research that this multifactorial synthesis’s essence is

<sup>105</sup> Bohley, 2007, pp. 228-235.

<sup>106</sup> Nietzsche, 2017. Sanchez Mecca and his collaborators in the Spanish translation of the philological writings highlight at different times the presence of the philologists in studies from the early to mid-1870s.

<sup>107</sup> Brobjer (2007) affirmed Nietzsche’s deep study about the founders of historical methods: “He had studied the founders (Wolf, Niebuhr, Ranke and Mommsen) thoroughly” (p. 165).

linked to late Nietzsche’s project of the will to power. From what has been demonstrated in the present work, however, it is concluded that this multifactorial vision precedes this project. Given that such a conception occurs still in the context of the philological investigations of the late 1860s—since the planning of studies on the pre-Platonic philosophers were initiated in the last two years of that decade—, extending through most of the following decade, and that all the *Freigeisterei* books resort to multiple examples—in general enumerative and descriptive—for the support of the premises that underlie their arguments, it is considered that Nietzsche’s multifactorial thought *procedurally* precedes, as a method of investigation and analysis, the *conceptual and material* project of the so-called “will to power”.

With such a development, we reach the main conclusion of this work. It is observed that Nietzsche’s 19th century historical education allowed him to learn different methods of understanding the same human phenomenon. With this, his view seems to have been trained to identify different paths to knowledge and to remain conscious of the task of observing himself and these same paths, *while passing through them*. In these processes, he reveals a constant search *to not get lost* in these investigative paths, so as to remain *free from* each one of them in order to proceed towards the central nuclei where his objects are found. Once he is satisfied with the amount of distinct investigations of these objects, he *takes the opposite path*, abandoning them along the same investigative trails he had once traced to know them, *freeing himself from* the objects and their respective ways of analysis. This becoming a habit of thought, it seems that, in the course of these punctual *liberations*, he achieved a *liberation from themselves*, so as to *almost* involuntarily encounter with thought itself and **with philosophy**.

Taking the example of the synthesis analyzed here, punctuated elements of human processes, rather than dialectically dissolved in the spiral Hegelian synthesis are taken on a case-by-case basis by Nietzsche, as radial cores *to and from which converging and diverging vectors* of analysis *depart*, constituting a grand overview (HH/MA, 163). It is considered that this encounter with philosophy is *almost involuntary* because the writings of his texts from the periods of school and teaching philology can be geometrically thought of as different *converging lines* directed rapidly toward a central common point. But the feeling of desire for liberation that he identifies as the first moment of *Freigeisterei*, and that is already present in the preparatory texts for *Human, all too human*, seems to be the a “compulsion” that determines the opposite movement, reexamining each of the radial lines of investigation in a *divergent* direction opposite to the core of the object, as we can also think geometrically.

That this *feeling of resistance* (*Widerstandsgefühl*) was aroused also by multifactorial ways (biographical, historical, theoretical, methodological, accidental, etc.) it cannot be disagreed with. But if, at the conclusion of the present work, a concentration is sought only on the theoretical and methodological lines, it is already possible to see that the *convergent movements* that educated him to the search for the concentration of human phenomena as processes from their daily imminence—as in first partial conclusion—and for the appreciation of the scientific-ethnographic grounding—as in second partial conclusion—give rise to such a profound *narrowing of vision*. Such a vision could either tend to radically draw the researcher to the epistemological nuclei of the objects—in the sense of thoughts similar to positivism—or could instinctively *repel* the one who knows (Nietzsche’s *Erkennende*). That this *repulsion* occurred in Nietzsche in the late 1870s, accompanied by a liberating and progressive feeling of resistance to the narrow convergent vision standardized by the 19th century is noteworthy. In his search for *a view from a distance on Europe* by different methods of knowledge, he encountered the fundamental traits of **his philosophy**.

Towards the final statement of this conclusion, one last detail is worth mentioning: that this radial repulsion did not happen blindly, and that Nietzsche, when experiencing it, repeated the path of the once converging lines, overlapping them by diverging lines, but in the opposite direction—as the prefaces of 1885-1886 show—seeking an “ever more expansive” view, we can find there the development of a **metaphilosophy**. The concern that the philosopher *must* remain in self-observation (GS/FW, 335) as early seen in 1882 and, later, in 1885, that the ethnological task of the West is a project of *the most expansive view over the world*, is a fractal conception of philosophical reality itself.

Assuredly, such a vision has consequences in all philosophical disciplines, being most notably visible in its ethnological and political aspects. But conclusively, it is an *ethical task of logical consequences* that submits not only philosophy, but *the philosopher himself* and his methods constantly to examination. Nietzsche had included himself in such a process and demonstrated this with his examinations both of the philosophers who preceded him and his own works. With this metaphilosophical thinking, he left this task as an inheritance to the philosophers of *his* future whose philosophers, for us of the current century, are men of the past, the present, and the future. After all, metaphilosophy is a comprehensive, expansive and dynamic fractal vision of what philosophy is meant to be: always a task!

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