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NIETZSCHE AND THE TRANSCENDENCE OF HIS TIME: BETWEEN THE PAST AND THE FUTURE

In this article, we shall demonstrate that Nietzsche's philosophy surpasses modernity and inaugurates a timeless philosophical discourse, particularly from the writing of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* onward. We recognize that the absence of a hierarchy of values and the unrestrained rise of nihilism characterize postmodernity; although Nietzsche pointed to the advent of nihilism in various texts, we consider that his philosophy does not belong to the postmodern condition – both for what is absent in it and for the events he did not experience, such as the Second World War and totalitarian regimes¹, as well as the transformations in modes of production, art, literature, and architecture peculiar to the twentieth century. This leads us to situate Nietzsche philosophically beyond a given period – modernity – without placing him within another, namely postmodernity. As he himself declares in *The Case of Wagner*: “To overcome his age in himself, to become ‘timeless’” [Nietzsche 1911: 21]. From our perspective, Nietzsche's philosophical discourse is timeless. At first, we shall present Habermas's interpretation in *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, contrasting it with our own view of Nietzsche's philosophy as a transcendence of modernity. Subsequently, we shall address Lyotard's thematization in *The Post-modern Condition*, beginning with the crisis of speculative and emancipatory narratives, and we shall situate Nietzsche's discourse as a rupture with tradition through the rejection of both fact and foundation by means of the affirmation that only interpretations exist. Finally, we shall emphasize the necessity of hierarchy as a key point for determining the place of philosophy, literature, art, and science, situating Nietzsche's philosophical discourse beyond modernity, yet without inserting it into a postmodernity.

To discuss the possible links between Nietzsche and modernity requires revisiting his own reflection on the demand that a philosopher must make of himself, as he states in *The Case of Wagner*: “What is the first and last thing that a philosopher demands of himself? To overcome his age in himself, to become ‘timeless’. With what then, does the philosopher have the greatest fight? With all that is in him that makes him the child of his time” [Nietzsche 1911: 21]. Indeed, Nietzsche is modern insofar as his birth and life took place within the modern era, and in this sense, as he himself admits, a decadent: “I am just as much a child of my age as Wagner” [ibid.: 21]. However, by recognizing this, he claims to have managed to defend himself from that time, becoming timeless – or, as we suggest in our interpretation, *extemporaneous*: “The only difference is that I recognised the fact, that I struggled against it. The philosopher in me struggled against it” [ibid.]. We aim to show that, by breaking with the discursive bias of tradition – understood as extending from

Plato to Hegel – through the primacy of interpretation, the rejection of the specular subject, and the critique of the ensemble of events that shaped modern times, Nietzsche situates himself philosophically within a new horizon.

I. The Philosophical Discourse in Modernity: Nietzsche and Habermas

In *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, Habermas considers that the development of Nietzsche's philosophy presents problems of internal coherence that could render the philosopher's position toward modernity untenable. Despite his effort to bring the examination of the concept of reason to an end – replacing it with the introduction of a total critique of that faculty – his enterprise would have resulted in an irrationalism, since it undermines any and all claims to objectivity within epistemological domains. Furthermore, Habermas holds that the will to power appears as a positive presupposition, serving as the foundation for the claims of both knowledge and morality. He argues that this could not occur without the objectivity of science, which is grounded in reason. In his view, Nietzsche's philosophical project remains circumscribed within modernity, as it would still be supported by a temporal consciousness and an appeal to rationality. Thus, by denying modernity – whether through his artistic consideration of the world or through a philosophy capable of criticizing metaphysics as a whole – Nietzsche would be unable to detach himself from the very object of his negation, resorting, albeit implicitly, to modern presuppositions.

From our perspective, Nietzsche breaks with such presuppositions and inaugurates another philosophical dimension by proposing human production as interpretation and by assigning to the body the primacy of meaning, especially in regard to the self-certification project of modernity through subjectivity. We introduce the concept of the *social structure of many souls* as Nietzsche's revision and transcendence of this modern concept. Analyzing his critique of and the meaning of the French Revolution and the Reformation, we hold that Nietzsche inaugurates a discourse that situates itself beyond modernity without entering postmodernity.

Let us begin by presenting modernity – which we understand as extending from Descartes to Hegel – drawing on Habermas's exposition of the meaning and identity of its project of self-certification, based precisely on the concept of subjectivity. In *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, Habermas presents, on the one hand, “The key historical events in establishing the principle of subjectivity are the Reformation, the Enlightenment, and the French Revolution” [Habermas 1987: 17]; and, on the other hand, the realization of the critique of modernity as an attempt to situate it at the level of concept. According to Habermas, the expression “subjectivity” carries four connotations derived from Hegel: individualism, as a starting point for asserting one's actions; the right of critique, as the need to legitimate what is recognized; the autonomy of action, as the capacity to respond to what one does; and, finally, idealist philosophy as the idea that knows itself. It is worth noting that, in the aforementioned book, there is a direct reference to Hegel as the one who discovers the principle of the new age – namely, the modern age – as being subjectivity itself, even though it had already been present in philosophical discourse since Descartes. On page 18, we find the following statement, which becomes illuminating in characterizing modern discourse and subjectivity:

In modernity, therefore, religious life, state, and society, as well as science, morality, and art, are transformed into just so many embodiments of the principle of subjectivity. Its structure is grasped as such in philosophy, namely, as abstract subjectivity in Descartes's "cogito ergo sum" and in the form of absolute self-consciousness in Kant. It is the structure of a self-relating, knowing subject, which bends back upon itself as object, in order to grasp itself as in a mirror image – literally in a "speculative" way. Kant carried out this approach of the philosophy of reflection in his three "Critiques"; he installed reason in the supreme seat of judgment before which anything that made a claim to validity had to be justified. [ibid.: 18]

It is necessary, before continuing our argument, to reflect on the status of Habermas' position regarding Modernity and, particularly, our own position concerning this point. Indeed, we share with the author the assertion that the structure of subjectivity is apprehended in the Cartesian *cogito*, representing "It is the structure of a self-relating, knowing subject" [ibid.: 17] whose descriptive exposition finds its conceptual expression in Hegelian idealism, since philosophy then takes on the task of apprehending its own time in thought – which, in this case, is precisely Modernity. Discovering subjectivity as principle, Hegel simultaneously explains both the superiority and the tendency toward crisis of the new age. From Habermas's perspective – which we follow at this juncture – this constitutes the self-certification of Modernity.

We recognize that the Cartesian postulation of the supremacy and authority of reason introduced into the course of philosophical thought certain guiding principles that were nonexistent prior to modernity. Modern thinkers, almost without exception, began to place the elaboration of a theory of knowledge before that of a metaphysics. In doing so, a substantive transformation occurs in the very order of explanation. The possibility and description of the process of knowledge relate directly to the dimension of reason and therefore precede any other formulation. The logical shifts underlying philosophical construction are grounded in the self-affirmation of the subject within modernity. Rational subjectivity appears as the foundation of knowing, being, and acting. It is the critique that self-affirms subjectivity and refers to Kant its conditions of possibility, whose full realization becomes evident through the extension of legislation of universal essence to the spheres of nature, social life, law, and ethics. It is worth noting that we do not identify *subject* and *subjectivity*, for we understand the former as bearing the primacy of thought and representation, and the latter, as Habermas expounds, as "It is the structure of a self-relating, knowing subject, which bends back upon itself as object, in order to grasp itself as in a mirror image – literally in a 'speculative' way. Kant carried out this approach of the philosophy of reflection in his three 'Critiques'" [ibid.].

According to Kant himself, it was both the awareness of the fragility of metaphysical argumentation on the one hand, and, on the other, the secure knowledge achieved by the natural sciences up to his time (Galileo, Torricelli, Stahl), that led him to the necessity of a critique of reason. It became necessary to determine the limits and possibilities of reason in terms of knowledge. Not engaging in criticism would precisely allow for a use of reason that would enable it to transcend limits that are cognitively forbidden to it. Hence, his response regarding the absence of a critique of reason as a whole: that such absence is responsible for the construction of systems that ultimately collapse into ruins. This mode of procedure configures modern subjectivity as the presence of the knowing subject unfolding upon itself.

However, from Nietzsche's perspective, this self-unfolding of the subject, present within critique, is grounded in the invulnerability of morality, and therefore does not constitute a critique at all. Kantian critique never questioned the value of knowledge itself and, more emphatically, the value of morality itself; rather, it sought to erect them as something absolutely secure, through the critique of false knowledge and false morality. The value of knowledge and the value of morality are, for Kant, given *a priori*.

From the Nietzschean standpoint, critique and philosophy are one and the same, such that what defines both is the presentation of an element of general interpretation that also makes it possible to analyze in detail the reactive type. This, properly speaking, is the intent of *The genealogy of morals*, which, according to Deleuze, is "the key to interpretation in general and the analysis of the reactive type in particular" [Deleuze 1999: 99]. The rejection of fact in favor of the exclusive validity of interpretation immediately eliminates the illusions of truth associated with knowledge, morality, and religion.

The right answer would rather have been, that all philosophers, including Kant himself were building under the seductive influence of morality – that they aimed at certainty and "truth" only in appearance; but that in reality their attention was directed towards "majestic moral edifices", to use once more Kant's innocent mode of expression, who deems it his "less brilliant, but not undeserving" task and work "to level the ground and prepare a solid foundation for the erection of those majestic moral edifices" [Nietzsche 1911: 10].

The Kantian reason, through critique, establishes its own possibilities in relation to knowledge, thus responding to the question of what can be known. In accordance with the determination of the legislation of the understanding over the phenomenal world, reason is granted a practical use through which it attains the noumenal. The absolute governance of reason in terms of morality makes possible the universality of legislation and the response to Kant's second question, concerning human action. All these theoretical points are the objects of Nietzsche's critique; hence, we begin our refutation of a possible subjectivity in Nietzsche with the notion of *critical inversion*, for Nietzsche undertakes a critique of morality – explicitly, of the postulation of an indifferent element in regard to values. According to him, the scholars of morality who preceded him have always oscillated, in their treatment of values, between that which would be valid *in itself* and that which would be valid *for all*. In the Preface to *The Genealogy of Morals*, upon asserting that we need a critique of values, Nietzsche traces the beginning of this critique back to the question of the value of moral values themselves: "...we need a critique of moral values, the value of these values is for the first time to be called into question – and for this purpose a knowledge is necessary of the conditions and circumstances out of which these values grew, and under which they experienced their evolution and their distortion (morality as a result, as a symptom, as a mask, as Tartuffism, as disease, as a misunderstanding; but also morality as a cause, as a remedy, as a stimulant, as a fetter, as a drug), especially as such a knowledge has neither existed up to the present time nor is even now generally desired" [Nietzsche 1918: ix].

In Nietzsche's assessment, the scholars of morality who preceded him always oscillated, in their treatment of values, between what would have value in itself and what would have value for everyone. In *Beyond Good and Evil*, he discusses the philosophical laborers who worship prevailing values. He specifically names Kant and Hegel as conferring the status of truth upon value estimations: "The project for philosophical laborers on the noble model of Kant and Hegel is to establish some large class of given values (which is to say: values that were once posited and created but have come to dominate and have been called

'truths' for a long time) and press it into formulas, whether in the realm of logic or politics (morality) or art" [Nietzsche 2002: 105]. In *The Genealogy of Morals*, he alludes to the moralists who introduce an explanation for the emergence of the judgment "good" based on unegoistic actions that were praised and deemed good by those to whom they were useful. With the passage of time, the knowledge of such origins fell into oblivion, and people began to call unegoistic actions good because this had become the customary practice: "Man had originally, so speaks their decree, praised and called 'good' altruistic acts from the standpoint of those on whom they were conferred, that is those to whom they were useful; subsequently the origin of this praise was forgotten, and altruistic acts, simply because, as a sheer matter of habit, they were praised as good, came also to be felt as good – as though they contained in themselves some intrinsic goodness" [Nietzsche 1918: 3].

From a Nietzschean perspective, if the value judgment "good" originated from the utility of the action, this could not be forgotten, since the utility of the acts deemed good would not have ceased to exist. On the contrary, instead of the origin of this judgment – the linking of utility to the approval of the action – being forgotten, it should have been increasingly fixed in memory, especially since the primary impulse for such recording or fixation was the everyday utility of the action. Consequently, Nietzsche designates this analysis as being, on the one hand, a historically untenable hypothesis, as there is no reference in humanity's past that reports this link established by the English moralists, and, on the other hand, it "it suffers from an inherent psychological contradiction" [ibid.: 5], given that it is a contradiction to suppose that an unegoistic action – which thus links its appreciation to its utility for others – could lose its utility and become good in itself by transposing the analysis of benefits into a feeling of what is intrinsically good. By excluding the existing link between the origin of the judgment "good" and those to whom the good was done, as well as the relationship of equality between good and useful, he demands a new path for its establishment. The hypothesis arises in Nietzsche that the judgment "good" stems from those who felt themselves to be good – that is, precisely from distinct, powerful, and superior men, who judged their actions as good without thinking of their utility. Their intent was to differentiate their being, more than their doing, from a low and vulgar being and doing: "Now the first argument that comes ready to my hand is that the real homestead of the concept 'good' is sought and located in the wrong place: the judgment 'good' did not originate among those to whom goodness was shown. Much rather has it been the good themselves, that is, the aristocratic, the powerful, the high-stationed, the high-minded, who have felt that they themselves were good, and that their actions were good, that to say of the first order, in contradistinction to all the low, the low-minded, the vulgar, and the plebeian" [ibid. 3-4]. Now, belief in the validity *in itself* of postulation – the attribution of a value – immediately requires understanding value as something given, and therefore as something whose own value cannot be questioned. Yet the determination of value as something valid *for all*, though distinct from what is valid *in itself*, still constitutes an attribution of value derived from an evaluation referred to collectivity, and thereby entails the same refusal to question the value of such evaluations. Nietzsche's position conceives the critical element as *creative* and therefore requires the conditions for the creation of values as that which makes possible the very establishment of their value. Hence, the indifferent stance that would consist in preserving what is given becomes itself an object of critique – and, one might say, an ideal to be destroyed by the "hammer", since critique, insofar as it refers to the value of values, configures the *philosophy of the hammer*, the destroyer of ideas and of ideals. If the question concerning the

value of values refers to their conditions of creation and, consequently, to the differential element from which values derive, critique necessarily annihilates both what is valid *in itself* and what is valid *for all*, for the differential element can endorse neither the *in itself* nor the *for all* – although it can demonstrate the impertinence of such analyses and thereby reject the continuation of those evaluations.

Kantian critique presents three crucial problems that compromise its realization. First, it fails to identify the critical instance: the *will to power* as that which interprets and evaluates. Second, it overlooks the paralogism of the force separated from what it can do – the primordial character of bad conscience, antinomic, an inward-turning force that turns against itself. Lastly, it neglects the ascetic ideal as the expression of all fictions: the fiction of true knowledge, of true religion, and of true morality – the mystification of the ideal in which the will prefers to will nothing rather than not will at all. These issues are precisely the objects thematized in *The Genealogy of Morals*; accordingly, Nietzsche demands of genealogy a critical undertaking without establishing commitments to truth, duty, beauty, or the absolute. Deleuze claims for Nietzsche the opposition between *The Genealogy of Morals* and the *Critique of Pure Reason* as the fulfillment of critique itself. In these terms, we are, in effect, no longer speaking of the same critique, nor even of the unfolding of the subject upon itself – thus requiring either the rejection of a Habermasian notion of subjectivity in Nietzsche, or the complete transformation of that concept. In the latter case, subjectivity would not be emblematic of Modernity but of its transcendence, thereby requiring the refutation of the thesis defended by Habermas in *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*. Nevertheless, our position, up to this point, is one of assent to the thesis. In light of this, we now present Nietzsche's perspective concerning the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, and the Reformation.

Let us begin with the French Revolution, whose origins lie in the struggle between the warrior and priestly aristocracies over the primacy of their evaluations and, consequently, of their respective moralities. One might say that both moralities originated from the same ruling class; yet, although they share the same lineage – they are not entirely identical, for the decline of the warrior nobility was followed by the ascension of the priestly aristocracy – they differ through their adherence to opposing principles. The first is founded upon the principle of strength; the second, upon that of impotence. Priestly morality developed in opposition to aristocratic morality, though it derived from the warrior aristocracy, and a profound conflict emerged concerning the hegemonic dispute between their values, since the judgments of the one are entirely antagonistic to those of the other. Aristocratic morality cultivates muscularity, health, adventure, and, ultimately, almost all the powers of vigor and energy. Priestly morality, by contrast, cultivates decay and negation. From this arises a radical hatred toward aristocratic morality. Nietzsche's investigation seeks to show that, historically, there was a concerted effort on the part of priests, driven by their hatred of the noble, to gather the weak and the suffering in order to transmute the morality of masters into the morality of slaves. The historical motto of this struggle is "Rome against Judea, Judea against Rome". Yet Judea triumphed; noble values – those sustaining a vigorous and full vital impulse – were buried. Interior life was judged and condemned, while the representation of exteriority became the means of determination, of postulation. One may take "Rome against Judea, Judea against Rome" as the emblem of the conflict between interiority and exteriority as dominant forces. If, however, one interprets interiority versus exteriority as the possibility of an exteriority acting as determinant, one forgets the fundamental instance of life: the will to power. For Nietzsche, however, the very

impotence of a given interiority entails the construction of an external representation in order to preserve a sick vital impulse – a will turned against life – as the only means of its continuity as will. Such is the driving force behind the French Revolution and its motto: “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity”.

Now, in Nietzsche’s view, it is within the realm of material relations between buyer and seller that law and justice arise; for it was from the act of measuring, of weighing – in short, from the act of estimation – that humankind came to establish rights and duties. Justice thus acquires, in Nietzsche, a new status, since the relation between pain and forgetting, in view of the establishment of a memory of the will, refers to the very role of justice. Damage represents precisely the failure to fulfill a promise and, consequently, the forgetfulness of one’s pledged word. Hence, pain is both equated with forgetting and imposed as the determining means of its temporary suspension, its purpose being to inscribe in memory certain “I will” and “I will not”. Punishment appears as the necessary means to make memory in man – “Punishment as a mnemonic” [Nietzsche 1918: 71] – one of its possible meanings. If the need to create memory in man reaches back to prehistory, then the equivalence between damage and pain, as a mode of suspending forgetfulness, also dates from that time. It is precisely there that justice must be situated, as that which makes the debtor responsible for a debt. Such determination points to the origin of the feeling of guilt and of personal obligation.

The feeling of guilt has its genesis in the relation between buyer and seller, creditor and debtor: “Here it was that individual confronted individual, and that individual matched himself against individual” [ibid.: 57]. These relations – taken by Nietzsche as the most ancient found among human beings – reveal man as the one who values, who measures person against person, that is, who establishes equivalence between one person and another. Exchange and valuation, in his perspective, are so fundamental to the beginning of human thought that they come to define it; and therein lies even the feeling of superiority that man holds over other animals – his capacity to measure and to value. Perhaps our word “Mensch” (man) still expresses just something of this self-pride: man denoted himself as the being who measures values, who values and measures, as the “assessing” animal par excellence [ibid.: 58]. For Nietzsche, the relations between buyer and seller, creditor and debtor, precede any social organization and are only later transposed to communities, since such relations are first established among individuals. Later, they reach such refinement that one begins to perceive value in everything, so that every existing thing comes to possess a price – an equivalent.

Soon arrived at the great generalisation, “everything has its price, all can be paid for”, the oldest and most naive moral canon of justice, the beginning of all “kindness”, of all “equity”, of all “goodwill”, of all “objectivity” in the world. Justice in this initial phase is the goodwill among people of about equal power to come to terms with each other, to come to an understanding again by means of a settlement, and with regard to the less powerful, to compel them to agree among themselves to a settlement [ibid.].

The notion of justice arises from the possibility that human beings, by measuring person against person, may distinguish those of greater or lesser power and establish rights and duties among equals. Accordingly, equals adjust themselves to one another and subjugate those of lesser power. Thus, a distinction is established between the group of the more powerful and that of the less powerful, with goodwill extending only to those of equal power – thereby recalling that notion of equality among equals, which entirely refutes the concepts of “liberty, equality, and fraternity” proclaimed by the French

Revolution. In Nietzsche's words, in *The Gay Science*: "it was the French Revolution that finally and ceremoniously handed over the sceptre to the 'good people' (to the sheep, the donkey, the goose, and everything that is incurably shallow and loudmouthed and ripe for the madhouse of 'modern ideas')" [Nietzsche 2001: 208-209].

It is worth noting that, while Nietzsche directs fierce criticism toward the Reformation and the French Revolution – events which Habermas, together with the Enlightenment, regards as historical milestones for the establishment of subjectivity – he exalts the Renaissance as a movement of transvaluation of Christian values. The Renaissance reclaims noble values, invigorating all that was strong and ascending in relation to life, manifesting an attitude of confrontation – a resurgence of the warrior nobility. Nevertheless, the Germans themselves suspended the reawakening of Roman nobility expressed in the Renaissance through their reinstatement of the value of Christianity by means of the Reformation, which Nietzsche regarded as the expression of "a radically plebeian resentment". The ideals of the Reformation opposed Catholicism and the Church, but not Christianity itself. On the contrary, they promoted an alliance with theocentric values to combat the transvaluation inaugurated by the Renaissance – thus ensuring yet another victory for Judea. Therefore, at least concerning the so-called historical "facts" decisive for the establishment of subjectivity, Nietzsche rejects each of them. Consequently, we return to the question of whether or not there is a notion of subjectivity in Nietzsche, or, if there is, whether it is constituted according to other parameters, which requires the introduction of the concept of a *social structure of many souls*. Let us begin with the notion of *drive*, since for the philosopher, we cannot rise or descend to any other realm than that of our drives. All our manifestations – in terms of willing, feeling, and thinking – are expressions of the relations among drives themselves. "It is our needs that interpret the world; our drives and their For and Against. Every drive is a kind of lust to rule; each one has its perspective that it would like to compel all the other drives to accept as a norm" [Nietzsche 1988: t. XII.: 267]. It is our drives, in perpetual struggle, that configure interpretations. Every existing being is composed of a multiplicity of drives constantly in conflict, for each organism – even each organ – derives its efficacy from the alternation between domination and subjugation that, properly speaking, sustains it. Hence Nietzsche's reference, in *Beyond Good and Evil*, to "a society constructed out of many souls" [Nietzsche 2002: 19], arranged through relations of command. Across all living organisms, there extends a flux between becoming and perishing, expressed in the interplay of domination and subjugation that, in fact, constitutes them. The drive must thus be understood as a despotism which, from its own perspective, introduces an interpretation expressing ascent or decline: "No limit to the ways in which the world can be interpreted; every interpretation is a symptom of growth or of decline" [Nietzsche 1988: t. XII.: 326].

For the philosopher, we cannot reach any reality other than that of our drives, and the drives are presented, in several passages, as forces and wills to power in relation. In *Genealogy of Morals*, he writes: "A quantum of force is just such a quantum of movement, will, action – rather it is nothing else than just those very phenomena of moving, willing, acting" [Nietzsche 1918: 27]. This passage makes explicit the identification among these notions, for the author, drawing on a term from physics, applies it indiscriminately to force, drive, and will. In another fragment, he remarks: "that all driving force is will to power, that there is no other physical, dynamic or psychic force except this" [ibid.: 366], leading us to recognize a certain parity among the terms. Although *force* and *will* are distinct words, they need not differ in meaning for Nietzsche, since his formulation removes

from the field of these notions both the ideas of cause and effect and any perspective of unity or substantialization. Dynamism pervades both notions, which, throughout the philosopher's writings, indistinguishably express exertion and actualization.

The concept of *will to power*, when introduced in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, posits the will as the interpreter *par excellence*. Even so, one cannot affirm that this concept differs essentially from that of *drive*, since the two notions are exceedingly close. In most cases, indeed, one may substitute one for the other without losing the sense of Nietzsche's propositions. *Drive*, however, seems easier to grasp, as it more directly evokes the complex web of which beings are composed and does not imply the notion of unity that the expression *will to power* might at first suggest. Yet for the German philosopher, "all ends and all utilities are only signs that a Will to Power has mastered a less powerful force, has impressed thereon out of its own self the meaning of a function" [ibid.: 67]. The configurations of domination manifested by our drives, in perpetual transformation, constitute what we call "man", corresponding to what Nietzsche in *Beyond Good and Evil* termed "a society constructed out of many souls" – designating drives, forces, or wills to power. Conversely, thinking, willing, and feeling do not arise from a human fragmentation into faculties, but from the introduction of the comprehensive concept of *governance* – that is, the organization present within the multiplicity of drives, of forces, in short, of wills to power corresponding to this or that human structure.

Hence Nietzsche's affirmation that it is always the drives, forces, and wills to power that evaluate. For this reason, the same reasoning applies to the concepts of *spirit*, *intellect*, and *reason* as they appear in the various philosophical systems. All are instruments of the hierarchy of drives – of what Nietzsche at times calls the *tyrant within us*: "Our strongest drives, the tyrants in us, subjugate not only our reason but our conscience as well" [Nietzsche 2002: 71]. Now, if the delimitation of *spirit*, *intellect*, and *reason* in the various philosophies refers to the concept of subjectivity, the *society constructed of many souls* departs from it, situating itself within a new register – beyond Modernity.

In terms of Nietzsche's goal in proposing and imposing this new perspective, we take it to be the liberation of the full range of drives present within the human being – an understanding of the regency that determines the hierarchy of drives promoting his elevation as a type, the re-creation of man through the project of reinserting him into the world as a creative becoming and, therefore, as essentially interpretive. We attribute to Nietzsche a new understanding of the human being as a *society constructed of many souls* – one that simultaneously abandons the modern presuppositions and the Habermasian concept of subjectivity, introducing into the history of philosophy a new concept that converges with his affirmative vision of language. In this sense, according to *The Genealogy of Morals* I §2, he establishes a relation between the institution of the sign and the feeling of power, expressed through the master's right to give names. Every event receives a designation – precisely, a sound – whose origin derives from the act of the master who designates, who names. Now, this act already constitutes an appropriation, since the act of naming implies possession of the name and, to a certain extent, of the event named. Hence Nietzsche's reference to the possibility that the origin of language may be traced to "the expression of the power of the masters: they say 'this is that, and that', they seal finally every object and every event with a sound, and thereby at the same time take possession of it" [Nietzsche 1918: 4]. In our view, Nietzsche takes possession of the concept of a *society constructed of many souls* – a concept that transcends the Cartesian, Kantian, and related models of

the subject, and that stands beyond what Habermas describes as “the figure of self-realization of the knowing subject, who unfolds upon himself as object in order to comprehend himself as in a specular image” [Habermas 1987: 18].

Accordingly, we do not discern in Nietzsche any notion of subjectivity, and for that reason, we entirely remove him from the philosophical discourse of modernity as conceived by Habermas.

II. The Postmodern Condition: Nietzsche and Lyotard

In *The Postmodern Condition*, Lyotard analyzes “the condition of knowledge in the most highly developed societies” [Lyotard 1984: xxiii]. considering them postmodern due to the transformations that have taken place in science, literature, and art – transformations that have altered the very status of culture as a whole. Focusing thematically on the changes directly related to what he calls “the crisis of narratives”, the author does not dwell on the transformations themselves within these societies, but rather on the alterations in the role of the *metanarrative*. Notably, in Modernity – understood as extending from Descartes to the late 1950s – philosophy constituted itself as the legitimating *meta-discourse* of science by emphasizing the importance of legitimating knowledge through metanarrative, while guiding the questioning of the truth of discourse and the validity of institutions toward the discourse on issues of justice and truth. Although he regards it as somewhat simplifying, Lyotard designates “postmodern as incredulity toward metanarratives” [ibid.: xxiv] showing that if there is a crisis in the legitimating instances of discourse – such as philosophy and the University – this leads to the emergence of “the society of the future falls less within the province of a Newtonian anthropology (such as structuralism or systems theory) than a pragmatics of language particles” [ibid.: xxiv].

In such societies, there exist many diversified *language games*, whose decision-makers, according to Lyotard, reduce both social legitimation and scientific truth to the criterion of effectiveness, thereby reducing life itself to the increase of power. Considering this criterion is inconsistent in many respects and generative of terror – though in varying degrees – since it produces the maxim “be operational, or disappear”, Lyotard poses as fundamental the following question: “Is a legitimation of the social bond, a just society, feasible in terms of a paradox analogous to that of scientific activity? What would such a paradox be?” [ibid.: xxv].

Taking the 1950s as the landmark of what he calls postmodernity, Lyotard begins with the hypothesis that there is a change in the status of knowledge parallel to society’s entrance into the postindustrial phase and to the advent of postmodern culture. Knowledge comes to be translated into quantities, pointing toward the hegemony of informatics, since another logic emerges to define which statements are to be admitted as genuine “knowledge”.

No longer an end in itself as *formation*, knowledge becomes a commodity, losing its use-value and turning into an exchange-value that assumes the form of value *as such*. There are suppliers and users of knowledge, for insofar as it becomes a commodity, it is produced to be sold – thus raising the question concerning the status of knowledge in terms of its legitimation.

When the statement in question involves the necessity of citizens performing a certain action, the problem of legitimation may be viewed from the perspective of law. In the case of a scientific statement, it must present a specific set of conditions that allows us to

consider it scientific. In both cases, there is a legislator: in the first, one who promulgates the law; in the second, a “legislator” who prescribes the conditions under which a statement may be integrated into scientific discourse and thereby accepted by the scientific community.

The decision regarding what is true is not entirely independent from that which is just – and this has been the case since Plato – for there is an interweaving relation among the genres of discourse known as science, ethics, and politics. But assuming that power and knowledge are two faces of the same coin, one must ask: “Who decides what knowledge is, and who knows what needs to be decided?” [ibid.: 9].

The analysis of this problem led Lyotard to adopt a different methodological approach. Drawing on Wittgenstein’s language games, he begins to investigate the issue by focusing on what he calls *language facts* in their pragmatic aspect, based on three canonical observations:

1. Rules constitute the object of an explicit contract among players, rather than legitimating themselves;
2. The game exists only insofar as rules are present;
3. Each statement is considered a *move* within a game.

By introducing the concept of *general agonistics*, the French thinker derives the game from the notion of agonistics, given that to play is to contend. The social bond, as a second principle, arises from the *moves* of language, which cannot be concealed due to the agonistics of language. It is through these two principles that Lyotard analyzes the nature of the social bond both in the modern alternative and in the postmodern perspective, understanding social relations as a *theory of games* grounded in the agonistic element as a necessary presupposition, rather than as a *theory of communication*.

Aiming to recover the seeds of the *delegitimation of knowledge* in what he calls the postmodern condition, Lyotard examines two versions of the narratives that legitimate knowledge – one political and the other philosophical. Synthesized by Humboldt, the *speculative narrative* considers the singularity of science as it follows its own laws, but at the same time emphasizes that the University must be oriented toward the moral and spiritual formation of the nation. This is what Lyotard regards as a conflict between different *language games*, since one consists of denotative statements emanating from the criterion of truth, while the other involves statements that must be just.

Nevertheless, both discourses are indispensable to the *Bildung* of the Humboldtian project, which aims simultaneously at the acquisition of knowledge and at the formation of a subject legitimized in both knowledge and society: “Ensuring that the scientific search for true causes always coincides with the pursuit of just ends in moral and political life). This ultimate synthesis constitutes the legitimate subject” [ibid.: 33].

Subsequently, Lyotard adds: “Schools are functional; the University is speculative, that is to say, philosophical” [ibid.].

This characterization of the legitimation of scientific discourse through speculation – and therefore through philosophy – goes back to the modern synthesizing discourse that gathers dispersed forms of knowledge into a unity. Hence Lyotard’s reference, first, to the notion of *System* in Fichte and Schelling, and later to Hegel’s *Encyclopaedia* as the rational metanarration of the spirit’s becoming.

In this case, the narration of what the French philosopher calls the *life-subject* ends up formulating the legitimacy of discourses both within the empirical sciences and within popular culture. For him, the place of this legitimating *metasubject* is the speculative

university. In summary, “German idealism has recourse to a metaprinciple that simultaneously grounds the development of learning, of society, and of the State in the realization of the ‘life’ of a Subject, called ‘divine Life’ by Fichte and ‘Life of the spirit’ by Hegel” [ibid.: 34]. Within the rules of the speculative *language game*, statements must engender one another, and their exclusive institution is the University. Seeking to recover the seeds of the *delegitimation of knowledge* in what he calls the postmodern condition, Lyotard also points to another mode of legitimation – the *practical subject*. Still tributary to modernity, this subject, distinct from the one who actualizes the possibilities of knowledge, is humanity itself. In this sense, he writes: “The principle of the movement animating the people is not the self-legitimation of knowledge, but the self-grounding of freedom or, if preferred, its self-management” [ibid.: 35]. This is a mode of legitimation that harks back to Kant and his affirmation of the autonomy of the will. It corresponds to the *language game* that Kant would have called *imperative*, and which today is termed *prescriptive*. In both cases, legitimation is not guided by the truth of denotative statements, but by the justice of prescriptive statements, insofar as they prescribe what ought to be done. Hence Lyotard’s statement: “Knowledge is no longer the subject, but in the service of the subject: its only legitimacy (though it is formidable) is the fact that it allows morality to become reality” [ibid.: 36]. In this case, knowledge is completely subordinated to the *practical subject*, for its ultimate legitimacy is determined by the ends pursued by that subject, which, as an autonomous collectivity, makes knowledge serve its purposes. This is what the French philosopher calls the *reencounter of the critical function of knowledge*. A privilege is thereby conferred upon prescriptive statements, rendering them independent from scientific ones, since the latter are converted into information for the practical subject.

Lyotard’s analysis of the legitimation of knowledge becomes particularly thought-provoking in that it highlights the changes that took place concerning legitimation itself in postmodern culture – dating from the Second World War – in the sense that, from that point onward, a shift occurred from an emphasis on ends to an emphasis on means, marking the end of credibility in narrative, whether speculative or emancipatory. Nevertheless, he points out that the crisis of narratives originates in the nineteenth century and therefore within modernity itself, as the very generator of the crisis of legitimation – or process of *delegitimation* – and of the nihilism inherent in the grand narratives of modernity as their seeds. Thus, despite capitalist transformations and technological progress – which have influenced the status of knowledge – Lyotard contends that contemporary science had already felt these effects even before their historical unfolding. The speculative and emancipatory narratives precipitate, from within their own internal connections, the crisis of legitimation. In considering that positive science is not knowledge, the Hegelian speculative narrative “harbors a certain skepticism toward positive learning” [ibid.: 38]. The necessary consequence of this embryonic skepticism is the disqualification of science as truth, since, failing to find its legitimacy, it is relegated to the level of ideology.

On the other hand, taking a sense closer to postmodern culture, Lyotard presents the consequences of accepting the knowledge of the positive sciences as a general mode of language. Such language implies axiomatic presuppositions that must always be made explicit. In this case, “a process of delegitimation fueled by the demand for legitimation itself” [ibid.: 39]. Thus, the French philosopher points to an internal problem in the speculative narrative concerning the principle of legitimation of knowledge, whose result is both the emancipation of the sciences and the loosening of the encyclopedic framework.

The crisis of scientific knowledge thus finds its source in the erosion of the principle of legitimation itself.

As for the procedure of legitimation stemming from the narrative of emancipation, Lyotard likewise analyzes it and exposes its internal point of erosion. In this case, it involves the establishment of an implication between a descriptive statement and a prescriptive one. As the emancipatory device grounds the legitimacy of science through the interlocutors of ethical, social, and political practice – that is, through the autonomy of the interlocutors themselves – it generates a problem of pertinence; for the truth of a descriptive statement does not imply the justice of a prescriptive statement. In other words, even if the description of reality is true, this does not entail that the statement that would transform it is just. Hence, Lyotard affirms the impossibility of science legitimating any games other than its own, since prescription lies beyond its domain – yet science cannot even legitimate itself. This opens the way for a current within postmodernity. Nevertheless, he situates the trajectory of this “attack”, albeit indirect, on the legitimacy of scientific discourse in the very division of reason into pure and practical, since it refers to statements with autonomous rules and distinct pertinences. There is, therefore, a proliferation of language games that seem to dissolve the social subject, for the bond is linguistic and occurs through multiple games governed by distinct rules.

Lyotard’s analysis of the process of delegitimation of narratives makes it possible to glimpse the crisis of knowledge, both in philosophy and in science. In both cases, there has been a loss of discursive hegemony – philosophy retreats into itself, while science borders on application and performance as its defining criteria. Yet, in the French author’s view, what characterizes postmodern cultures is the recognition that legitimation can arise only from the practice of language and communicational interaction. Again, drawing upon Wittgenstein, this legitimation refers to language games as an alternative to the logic of performance. Determinism is the hypothesis of legitimation through performance, but contemporary scientific knowledge seeks to overcome determinism as the focal point of its crisis. According to Lyotard, there is little affinity between the pursuit of performance and the pragmatics of postmodern scientific knowledge. Thus, he asserts that “the striking feature of postmodern scientific knowledge is that the discourse on the rules that validate it is (explicitly) immanent to it” [ibid.: 54]. Another important feature of postmodern science is its transformation of the theory of its own evolution into something discontinuous and paradoxical. This led Lyotard to conceive a *legitimation by paralogy*, since he considers the principle of consensus – long treated as a criterion of validation – insufficient, and he excludes the narratives of both the dialectic of spirit and of emancipation.

Paralogy is presented by the French thinker as a *move*, whose relevance is not immediately recognized, made within the pragmatics of knowledge. By placing the emphasis of scientific pragmatics on dissent, Lyotard presents consensus as a horizon that will never be reached, while the reigning paradigm within the scientific domain is continually traversed by some assertion that disrupts the order in which it is set. These are new linguistic rules that will determine the field of knowledge precisely as it is constantly destabilized. Hence he writes: “Applied to scientific discussion and placed in a temporal framework, this property implies that ‘discoveries’ are unpredictable” [ibid.: 61]. Although scientific pragmatics is enveloped in descriptive statements, its postmodern difference lies in the demand for rules at the prescriptive level – rules that Lyotard calls *metaprescriptive*, since they determine which moves are to be accepted within language games. Paralogy reveals these metaprescriptive statements, and the legitimation of knowledge takes place through

the proposition of new statements. Consensus is not a value, but justice is – therefore, it becomes necessary to seek another practice of justice, one not grounded in consensus. As Lyotard states: “A recognition of the heteromorphous nature of language games is a first step in that direction” [ibid.: 66]. It is not our concern here to reject parody or to adhere to Habermasian consensus, but rather to return to the moment prior to the crisis of narratives and to pose the problem on new grounds – beginning with Nietzsche. We intend to situate the problematic from the investigation of values and to show that the maintenance of an indifferent position regarding this question is itself the object of Nietzsche’s critique of modernity, as well as of the gradual crisis of values that follows it – casting, in our view, contemporary humanity into nihilism and inaugurating what may be called post-modern cultures and societies, and finally establishing the German philosopher as *timeless*.

From our perspective, based on Nietzsche’s philosophical discourse, the postmodern condition results from the human difficulty of assimilating the loss of foundation – a condition that manifests when the will ceases to will nothing and begins to will nothingness. This requires, on the one hand, a return to the meaning of the ascetic ideal in relation to the human condition of sickness and, on the other, a reconsideration of Nietzsche’s thematization of the question of values and interpretation.

Let us begin with the ascetic ideal as a condition for filling the existential void, preventing thereby the negation of the will, even though it is itself the expression of a will to negate. The nihilism inherent in the ascetic ideal devalues life, opposes a suprasensible world to the sensible one, and establishes universal parameters such as Being, the Good, the True, and the universal God. Yet this transposition to the imaginary plane, which implies the negation of actuality, nonetheless safeguards the act of willing itself, and thus the will to power. If the insertion of man into society caused his drives to be suspended, this produced an unbearable pain and its constant multiplication. Yet the maintenance of existence requires narcotics – something to alleviate pain, even if this increases the disease. This is the role of the ascetic ideal in Nietzsche: to alleviate pain through the introduction of a meaning for it.

Pain is not overcome but merely dulled through its justification as a means of sustaining and making existence bearable – through its perception as an inverted image: a universal God and an otherworldly realm set in opposition to life and to this very world. Such projections are constructed in order to safeguard “being here and being human”. To speak of the bearability or unbearable of existence necessarily requires determining the meaning of the ascetic ideal. The affirmation of the suprasensible – the object of transcendence – has as its background nihilism, which is established upon three fundamental elements: resentment, bad conscience, and the ascetic ideal. Through this ideal, man discovers a meaning for existence, a meaning for pain, and thus survives; for one can endure pain, but not its lack of meaning. “Not suffering, but the senselessness of suffering was the curse which till then lay spread over humanity – and the ascetic ideal gave it a meaning!” [Nietzsche 1918: 177]. In this way, the will was saved. Man finds in this ideal a purpose, a reason for being; he manages to develop a will, even if it is the will to nothingness. “In that ideal suffering found an explanation; the tremendous gap seemed filled; the door to all suicidal Nihilism was closed. The explanation there is no doubt about it brought in its train new suffering, deeper, more penetrating, more venomous, gnawing more brutally into life: it brought all suffering under the perspective of guilt; but in spite of all that – man was saved thereby, he had a meaning, [...] the will itself was saved. [...] and to say at

the end that which I said at the beginning man will wish Nothingness rather than not wish at all" [ibid.: 178].

On one side lies the animal past; on the other, the recoil of instinct; and at the center, precisely between these two positions, stands man – torn and sick of himself – for he cannot free the animal within, cannot endure its repression, and, what is worse, begins to feel ashamed of his own existence. As a consequence, he develops disgust toward himself, self-depreciation, and the multiplication of pain. It is a pain that corrodes, annihilates, kills – so unbearable that it requires narcotics merely to keep the sufferer alive. The will to power manifests itself within ascetic ideals, receiving stimuli in controlled doses, thereby making existence bearable. From Nietzsche's perspective, every man who suffers seeks the cause of his suffering. He seeks an animated cause, a living being against whom he can discharge his passion. The search for an agent responsible for one's pain is precisely the attempt to discharge affect, aiming at obtaining relief in the form of numbness. "It is in this phenomenon alone that is found, according to my judgment, the real physiological cause of resentment, revenge, and their family is to be found that is, in a demand for the deadening of pain through emotion" [ibid.: 134]. This numbing takes place through the very discharge of affect, producing an intense emotion whose effect is the temporary suspension of discomfort.

On the other hand, in affirming that truth does not exist – since the value of the world lies in our perspectival evaluation and is nothing more than a provisional interpretation, a falsity in constant displacement – Nietzsche introduced interpretation into the very domain of the world by means of an interpretation, and thus annihilated entirely the notions of fact and foundation. One must rigorously understand this procedure, as it rejects any instance that might hold the definitive answer. This includes knowledge, morality, politics, and aesthetics. Effectively, from Nietzsche onward, there is no foundational domain, because there are only interpretations – strictly provisional perspectives that become, momentarily, what is taken as being.

It is not a specific critique of Greek antiquity, the medieval age, or, more pointedly, modernity; rather, it is a critique of the philosophical tradition as a whole – from Plato to Hegel. Nietzsche directs his critique to the entire edifice of that tradition. At the same time that he annihilates semantic referentials, he introduces a demand for the revision of philosophical discourse by proposing a new way of analyzing and expressing. In revising the meaning of the concept, the philosopher redefines both the text and philosophical thought at the very core of their production and signification. This is the Nietzschean meaning of the rejection of foundation: the refusal of pre-established meanings and the affirmation that there are only posits. In considering the history of philosophy in its entirety as an object of critique, Nietzsche is in fact criticizing a recurring *procedure* – one that, in his view, marks the history of explanatory constructions of being, knowledge, and action. It is this procedural continuity that brings together Plato, Descartes, Kant, and Hegel, for instance. It is precisely this mode of proceeding that the genealogical philosopher seeks to dissolve by introducing an interpretation upon interpretation.

This philosophical procedure implies, for some, the refusal of criteria for evaluation – thus plunging man into absurdity, meaninglessness, and nothingness. The German thinker, however, would reply that any criterion already derives from an act of valuation; even meaning or its denial constitutes the imposition of a perspective – the introduction of an interpretation. The difficulty in formulating a conclusive response concerning the production of meaning is linked to the absence of any hidden domain in which meanings would

be stored, and to the affirmation that they are established from the very conditions of their institution. For if there were a human nature capable of accounting for meaning, truth, and reality, then it would provide all explanations. Nevertheless, for Nietzsche, we do not even formulate explanations, since these would presuppose a fixation of being that can be attained only abstractly. Because the value of the world lies in our interpretation, we cannot explain it – we can only enter it from multiple angles, view it from diverse perspectives. If all we possess is a perspectival seeing, then our knowing will be perspectival as well, and the world, “insofar as it matters to us”, can never be true, but only the result of our valuation – and thus, the imposition of an interpretation. This constitutes a rupture with the philosophical discourse of tradition and requires a reorganization of the spheres of culture based on the hierarchy of interpretations.

To confer upon interpretation both incompleteness and infinity transforms philosophy itself, for it directs attention to the unveiling of the process by which meaning is introduced. We say *process* because it is the term that best captures the dynamism inherent in the expressive configurations that have historically been objectified in semantic systems. Yet these systems do not reflect facts – or at least not necessarily. That is precisely Nietzsche’s point of contention: that behind such systems lie valuations. Philosophy, then, is presented as *symptomatology*, *semiology*, *typology*, and *genealogy* – and it thus becomes necessary to determine the meaning and scope of a symptom, a sign, a type, and a value in their direct relation to the institution of interpretation.

Indeed, Nietzsche’s philosophy excludes a founding subject of being, knowing, and acting, annihilating the very possibility of the absolute as the substratum of meaning and value. In doing so, it eliminates both the unconditional validity of duty as constitutive of being and the efficacy of any foundation underlying the provisional nature of interpretations – thus completely undermining the argumentative foundations of tradition across the various spheres of culture. Consequently, *infinitism* – as the validity of unconditional norms – loses its force as the substratum of contemporary formulations. Our present age expresses profound contradictions and tensions produced fundamentally by the loss of an ultimate foundation as the determinant of knowledge and action. There is no God, reason, or human nature capable of overcoming the anguish that arises from the understanding of the absence of secure foundations. This points to finitude, transitoriness, and particularity as prevailing dimensions – those that, in our view, render Nietzsche’s philosophical discourse an effective possibility. Even so, Nietzsche wrote in a note to *The Genealogy of Morals* that there was a need for all the sciences to unite in order to resolve the problem of value and to determine the hierarchy of values. Perceiving the absence of will, he denounced the processes that would render it devastating to meaning and value – particularly in terms of hierarchy – whose consequence is the lack of organization, from the smallest organisms to the most complex societies, even though this disorganization is itself a product of that very absence.

It is worth recalling the necessity of *transvaluation* identified by Nietzsche as a task he claims for himself and for the “new philosophers”, whose very designation as *new* rests on the prerogative of being able to transvalue eternal values. This is the condition Nietzsche sets for the execution of such a task: to possess strength and daring simultaneously – that is, a well-constituted physiological condition that demands the destruction of old values and the creation of new ones. In *Beyond Good and Evil*, he states: “Towards new philosophers, there is no alternative; towards spirits who are strong and original enough to give impetus to opposed valuations and initiate a revaluation and reversal of ‘eternal

values” [Nietzsche 2002: 203] – referring to the necessity within these philosophers for the task of transvaluation. He then adds, concerning his own teaching: “To teach humanity its future as its will, as dependent on a human will, to prepare for the great risk and wholesale attempt at breeding and cultivation” [ibid.].

Several issues are implicated in Nietzsche’s notion of *new philosophers* or *philosophers of the future*. There is a marked difference between them and those philosophers who merely cultivate prevailing values – whom Nietzsche also calls *philosophical laborers*. The distinction lies in their very condition. Here we find a prerogative of Nietzsche’s discourse, supported by his notion of *typology*. It is the distinction between a *strong type* – whose physiological condition, manifested through its evaluations, expresses a well-ordered system of vassalage among impulses – and a *weak condition* that, conversely, expresses a disaggregation of hierarchy. According to Nietzsche, the *legislator philosopher* is the philosopher of the future – the one charged with wielding the hammer in order to destroy ideas and ideals. His task is not the preservation of what exists. That role belonged to the *free thinkers* who, believing in the unconditionality of truth, ultimately undertook a defense of what was already established. The philosopher of the future is presented as a *physician*, *artist*, and *legislator*, whose primary tasks are determined by the interpretation of symptoms, the shaping of types, and the determination of rank. The *interpretation of symptoms* refers to the understanding of the meaning of force. In the *configuration of types*, one identifies the dissymmetries that constitute interpretations. Through the *determination of rank*, one reaches the *hierarchy of values* and the possibility of *transvaluation*. This triad, proposed for the philosopher, establishes a certain unity between philosophy and science, providing the necessary conditions for the philosopher’s fundamental task: the establishment of a hierarchy of values.

In our view, since Nietzsche, the central problem of modernity has been its failure to pose the question in terms of *values* and *interpretation*, thereby precipitating man into a condition of non-hierarchy due to the loss of foundation – inaugurating what Lyotard calls the *postmodern condition*. However, whereas the crisis of narratives in Lyotard raises the problem of legitimation, in Nietzsche we find science itself bound to the ascetic ideal within modernity – and, with the suppression of that ideal, the plunge into nihilism. In *The Gay Science*, in the section entitled “In what way we, too, are still pious” he writes: “it is still a metaphysical faith upon which our faith in science rests – that even we knowers of today, we godless anti-metaphysicians, still take our fire, too, from the flame lit by the thousand-year old faith, the Christian faith which was also Plato’s faith, that God is truth; that truth is divine [...]” [Nietzsche 2001: 201].

Thus, we see that the problem, according to our understanding since Nietzsche, refers to tradition, on the one hand, and to Nietzsche’s discourse, on the other, as an effective rupture with discourse, as well as with the presuppositions of modernity and tradition. However, Nietzsche, in our view, is not postmodern, since the problem of the hierarchy of values has not come to be understood as the central problem, nor as a condition for establishing the place of philosophy, science, literature, and art in culture. Nietzsche, although he rejects the foundation, does not abandon criteria, proposing to evaluate interpretations based on the feeling of power, on the increase of power. In *The Antichrist*, upon introducing the question “what is good?”, he defines it from the perspective of the elevation of the feeling of power, stating that good is: “Whatever augments the feeling of power, the will to power, power itself, in man”. Regarding happiness, he adds: “The feeling that power is growing, that resistance is overcome” [Nietzsche 1931: 42-43]. Such statements

lead us to understand that the feeling of power and the increase thereof are criteria for evaluating interpretations in Nietzsche, linking their legitimacy to the growth of power. It is not a problem of truth or justice, but of the evaluation that determines value and establishes a perspective about the world while simultaneously elevating the feeling of power of the one who evaluates.

In characterizing postmodern times in the introductory part of his book, Lyotard mentions the attitude of decision-makers who attempt to manage sociability based on the “commensurability of elements and the determinability of the whole”, linking legitimation to the system’s performance. It is in this perspective that life is reduced to the increase of power as the optimization of results aimed at efficiency and performance. In *The Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche, conversely, identified in herd organization the attempt to resolve impotence through the feeling of seeing the community prosper, equating different forms that seek to deaden suffering, whether in work (mechanical activity) or in mutual aid (the joy of love for one’s neighbor). Mechanical activity is characterized by a concentration on routine activities that divert consciousness from the perception of pain, producing relief, since no room remains for depression, given that every impulse is transferred into doing. In it, from our perspective, lies the sense of result optimization and the system’s increase in power, pointed out by Lyotard as an attempt to manage sociability. For Nietzsche, this is the task of the Priest; for Lyotard, in postmodern times, it is the task of the decision-makers. In our view, in both cases, the aim is to deaden despair by transposing individual pain into the joy of the community’s prosperity, maintaining control over it: “stifling of all vitality, mechanical energy, the little joy, and especially the method of ‘love your neighbor’ herd-organisation, the awaking of the communal consciousness of power, to such a pitch that the individual’s disgust with himself becomes eclipsed by his delight in the thriving of the Community” [Nietzsche 1918: 147]. Ultimately, both Nietzsche’s “ascetic priest” and Lyotard’s “decision-makers” seek to manage individual pain and maximize communal/systemic power through the anesthesia of action.

In conclusion, postmodernity is characterized, above all, by the absence of a hierarchy of values and by the unrestrained escalation of nihilism – whose possible consequences Nietzsche had already foreseen in many of his works. On the other hand, the emergence of certain historical events – such as the Second World War and the totalitarian regimes that transformed political vision; globalization and the alterations in the capitalist world that accelerated, in a certain sense, the absence of criteria; as well as the transformations in art, literature, and architecture in our own century – were not experienced by Nietzsche. It is this, together with the entirety of his philosophy, that leads us to understand the place of his discourse as lying *beyond modernity* and yet *without being situated within post-modernity*. Indeed, in surpassing his own time, Nietzsche became *timeless*.

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Nietzsche and the Transcendence of His Time: Between the Past and the Future

The article argues that Nietzsche's philosophical discourse surpasses modernity without fitting into postmodernity, because this thinker criticizes the articulation axes of modernity, as interpreted by Habermas, and distances itself from the postmodern condition from Lyotard's perspective. We emphasize Nietzsche's rejection of traditional discursive bias through his critique of the specular subject. He introduces the concept of a "social structure of many souls" as a way of revising and surpassing modern subjectivity. At the same time, a central problem remains, the hierarchy of values. This shows that Nietzsche does not abandon criteria, even while rejecting foundational principles. For this reason, his thought must be distinguished from postmodernity.

Ванья Дутра де Азередо

Ніцше і трансцендентність його часу: між минулим і майбутнім

У статті доводиться, що філософський дискурс Ніцше перевершує модерність, не вписуючись у постмодернізм. Адже Ніцше критикує артикуляційні осі модерності, як їх інтерпретував Габермас, і дистанціюється від постмодерністського стану, як його розумів Ліотар. Ми наголошуємо на відмові Ніцше від традиційної дискурсивної упередженості через його критику дзеркального суб'єкта. Він запроваджує концепцію «соціальної структури, [складеної з] багатьох душ» як спосіб перегляду та подолання сучасної суб'єктивності. Водночас центральною проблемою залишається ієрархія цінностей. Це показує, що Ніцше не відмовляється від критеріїв, навіть відкидаючи засадничі принципи. З цієї причини його думку слід відрізнити від постмодернізму.

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