

## TOPIC OF THE ISSUE / ТЕМА ЧИСЛА

### Local Contexts of Global Philosophies / Локальні контексти глобальних філософій

#### NIETZSCHE IN BRAZIL

Nietzsche was received at an early stage in Brazil. Already during his productive lifetime, he had readers within the Brazilian academic milieu in the nineteenth century. In the Northeast of the country, particularly around the Faculty of Law in the city of Recife, one finds the earliest references to the philosopher, articulated by leading intellectuals of the period who, in addition to their work in the field of law, began to reflect on Brazilian national identity, drawing in part on Nietzschean philosophy.<sup>1</sup>

The history of the reception of Friedrich Nietzsche's thought in Brazil, however, still remains to be systematized. Beyond a limited number of isolated studies, recent large-scale research efforts have begun to be undertaken by younger scholars, who have examined extensive periods and/or a wide range of domains (literary, artistic, political, etc.) pertaining to the initial reception of Nietzsche's thought, from the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century.<sup>2</sup> Such an undertaking began belatedly, since, with regard to Nietzsche's thought, the philosopher first had to be legitimized within the academic milieu as a thinker worthy of scholarly inquiry. This recognition occurred only after World War II, and in the Brazilian case, indirectly so, as this legitimation came from abroad, above all through the work of French authors.

With this legitimation achieved, other factors, linked to the formation of the Brazilian university system itself, delayed research into the history of the early reception. Only with the effective consolidation of philosophy departments from the second half of the twentieth century onward could a sustained study of Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophy begin to take place. This development, moreover, occurred gradually, as there was even a shortage of bibliographic material necessary for such research. As interest in Nietzsche's philosophy grew following its incorporation into the academic curriculum, the history of its reception likewise began to arouse considerable curiosity. With the creation of recent

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<sup>1</sup> In this regard, I would like to highlight the works of Pantuzzi, T. (2023). *A recepção de Nietzsche na Escola do Recife (1876-1905)*. [Doctoral dissertation, UNIFESP]. UNIFESP Repository. <https://repositorio.unifesp.br/handle/11600/68746> and Xavier Gonçalves, L. F. (2024). *As definições sobre uma "Teoria dos valores em Nietzsche"* por Lourival Vilanova. In A. L. Mota Itaparica et al. (Eds.), *Leituras nietzschianas* (pp. 226-239). Toledo: Instituto Quero Saber. <https://doi.org/10.58942/eqs.101.12>

<sup>2</sup> Beyond the researchers mentioned in the previous note, I would also like to highlight the works of Dias, G. (2023). *Nietzsche no Brasil (1922-1945). Modernistas e intérpretes do país*. São Paulo: Editora Unifesp; and Chagas, O. (2023). *O niilismo na Amazônia: a recepção da filosofia de Nietzsche nos romances de Dalcídio Jurandir*. São Paulo: Editora Unifesp.

research databases, which have brought together materials from daily newspapers and weekly periodicals dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the study of this early reception has, from that point forward, become possible.

Thus, it became possible to ascertain that, with regard to the early reception, the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche was widely known throughout the country, albeit only within restricted, educated circles of the emerging national bourgeoisie, which maintained direct and sustained contact with certain European countries. At this point, one observes a significant impact of Nietzsche's thought among literary figures, particularly those who would become leading proponents of Brazilian Modernism, a movement that sought to take a decisive step toward the cultural formation of Brazil by providing clearly defined identity markers to a nation recently independent from Portugal. This anchoring in Brazilian society took place in literature (especially among the modernists, such as Mário de Andrade), but also in formative essays (in the field of sociology, as seen in Paulo Prado, Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, and Gilberto Freyre), and in politics (to a large extent among anarchists, but also within so-called integralism, that is, the far right). It spread across all regions of Brazil, including the most remote, such as the Amazon region, where one finds Nietzsche's influence in locally significant authors like Dalcídio Jurandir, as well as the southern parts of the country. Gradually, knowledge of Nietzsche's name and thought began to become popularized, appearing even in the most banal forms of publicity: on medicine packaging, in circus advertising, and similar contexts.

In the second half of the twentieth century, a second phase of reception takes shape, as previously noted, with the effective incorporation of Friedrich Nietzsche into the academic sphere. At this juncture, in Brazil, as elsewhere, there emerged an effort to denazify Nietzsche's image. Prominent figures in the national intellectual landscape contributed to this undertaking. The works of Antonio Candido, an important literary critic, and Florestan Fernandes, a leading figure in Brazilian sociology, may be cited as representative examples.<sup>3</sup>

Within the academic sphere, the work that represents a genuine inflection in relation to what had been produced elsewhere – offering an interpretation that does not follow the then prevailing readings in Brazil (notably those of Gilles Deleuze, Michel Foucault, and Martin Heidegger) – was published at the end of the 1980s: *Nietzsche: Das forças cósmicas aos valores humanos*, by Scarlett Marton.<sup>4</sup> Today, the profusion of works on the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche is vast, encompassing studies of considerable analytical value. Moreover, Nietzsche studies in Brazil are organized around the Nietzsche Working Group, which is part of the Associação Nacional de Filosofia (ANPOF). There are also numerous study groups that maintain journals and book series dedicated to the philosopher.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Candido, A. (2013). O portador. *Cadernos Nietzsche*, 32, 13-22, São Paulo: GEN. <https://www.scielo.br/j/cniet/a/FNHdPf6HTYTWqD5ym7csCR/?lang=pt#>; Florestan, F. (1944, 19 de outubro). Nota sobre Frederico Nietzsche. *Folha da Manhã*. <http://almanaque.folha.uol.com.br/florestan2.htm>

<sup>4</sup> Marton, S. (2010). *Nietzsche, das forças cósmicas aos valores humanos*. Belo Horizonte: Editora Ufmg.

<sup>5</sup> Within the scope of the Nietzsche Working Group, I highlight the publication *Estudos Nietzsche* (<https://periodicos.ufes.br/estudosnietzsche>). Regarding study groups, I refer to just a few of the more structured ones, such as GEN – Grupo de Estudos Nietzsche (<https://gen-grupodeestudosnietzsche.net/>), founded in 1996 by Scarlett Marton, which is responsible for the most important Nietzschean publication in Brazil, *Cadernos Nietzsche* (<https://www.scielo.br/j/cniet/>), as well as for a book series. Concerning studies on the reception of Nietzsche's philosophy, I mention Cenbra: Centro de Estudos Nietzsche – Recepção no Brasil.

In this second phase, the reception of Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophy takes on new contours. Scholarly work is carried out predominantly under the aegis of the history of philosophy, for the most part following a rigorous French methodological framework, at least in spirit. The themes addressed are no longer tied to a national agenda, as was largely the case during the initial reception, but rather to a wide range of particular issues. Accordingly, the topics explored are diverse, consistently approached through a dialogue with research on Nietzsche's philosophy conducted both in Brazil and abroad.

In this dossier, a small sample of research conducted in Brazil within the strictly academic sphere is presented. Outside the university walls, in the arts more broadly (music, theater, cinema, literature, etc.) as well as in certain politically oriented groups, the "use" of Nietzschean philosophy continues, to a greater or lesser extent, depending on the historical moment. Under the lens of reception, this dossier includes a study on the early reception of Nietzsche's thought: Geraldo Dias's article, "*Nietzsche in Brazil: Creation of a New Lexicon*", which examines the historical reception of Nietzsche in Brazil (from the late nineteenth century to the early mid-twentieth century). It focuses on a highly circumscribed topic: the introduction of new vocabulary into the Portuguese language, aiming to provide conceptual tools for understanding a Brazilian reality for which adequate words were still lacking. The article tacitly situates this process within a historical moment in which the formation of the Brazilian state was still underway, including in the realm of high culture. Along similar lines, Ivo da Silva Júnior's text, "*Nietzsche and the Seventh Art in Brazil: The Film Days of Nietzsche in Turin by Júlio Bressane*", addresses the contemporary reception of Nietzsche in the cultural sphere, particularly cinema, analyzing in a focused way Nietzsche's impact on the film by the director Júlio Bressane. The article implies that Nietzsche's reception today does not occur solely within the academic sphere but continues to be appropriated in a more free-form manner, that is, at the margins of hegemonic scholarship. Regarding the second, academic phase of reception, the dossier includes Vânia Dutra de Azeredo's article, "*Nietzsche and the Transcendence of His Time: Between the Past and the Future*", which investigates the status of Nietzschean discourse, seeking to show that the philosopher aims to surpass modernity, bringing the discussion into contemporary political contexts. André Itaparica's article, "*Nietzsche on the 'Sovereign Individual' and Agency*", addresses a contentious issue in *On the Genealogy of Morality* from an axiological perspective, reinterpreting the notion of the "sovereign individual" in light of Anglo-American debates. Finally, Márcio Silveira Lima, in his text "*Nietzsche and the Methodological Fictions: From Logical Unity to Methodological Pluralism*", deals with an epistemic question within the framework of the will to power, demonstrating that Nietzsche employs a pluralistic methodology.

Ultimately, these works serve as a small sample of current Nietzschean studies in Brazil. Today, firmly established within philosophy departments, the philosopher is treated on the same level as other thinkers, although he continues to engage Brazilian general readers with force, who appropriate Nietzschean philosophy as a part of everyday cultural life.

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