

## FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE'S PHILOLOGICAL METHOD AS A PREAMBLE FOR HIS LATER CRITICAL-GENEALOGICAL METHOD: A REINVENTION OF RATIONALITY

*A deep analysis of Nietzsche's philological works reveals the core arguments of their estimation merely as a mistake of youth and the prejudices they come from. The author opens one of the promising fields on future Nietzsche research that is the development of the Genealogical Method in Nietzsche, starting from his philological works and his lessons on the History of Greek Literature in 1874/76, and culminating in his more generic writings. This approach demonstrates the way the standard assumption of a rupture and discontinuity in Nietzsche's methodology (from a romantic to a positivistic-illustrated, and from an illustrated to a more poetical type of Philosophy) can be easily refuted by these missed texts. It is concluded that the place where all nietzschean thoughts about Classical Antiquity and Nietzsche's late writings can be integrated is *Geschichte der griechischen Literatur*. Apart from the methodological issue, there are in this work several concerns which are also present throughout all nietzschean writings, such as criticism of metaphysics, *Kulturkritik*, and *Bildung* as an instrument for human perfection. **Keywords:** Nietzsche, critical-genealogical method, Nietzsche's philological writings, Nietzsche's *Nachlass*.*

### 1. The Significance of the Posthumous Philological Writings in Nietzsche's Work. Short History of their Reception.

Beneath the surface of every *phenomenon* there is always a plethora of underlying heterogeneous elements, forces and influences. This can be also affirmed for a Philosopher's work. For a long time, some monumentalist longing had considered a writer's work only and exclusively his published legacy. All other working materials, in the case they were still available, were just considered expendable if not even blemish for the understanding of the eternal character of their classicity. With the passing decades of 20th century, a historical-critical perspective about these materials turned its gaze to these documents that were not meant for publication. Collected letters, private notes, project sketches, other writings or academic annotations, each one of them gained a new value for the better understanding of the mechanism of more binding thoughts. The common belief in the purity of Cultural images just by means of sole inspiration lessened, and the idea of genetics of thoughts by trial and error spread instead.

In the case of Friedrich Nietzsche, it was Martin Heidegger who emphasized the significance of his posthumous writings or *Nachlass* in its dazzling immensity<sup>2</sup>. Heidegger didn't claim the right, as Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche on the contrary did, to publish in the name of Nietzsche a single compilation of posthumous fragments in the form of a final work titled "Wille zur Macht", because that would mean to succumb to the bad habit of considering valid only what it is meant to be published<sup>3</sup>. Nevertheless, Heidegger was perfectly aware of the value of these materials which Förster-Nietzsche's own vanity had saved from getting lost, to the extent that he points out that many doctrines of late Nietzsche (*Übermensch*, *Wille zur Macht*, etc.) originate in those notebooks<sup>4</sup>. Critical editions of the complete Works and documents of a writer are from that moment a high priority in the editorial research: Hegel, Schelling, Hölderlin, Marx, or even Heidegger among many others, they all have at last a critical edition to observe the history of their transmission (*Überlieferung*). With respect to Nietzsche, and after several unsuccessful attempts<sup>5</sup>, we have since 1967 the *Friedrich Nietzsche Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (KGW), edited by Colli and Montinari and published in 1984 as a more manageable edition named

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<sup>2</sup> For a critical consideration about the value of the *Nachlass*, see Sánchez Meca, D., *Introducción general a la edición española de los fragmentos póstumos*, in: FP I, pp. 15-34.

<sup>3</sup> Against all falsifications made by Förster-Nietzsche and Peter Gast motivated by their longing for classicity, Karl Schlechta defended the thesis that the late Nietzsche had renounced to publish a work with materials from his *Nachlass*. This is the reason why he published anew this posthumous although this time without any systematicity. See Nietzsche F., *Werke in drei Bänden*, Schlechta, K. (ed.), Hanser, München, 1956.

<sup>4</sup> See Heidegger, M., *Nietzsche*, vol. 1. 1988, Stuttgart, Neske, 1998, p. 6 and forward.

<sup>5</sup> For a short description of these attempts, see Sánchez Meca, D., *Op. cit.*, pp. 16 and forward.

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*Kritische Studienausgabe* (KSA). Besides, this KGW edition was the source for the translation into Spanish of *Obras Completas* (4 vols.) and *Fragmentos Póstumos* (4 vols.), both edited by prof. Diego Sánchez Meca and published with support from SEDEN (Sociedad Española de Estudios Nietzscheanos). Such critical editions confirm the need of a related accurate critical research. In regard of Nietzsche's philosophical posthumous fragments, this aim has been certainly achieved, and nobody can today conceive Nietzsche's work without this collection of writings.

However, something very different happened in the case of the *Philologica* or posthumous writings during Nietzsche's teaching period in Basel, as well as his early writings on Greek and Latin Philology. Like Diego Sánchez Meca points out, "we just need a quick look over the topics of the available literature about Nietzsche until the 1970s to realize a barely interest on his philological writings"<sup>1</sup>. We can find in the specifics of these materials composed or dedicated for the philological teaching the paradox that, on the one hand, this early period of Nietzsche's intellectual production has been of little interest for the philosophers, because (they claimed) nothing useful can be found there other than their character as a preamble or even a counterpoint for his truly later thoughts. On the other hand, philologist considered Nietzsche – especially after the verdict of Wilamowitz-Möllendorf and the anathema of his colleagues – someone who was lead astray from real Philology. As a result, both sides estimated Nietzsche's philological Works merely as a mistake of youth<sup>2</sup>.

Nonetheless, a deeper look at this writings will reveal the core of these arguments and the prejudices they come from. First of all, this hypothetical phase of "Nietzsche as a Philologist" is not as short as they believe: in strict sense, this period begins by his time at Schulpforta in 1858, and its concludes with his giving up in 1879 after his experience in Bonn, Leipzig and Basel – it takes hence more than 20 years of his life. Secondly, in a broad sense this period does not end "cleanly" after his resignation, but rather his achievements will walk with him beyond his critical philosophy until the end of his life, as many recent studies are now starting to show. Being part of the *Nachlass*, Basel *Vorlesungen* alone use the last four sections of the five sections which compose the *Abteilung II* in the KGW. This KGW has reported the significance of these materials, which were entirely published for the first time from 1993 through 1995, as well as in the first two volumes of the *Obras Completas* in Spanish language with support of the SEDEN (Sociedad Española de Estudios Nietzscheanos). The specific circumstance of this recent publication might partially justify the lack of attention and understanding referring these writings to date; but from now on, there is no valid excuse for a probable inattention. Those words uttered by Heidegger for the *Nachlass* in general can be hereby specifically applied for the *Philologica*, as we can trace in them some essential clues contained in Nietzsche's latest thoughts, like for example the influence of Antiquity and the confrontation with the science of it or the first evidences of his genealogical methodology<sup>3</sup>. This hypothesis was formulated by Andler back in the 1920s, but "successfully" ignored after that<sup>4</sup>. It raises the doubt about the significance of the *Philologica* in Nietzsche's work, noticed also

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<sup>1</sup> Sánchez Meca, D., *Introducción al volumen II*, in: OC II, p. 15. See also Hildebrandt, K., *Nietzsches Wettkampf mit Sokrates und Plato*, Dresden, Sybillen, 1922, p. 75; Howald, E., *Nietzsche und die klassische Philologie*, Gotha, Perthes, 1920, p. 7; or Vogt, E., *Nietzsche und Wettkampf Homers*, in: *Antike und Abendland* 1962, (11), pp. 103-113.

<sup>2</sup> Hermann Diels, in a Speech at the *Königlichen Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* in Berlin would say: "Friedrich Nietzsche ist aus den Reihen der strengen Wissenschaft, die ihm früh, zu früh, ihre Kränze reichte, in das Lager der Gegner übergegangen. Dieser Schritt war innerlich längst vorbereitet. Denn von Jugend auf war seine Seele mehr künstlerisch als wissenschaftlich angelegt. Der laute Beifall seiner Freunde und die vorschnelle und, wie man jetzt wohl allgemein zugestehen wird, unberechtigte Überschätzung seiner Lehrer konnte ihn nur zeitweilig darüber hinwegtäuschen, dass er sich in der Wahl seines Berufes vergriffen. So genügte ihm die Wissenschaft nicht mehr, weil er ilir nicht genügte. Seine gelehrten Jugendarbeiten sind zwar lebhaft, zum Theil glänzend geschrieben, aber unmethodisch gearbeitet. Es sind Spiele des Witzes, blendende Einfälle, im besten Falle vage Ahnungen des Richtigen, aber niemals und nirgends strenge Wissenschaft". Diels, H., *Eine Rede über Wissenschaft und Romantik*, in: *Sitzungsberichte der könig. preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin*, 23. Januar 1902, (4), pp. 31-32.

<sup>3</sup> Nietzsche's early philological hermeneutics and its pre-genealogical methods have been explained by Figl, J., *Hermeneutische Voraussetzungen der philologischen Kritik. Zur wissenschaftsphilosophischen Grundproblematik im Denken des jungen Nietzsche*, in: *Nietzsche Studien*, vol. 13, 1984, pp. 111-128.

<sup>4</sup> "On peut suivre, dans les *Philologica* les marches et contre-marches de cette methode nouvelle qui se cherche (\*). Elles symbolisent le mouvement général de la pensée nietzschéenne [...] Comment ne pas reconnaître que Nietzsche projette ainsi dans l'histoire impersonnelle revolution de sa pensée proper?" Andler, C., *Nietzsche, sa vie et sa pensée*, Editions Bossard, Paris, (2nd ed. 1921), p. 96.

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by Crusius in the *Vorwort* to the *Großoktavausgabe* (GA) according to Holzer's design<sup>1</sup>. Nowadays, we are confronted by few case studies – mostly slightly unfocused. Nevertheless, we can predict an unstoppable reconsideration of this writings. As C. Benne has recently claimed:

In der Nietzscheforschung hingegen ist die philologische Herangehensweise an Nietzsche heute nicht mehr umstritten. Der philologische Imperativ in Nietzsches Werk ist so stark [...]. In der Nietzscheforschung ist die Philologie, ganz im Gegenteil zu den Mainstream-Literaturwissenschaften, wieder zur Avantgarde geworden [...]. Möglicherweise kann die Nietzscheforschung sogar zu einer Wiederbelebung der philologische Tradition insgesamt führen, wenn sie auf ihrem Weg nur fortschreitet.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. The Significance of *Vorlesungen über Geschichte der griechischen Literatur* from 1874/76.

Any updated study about Nietzsche's *Philologica* has to point in my opinion the significance of an essential writing of Nietzsche at Basel, i.e. the *Vorlesungen über Geschichte der griechischen Literatur* (GGL) from 1874/76. We are talking here of a course in two parts delivered by Nietzsche during winter semester 1874 and winter semester 1876. In Crusius' opinion, this text is "eine Quintessenz" for the *Sonderkollegien* and *Übungen* previously taught<sup>3</sup>. The lesson was edited for the first time in 1912 in the second volume of the *Philologica* "Unveröffentlichtes zur Litteraturgeschichte, Rhetorik und Rhythmik"<sup>4</sup>, although in an incomplete form. This defect was not solved until 1995 by the complete edition of the *Kritische Gesamtausgabe* by Fritz Bornmann and Mario Carpitella<sup>5</sup>. As Carlotta Santini remarks: "Si tratta infatti del corso più complete, più lungo e più organic del suo Nachlass e quello per cui Nietzsche spese maggiori forze per concepirlo ed elaborarlo"<sup>6</sup>. More than a text perfectly accomplished, these are rather teaching materials in the form of a script for the public lecture, created in the context of the academic freedom of a professor and an academy that became more and more estranged each time. The idiosyncrasy of these materials, in addition to the fact that they were scientifically published for the first time only recently, produced as result that GGL remains a text scarcely studied by the *Nietzscheforschung*, let alone the Classic Philology in general<sup>7</sup>. As well as for the common problem of the reception of the *Nachlass* and the *Philologica*, this detail has led to a conflict between what GGL really is and what GGL seems to be. May it serve as an example of the assessments of contemporary philologists like Gherardo Ugolini, who does not see any relation between GGL and other text of that period such as *Der Gottesdienst der Griechen* which he criticizes for showing a "ziemlich traditionellen Darstellungsmuster"<sup>8</sup>. Other studies, such as the investigations made by Carlotta Santini or Barbara von Reibnitz, didn't understood fully the originality of its exposition, even though they are otherwise bright dissertations which clarify many other contents of GGL (especially GGL III). According to Santini, for example, many materials exposed in GGL "sono solo relativamente originali, poiché nelle vaste sezione a carattere compilativo Nietzsche riprende liberamente o letteralmente i resoconti dei manuali dell'epoca"<sup>9</sup>. As I say, this is correct but only partially. For it is true that Nietzsche uses many modern Handbooks to compose GGL, but it is also true that the way to organize those contents is anything but typical, and any observant gaze will find there the first attempt in Nietzsche's work to built a genealogical historiography in terms of the *Wille zur Macht*. It is not my aim to depreciate Santini's or von Reibnitz's

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<sup>1</sup> "In dieser Richtung liegt auch, nach Holzer's planvoller Auslese, Zweck und Ziel der ganzen Veröffentlichung. Was bedeutet die Fachstudien für Nietzsche's Persönlichkeit und selbständige Schriften? Wer mit diesem Gedanken die Vorlesungen durchgeht, wird auf Schrift und Tritt halt machen und einen Fund mitzunehmen haben". Crusius, O., *Vorwort* in: GA, 18, p. X.

<sup>2</sup> Benne, C., *Nietzsche und die historisch-kritische Philologie*, Berlin/New York, 2005, p. 358.

<sup>3</sup> GA 18, p. 323.

<sup>4</sup> GA 18, Abt. III.2, pp. 1-128 (GGL I/II) y pp. 129-198 (GGL III).

<sup>5</sup> KGW II.5, pp. 1-353.

<sup>6</sup> Santini, C., *Nietzsche e la Grecia. La riflessione sul mondo greco nelle Lezioni di Basilea*, Tesi sostenuta a Parigi il 5 Settembre 2012, Università del Salento – Paris IV (Sorbonne), p. 2.

<sup>7</sup> As an exception, we can find the aforementioned doctoral thesis by Carlotta Santini, as well as Barbara von Reibnitz' paper *Vom "Sprachkunstwerk" zur „Leseliteratur“*, in: Borsche, T./Gerrantana, F./Venturelli, A. (ed.), *"Centauren-Geburten". Wissenschaft, Kunst und Philosophie beim jungen Nietzsche*, Berlin/New York, 1994.

<sup>8</sup> See Ugolini, G., *Philologica*, in: Ottmann, H. (ed.), *Nietzsche Handbuch, Leben-Werk-Wirkung*, Metzler, Stuttgart, 2000/11, p. 167.

<sup>9</sup> Santini, C., *Op. cit.*, p. 2.

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researches, which have revealed indeed many aspects of GGL unknown to date. My only concern is the fact that the difficulties and complexity of a text such as GGL lead often to some dislocations which only a meticulous historical-critical reading can solve<sup>1</sup>.

A critical research of *Geschichte der griechischen Literatur* from 1874/76 (in two parts: GGL I/II and GGL III) requires therefore to recognize the historical-critical nature of the text. For that purpose, we will use the critical edition in KGW II.5 and the translation into Spanish made by me along with prof. Diego Sánchez Meca in OC II. A critical research of this text should therefore be divided in two parts: a first theoretical part [I] organized around the definition of nietzschean (philological) method in collision with the contemporary (philological) method by that time; and a second part [II] devoted to GGL itself, in order to show the way Nietzsche puts into practice the critics formulated in the first part. Generally speaking, both parts flow spirally from the very same center of Nietzsche's permanent concerns since his early writings: *Kulturkritik* and the question of *Bildung*. These concerns continue uninterrupted until 1878, when Nietzsche writes *Menschlich allzumenschlich*, his first philosophical work *in sensu stricto*. In 1879 he will leave his job as a professor in Basel. The destiny of Nietzsche's work from this point on is a larger discussion. But we can tell beforehand that our treatment of the *Philologica* from the perspective of a non teleological, historical-critical method anticipates the genealogical method in the forms in which it will materialize from that point forward. In contrast to the standard assumption of a rupture and discontinuity in Nietzsche's thoughts as defended by the establishment of the *Nietzscheforschung* to date, we can conclude instead that there is a certain methodological continuity throughout all his work.

### **3. History of Greek Literature, Rhythm and Great Style: Is Nietzsche a Philosopher of Irrationality?**

For a long time, academic studies on Nietzsche's reception of antiquity focused uniquely on a single work: *Die Geburt der Tragödie* (1872). This essay, so it was thought, was the quintessence in early Nietzsche's writing; and many cultural monuments, such as Russian Silver Age starting on the late 19<sup>th</sup> century or some Avant-gardes were sumptuously built on the thesis contained in that book. Nevertheless, the habit of considering Nietzsche a Classic just because of a few single works seems today quite unscientific, on the grounds that nowadays no literary creation can be analyzed without reference to its specific context anymore. In this regard, it must be outlined the Critical Edition of Nietzsche's writings – published works as much as his *Nachlass*. A historical-critical perspective which can finally scope the fluid conception of their "emergence" (*Entstehung*) is therefore needed.

The idiosyncratic editing of Nietzsche's works throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century meant that the Lectures which Nietzsche gave in 1874/76 on Greek Literature *Geschichte der griechischen Literatur* (*History of Greek Literature*) was scientifically published for the first time only in the late 90s, something that makes its content a gold mine for contemporary research on Nietzsche. In this text, Nietzsche attempts a specific approach to the Greek question, summarizing to date all his efforts on that subject from his early works, but in this case introducing a methodological element which he also made use of in his late work. This element is the *Genealogical Methodology*. The Texts on History of Greek Literature from 1874/76 are in this respect a genuine and essential link to the whole nietzschean work, and a key element for the understanding of the whole scientific criticism of 20<sup>th</sup> Philosophy of Science (e.g. Michel Foucault).

One of the more promising fields on future Nietzsche research is the development of the Genealogical Method in Nietzsche, starting from his philological works and his lessons on the History of Greek Literature in 1874/76, and culminating in his more generic writings. In my opinion, this open horizon has to demonstrate the way the standard assumption of a rupture and discontinuity in Nietzsche's methodology (from a romantic to a positivistic-illustrated, and from an illustrated to a more poetical type of Philosophy) can be easily refuted by these missed texts. My idea of an empirical critical-historical continuity in Nietzsche tends to see the romantic approach taken by Nietzsche in some of his books (such as, for example, *Die Geburt der Tragödie*) as an exception, influenced by several personalities of that time like A. Schopenhauer and R. Wagner, but not bearing much relation to the line of continuity between Nietzsche's early philological works, his works in the middle period in the 1870s, and extending finally to his late works

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<sup>1</sup> See Sommer, A., *Von Nutzen und Nachteil kritischer Quellenforschung. Einige Überlegungen zum Fall Nietzsches*, in: *Nietzsche-Studien*, v. 29, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin/New York, 2000.

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in the 1880s. In view of the lack of any studies to date on Nietzsche's lessons about *History of Greek literature*, it is needed now to demonstrate with the help of the newly discovered text this hypothesis which could certainly change the understanding of some important features of nietzschean philosophy.

Considering the fluid nature to the entire nietzschean work, it is very improbable to find an absolute coherence in Nietzsche's writing. However, if there is a place where all nietzschean thoughts about Classical Antiquity and Nietzsche's late writings can be integrated, that is *Geschichte der griechischen Literatur*. One of the main questions raised in GGL is: how did ancient Greeks manage to produce a classical literature? Or in other words: What can we learn from them in order to write in a classical way today? What makes a classical classical? The key to answer this question revolves around the idea of *Kunstmässigkeit* of classical artwork, that is to say its compliance with a law. One of the features shown by the analysis of Greek literary genres in terms of *Wille zur Macht* was their strict formal *rigidness*. This is an essential part of aesthetical experience in Antiquity, materialized by its *orality* as Rhythm and effect (*Wirkung*) on individual and community. According to Nietzsche, the power of Rhythm has a sort of religious nature, because this is the way old Greek tamed divine forces and transformed chaos into beauty. If we have something to learn from them, that is their *Great Style (Grosser Stil)*, by means of which Greek harmonized forces of heterogeneous provenance. Against the erroneous vulgate that considers Nietzsche a Philosopher of irrationality, we discover rather an implementation of self-control through discipline (*Züchtung*). In Nietzsche's opinion every aesthetical paradigm is an ethical paradigm as well. Nietzsche's philosophy is an evidence of his commitment to this belief.

Apart from the methodological issue, there are consequently in *History of Greek literature* several concerns which are also present throughout the whole nietzschean work, such as criticism of metaphysics, *Kulturkritik*, and *Bildung* as an instrument for human perfection. Nietzsche's "historical Philosophy" analyzes the values of Antiquity in connection with its uses for modernity. Classical education, formal education, self-control, all these refer to the same question: what can we learn from past? In this context, a central idea in *Basel Vorlesungen* and GGL specifically is that precise contents are not as important as the *practical processes* of assimilate them (*einverleiben*) in the marks of our infinite possibility for upgrading and betterment. *Nachahmung* vs. *Nachbildung*. In contrast to modern philological scholasticism, Nietzsche's philology becomes philosophy, and so it returns to the propaedeutical goals of the discipline.

Thanks to the highly detailed genealogical research contained in it, GGL displays therefore two different ideas about Culture (*Kultur*): one classical based on orality, and one modern based on literality. The first one is productive, the second merely reproductive. The first is built by and for the *polis*. The second is made by and for modern individuality. As a consequence, it can be affirmed that the breach opened by nihilism in our time is not only an epistemological breach, but also an aesthetical and ethical one. The genealogical studies on literary genres, works and authors of GGL reveal thus a new perspective about Nietzsche's conception of science and arts. And the famous imperative of GT that we "view science through the lens of the artist, and art through that of life" ("Die Wissenschaft unter der Optik des Künstlers zu sehen, die Kunst aber unter der des Lebens..."<sup>1</sup>) gains now, beyond any kind of metaphysical digression, a new meaning.

1874-76

Kulturkritik - Bildung.

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<sup>1</sup> GT, KSA 1, 14.