

EUDORO DE SOUSA AGAINST THE GRAIN: AUTOCRATIC THOUGHT IN THE HISTORY OF CLASSICAL STUDIES IN BRAZIL

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Abstract

Without losing sight of the work published by Eudoro de Sousa (1911-1987) in the 1940s, as well as some traces of his readings marked in the *marginalia* of his personal books, we will resort to the letters exchanged by this intellectual and comrades of his generation to attempt a broader understanding of the situation that formed him in Heidelberg, but also of the process responsible for confirming him within an axis of autocratic thought that would flow into the lands of São Paulo, in the arms of integralism. Biographies such as that of Eudoro de Sousa and his generation tell the memory of the creation of the university in Brazil and Latin America, but they certainly contribute so that we can glimpse more clearly some of the main scenes of construction of the field of classical studies itself and its crises, criticisms and fights.

Keywords

Eudoro de Sousa; history of classical studies; history of books and libraries; *marginalia*.

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Resumo

Sem perder de vista a obra publicada por Eudoro de Sousa (1911-1987) nos anos 1940, bem como alguns rastros de suas leituras marcadas na *marginalia* de seus livros particulares, recorrer-se-á às cartas trocadas por este intelectual com camaradas de sua geração para a tentativa de um mais amplo entendimento da conjuntura que o formou em Heidelberg, mas também do processo responsável por confirmá-lo dentro de um eixo de pensamento autocrático que iria desaguar em terras paulistas, nos braços do integralismo. Biografias como a de Eudoro de Sousa e sua geração contam a memória da criação da universidade no Brasil e na América Latina, mas certamente contribuem para que possamos vislumbrar mais nitidamente algumas das principais cenas de construção do próprio campo dos estudos clássicos e suas crises, críticas e lutas.

Palavras-chave

Eudoro de Sousa; história dos estudos clássicos; história do livro e das bibliotecas; *marginalia*.

Prologue: symptom and the *corpus*

"(...) the only man in Europe, in the world, whom it is politically possible to trust, is Hitler."

Eudoro de Sousa, 1940³

"The destructive moment: demolition of universal history, *elimination of the epic element, no identification with the victor. History must be brushed against the grain.*"

Walter Benjamin, 1940

The manner in which the history of classical studies in Brazil has traditionally been told has been profoundly questioned since it was understood that the eternal "crisis" of the field has taught us much more than reconcilable theoretical differences and/or debatable positions within academic spaces. With the consolidation of critiques against the supposed German hegemony (Roche; Demetriou, 2008), or even against the centrality of the figure of Homer within this historical construct (Silva, 2022), it becomes pressing to understand the position of Latin America and Brazil in the general scheme of the studies of antiquity in order to take a stance in the face of contemporary debates.

In this sense, the possibility opened by those who have explored a "subgenre" called the history of classical studies gains strength and importance, with its concrete suggestions for a reevaluation of our crisis and its specificities. The case here discussed is described through the example of one of the most singular biographies that has crossed these lands, namely, the Luso-Brazilian thinker Eudoro de Sousa, one of the proponents and defenders of an *Altertumswissenschaft* in the twentieth century.⁴

³ Unpublished letter.

⁴ *Altertumswissenschaft* is a German word coined by Friedrich August Wolf in a text from 1807 to designate a new discipline dedicated to the "study of Antiquity" (the literal translation of the German term, which sometimes also appears as "science of Antiquity"). According to this proposal, it was necessary to combine a robust knowledge of the classical languages (Greek and Latin), in terms of grammar, criticism and hermeneutics, with an investigation of the material reality of the past through new fields, such as archaeology, epigraphy, numismatics, etc., in order to provide a complete understanding of ancient reality. According to Wolf (1807: 124-5), the aim of the discipline thus defined "is none other than the knowledge of ancient humanity itself, a knowledge that, starting from the study of ancient remnants, emerges from the contemplation of a significant and organically developed national formation." For a critical interpretation of the work (and its translation into Portuguese as an appendix), see Silva, 2022: 496-522.

With traces still visible in the corridors of Brazilian universities, it is important not only to investigate the legacy of someone who inhabits the oral memory of the most prominent intellectual figures in our field today, but also to recognize the necessity of a critical re-reading of the formation of this intellectual in order to better understand how his journey not only shaped his *Bildung* but also laid the foundations of the Brazilian university. Thusly, we analyze letters exchanged between Eudoro de Sousa and his circle, hoping to catch a glimpse of this figure and his work in connection with the pressing issues of his time, while understanding his era, its demands and interests.

Questioning the *why* and *for what purpose* we do what we do is essential for investigating a legacy beyond mere praise. Even in recent studies that claim to be analytical, in the end, very little consideration is given to the historical-critical and ideo-political dimensions of the hermeneutic debate. It's a curious type of *argumentum ex silentio*, where there is no lack of documents and/or arguments, but rather the opposite.

As we will attempt to indicate in these notes, as a symptom,⁵ little or nothing written about the author of *Mito e História* reflects on the sharp edges and contradictions posed by Eudoro's paths.⁶ Whether due to complete ignorance of vital elements⁷ or because the hegemonic conservative spirit in the field seems to avoid it, through silences, taboos and controversy, this case shows us that – to use Shakespeare's worn-out paraphrase – there is much more between heaven and earth than is *judged* by our vain history of classical scholarship.

Brazil is a “young country,” in Agostinho da Silva's own words, but

carrying within it the paradox of being an ancient country that comes from the Mediterranean. In each step of our folkloric customs, for example, we find things that trace back to Crete or that are rooted in the traditions of these Mediterranean regions (Silva, 2009: 52-53).

Now, if Brazil has (as much as Heidelberg or any other classical tradition)⁸ the right to claim the Antiquity that it embodies, considering the

⁵ Here we appropriate the notion presented in Žižek, 1999.

⁶ The most notable exception is undoubtedly the anthropologist Ordep Serra, one of the last remaining disciples of Eudoro, with a rare critical narrative about the dismantling of UnB, but never about the *Reich*, a subject veiled or unknown to the majority of living disciples, relatives, and critical scholarship until 2011.

⁷ The letters from the German period only arrived in Brazil in 2011, and not even the disciples of his esoteric circle had details about Heidelberg and the situation experienced during the Third Reich, as discussed elsewhere (Borges, 2015).

⁸ Even if one does not necessarily accept the official version that “classical tradition” = Greece and Rome.

constitutive heterogeneity that is a fundamental characteristic of the *fragmentary testimonies* of the past, more than just recognition, this assertion implies the forging of perspectives that, not only overflow from the Greco-Roman tradition, in our case, also considers inherent what historiographical and interpretive hegemony has insisted on treating as *external*. Only in such a manner does it seem possible to give the crisis new critical contours which, indeed, are the great thread of continuity among us.

With excerpts from a *corpus* composed by the dozens of letters here referenced, our aim is to share some insight into the shaping of Eudorian thought and understand how its paths point to the ways in which autocratic thought overtakes the field. From the 1930s until his departure from São Paulo to Santa Catarina (1955), the mythologist found himself surrounded by the most conservative elements of European and Brazilian intellectual circles. Through an enduring period it was understood that intellectual convergences and *collaborations* were part of one's own course and were inevitable presences/situations in the life of someone with a body of work to carry out, a *mission* to fulfill, what is assessed here is the silent and silenced malice, the choice, the political project that, like a spectre, has haunted and continues to haunt classical studies and Brazilian thought: an autocratic axis.⁹

Parodos: Between the “German of Klages” and Integralism

The Portuguese Context and the French Guilt

A former seminarian of Moorish Algarvian descent and the son of a Portuguese cleric, Eudoro de Sousa had an irregular academic career. Connected to the university yet never fully tied to Portuguese institutions with their diverse intellectual frameworks—ranging from Leonardo Coimbra to the Portuguese Renaissance, the Porto School, etc.—he soon began to navigate against the current of his time.

In his viewpoint, Portuguese Philology and Criticism lacked the methodological and cultural apparatus that the German tradition

⁹ To understand the intellectual violence organized as a militia against thinking through the Brazilian Institute of Philosophy (IBF), which welcomed Eudoro de Sousa in São Paulo and harbored Nazi intellectuals who came to Brazil after the end of World War II, it is essential to evaluate the insights contained in *A Restauração conservadora da filosofia: O Instituto Brasileiro de Filosofia e a autocracia burguesa no Brasil (1949-1968)* (Gonçalves, 2016).

possessed after Wolf's work. The racist and colonial aspects of Wolf's proposal for a "national formation" (German) based on the study of classical antiquity were never questioned. What Eudoro ironically referred to as "literatism" in his struggle against ruling tendencies at the Portuguese university had nothing to do with the research of the newly arrived Linguistics (which would later materialize in the Herculean work inherited by Dialectology), but rather with the belletristic trends in Literature courses. The general framework of literary critique in 1930s Portugal oscillated between the positivism of Teófilo Braga and the culturalism of Fidelino de Figueiredo or Hernâni Cidade.

In a middle ground, philological studies were dominated by references ranging from Carolina Michaelis and J. Leite Vasconcelos to Mendes dos Remédios. The latter, along with Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, was involved in the inaugurations and programs of the German Institute of Lisbon.¹⁰ "Nietzsche's famous opponent"¹¹ had already signed the *Manifesto of the 93* at the onset of World War I, publicly and collectively inciting the linkage between science and militarism. The history and readings of Eudoro de Sousa will reveal to us, in fragments, something of what remains for us, in our field, from the controversy over the birth of tragedy and the transmission of *Altertumswissenschaft* to Latin America during the formative era of our universities.

With Leonardo Coimbra's death and the dispersion of his disciples, Eudoro de Sousa's immediate circle includes figures like Vitorino Nemésio, José Régio, Adolfo Casais Monteiro, among others. On a more intimate level, the most fundamental structuring relationships for Eudoro de Sousa were with two inveterate Nazi Germanophiles: Álvaro Ribeiro and Delfim Santos, this, despite all the hasty attempts to emphasize this intellectual's inclusion in Portuguese schools and circles.

Miguel Real comments on this context, the work, and the significance of Carolina Michaelis in demonstrating that in the 1930s, Portugal had just "abandoned philological studies, replacing them with the influence of Saussure's French linguistics" (Real, 2015: 129). If this statement confirms Eudoro's persistent determination to surpass French translations (and traditions), it is not so much about ignoring Saussure, but rather seeking in another philology what, lacking in Portugal, would allow him to integrate into the field, perhaps even help build it, especially institutionally, at a time when, in the 1930s, Language Schools governed the formal space of classical studies.

¹⁰ Ninhos, 2022.

¹¹ Sousa, 2010.

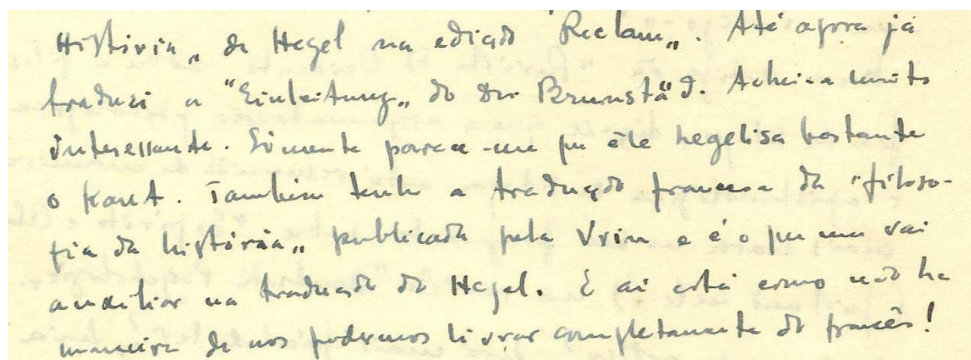


Imagem 1: excerpt in which French and Hegel appear as a question.

More than attacking the existence of literary critique from the perspective of its autonomy, it was an institutional problem stemming from a university reform/crisis that was proposed, debated, and the target of public policies in Portugal and Brazil. This means that all of it stems from the rise and fall of a *deutsches Beispiel*.¹² Eudoro de Sousa's antagonists dominated the chairs of Lisbon, Coimbra, and Porto. Antagonists who, if not political, were epistemological—or perhaps both. Attacking the Language Schools and the magazines of their own tertullians became a *method*. For Eudoro, Letters represented a place of risk that haunted him for decades and, at the University of Brasília (UnB), would become his grave.

"Philologia e Literatismo" for example, affirms itself as a response after Heidelberg to his interlocutors (Sousa, 2000: 97-99). In proposing a *specific philology*, "perhaps with a deep influence from the thought of Álvaro Ribeiro" (Real, 2015: 129), Eudoro diverges from a Portuguese development that would fall into the arms of Saussure,¹³ and once again, of France. Whether through a *culturalist* or *ontological* path, the relationships between language and literature, in the case of Portuguese, as we clearly see both in the letters and in theoretical and press texts, are entirely embedded in the university context of a *reform heading towards Germanization*. In the struggle over how to shape the university, traditions and intellectuals from various fields are in open conflict. Real points to what, for us, is a duality of Eudoro de Sousa-Álvaro Ribeiro:

Indeed, this author, both through his challenge to the scientific ideology of positivism, dominant in universities, and his challenge to the trends (...) in literature, focuses the roots of a country's thought and literature on the cultural development of its language (...), where he pleads to philological scholars for the

¹² German example.

¹³ The Geneva linguist himself spent his stay in Leipzig, then Berlin, in the last fortnight of the 19th century.

preservation and renewal of the Portuguese lexicon in order to reach an understanding of the soul of Portuguese culture” (Real, 2015: 138).¹⁴

The motif will return, imbued with the concrete German experience. However, despite the careful overview it offers, linking both, and despite the recognition of both as “unavoidable” in Portuguese (or Luso-Brazilian) thought, it errs in the most fundamental reality by tracing elements of historicity and emphasizing the symptom of turning a blind eye to afternoons spent in German clubs, translating Berlin newspapers to fabricate tales about the glorious exaltation of the *Reich*.¹⁵

It is from this perspective that, as we will see later, in a dual articulation with his friend Delfim, we examine two of the main scholarship recipients of the III *Reich* in the Interpreter School program between Lisbon and Berlin during the years of “neutrality.” The above development, anchored in very brief considerations from Real, leaves no doubt: the philology that the Portuguese tradition begins to abandon, to transform in the direction of Saussurean linguistics, does not converge with the Philology that Eudoro de Sousa envisions for himself and for the Portuguese *intelligentsia*. One thing is philology as an expression in language studies, as a means; another is Philology as part of the essential set of *Altertumswissenschaft*, which would be the quality seal announced wherever he went. With no reason to err, we could recognize as fitting for Eudoro the definition of Philology given by Wilamowitz-Moellendorff between the wars.¹⁶ But if it was only with Wolf that Philology ceased to be *ancilla theologiae*, the break made by Wolf, analogous to what Rosenberg and Klages would later do (Pozzo, 2016), is fundamental to understanding how German philology embraced the spirit of reaction that culminated in its *Führer*.

From the “German of Klages” *et alii*.

I never supported the claim that the Nazi bigwigs belonged to a superior race. However, (...) I consistently refused to accept the claim of another race as the chosen people. The arrogance is identical (...) but with this important distinction:

¹⁴ Exactly these words Eudoro uses in an unpublished letter to refer to his objectives with the Germans who were his students in Heidelberg.

¹⁵ Even the Braga’s scholar Joaquim Domingues, organizer of one of the most important collections of correspondence on the subject (Ribeiro, 2001), as well as the intellectual responsible for establishing the active and passive bibliography of Eudoro de Sousa, deliberately disregards the issue of the Reich as exogenous and/or of lesser importance.

¹⁶ Defined by its object, we read that “the task of Philology is to bring back to life, through the power of science, that past life: the song of the poet, the thought of the philosopher and the legislator, the sanctity of the temple and the feelings of believers and non-believers, the colorful hustle and bustle of the market and the port – on land and sea – and the people working and playing” (Wilamowitz, 2023: 35).

after waging a war against humanity for more than three thousand years, Judaism has finally achieved total victory over all the nations of the earth.

Ludwig Klages

It is February 1938. Stéphane Grappelli and Django Reinhardt are making their mark in a Black musical genre that, perhaps for the first time, with a Gypsy *bandleader*, is transforming jazz in the cafés of the old continent. More than a year before invading Poland, Hitler is craving war and takes advantage of a scandal among generals¹⁷ to unleash his persecutory zeal within the high ranks of the *Wehrmacht*. The accused: suspected of non-conformity. This issue, as we well know, will be crucial: who adheres, who collaborates for a *Volksgemeinschaft* (people's community). From 1933 to 1945, this was the practice of German institutions. Between 1933 and 1939, around 1,200 university professors were expelled from German universities (Pozzo, 2016). With greater or lesser resistance, all German universities were at the mercy of National Socialism.

The most well-known case, in Freiburg, spared no effort in reports and denunciations against colleagues opposing Nazism. The king of this generation: Martin Heidegger.

He believed that the Germans were “the most metaphysical of peoples” because they were exclusively rooted in their land (*Bodenständigkeit*). This meant they were destined to reconnect history with Being — he believed in the Nazi “New Awakening” with “inner conviction” (Jöhsson, 2023).

Traces of his profile are revealed in what the District Party Directorate described in May 1938 as the “psychological evaluation” of the former *Rektor-Führer*: “a somewhat closed character, not very close to the people, he lives only for his science, and does not always have a sense of reality.”¹⁸ The project: to Nazify the German university, Germanize the European university, cleanse the races of degeneration, and combat communism.

Referring to data on the existing context in Heidelberg, another name arises beyond Klages. In the “clan of German philologists,” we are inevitably led to the controversial influence of Friedrich Creuzer (Silva, 2022: 141). In his reading of Wolf, Creuzer is said to have renewed the Heidelberg seminars, defining the science of Antiquity in ways that were previously incompatible/opposed but would become *complementary*. The “complementarity” between the historical (scientific) and the exemplary (classical), Eudoro would learn in Heidelberg, so that “scientific research (*Wissenschaft*) and education (*Bildung*) become equally important tasks

¹⁷ Blomberg-Fritsch case.

¹⁸ Moderno, 2015.

within this central field of formation” (Silva, 2022: 141). This field, still called Philology by him, is fundamentally hybrid, with three fundamental dispositions: historical diligence (*historischen Fleiß*), poetic sense (*poëtischen Sinn*), and philosophical spirit (*philosophischen Geist*). Having affirmed the Wolfian perspective wherever he went,¹⁹ “while it is true that Wolf had not yet ascended to the heroic status he would attain in the following decades” (Silva, 2022: 141), his presence is perceptible in Creuzer’s understanding of his own field:

Regarding the fate of this science, it is important to remember that its origins are lost in Antiquity itself, tracing back in part to the time of the Pisistratids, to the investigative spirit of the sophists, and then to the scholarly works and collection of books by Aristotle, as well as the remarkable destiny of the philosopher’s own writings, which provide material for reflection. Now, Alexandria (since 332 BC) must be noted as the first center of scholarly life and work (Creuzer, 1807 *apud* Silva, 2022: 141).

Regardless of how Creuzer interprets Wolf, this moment not only demonstrates the realization of a scholarly paradigm but also foreshadows how Eudoro’s quest magnetically responds to and integrates with the construction of the very canon that was being forged, and which would find its *alma mater* in Nazi Germany, at least from 1933 to 1945.

In the late 1930s, Eudoro writes to Delfim:²⁰

I’m still terribly confused with Klages’ German: I find myself forced to translate it in fragments, and even then, poorly. Sometimes, I fall into deep despair. But what I’ve managed to translate is so promising... In those moments — forgive me — I envy you!

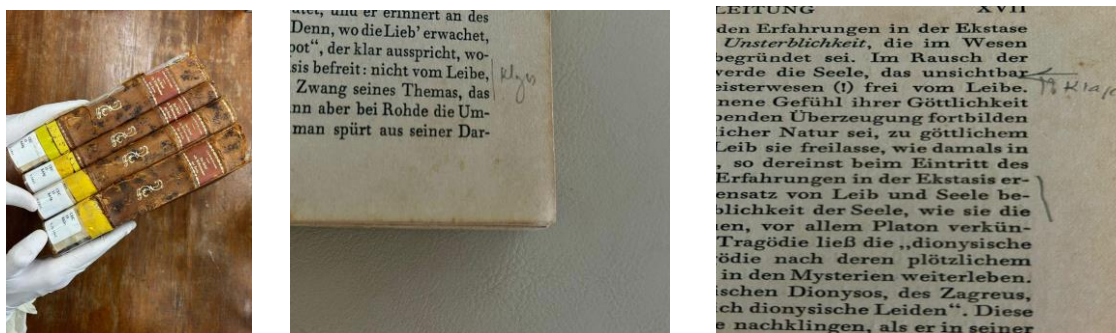


Imagem 2: German edition of Klages and *Psyché* read in 1940, and the search for Klages in Rohde and vice versa.

¹⁹ Both in the inaugural lectures at the Brazilian Institute of Philosophy (IBF) in São Paulo in 1954, and in the founding of the University of Brasília, such a paradigm would be established as a program.

²⁰ Unpublished letter.

It will not be the last time the word “*fragment*” appears in Eudoro’s portrayal of his studies and readings. The very nature of the fragment (Mota, 2019: 23-37) and its scattered pieces shapes the interpretation of someone who would translate Novalis’ *fragments* as his first publication – a deliberate and symbolic choice,²¹ considering that this poet is regarded as a critique of the French Revolution and its effects (Losurdo, 2018). A German example of Klages is the small, fragmented collection of an edition acquired by Eudoro de Sousa in Heidelberg. Also on the same table during his “Germanic” months was *Psyche* by Erwin Rohde, prefaced by Hans Eckstein. Extensively examined in the *marginalia* present here, one of the focal points of the reading was Rohde’s interpretation of Book XI of the *Odyssey*.²² The arguments and problems raised by the famous defender of Nietzsche were of great interest to Eudoro, as well as what in Rohde explains Klages – and helps understanding Nietzsche’s own influences and weaknesses.

Whether in deepening the connections between Homer and indigenous traditions or by examining the Orphic element as something prior to and/or intrinsic to Homer²³ (even while the term “Orphic” required an uncomfortable use of quotation marks by some scholars),²⁴ the *reader* traces a method in the making; a scene from the Eudorian workshop, building the program of the *Prolegomena* in Reich’s Heidelberg. These are the first steps of an emerging exegesis.

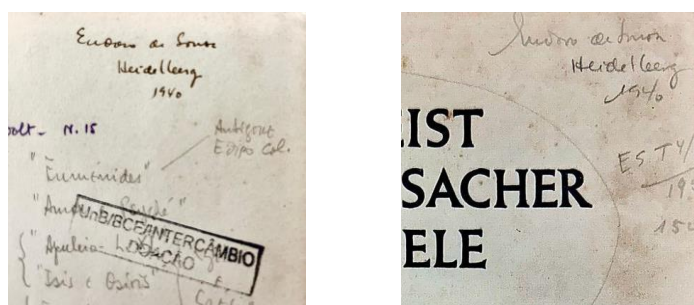


Imagem 3: *ex libris* in copies of Rohde and Klages.

Both books were read in Heidelberg in 1940. In both, as previously noted – though especially in Rohde – the reading progressed alongside the

²¹ A facsimile of the original published during World War II is available at https://digitalis-dsp.uc.pt/bg4/UCBG-RP-1-5-s1_3/UCBG-RP-1-5-s1_3_master/UCBG-RP-1-5-s2/UCBG-RP-1-5-s2_item1/P79.html.

²² Inputs from the legendary course on *catabases* offered at UnB in the 1960s.

²³ It is from these same months Eudoro’s reading *Orphicorum fragmenta* by Otto Kern, as discovered when visiting what remains of his library

²⁴ Pitt, 2022.

translation of the language. The very controversy led Eudoro first to Rohde.²⁵ In Eckstein's preface, red ink is used to mark a rereading done after 1950, the year *Mythos und Kult bei Naturvölkern* was published. Upon revisiting Rohde:

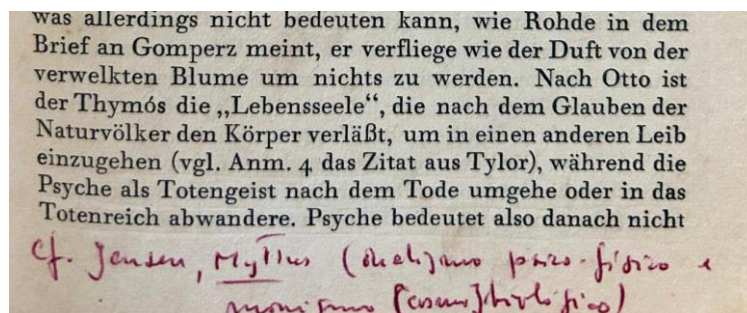


Imagem 4: Second layer of reading in *Psyché* with red pen: “cf. Jensen, Mythus (psychophysical dualism and (cosmobiological) monism)”).

Here is the reader responding with Jensen, complementing the reading and argumentation that formed the basis of the 3rd National Congress of Philosophy in São Paulo, which took place in November 1959. It was only in 1961 that the thesis was made public, whose author “resisted, as much as he could, the temptation to express it in the form in which it is actually expressed” (Sousa, 2000: 181).

But this *complementarity* had been discussed in other spheres, given its influence on modern physics. In his third publication, in 1944, with the support of the *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Kulturinstituts Lissabon*, he translated Karl Weizsäcker from German. His interest: philosophy and atomic physics. The Portuguese cultural magazine *Rumo* would publish “Origem da poesia e da mitologia no drama ritual” about two years later, marking the beginning of a dramatic theory of myth. In the same edition, Delfim Santos celebrates the Portuguese translation of “Zum Weltbild der Physik”,²⁶ a “very well translated” work by Weizsäcker. The war would continue, and translation would always be a front. The conflict was about to end, and the high Portuguese *intelligentsia* announced the bomb through the convergence of fields. The “consequences to which modern physics has compelled philosophical speculation”²⁷ had become inevitable. Logic and Ethics find themselves in the same destruction of reason.

²⁵ For an approach to the controversy through texts published at the time, see Machado, 2005.

²⁶ The edition from Coimbra published by Revista Atlântida with a translation by Cabral de Moncada would be titled Towards a physical conception of the universe.

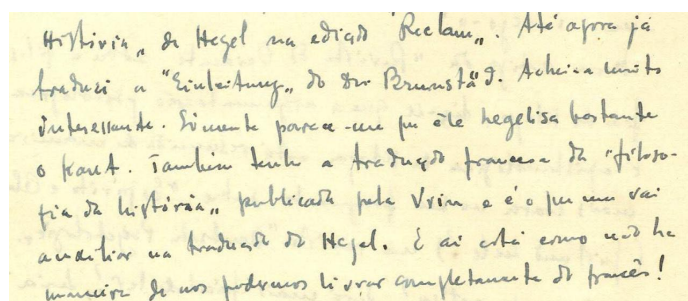
²⁷ SANTOS, Delfim. A cosmo-visão da física moderna. *Rumo*. Ano I, Lisboa, 1946, p. 201-221.

It seems to us, upon a first rereading with attention to his notes, that *complementarity* is both rehearsed as a response to Hegel and points to an attempt to resolve thought structures that emphasize contradictions. Additionally, the influence of modern physics shapes the debate within philosophy. This image and experience would profoundly mark Eudoro de Sousa until the end of his life, when he would affirm in *Colina Velha* that it was only with nuclear fission that Prometheus had finally gifted fire to mankind.

In this context, to respond to Rohde, Eudoro engages with Alfred Baeumler (1887-1968), who, coming directly from Dresden, would be a key figure in the assimilation of Nietzsche into the ideological framework of the Third Reich.²⁸ Rohde justifies Homer's silence regarding Dionysus by claiming that the recent Thracian god did not yet hold the importance he would later achieve. The map is laid out and reviewed before us, loose in a vast manuscript between pages 112-113 of his copy. In this study on Greek religion and mythology, under the influence of Romanticism, bibliographical and methodological notes are outlined from a first reading, done swiftly in 1940. Here, the pursuit of bibliography is affirmed, and fundamentally, the permanent relationship between religion, philosophy, poetry, etc., is established. The problem of distinguishing between origin and beginning, and the questions brought by phenomenology to the problem of history, are also present.²⁹

It is not surprising to find here, on the worktable of the second semester of 1940, an *emphasis on the reaction to Hegel*, a keen awareness of the Hegelian presence. In a letter from February 1938, Delfim reads:

(...) I bought Hegel's Philosophy of History in the "Reclam" edition eight days ago. So far, I've already translated the "Einleitung" by Dr. Brunstäd. I



A handwritten note in Portuguese on aged, yellowed paper. The text is written in cursive and discusses the acquisition and translation of Hegel's 'Philosophy of History' (Reclam edition) and the 'Einleitung' (Introduction) by Dr. Brunstäd. The note mentions that the work is interesting because it is a Hegelian work and that the author has also translated French philosophy and history, published by Vrin, and that it is a very good work. The note concludes with the statement: 'E ai está como um ha monioso de um profundo livro completamente de francês!'.

²⁸ According to Domingues (2001), Eudoro de Sousa's "direct immersion into the heart of German culture" would have taken shape precisely after reading Baeumler, through the influence that Álvaro Ribeiro exerted using the work of Ernst Seillières.

²⁹ Full transcript in Borges, 2015: 200.

found it very interesting. It just seems to me that he Hegelianizes Kant quite a bit.³⁰

Imagem 5: conversation about books between Delfim and Eudoro, 1940.

In letters from other friends, warning and preparing criticism of Hegel is the order of the day. Regarding this context, and specifically about one of these authors that Eudoro encountered in his search, which, according to the letters, began with Klages, Georg Lukács (2018: 48) says:

The “renaissance” of classical German philosophy during the imperialist period is not, therefore, a renewal or further development of Hegelian dialectics, nor an intention to actualize Hegel’s historicism, but rather an attempt to put Hegelian philosophy at the service of a reactionary and imperialist reconstruction of Neo-Kantianism.

It is not the occasion of elaborating on the virtues and problems of the Hungarian philosopher and critic’s analysis of German philosophy. Even so, we see in his critique of irrationalism the confirmation that challenging the Hegelian tradition or launching attacks against the risks it represents was part of a generational effort. “All philosophers,” Lukács explains while questioning a supposed unity between Hegel and Kant,³¹ “strive to demonstrate that all the problems of Hegelian philosophy are already present in Kant, that the only thing Hegel did was to consciously and explicitly formulate what was already implicitly and unconsciously in Kant.”³²

Regardless of whether one adheres to Lukács’ thesis or not, what matters to us is understanding what is encrypted in the letters and the articulation we present here. Europe is taking new directions, and it will always be necessary to ward off the Jacobin risk, metamorphosed into the demonic fear of the events of October 1917. Even in Klages, Eudoro remains attentive. In *Geist und Seele* we read:

Systeme im engeren Sinne entstehen erst, wo die Gedankenbewegung, statt unmittelbar aus der Sprache zu schöpfen, vielmehr im Mittel eines schon festen Bestandes philosophischer Begriffesgeschichte.³³

³⁰ Unpublished letter.

³¹The Hungarian author here explicitly cites Windelband, J. Ebbinghaus, and Brunstäd, the latter being the author of the *Einleitung* read by Eudoro in 1940. It is worth noting that Brunstäd, with Lutheran influence, was an important figure in right-wing circles of the Weimar Republic.

³² Lukács, 2018.

³³ “Systems in the strictest sense only emerge where the movement of thought, instead of deriving directly from language, occurs through an already fixed body of philosophical concepts.”

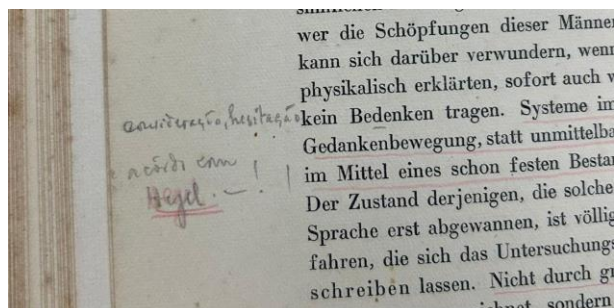


Imagem 6: Eudorian *marginalia* present in Klages editio.

The reader does not hesitate in responding with the characteristic *exclamatory style, underlining in red*: “according to Hegel!” The simultaneity of readings appears not only in the manuscript that establishes the *ex libris* on the title page. Still reflecting on the origin and function of the Thracian god, in the course of Rohde’s analysis of hieromania, enthusiasm and ecstasy, Eudoro’s search asserts itself, and the *marginalia* shows: “[Rohde’s] description supports Klages regarding the nature of Ecstasy.” Eudoro will soon be immersed in the debate about Orphism.

One book leads to another through the clues provided by the letters, in a structure where *marginalia*, notes, and counter-notes are added through different years, in one, sometimes even two or more layers of readings. Both lead to Otto Kern, also read in 1940, forming not only the Orphic epistemic foundation of Eudoro’s period, but also tracing a thread of continuity interrupted with blood from the hands of the Heidelberg reader, a former student of Heidegger’s lectures.

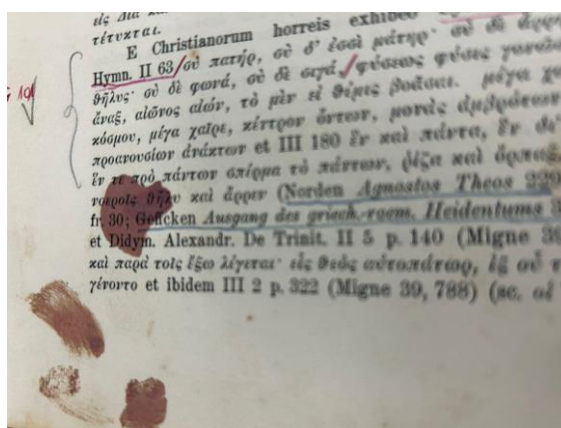


Imagem 7: Eudoro de Sousa’s blood in O. Kern exemplary.

Finding blood on private books read in Germany, a search that aimed only to open paths in the labyrinths of Eudoro’s readings of Klages, Rohde, and

Baeumler, cannot help but suggest something *sui generis* regarding Klages' German. Explaining Heidegger's radicalism, Emmanuel Faye presents a debate for which Klages was known, something much more foundational to German thought than his graphology – namely, the idea of race and blood, no longer corrupted by Darwin's "biologism." German blood necessarily becomes "authentic" blood, blood that still flows today through the wreckage left by Nazism. Ludwig Klages, Alfred Rosenberg, Alfred Baeumler... Hitler. In some German library in 1940, the name of Eudoro de Sousa aligned and integrated with a still little-examined axis – not in its European problems, but in its influence within Latin America.

Exodus: at the expense of Integralism.

The letter embodies an ambivalence; it is the exteriority of an interiority, and still: it is the display of an invisibility. Materializing a wide and varied range of feelings and thoughts. The letter is a way to make the private public, to introduce the individual into society (Neves, 1988: 191).

Between leaving Heidelberg (1940) and arriving in Brazil (1952), issues arise. With a Germanic baptism and swimming against the Lusitanian current, Eudoro sets out to sea like many Portuguese who came to the Americas, most of them devoid of any kind of anticolonial critique.

The defense of a Center for European Studies; the critique of his time and the problem between contributing with and rejecting the context in which he lived until emigrating; his perspectives on philology itself as a science or considerations on fundamental aspects of the history of classical studies; his stance towards Wolf's program and the Science of Antiquity; as well as specific debates where he developed original and mature work on mythological and religious themes, always invoking the constant relationship between poetry, myth, and philosophy – all of this demonstrates how fertile the 1940s were. But it is on his political alignment that we now focus our attention, as well as the distinctive trait of his effacement. Firstly, to deviate from the narrative that always attributed to Eudoro an *apolitical* character, among other absurdities,³⁴ and secondly, to pinpoint him by identifying the groups and projects with which he was involved and which he supported.

The position that the intellectual Adolfo Casais Monteiro (1908-1972) would hold regarding his friend, having integrated himself into Brazil in 1954, presents us – through an exchange of books – an unmistakable

³⁴ In Belchior (2024:111), for example, it is even stated that Eudoro de Sousa had issues with Salazarism, which couldn't be further from the truth.

glimpse of the atmosphere among the tertulians even before the war had ended. It is January 21, 1943:

To Eudoro de Sousa, wishing that, without losing your philosophical sense, you may gain a bit of psychological sense, at least to understand that silence is accordance, and therefore implies co-responsibility (...).

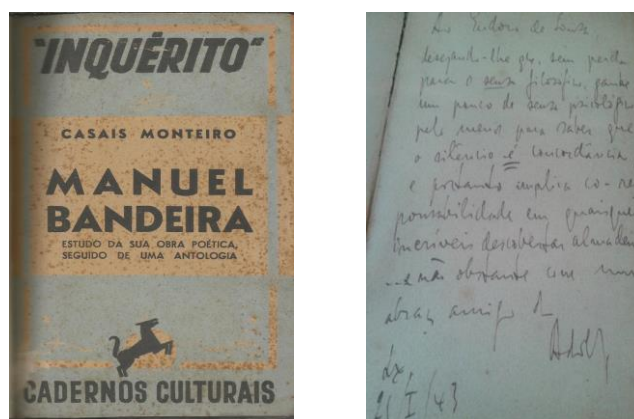


Imagem 8: inscription dedicated to Eudoro, 1943.

This is how “Casais,” as Eudoro’s daughter still refers to him today, dedicates his *Manuel Bandeira: estudo de sua obra poética*. The year 1943 would also witness the creation of LSD by the hands of Hoffman’s chemistry. In April, the Warsaw Ghetto would rise. His position *to the press*, regarded as authoritative, illuminates the context:

That to this day there has not emerged in Portuguese culture the logical and metaphysical equivalent of the genius that, in sublimity, is revealed in the maritime epic of the 15th and 16th centuries, and, in beauty, in a timeless lyricism; that is, that Portuguese genius has no philosophical expression – this seems incontestable (Sousa, 2000: 275).

Accusing Portugal of being inherently anti-philosophical (because obviously only Greece and Germany are granted that privilege), Eudoro is asked about universities:

It is true that the Portuguese university does not have a school of philosophy, that the language schools do not offer a specialized philosophy course, that neither students nor professors read the original works of the great Greek and German philosophers, and that, due to the lack of direct Portuguese translations, we are subject to the distortions of French translations (Sousa, 2000: 276).

The internal struggle within universities and the risk of turning to France due to the lack of a philosophical tradition in Portugal is the context in which, at its peak, classical philology is suspended by the heraldic claws of the *Reichsadler*. The intellectual environment fractures, and Eudoro is

aware that the tertulians of his generation, “‘groups’ formed by the rare men of each generation, driven by an *authentic* interest in philosophical speculation, soon disperse in every direction due to personal divergences (Sousa, 2000: 276, emphasis ours).”

It is time! In an exodus, dozens of intellectuals emigrate to Latin America, with the more conservative ones heading to Argentina and, in Brazil, to São Paulo’s Integralism. In the year 1949, two emblematic movements occur along the *Lisbon-Mendoza axis*. In an attempt to get a position in Cuyo, we read the following words from Eudoro:³⁵

Tell your Rector that I am ready to teach (...) a course on the language, literature, religion, and philosophy of Ancient Greece, or if they want nothing to do with the Greeks, on the philosophy of Romanticism and German Idealism, or on the general history or phenomenology of religions [...].

But what I prefer, and where I can be of most service, is a course on mythology, religion, and philosophy of Ancient Greece.

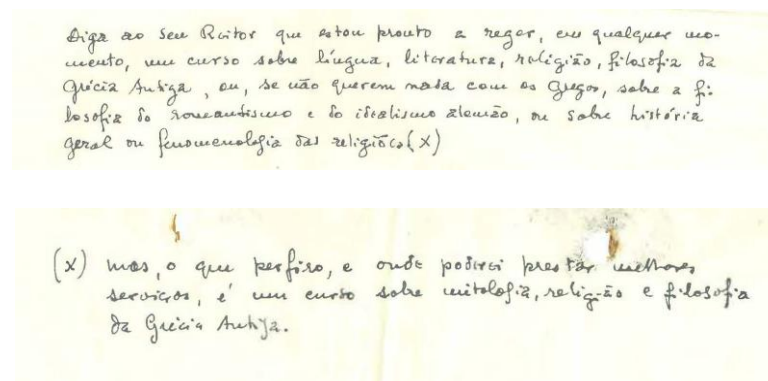


Imagem 9: letter in which Eudoro presents his credentials to Mendoza, Argentina, 1949.

Intellectually mature,³⁶ Eudoro defines how he can serve the Latin American university,³⁷ just as he had rehearsed at the Center for European Studies, discussing the state of classical studies in Portugal, with a critical and creative approach to renewing classical studies after his experience in Heidelberg. Already suffering the consequences of not having any of the bureaucratic formalities required by higher education institutions, and understanding that the Portuguese crisis prevented the cultivation of

³⁵ Unpublished letter.

³⁶ Eudoro de Sousa is 38 years old.

³⁷ It was approximately during this period that he published interventions in *Anales de Arqueología y Etnología*, an Argentinian journal where he launched the core texts that would later be republished in *Dioniso em Creta e outros ensaios* (1973). For some time, the reasons why Eudoro dedicated himself to publishing in Spanish were overlooked (Domingues, 2001: 172), a trace of both the self-centered argument of Lusophone criticism and the effort to ignore the *continent* as Eudoro’s intention – *not necessarily Brazil*.

classical culture as a common European good, the now “renowned Hellenist” spares no effort to interrupt the interview: “this is not the occasion to criticize our university education (...) but I will simply say that I completely disagree with the way higher education in the humanities has been organized, since 1911, in language schools” (Sousa, 2000: 359).

As if foreshadowing the fate he would face after May 1968, our mythologist judges that

(...) the existence of language schools in universities has no cultural sense, and even less, a Portuguese one. If by “Languages” one means the body of “literature,” and by the study of “literature,” the investigation of the thought of the peoples who produced them, there is no doubt that the proper institution would be better named a school of philology, or even better, a school of philosophy. “Language” corresponds to a sterile aestheticism that belongs to... History. “Philology” or “Philosophy” signifies the more serious attitude of those who are no longer satisfied with matters of taste (Sousa, 2000: 359).

For Eudoro in 1944, Schelling emerged as a symbol of the transcendence of allegory, in the same aforementioned text on Portugal’s philosophical incapacity, the “illustrious Hellenist” declared: “here is the problem whose solution we propose to the reader who, in *exalting the Genius of the Race*, prefers authentic vision to precarious comparison” (Sousa, 2000: 276, emphasis ours). Austria had already been annexed, the Sudetenland ceded with French support at the expense of Czechoslovakia, Poland had been swept by German troops by the end of 1939, yet despite “upheavals like that of May 10 [1940],” we see Eudoro, fervently disregarding the *Reich*’s expansionist policy, speaking of *authenticity*³⁸ and “exaltar o Génio da Raça.”

The fact is that in 1949,³⁹ in a letter confessing suicidal ideation if he were to remain in Europe, a defining ideo-political trait emerges when he claims that no “psychological or ideological” opposition would represent progress in the face of a Salazar who demonstrated “competence and the most penetrating sense of realities” (Sousa, 2000: 358). This is Eudoro’s

³⁸ For a critical examination of the category of “authenticity” in light of the context indicated here, see Faye, 2015: 72.

³⁹ By way of illustration/suggestion of what is presented here, note that the publication of *Les ages du monde suivis de Les Divinités de Samothrace*, translated by S. Jankélévitch, dates from this year. Eudoro’s copy of this Parisian edition would be acquired at the famed *Livraria Francesa* on *Barão de Itapetininga* Street, during his time in São Paulo (1952–1955). By the late 1970s, now at the University of Brasília, Eudoro would return to reading Schelling in a French edition, as evidenced by the 206 pages of *Textes Esthétiques* (1978), where the *marginalia* suggest a rereading of the German philosopher for the development of the book *Sempre o Mesmo Acerca do Mesmo* (Sousa, 1978), with emphasis on *texte 6*, dedicated to reflections on *Schème, Allégorie, Symbole*, a core of Eudoro’s thought in the 1980s.

position in one of his “rare”⁴⁰ incursions into the political field, on the eve of a fraudulent election that would be followed by purges, crimes, and political deaths.

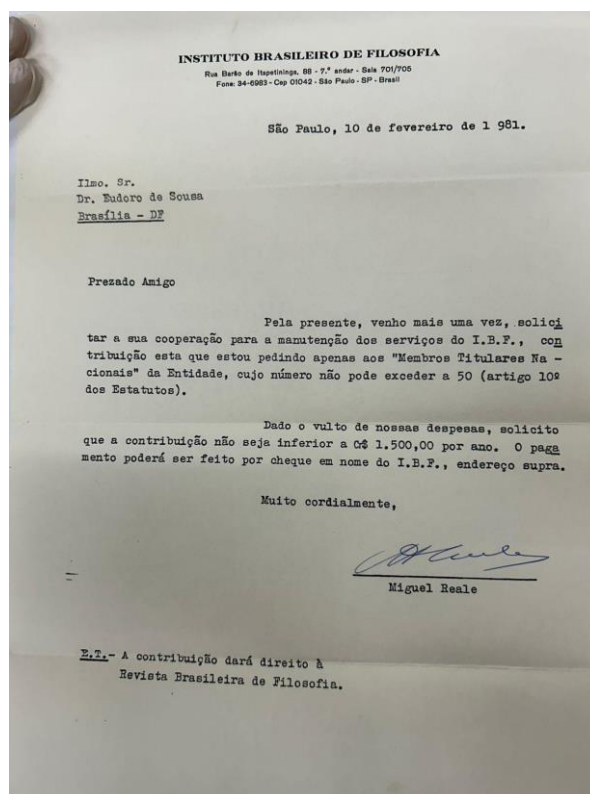


Imagem 10: letter from Miguel Reale to Eudoro de Sousa inside a copy of Klages read in 1940.

Finding a letter written by Reale to Eudoro in 1981, kept inside an edition of Klages printed during the *Reich* (an edition reread for the development of the work Eudoro managed to publish with the support of the Brazilian dictatorship from the 1970s onward),⁴¹ reveals how Reale charges a debt owed to the institute and requests a contribution “no less than” the established amount for the selection supporting the Brazilian Institute of Philosophy (IBF).

Filipe Delfim Santos’s work shows that, after attempting to settle in Argentina, Eudoro took on a leading role at the IBF —remarkably, *in full*

⁴⁰ This constitutes a profile entirely different from the one that, whether in criticism or oral memory, portrays Eudoro de Sousa as apolitical, as a master removed from the fate of the polis.

⁴¹ As demonstrated through analysis and primary sources in a short course for the XI Encontro ANPUH-DF: Gênero, Raça e Classe e os 60 anos do Golpe civil-militar, in December 2024, titled “O maio de 1968 na Universidade de Brasília: a degola de Eudoro de Sousa e o legado dos ‘clássicos’.”

*leadership and with diligence*⁴²—a position that has been little discussed in terms of the co-optation of the field of philosophy and classical studies by an autocratic axis (Gonçalves, 2016). The IBF was founded in 1949, its journal in 1951, and Eudoro was seen by the *São Paulo group* and the IBF's Catholic Integralists as the epitome of Portuguese intellectualism, much like Delfim. The latter, from the late 1930s through the 1960s, would attempt forays into the academic field through Integralism's mediation.

Despite all of this, it is difficult to understand the continuity of Eudoro's reactionary stance without knowing who Reale and the IBF were. To grasp the intellectual advance of the far right in Brazil and the construction of Brazilian universities, one must recognize that the history of the University of São Paulo (USP), since 1934, is the history of a project by São Paulo's oligarchy, specially from 1949 onwards—a year of intensified disputes at that university (Gonçalves, 2016: 89). From this period comes Delfim Santos' contribution to Reale's circle, presenting his views on the "crisis of the university." Delfim Santos served as a guide for/among Luso-Brazilian intellectuals, the same *guide* who, in another unpublished letter from July 1940, while Eudoro praised Hitler in his correspondence, joyfully exalted the French capitulation and the barbarism that preceded Dunkirk:

I greatly appreciated your initial reports from Germany. I believe that, in the most important aspects, you *should not have been disappointed* with the social organization and other elements that greatly interest us: *Germany must now be experiencing a well-deserved moment of victorious exaltation*. It must have been interesting for you to witness it.⁴³

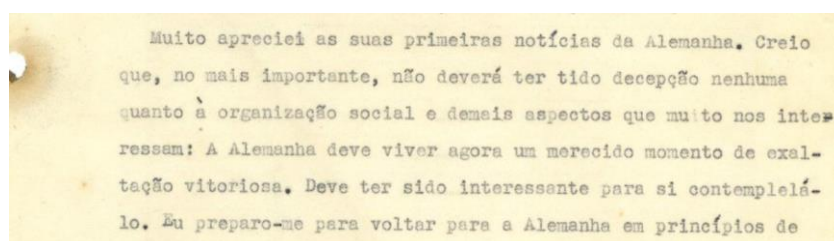


Imagem 11: letter from Delfim Santos to Eudoro de Sousa on July 6, 1940.

Eudoro de Sousa would then be received in São Paulo in 1952 by Vicente Ferreira da Silva, Reale's right-hand man at the IBF and in São Paulo's intellectual scene. The *aristocratic conception* that establishes them, a phenomenon surgically explained by Rodrigo Jurucê Gonçalves in 2016, remains largely unaddressed in Eudoro's critical reception. Let us listen to the professor and historian:

⁴² As part of the corpus collection shows with rich details (Santos, 2011).

⁴³ Unpublished letter.

(...) the IBF undertakes two movements: a conservative reform of Hegelianism and a reaffirmation of legal authoritarianism, both integrated by their critique of Marxism. The first aims to erode the foundations of any anti-autocratic movement from leftist intellectuals; the second ensures the broad development of bourgeois autocracy” (Gonçalves, 2016: 179).

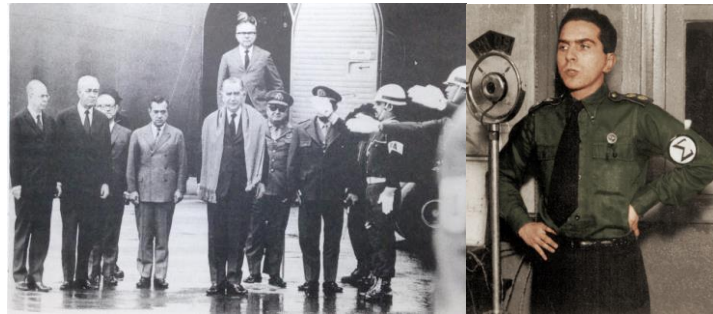


Imagem 12: On the left, in 1971, Reale in the background poses for a photo with Emílio Garrastazu Médici and Gen. Fontoura, head of the National Information Service. On the right, Reale as Secretary of Doctrine for the Integralist Organization in the 1930s.

But there is resistance within the legacy of classical studies and Brazilian thought. It existed then and still exists today, building a class struggle of memory, in the spirit of Walter Benjamin. Recently, the strength of this counter-hegemony emerged in the words of philosopher Marilena Chauí, curiously responding to the critique that USP was a French Overseas Department, during a debate on *structuralist methods*:⁴⁴

Cruz Costa would teach and 90% of what he did was to criticize Miguel Reale’s IBF, the Catholics, the Integralists. During half of the class, Professor Cruz Costa would slam those people. In the other half, he would say they needed to learn to read something of philosophy. And in our time, there was a French philosophy manual written by Cuvillier called *Précis de philosophie*. So, Professor Cruz Costa would say that we needed to take the “*précis* of philosophy” and show them that they needed philosophy.

This is not, and has never been, about pointing out *Nazi elements* in the work of Eudoro de Sousa. It is, rather, about understanding from another point of view the very notion of reception and transmission as it occurred in the 20th century, and the forces at play in the construction of the academic field within the university. With Eudoro de Sousa’s institutional silence, the dictatorship and Miguel Reale took control of the University of Brasília (UnB) as if in a wartime occupation, a few days after the 1964 coup. There is no record of any moral reckoning on the part of Eudoro de Sousa. The silence in the critique regarding the exposed depths of this matter continues to corroborate a radically emblematic case. Recently, the

⁴⁴ Accessed September 2024, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_VdS-VEgPNg.

Commission of Truth provided surprising accounts of the destruction of classical studies at the leading university in Latin America under the aegis of Institutional Act No. 5. In view of our arguments, it is not impossible that by the end of 1964 Eudoro de Sousa may have applauded, alongside Reale, the presence of Plínio Salgado on the Darcy Ribeiro *campus*. In any case, it is also clear beyond question that the *Deutscher Gruß* profoundly influenced one of the masks worn by Eudoro de Sousa.

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