The Philosophy of the Übermensch in Nikos Kazantzakis and Migjen as an Influence of Friedrich Nietzsche

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Abstract
This study examines the influence of Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophy on Migjen and Nikos Kazantzakis, focusing on the "Übermensch" as a shared intertextual framework. It explores how Nietzschean thought shapes their rebellious ethos and the epic dimension of their characters. The article highlights key philosophical convergences between Albanian and Greek literature, emphasizing both the uniqueness of these works and their commonality.
Key words: déjà lu, philosophy, Übermensch, intertextuality, existentialism

Introduction

Nietzsche's philosophy constitutes one of the most powerful expressions of an age of awakening and of the dark realities underlying the formative centuries of modernity. His worldview is marked by a kind of atemporality, it does not fade, but continually reappears as an inexhaustible source of creation and as an opaque, yet generative, foundation of the world.

His thought enjoyed an extraordinary diffusion and exerted a multifaceted influence first on German literature itself and, through translation into other languages, on the literatures of many countries. At its core stand several key concepts the *"Death of God"*, the *"Will to power",* and the *"Übermensch"*, through which he articulates a revolt against a morality of submission and against passive nihilism. *"Thus Spoke Zarathustra"* is the most resonant articulation of this philosophy, written in an aphoristic and unsystematic mode, often in tension with Nietzsche's own theses and reflections.

In this sense, historical truth, morality, the ideal, the supra-human, power, and the death of God do not present themselves as a closed philosophical system or a traditional ethics. Rather, they appear as a philosophy of life, of conflict with the other, and of self-overcoming. Nietzsche's thought has exercised a profound influence on existentialist philosophy, on modern literature, and on twentieth-century cultural reflection.

The methodology of this paper is comparative. It places the works of Nikos Kazantzakis alongside those of Migjen with the aim of analyzing thematic, ideological and stylistic convergences and divergences, as well as the ways in which each author articulates existential and social concerns within his specific cultural and historical context. The idea of bringing these two authors into relation arises from striking similarities observed in the act of reading. It is not difficult to perceive the analogies between them, as though they were drawing on the same philosophical source.

Several considerations justify making this comparison the object of the present study. Above all, by examining and approximating these works, we can identify elements in common, both at the level of themes and of narrative and poetic treatment, independently of the place, time and culture in which they emerged. The comparison between Kazantzakis and Migjen, in the light of Nietzsche's influence, reveals a fundamental affinity in their revolt against traditional morality and their search for a new human being. In Kazantzakis, the Nietzschean impulse manifests itself as metaphysical and ethical drama, in Migjen, it appears in a more directly social and existential key. In neither case does Nietzsche's influence remain mere philosophical

imitation, rather, it becomes a creative energy that gives form to the crisis of modern humanity.
Such a comparison is important, on the one hand, for illuminating the affinities between Albanian and Greek literature and, on the other, for demonstrating the force and reach that a single philosophical idea can have in an individual life.

Nietzsche's "Übermensch"

Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophy emerges from a deeply personal and historical context. Friedrich Nietzsche grew up in a strongly Lutheran environment, marked by religious devotion and by the loss of his father, which confronted him early on with questions about suffering, meaning, and the fragility of existence. In these circumstances and within a culture dominated by Christian morality, Nietzsche began to question the foundations of traditional morality.
A decisive influence on his intellectual formation was Arthur Schopenhauer, from whom Friedrich Nietzsche acquired a deep sensitivity to suffering as the essence of existence and a pessimistic vision of the world. Nietzsche says that before encountering Schopenhauer he was lost and without principles to guide him, whereas after becoming acquainted with his figure and thought, everything changed for him. However, unlike Schopenhauer, Nietzsche did not remain within negation, he transformed this inheritance into a philosophy that affirms life.

> *"Young, fiery, questioning all the heroes in order to find the one who would conquer your soul, one day you encountered Schopenhauer! Sitting at his feet, you discovered the heroic and desperate vision of life: the world is the creation of our spirit; all things, visible or not, are nothing but a flattering dream."* (Kazantzakis, 2001: 297)

In parallel, the influence of Richard Wagner was equally formative on an aesthetic and cultural level. For Friedrich Nietzsche, Wagner represented the idea of art as a force capable of renewing culture. Later, however, Nietzsche distanced himself from him, seeing him as a symbol of the cultural decadence he had once criticized.

> *"Your spirit burst forth with a heroic bitterness when one day, in the flower of your youth, you encountered the man of destiny, the second guide after Schopenhauer, who gave you the most insatiable joy of your life: Wagner*." (Kazantzakis, 2001: 298)

These moments are highly significant in Friedrich Nietzsche's life because of their influence and the indelible mark they leave, one that goes beyond ordinary logic. They constitute experiences so powerful, so profound, that they plant in his life an idea, a fundamental principle, an illumination, a metaphysical conviction, or a spiritual path.
Against this philosophical and aesthetic background, Friedrich Nietzsche formulates the concept of the "Übermensch", as one of the deepest and at the same time most challenging ideas of his philosophy. This concept should not be understood as a superior being or a mythical figure, but rather as an existential and ethical ideal that expresses the individual's overcoming of themselves and of the limitations imposed by traditional morality.
The starting point of this concept is closely linked to the idea of the "death of God," which signified a profound crisis of values in the modern world and the collapse of the transcendent foundations upon which meaning in Western civilization had been built. With the disappearance of absolute divine authority, the human being is faced with a void of meaning and morality. In this situation, according to Friedrich Nietzsche, the need arises for the creation of new values.

> *"The 'death of God' means that humanity no longer relies on divine wisdom. The supernatural has disappeared because there is no longer a place for it. For Nietzsche, as well as for many of his contemporaries, the idea of God as an objective reality is incompatible with modern scientific knowledge. But he,*

> *perhaps more than anyone else, understood its frightening consequences. Since God is dead, humanity must walk alone. Since God does not exist, people must shape their own lives. Human beings cannot live without values, but now there is no other source of values except humanity itself. Nietzsche is not against morality; he is deeply concerned with moral standards and guidance, but the old values have lost their power. His mission was to present a 'revaluation of values'"* (Raeper & Smith, 1999: 100)

In Nietzsche's thought, most people live within a morality that stems from weakness and fear. The "Übermensch" on the contrary, does not submit to this morality. He creates a new way of living, in which strength, courage, and self-confidence become essential. This does not mean ruling over others, but rather achieving a form of mastery over oneself.

> *"Thus, Nietzsche's path from morality to the death of God, from passive nihilism to active nihilism, describes a progression in which creativity becomes both a necessity and a destiny. It begins in negation but culminates in affirmation. The destruction of old values is the condition for the possibility of new creation."* (Putra et al., 2025: 69)

Nietzsche repeatedly calls for the rejection of God and the rejection of old values.

> *"The old laws have degraded man, despite the efforts of Christian mercy to conceal this. Nietzsche aimed to overcome these limitations at any cost. Ascetic morality, a life of denial, the confession of guilt, and rigid spirituality are signs of decadence—a distorted conception of life that hinders human development."* (Quiroz Pizarro, 2006: 250)

Through Zarathustra, Nietzsche suggests the extraordinary idea that human beings are nothing more than a bridge, a passage toward the overcoming of man. This implies that human existence should not be understood as a finished or sufficient state, but as a continuous process of transition and transformation. Man is at an intermediate stage of life's development, he is not the final point of spiritual or moral evolution, but a form that must be overcome. Man represents an incomplete state, open to change, where creative forces, instincts, and the will to power push him toward a higher form of existence. This higher form is the "Übermensch," which is an ideal of self-overcoming, complete freedom, and affirmation of life.

In this way, Zarathustra presents man as a being in continuous self-overcoming, where every achievement is not an end, but a new starting point.

According to Nietzsche, Christianity contributed to that belief man is incapable of self-governance and requires external guidance embodied in the figure of a God who rewards or punishes. In this framework, the individual who fails to achieve something meaningful with his life becomes absorbed into the mass and submits to the logic of the crowd, avoiding "sin" in order to gain the reward of paradise. However, for "free spirits," what is essential is the figure of the creative individual, who dares to live without fear and to affirm life fully, even if he is often labeled "immoral" from a Christian perspective. According to Nietzsche, many of the prohibitions of Christian morality function as instruments of social control and uniformization, aiming to keep man in a state of generalized equality, where no one stands out and everyone remains part of a homogenized herd.

This idea constitutes a direct critique of any philosophy or religion that sees human beings as perfect or as closed within a predetermined destiny. For Nietzsche, it is precisely this openness toward the future and self-overcoming that forms the essence of human dignity.

A number of existentialist philosophers and thinkers found this idea extremely inspiring. Authors such as Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus valued the idea that human beings do not have a predefined essence and that they must create themselves through their choices and actions.

Sartre's famous statement, *"Hell is other people"* (Sartre, 1981: 43), comes from his play *"No Exit"* and expresses the existentialist idea that the judgment of others restricts our freedom and creates a psychological hell, forcing us to be someone we may not truly be.

This concept was interpreted as a call for freedom and radical responsibility. Thus, Sartre emphasizes the absolute freedom of every individual to create themselves without a predetermined destiny, without a shared final destination, like the "Übermensch". Meanwhile, Albert Camus accepts the spirit of revolt found in Friedrich Nietzsche, but rejects the idea of a final transcendence of human beings toward a higher form. In this sense, Camus is particularly critical of any philosophy that suggests a "salvation" beyond the human condition. For him, human greatness does not lie in becoming the "Übermensch," but in the ability to live with dignity within one's own limits.

On the other hand, some critics have viewed this idea as dangerous, especially due to the misinterpretation of the "Übermensch." In the 20th century, the idea was distorted in certain political contexts and unfairly associated with violent and hierarchical ideologies. Thus, at the beginning of the 20th century, some of Nietzsche's ideas were taken out of context and used selectively, especially by Nazism in Germany. A significant distortion occurred here, the "Übermensch" was interpreted as a biologically superior human being, associated with ideas of "racial purity," physical strength, and domination over others. For this reason, some scholars have criticized the concept as vague and open to extreme interpretations.

In the religious tradition, especially in Christianity, the response has been mainly critical. The Church and theologians have viewed the idea of self-overcoming as a denial of human dependence on God and as a form of human pride that risks separating man from the traditional spiritual and moral dimension. From a theological perspective, the main issue is that the concept of the "Übermensch" implies a replacement of God with man. In Christian theology, man is not the ultimate measure of good, but a limited creature who derives meaning only in relation to God. Various theologians have also emphasized that the "Übermensch" risks producing an ethics without objective limits, where good and evil no longer have a transcendent foundation. For the Church, this leads to moral relativism, where each individual can create their own values, making a shared universal ethical norm impossible.

> *"Everything that a theologian considers to be true must be false; this, in practice, becomes a criterion of truth. Where the influence of theologians is felt, value judgments are overturned, and the concepts of "true" and "false" are necessarily reversed: everything that most strongly harms life is called "true," while everything that improves, enhances, strengthens, justifies life, or makes it triumphant is called "false." Nietzsche* attributes *the same inversion of truth and falsehood to philosophers as well, when he writes that the "true world" they defend is "an illusory world, insofar as it is a moral-optical illusion," which is "fabricated" in order to take revenge on life."* (Zulnoorain, 2025: 91)

Thus, reactions range from deep philosophical inspiration to moral criticism and ideological misinterpretation, making this concept one of the most discussed and debated in modern thought. This wide spectrum of interpretations shows not only the complexity of the concept itself, but also the internal tensions of modern thought, which fluctuates between the need for meaning and the crisis of universal values.

The ideas of Friedrich Nietzsche were absorbed and transformed by numerous authors, both in philosophy and literature. The influence of Friedrich Nietzsche on literature is deep and multidimensional, because his ideas transform the way writers think about the human being, morality, and artistic creation. Ai its core, Nietzsche challenges

traditional concepts such as absolute truth, universal morality, and the death of God, opening the way for a more experimental and individualist literature.
Literature inspired by Nietzsche often portrays the individual who rebels against social and moral norms. This is evident in many authors such as Franz Kafka, Thomas Mann, Albert Camus, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, and many others. Thus, the influence of his philosophy on modern and postmodern literature is undeniable, especially in the way authors address the crisis of values, individual freedom, and the creation of meaning.
By rejecting established dogmatism, he gave voice to the will to forge new values within a world losing its traditional bearings. Through this clarion call for authenticity, his work remains a definitive guide for the modern individual striving to construct personal meaning amidst contemporary chaos and existential ambiguity. In this sense, he remains one of the thinkers who has most profoundly reshaped modern thought.

The Übermensch as Self-Transcendence in Nikos Kazantzakis

Following his numerous journeys (to France, Germany, Austria, Italy, Crete, Palestine, Cyprus, Egypt), Nikos Kazantzakis forged many new friendships and absorbed a wide array of influences that shaped both his intellectual formation and his literary work. At the same time, his mental development and deepening immersion in his own visions increasingly isolated him. According to Lotman, *"...a well-known scholar* a distinguished work contains the informational essence of its cultural system, including the collective memory and intertextual references of that culture."(Lotman, 1976: 127)
In Kazantzakis we observe a continuous ebb and flow of philosophical and religious systems, which he abandons and then revisits. He approached these systems without prejudice, maintained an essentially eclectic stance, and drew from philosophy those concepts, ideas and perspectives that could be transmuted into artistic energy. The influence of Nietzsche's philosophy is particularly evident, both in the rebellious temper of his writing and in the epic stature of his characters. During his studies in Paris, Nikos Kazantzakis encounters the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche, an encounter that marks a significant turning point in his intellectual formation. At first, he perceives Nietzsche as a shocking and even dangerous figure, as his ideas challenge and overturn traditional foundations regarding God, morality, truth, and social order.

> *"-But who is this? -I asked, attempting to withdraw the young woman's hand in order to discern the name.*
> *-You do not know him? Is this your first encounter with him? It is Nietzsche! Nietzsche! I had heard his name, yet I had not read any of his works.*
> *-Have you not encountered The Birth of Tragedy, Thus Spoke Zarathustra? The writings on the Eternal Recurrence and the Overman?*
> *-Nothing at all, -I replied, with a sense of embarrassment.*
> *-Wait! -the young woman said, and hastened away. She soon returned, bringing me Zarathustra.*
> *Here! -she remarked with a smile, sustenance worthy of a lion for your soul, provided that you possess a soul and that it hungers.*
> *That moment proved to be among the most decisive in my life. There, within the Sainte-Geneviève Library, through the mediation of an unknown female student, fate had laid a snare for me; there awaited me ardent, formidable the great warrior, blood-stained: the Antichrist."* (Kazantzakis, 2001: 294)

However, over time and through deeper reading, this feeling of fear is transformed into a strong attraction and admiration. Friedrich Nietzsche's anger and pride strongly attracted Nikos Kazantzakis, who immersed himself in his work with a mixture of passion and anxiety, as if penetrating a living jungle filled at once with danger and enchantment, where hungry beasts and intoxicating aromas coexist in constant tension. Nietzsche no longer appears as a "blasphemer", but as a thinker who pushes the individual to face difficult realities and create the meaning of his existence himself.

From this confrontation, a deep inner tension arises within Nikos Kazantzakis. On one side stands the influence of Friedrich Nietzsche, with the concept of the Übermensch**,** the will to power, the overcoming of oneself and the denial of traditional morality, on the other, his human inclination towards compassion, equality and solidarity. In this context, a kind of "spiritual anarchy" is created, in which the individual remains uncertain and disoriented about what to believe.

In this respect, Friedrich Nietzsche appears as a deeply tragic figure, he overthrows old systems of values, but at the same time tries to build new, more powerful ones. Nikos Kazantzakis adopts this philosophy. While admiring Nietzsche's strength and intellectual courage, he remains tethered to the values of humanism and love, giving rise to a persistent inner tension. For this reason, a persistent inner tension continuously emerges throughout his work.

> *"Little by little, in my* soul*, the two figures, Christ and Antichrist, merged. So they were not eternal enemies, Lucifer was not an opponent of God and evil could sometimes be placed in the service of Good and cooperate with it!"* (Kazantzakis, 2001: 295)

Thus, Kazantzakis was shaken and tortured throughout his life.

> *"Kazantzakis owes this awareness to a large extent to his devotion to Friedrich Nietzsche. However, he never fully and unconditionally surrendered to the "optimistic or Dionysian nihilism" of the great philosopher. His soul always remained open to the ideal of love and brotherhood, which is the antithesis of Nietzschean social philosophy... Kazantzakis was shaken, as a thinker, as an artist and as a human being, by this vision of social justice, which in the eyes of Friedrich Nietzsche is nothing more than a pretext for imposing on the weak and the incapable. He did not leave, perhaps he did not even wish to leave, a complete socio-philosophical system. But Kazantzakis' work contains the embryos of a genuine evaluative approach, which ultimately leads to the construction of a humanist social ethic."* (Georgiadou, 2014: 93)

In this spirit of confrontation between the Dionysian ideal and Christian ethics, Kazantzakis's thought takes on a more challenging and critical tone. Influenced by Nietzsche, yet at the same time involved in a continuous dialogue with the Christian tradition, he constructs a discourse that does not simply aim at rejection, but at the re-examination of fundamental moral values. This internal clash between rebellion and faith, between individual freedom and the promise of an afterlife, pushes the author towards a sharp critique of traditional morality.

> *"It is a lion's food that Nietzsche had given me in the most decisive, most hungry moment of my youth; I had gained strength; contemporary man, as he had become, was far too narrow for me; the crucified Christ who postpones rewards and punishments to a future life in* order *to console slaves, cowards, the oppressed, so that they may endure this earthly life, the only certain one, without complaint, and humbly bow their necks before their masters! What a sacred gaming table is this religion, where one gives a penny in earthly life to receive ten eternal millions in the other! What naivety, what cunning, what usurer's work!"* (Georgiadou, 2014: 94)

In Kazantzakis's poetics, the human temptation toward a "Übermensch", the death of God, and the will to power are seen as something inevitable, and at this point an organic affinity with the spirit of Nietzschean nihilism emerges.

A Greek critic has observed that, whereas the Nietzschean "German mold" is presented as a ready-made theological matrix, already created and proclaimed and awaiting only acceptance, Kazantzakis's model remains oriented toward becoming. Nietzsche's amor fati, in Kazantzakis, becomes an exhortation to "take up brush and color and paint paradise with one's own hand, and then be buried within it." As one concise formulation

has it, while Nietzsche names man as God, Kazantzakis names as "God" the path of man the road toward becoming truly human. (Kazantzakis, 2021: 98)

For Kazantzakis, the age of the Übermensch will dawn only when human beings begin to strive consciously to transcend the ordinary and the habitual. Like Nietzsche, he criticizes the desire to regress to the animal or to remain arrested at that level, insisting that the human being is not destined to stay as he is.

> *"I hurry. I shall descend, I shall mount another body and I will leave you stranded! And you, my father, you rejoice as you hear the scornful voice of your child. 'Everything, everything for my son!' He cries out. 'I am nothing. I am the ape, he is the man. I am the man, that son of man!' A force within you, more superior, describes you, while destroying the body and the mind, and shouts, 'Risk the present and what is certain, risk for the future and the uncertain!' Save nothing for the final moment. I love risk. We might lose, we might also be saved. Do not ask! Lean the whole world on the hands of risk, every moment! I, the seed of the unborn, devour the entrails of your race and I shout!"* (Kazantzakis, 2021: 36)

In this sense, just as the ape is an object of ridicule for man, so man must become an object of shame and derision for the "*Übermensch*", a painful, almost unbearable figure of insufficiency. The Kazantzakian subject must therefore be troubled, unsettled, and severed both from the animal and from the complacent human.

> *"-Why do you climb? You struggle, you fret, you worry, you struggle to separate yourself from the animal. From the animal and man. Don't abandon me!*
>
> *-I struggle, I climb, so that I do not drown. I reach out my hands, I grasp at warm bodies, I raise my head above thought, so that I may breathe, I am slowly drowning, nothing can hold me any longer;*
>
> *-Lord, why do you tremble?*
>
> *-I am afraid! The dark ascent has no end. My head is a flame that rises eternally, but the spirit of the night blows eternally to extinguish it. My struggle risks every moment. My struggle risks in every body. I walk, I stumble within the flesh, like a traveler in the darkness of night, and I cry out: Help me!"* (Kazantzakis, 2021: 43)

Kazantzakis also advances a distinctive theological anthropology: God is one with the human being; the human is a creature bearing God within. Yet this God within must be liberated through human action. His Übermensch is not a figure who simply resembles God, but one who seeks to surpass God and to exercise sovereignty over others. The human being is thus caught in a constant effort, divided between spirit and matter, between God and man.

A pivotal element in Kazantzakis's philosophy is the notion of freedom. His epitaph often cited in English as "*I hope for nothing. I fear nothing. I am free."* (Kazantzakis, 2001: 115), encapsulates the essence of the Übermensch as a being who wrestles with fear and overcomes it, who chooses and acts despite the absence of ultimate guarantees. Nietzsche's influence on Kazantzakis's thought is therefore undeniable, especially with regard to the idea of the Übermensch. At the same time, a crucial difference separates them. Whereas Nietzsche's Übermensch is a creator of values who transcends traditional morality, Kazantzakis's Übermensch is a human being engaged in an inner struggle, who transcends himself in order to attain spiritual elevation.

Migjen and the Myth of the *Übermensch*

A wide range of problems in philosophy and related disciplines that deal with ethical and metaphysical concepts has generated a debate at once long-standing and acutely contemporary. In confronting different philosophical positions, one sees not only the depth of the issues at stake, but also their extension into what might be called the "boundless spaces" that constitute the mentality or inner logic of a given society.

Re-situating Migjen's poetics in the period of its composition and its geographical setting brings into sharper focus its dialogue with Nietzsche's thought. Migjen (Millosh Gjergj Nikolla), a leading figure of progressive ideas among the writers of the 1930s, introduced a powerful sense of novelty into Albanian literature and broke with the prevailing poetic monotony through his collection Vargjet e lira (Free Verse). He understood clearly that change had to involve society as a whole and that it required a new world, a new human being and a more human order, detached from the inherited figure of "the old man".

From an intertextual perspective, Migjen's work illuminates the culture and specificities of Albanian society, which asserts itself through a revolt nourished by hatred toward the regime and by a profound despair at the poet's own life circumstances. A careful reading of his poems, attentive to their philosophical dimension, quickly reveals both the personal and historical character of his thought. At the centre of Migjen's oeuvre stands the figure of man and the supra-human, articulated in various forms and in tensions between the individual and the universal, the national and the human-universal.

Migjen's reception of Nietzsche's philosophy introduces genuinely innovative elements into Albanian literature. It brings with it the model of the Übermensch, the refusal of the old human self, and the call to embrace this philosophy. Through social interaction and the representations it generates, his poems explore metaphysical and philosophical questions that challenge contemporary narratives.

In the poems *"The birth of man", "Recital of the highlander", "The prologue of prologues"* and *"The traits of the overman"*, Migjen articulates a model of the Übermensch from a renewed perspective. These texts delve into the ambiguities of social identity, the quest for selfhood and the rupture with the old human condition, themes central to his reworking of the supra-human figure.

His philosophy is not animated by sheer force or satanic defiance. Rather, it rests on principles of wisdom, goodwill, the need for radical transformation, and an intense passion for the possibilities of this world:

"Let a man emerge!
Let a New Time be born!
Let an Epic be created!
Let the New Life be sung among our lutes…
…
Let a man be born
great as greatness
and let our conscience be ignited in love
for a new idea, a generous ideal,
for a happy and just national dawn." (Migjen, 1936: 13)

Migjen's search for a new identity is bound up with his desire for change and his refusal to identify wholly with the ways of his predecessors. His poetry probes the complexity of self-discovery, cultural inheritance and the pursuit of authenticity.

A crucial question emerges within Migjen's philosophical horizon: how can a better tomorrow be achieved, even at the cost of sacrificing rational assurances in the name of far-reaching change? His thought revolves around vital, life-related values.

The desire for the birth of this Übermensch testifies to a profound, if tragic, optimism, a fervent wish for a new human being and a transformed world. "Traits of the overman" speaks directly to the changes that must and will come.

"The times passed on the face the Overman
are traces of fighting
are signs of sorrow
for new life is born with the death of man." (Migjen, 1936: 13)

The Migjenian Übermensch is driven by revolt and fully conscious of his condition. He is dissatisfied with the status quo, yet lacks the strength to transcend the human world toward another, supra-human and more promising order. For Migjen, the logic of the "human" marks an earlier stage in a human evolution, only when values are definitively distinguished from anti-values can the age of the Übermensch arise:

"Oh, if I only had a strong fist! To hit the mountain that doesn't scream, right in its heart!" (Migjen, 1936: 31) His revolt is not simply the expression of an injured individual, it extends far beyond the self, outward toward the national community. Individual destiny is inscribed within a collective fate. Across the fragile layers of social consciousness morality, politics, ideology Nietzsche's notion of a political philosophy of the *"will to power"* finds its place.

The Will to Power as a philosophical paradigm

The will to power, the second great theme in Nietzsche's philosophy, is not itself an object of knowledge; rather, knowledge is one of its manifestations. It is not only an anthropological priority, but also a cosmological one, for which the human being is a key phenomenon. *"Life and death, nature, cognition, social orders, systems of valuation, gender relations, philosophy and its disciplines, scientific undertakings, social revolts all may be read as more or less concealed expressions of the will to power."* (Nietzsche, 1981: 8)

> *"The will to power" is a central concept in Friedrich Nietzsche's work. He presents it as a principle that should be recognized throughout nature. It is the self, or the "center of power", that transcends its own limits and asserts itself over others. The will to power is the means by which human beings, initially weaker yet more intelligent become masters of the earth. "Will" is no longer identical with "life". Life remains open to chaos and many possess a direction or purpose that emerges from it."* (Raeper & Smith, 1999: 102)

The concept of the "will to power" in Friedrich Nietzsche constitutes a foundational pillar of his philosophical system, transcending reductive interpretations that construe it merely as a desire for domination or control over others. As underscored in the preceding citations, this will should not be understood as a purely psychological drive, rather, it functions as a more fundamental ontological principle that structures life itself and informs the processes through which meanings, values, and interpretations are constituted. In this sense, the "will to power" should not be understood as an external ambition to dominate, but rather as an intrinsic creative energy that propels the individual toward self-transcendence. It manifests as a dynamic force operating across all dimensions of existence, driving the individual to surpass inherent limitations and to actualize the self more fully within the world.

> *"Friedrich* Nietzsche's *concept of the "will to power" conceives of the human being as driven by an intrinsic impulse to create values. According to him, the "will to power" constitutes an authentic motivating force that impels individuals to exercise influence and to cultivate their capacities, thereby situating ethics at the very center of human action."* (Tawfeeq & Jasim, 2025: 298)
>
> *"Human beings are characterized, in Nietzsche's view, by a deep-seated desire to dominate their environment. This drive, located at the heart of human nature, is the will to power. It is closely tied to the will to survive, but extends beyond it as an inner urge to affirm and mobilize all of one's forces."* (Nietzsche, 1999: 28)

Phenomena appear according to a stark logic, great things belong to great individuals, rare things, to the rare few.

The skillful manipulation of motives and themes by political power has reinforced the enduring appeal of Nietzsche's philosophy and encouraged ongoing reinterpretation. In its name, new socio-political systems have been conceived and justified. Hitler

notoriously exploited the philosophy of the Übermensch to rationalize his absolute politics as an expression of the will to power. The communist regime in Albania similarly invoked a "new" supra-human figure, the proletarian subject, to justify dictatorship. Totalitarian regimes, in this way, transformed the Übermensch into a racial myth and a power ravenous for domination.

The models elaborated by Kazantzakis and Migjen can be understood as closely connected to Nietzsche's idea of humanity's thirst for mastery and transcendence. This instinct for domination before which reason and morality themselves often give way resonates strongly in their works, where both authors adopt a certain distance from the masses and an individualist sensibility aimed at teaching the crowd what a human being might become.

Kazantzakis's Übermensch is deeply indebted to Nietzsche, but he reinterprets the concept in a more spiritual register. The principle of "the will to power" takes the form of an inner struggle, an effort to overcome oneself and impose form upon the chaos of existence. It is not only an affirmation of life, but a cosmic striving for ascent in which the human subject is perpetually torn between matter and spirit.

> *"-There is not, but there will be; in animals it has been coming, for thousands of years, but it has not arrived yet.*
> *-What animal?*
> *-Ape; we are still halfway to ape-man. Just wait a little longer"* (Kazantzakis, 2021: 36)

In Kazantzakis's poetics, the will to power becomes a creative act, the human being fashions himself through action, choice and sacrifice. His protagonist oscillates, doubts and at times succumbs to the temptation of falling below the human level. His philosophy thus unfolds between matter and spirit, with the will to power urging the spirit upward against the weight of materiality.

Even Migjen's overman is a synthesis of the will to power. Migjen does not build a political system, he shows what happens to the individual when the system is absent. In Migjen we see an individual oppressed, hungry, stripped of any transcendence, a mind that sees but has no power to act, *"Oh, if I only had a strong fist!*" (Migjen, 1936: 31). Migjen's poetic cry, revolt, blasphemy, irony, represents a form of the will to power, not power to rule, but power to make misery visible.

If Nietzsche's philosophy appears as a creative force and an instinct to transcend and to break with herd morality, Kazantzakis reappropriates it as a spiritual project of value-creation, while Migjen builds his Übermensch upon the tragic paradigm of the individual.

Their works bear witness to an unbounded will to think and to confer meaning upon life through creative affirmation, tragic striving and revolt. Like Nietzsche, both Kazantzakis and Migjen's introduced literary and philosophical innovations that reshaped perspectives and ways of living.

> *"At the core of Nietzsche's thought is the idea that every human experience matters in the process of re-creation or rebirth, rejecting the notion of the human being as a passive* product *of evolution and social roles, in favor of an active individual who can overcome obstacles. His concept of the 'will to power' is central to his philosophy and serves as a driving force that emphasizes the uniqueness of each person as essential to human existence."* (Tawfeeq & Jasim, 2025: 287)

The Death of God as Metaphysical Crisis in Nietzsche, Kazantzakis, Migjen

The death of God is another central motif in Nietzsche's philosophy, arising from his radical critique of traditional morality, religious obligation and Platonic metaphysics.

> *"It marks the end of a historical regime of truth in which the world becomes a fable and the human being, projected into a transcendent realm, is revealed*

as "human, all too human". By proclaiming the death of God, Nietzsche unmasks what is held to be ideal, pure, moral, supra-human as in fact thoroughly human. The renunciation of the "other world" that seeks to place itself above man is at the same time the birth of the "Übermensch"." (Nietzsche, 1981: 7)

According to Nietzsche only with the death of God can the overman be born, because before God we are powerless, to others, we are small, beings without differentiation. But with the death of God, each of us would discover the hidden powers within us, and among people a man would be reborn who would rule and in him his will to power would rule. Thus, in his work "Thus Spoke Zarathustra", he speaks of the "The Death of God" as a metaphysical crisis and tries to find a way to teach man and prepare him for an overman. "The sin against God was once the greatest sin; but God died, and so these sinners also died."(Nietzsche, 1981: 20)

Nietzsche in this authentic work of his claims that "God is dead*"* and that the Overman is the descendant of man and the incarnation of the human with the divine. This philosophy of Nietzsche can be seen as a pretext for the philosophy of Kazantzakis and Migjen, who in their works spoke precisely about the existence and non-existence of God. We also encounter this dilemma in the work of Kazantzakis, who claims that God and man are one, they do not differ from each other. So, if Nietzsche's philosophy claims a dead God, Kazantzakis' philosophy claims that God is the same as man, but what unites their philosophy for differentiation of this man, the need for this man to rule over others.

"Virtue is so narrow, it takes my breath away; Heaven is so small and narrow, it does not embrace me; your God seems to me like a man, I do not love him!" (Kazantzakis, 2021: 24)

This dilemma and complex relationships accompanies these two philosophers throughout their lives, where God appears to us in their creativity as presence as absence and absence as presence. According to them man is not destined to remain in the form he is. They try to find ways to prepare him for an Overman.

This philosophy, in Migjen's creativity, comes strong, and at other times fluctuating through his philosophy. Thus, in "The prologue of prologues", Migjen states:

"Every day the gods fade
And their forms fade
Over years and centuries
And now it is no longer known who is god and who is man." (Migjen, 1936: 7)

Migjen's God, just like Kazantzakis' God, is tangible, human, almost human, and often so human that he stands there in the middle of the crowd and does nothing, he doesn't help anyone, not even those who need God.

"And man does not know:
whether god is his offspring
or he himself-the offspring of god
But he sees that it is in vain of the vain
to think upon an idol
that does not answer." (Migjen, 1936: 7)

Migjen's hesitation and doubt about God comes to us pure, clear and ready for Gods greater than this, for a God who answers man's existential questions, for a God with pure conscience and intentions, who will elevate both the mind and the soul. This hesitation and this "human cry" that permeates Migjen's work aligns him with modern existentialists, where anxiety does not stem from the non-existence of God, but rather from his prolonged silence. For Migjen, the tragedy lies not in the possibility that God might not exist, but in fact that, even if God does, he remains a passive spectator oh human suffering. This transforms faith from a spiritual support into an absurd burden,

forcing the individual to seek the meaning of existence within their own misery, without the aid of any supernatural power.
Thus, from Nietzsche to Kazantzakis and Migjen, the concept of "The Death of God" descends from metaphysics, from spiritual struggle to misery, remaining as a human cry throughout the centuries.
This existential crisis, although manifested through authors from diverse cultural backgrounds, proves that the trauma of losing the absolute is a universal experience that transcends national borders. By analyzing this phenomenon in world literature, we not only understand the 'other', but also reflect our own deepest collective dilemmas.
In conclusion, we can say that, "Encountering foreign works allows for a better discovery of the values (sometimes unconscious, so deeply they are absorbed) that underlie the cultural references of a society at a given time." (Chevrel, 2002: 72)
In essence, the 'death of God' is not merely a theological shift, but a catalyst that forces humanity to redefine its own existence. Through the mirror of foreign literature, this struggle becomes a shared language, allowing us to find meaning in the void while discovering the profound resilience of the human spirit.

Conclusions

The influence of Nietzsche's philosophy is deep and multidimensional, extending from existentialism to modern literature, psychoanalysis, and political and cultural thought.
Thinkers such as Heidegger, Sartre and Camus, as well as writers like Nikos Kazantzakis and Migjen, have transformed Nietzsche's philosophy in accordance with their own historical and spiritual contexts. The passage of Nietzsche's thought into the Greek and then the Albanian context has produced further abstractions and modifications, giving rise to a philosophy that foregrounds human consciousness and compels the subject to confront emptiness, suffering, vacillation, and the possibility of self-transcendence.
The purpose of this article has been to explore these configurations, focusing on concepts such as the *Will to Power*, the *Death of God* and the *Übermensch*. In doing so, it has highlighted the diverse interpretative possibilities opened up by Nietzsche's philosophy, the literary innovations these interpretations generate, and the shifting symbolic valences of his thought.
Such a study shows that Nietzsche's philosophy does not propose a single model, but a range of trajectories of reception. It offers not only philosophical crises, but also multiple forms of human tragedy. This perspective places Kazantzakis and Migjen in a philosophical dialogue, transcending mere historical-literary readings.

Declaration on the Use of AI

We hereby declare that no artificial intelligence tools were used in the creation of the content of this work. However, AI-based tools were consulted solely for translation purposes to assist in ensuring linguistic accuracy and clarity. All ideas, analysis, and conclusions presented in this work are entirely our own.

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