

Discussion in small groups on N and perspectivism, when Christina was sick Feb. 6
PHIL 449, Spring 2014

Group 1

Masks that Nietzsche puts on (shifts of perspectives he often makes.)

- Makes it difficult to see which is his real perspective?
- Nietzsche is writing in a way that messes people up. That stirs passions of people.
- The article manifests a very un-Nietzschean disposition in the sense that he takes a very neutral/ back seat position.
- Nietzsche stirs up passions of the readers, and

Questions/ Concerns about N's perspectivism?

- Does he really engage in internal criticism? We are skeptical as to whether he was that technically inclined.
- Is not concerned with which perspective is truthful, but rather whichever one allows you to express your will to power the most successfully.

Group 2

What do you think is the status of N's own truth claims in GM? Are they coming from his own perspective?? If so, how might he be read as trying to change the mind of those with different perspectives?

Some gathered notes on the discussion-In a varied sense, we all sort of believe that N is not making any particular truth claims but talking about the very nature of what truth is or can be for the individual. In this sense, and perhaps according to N as well, there can be no established or agreed upon notion of truth (he may very well see those who follow pre-established value systems as unauthentic; sheep), for every person has their own unique experience and therefore conception of what truth is to them.

The only potential truth claim that N might be attempting to expound is the simple notion that truth is a personal journey; truth is essentially what the powerful assert. Power in this sense – maybe in N as well - we believe, can also symbolize the individual (sovereign) who is living according to an ascetic ideal; in this sense it may not necessarily imply power in terms of domination but more in terms of those brave enough to question their beliefs in search of what truth is to them...in this light they become creative because they are no longer simply following the status quo and it may very well be the creativity that expresses the power, for it is creativity that is seemingly responsible for much of the social change that has occurred in human evolution.

- N attempts to change peoples perspectives by provoking them to question the origin of their own beliefs. He does this by setting up many contradictions and ironies in his writing – for instance, praising master morality and expressing dislike towards the slave morality for their seething *ressentiment* towards the masters, while the slaves essentially do what N praises in the master class: they develop a method to overthrow the masters thereby expressing their will to power, for they sure as hell were not following the status quo in that endeavor!

Group 3

1.

a. What do you think the status of Nietzsche's own truth claims in the *The Genealogy of Morals* is?

Nietzsche advocates a disposition toward propositional logic, rather than affirming certain propositions as absolute truths. He advocates for naturalism because he finds this to be the best possible explanation, however, it is unclear whether he ever claims that his own account shouldn't be challenged or falsified. In some ways, he argues that we need to be weary of criticism itself because it always arrives from another narrative or perspective—this forces us to question why this position has any more authority than our own.

b. Are they coming from his perspective?

Yes. Since he argues (or calls upon certain reasons) he also draws such reasons from things that he takes as self-evident—or his perspective. However, this perspective is not objective, rather, it is a perspective that craves revision (an “enemy as a mark of distinction”).

c. If so, how might he be read as trying to change the mind of those with a different perspective?

By showing internal inconsistencies in others views, Nietzsche is able to elucidate the fact that they themselves are not free spirits but rather stagnant spirits in decay. In order to gloss over one's own contradictions, one must be on autopilot—in inertia. Nietzsche opposes such disengagement because it indicates that one isn't their own master—instead, they are subject to views which preceded them in history.

2. What other Questions/Concerns do you have about Nietzsche's perspectivism?

Relativism is self-defeating, is perspectivism is the same? How tied is perspectivism tied to naturalism. Is there anything fixed about human nature, concerns? Can we build objective views using these common characteristics.

Group 4

1) What do you think the status of N's own truth claims in GM is? Are they coming from his own perspective? If so, how might he be read as trying to change the mind of those with a dif.

Perspective?

- By pointing out internal contradictions, N isn't keeping people from being free spirits; they see the contradiction and follow the logic themselves, rather than just yelling at them that they're wrong
- N himself says that contradiction and paradox can be good things...what does he mean by “good,” though? That we should keep them?
 - Maybe he means they're good in that they cause us to react and change ourselves
- N on naturalism, science
 - In the case of science, analytic philosophy, naturalism is still emphasizing objective truth
 - N is a naturalist, but he isn't presupposing ontological truth
- Are N's truth claims coming from his own perspective?

- Nietzsche likes change, flux, constant becoming—so perhaps Nietzsche's own perspective is changing, too
- Nietzsche doesn't necessarily think inconsistency is a bad thing himself
 - Christians (and others) do...so Nietzsche pointing out the internal inconsistency in the Christian's system of values is part of his internal criticism
 - If you point out inconsistencies in his own philosophy he probably just won't care

2) What other questions/Concerns about B's perspectivism?