Nietzsche's Theory of Perspectivism

Much of what we know about Nietzsche's doctrine of perspectivism comes to us from a collection of unreleased notebooks, curated and posthumously published in 1901 as *The Will to Power*. More a cluster of loosely related ideas than a precisely defined doctrine, perspectivism can be best understood as Nietzsche's refutation of philosophical realism, a wide-ranging stance which, until Nietzsche, had dominated much of Western philosophy and theology. My aim in the first part of this section is to explore the philosophical and theological traditions which gave rise to and enforced the positions of metaphysical and moral realism, to which Nietzsche was opposed. In each instance, I will consider how these realist perspectives influenced the understanding of truth, in both an epistemological and ethical context. Finally, I will consider how perspectivism demands us to re-evaluate the way in which we regard the truth conditions of value claims and judgements.

Nietzsche's critique of the Western philosophical tradition

As Steven Hales and Robert Welshon state, 'truth perspectivism helped [Nietzsche] punctuate his radical rejection of nearly every element of the received philosophical tradition.'[1] Until Nietzsche, the common methods for understanding truth had for the most part operated on an assumption of metaphysical realism - the view that "the world consists of some fixed totality of mind-independent objects" and that "[t]here is exactly one true and complete description of the 'way the world is'."[2] This view, for Nietzsche, is exemplified by the "true world" or "two world" theory, which posits that there are, as the name suggests, two worlds: one of truth, which is ontologically-transcendent and mind-independent, and one of appearance, which is the world we are bound to by the limits of our experiential ability.

The idea behind the two-world theory is often traced to Plato; as David Sedley argues, 'Plato is often and I think correctly credited with a 'two world' thesis [which states that] [t]here are two worlds: the intelligible world, populated by Forms, and the sensible world, populated by sensible particulars.'[3] Across the dialogues, these concepts are explained in various ways; for example, in the *Republic,* Plato defines the particulars as 'objects of sight but not of intelligence, [and] the forms [as] the objects of intelligence but not of sight.'[4] The general understanding is that forms are the ideal, unchanging, aspatial and atemporal *essence* of things, whilst the particulars are merely the imperfect imitations created by men.[5] Plato's distinction between the forms and particulars extends to non-physical, abstract concepts. In *The Simile of the Sun,* he states,

> 'we go on to speak of beauty-in-itself, and goodness-in-itself, and so on for all the sets of particular things which we have regarded as many; and we proceed to posit by contrast a single form, which is unique, in each case, and call it "what really is" each thing.'[6]

[1] Steven D. Hales and Robert C. Welshon, "Truth, Paradox, And Nietzschean Perspectivism", *History Of Philosophy Quarterly*, 11.1 (1994), 101-119 <http://www.jstor.com/stable/27744612> [Accessed 6 July 2020], p. 105.

[2] Hilary Putnam, *Reason, Truth And History* (Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 49.

[3] David Sedley, "An Introduction To Plato's Theory Of Forms", *Royal Institute Of Philosophy Supplement*, 78 (2016), 3-22 <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/royal-institute-of-philosophy-supplements/article/ an-introduction-to-platos-theory-of-forms/ 857C292D585DB8DFAD6D127F9A06E44E> [Accessed 6 July 2020], p. 11.

[4] Plato, *The Republic*, trans. by Desmond Lee, ed. Melissa Lane, 2nd edn (London: Penguin, 2007), 507b. (I will hereafter refer to page numbers when quoting Lee's additional commentary in the text, and to the section numbers when referencing the original work.)

[5] This distinction is better clarified in the allegory of the cave.

[6] Plato, Republic, 507b.

The reference to a "beauty-in-itself" and "goodness-in-itself" suggests that, for Plato, such values must also correspond to particular forms; in other words, that ideals of beauty and goodness exist mind-independently. This has some significant implications for the fields of epistemology and axiology.

By creating a distinction between two-worlds - a perceptible world of particulars and an imperceptible world of forms - Plato sets in motion a tradition of thinking committed to (1) the belief that a true and ideal form of all things, physical and non-physical, exists and (2) the belief that we can have knowledge of these forms. It is this tradition of thinking which sets the necessary philosophical foundation for a correspondence type theory of truth. Indeed, as Marian David observes, early formulations of the correspondence theory can be found in both the *Cratylus* and the *Sophist*.[7] In the *Cratylus*, in dialogue with Hermogenes, Socrates posits that 'those that say of the things that are that they are, are true, while those that say of the things that are that they are not, are false.'[8] In the *Sophist*, in conversation with Theaetetus, the stranger states that 'The true [sentence] states facts as they are about you [Theaetetus]' whilst the 'the false one states things that are other than the facts.'[9] In both these scenarios, truth is described as that which pertains - or, *corresponds* - to things *as they are*, and, as observed in Plato's metaphysics, the concept of *things as they are* must exist in some separate mind-independent realm.

Later iterations of the correspondence theory build on the same metaphysical premise; as Glanzberg notes, within this framework, something is true 'if it corresponds to the way things actually are - to the facts.'[10] The appeal of the correspondence theory of truth may lie in its supposed simplicity. As Descartes states, 'I have never had any doubts about truth, because it seems a notion so transcendentally clear that nobody can be ignorant of it.'[11] Indeed, as David notes, '[h]istorically, the correspondence theory [...] was taken for granted, so much so that it did not acquire this name until comparatively recently'[12], and elements of the basic theory of correspondence are noticeable throughout the history of debates on the nature of truth. Nonetheless, approaching truth from the vantage point of a correspondence type theory has important implications for our understanding of the concept.

For one thing, a correspondence type theory of truth implies a principle of bivalence, which argues that 'every truth-bearer (sentence or proposition) is [either] true or false.'[13] Supported by the true world theory, the principle of bivalence dictates that any meaningful statement pertaining to a fact can only be either true (in the case that it does correspond accurately to the true world) or false (in the case that it does *not* correspond accurately to the true world). Most significantly, this truth-value is independent of our judgements, beliefs, opinions, or perspectives. Secondly, a correspondence type theory of truth implies a doctrine of absolutism. As Hales and Welshon understand, the doctrine of absolutism is 'the cardinal intuition [...] that statements, if true, are true for everyone and, if untrue, then untrue for everyone.'[14] This appears a logical consequence of the true world theory - if a statement is true by virtue of its correspondence to some "true" world, it must be true for everyone. It is this view of truth which Nietzsche seeks to challenge with truth perspectivism.

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[7] Marian David, "The Correspondence Theory Of Truth", *The Stanford Encyclopedia Of Philosophy*, 2020 <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2020/entries/truth-correspondence/> [Accessed 6 February 2021].

[8] Plato, *Cratylus* <https://brianrabern.net/Plato-Cratylus.pdf> [Accessed 7 February 2021], 387c.

[9] Plato, *Sophist*, trans by. Benjamin Jowett, 2008 <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1735/1735-h/1735-h.htm> [Accessed 7 February 2021].

[10] Glanzberg, *Truth*.

[11] René Descartes, "Letter To Mersenne: 16 October 1639", in *The Philosophical Writings Of Descartes*, vol. 3, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 138-40.

[12] David, *The Correspondence Theory of Truth*.

[13] Glanzberg, *Truth*.

[14] Hales and Welshon, p. 105.

As Catherine Zuckert finds, for Nietzsche, '[t]o the extent to which later philosophers built on or extended the Platonic theory of ideas, they built on a falsification, a "noble lie" or mythos.'[15] This critique is summarised in the section "How the 'Real World' at last Became a Myth" of the *Twilight of the Idols*, wherein Nietzsche attributes to Plato the source of the history of errors in the philosophical tradition. He writes,

> The real world, attainable to the wise, the pious, the virtuous man - he dwells in it, *he is it* [This is the First Error in the History of Errors] (Oldest form of the idea, relatively sensible, simple, convincing. Transcription of the proposition 'I, Plato, *am* the truth.')[16]

Here, Nietzsche connects several ideas relating to the faults he identifies with the philosophical tradition set forth by Plato. He begins by critiquing the prejudicial nature of traditional philosophy, challenging the argument that knowledge of the "real" world - and consequently, truth - was attainable only to the 'wise, the pious, the virtuous man.' For Nietzsche, this act of "knowing" is inherently political. On the fact of it, the phrase "he dwells in it, *he is it*" may be interpreted as Nietzsche's suggestion that a wise man lives in the world of truth. However, the statement may also be interpreted as Nietzsche's hint at a kind of *Will to Truth* - that is, an act of active determination by which the wise man himself creates a set of statements and conclusions which are subsequently received as "truth" by others. For Nietzsche, this way of thinking is the basis of the fault of the philosophical tradition, the "First Error in the History of Errors." Again, a connection is drawn between this philosophical tradition and Plato, through first, a reference to the theory of Forms - "Oldest form of the idea" - and second, by explicit reference to Plato as one of the sort of wise, pious, men who consider themselves to have access to truth, and who designate their beliefs as "truth" ("I, Plato, *am* the truth").As Zuckert finds, Nietzsche's observation that '[w]estern philosophy since Plato [had] proceeded on a misperception of its own origin and essential nature' demanded that the philosophical tradition be 'radically reinterpreted in light of its political origins and goals.'[17]

Nietzsche's critique of the 'Theologian Instinct'

Nietzsche's critique of the western philosophical tradition leads onto his critique of traditional moral-religious thinking, which he observes operates on a similarly flawed logic of realism. This antipathy towards what had traditionally been celebrated as morality is expressed in the preface of *On the Genealogy of Morals*:

> I harbour a particular reservation which I am reluctant to confess - for it concerns *morality*, everything which has up to now been celebrated as morality - a reservation which emerged so unsolicited, so early and inexorably, so in contradiction with my environment, age, models, and origins, that I might almost be entitled to call it my 'A priori.'[18]

Nietzsche names this practice of religious moral thinking "the theologian instinct." In the opening pages of *The Antichrist*, he proclaims: 'I make war on [the] theologian instinct.'[19] By this, he refers to the tendency of theologians and religious institutions to claim subjective interpretations of the world as reflections of a singular, true, and objective reality, and to proclaim as truth those things which are not. In the context of morality, this takes the form of raising doxastic first-order moral values to the status of truth by an appeal to some religious scripture or authority as justification. As he explains, through the theologian instinct, 'one demands that no *other* kind of perspective shall be accorded any value after one has rendered one's own sacrosanct with the names 'God', 'Redemption', 'eternity'.'[20]

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[15] Catherine Zuckert, "Nietzsche's Rereading Of Plato", *Political Theory*, 13.2 (1985), 213-238 <https:// www.jstor.org/stable/ 191529> [Accessed 6 February 2021].

[16] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols and The Anti-Christ*, trans. by R.J. Hollingdale, (London: Penguin, 2003), p. 50.

[17] Zuckert, p. 213.

[18] Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. by Douglas Smith, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 4.

[19] Nietzsche, Twilight of the Idols and The Anti-Christ, p. 132.

[20] ibid, p. 132.

In essence, the theologian instinct Nietzsche refers to here can be understood as a kind of moral realism. As Robert Coburn finds, in the realist tradition, when one makes moral judgements, 'one supposes that any judgment of the kind in question is - must be! - either true or false, and, furthermore, that its truth or falsity is independent of the beliefs, attitudes, or other mental states of any - and indeed all - rational creatures.'[21] This way of thinking about moral judgements mirrors some of the principles by which we understand truth in a correspondence type theory, namely, the principles of bivalence and absolutism. As such, it can be argued that moral judgments seen from this perspective can be seen in the same way we judge *a priori* facts regarding the physical world; as Coburn states, 'it is natural to view moral judgments in just the way we commonsensically (or prephilosophically) view mathematical judgments [...] namely, as true or false depending on "what the facts are," where the relevant mathematical or scientific facts could obtain no matter what the beliefs, attitudes, or other mental states of any and all rational creatures.'[22]

Throughout his oeuvre, Nietzsche demonstrates how the theologian instinct is exemplified by the practice of Christian morality. In *The Will to Power*, he identifies how casuistical claims regarding the Christian moral values are made to appear as truth, by means of religious justification. He states,

> The supreme values in whose service man is *supposed* to live [...] these *social* values have been raised above man for purposes of *amplification*, to convey the impression that they were God's commands, or 'reality', or the world of 'truth', or the hope of a *future* life.[23]

The idea that Christian moral judgements and claims are raised to be seen as expressions of truth indicates the strong parallel between Christian morality and moral realism. For Nietzsche, this practice is exemplified by the priest, a figure who mimics the role of the philosopher, as seen in the previous critique of the philosophical tradition. The priest is one who 'wants to establish that he is to be regarded as the highest type of man' and that 'the hierarchy of his virtues must constitute the hierarchy of value among men.'[24] In other words, the values embodied by the priest as the principal values must also be the highest values for man to possess. For Nietzsche, this theologian instinct can be understood as a will to power - an act of raising ones personal perspective to the status of truth for the political goal of imposing that perspective onto others.

This parallel between Christian morality and moral realism is enabled partly by the close relationship between truth and authority in Christianity. This is particularly evident during the pre-modern period, a time when Christianity's power and influence was at it's peak in Europe. According to Kunjachan Koshy, 'life and society during [the premodern] period was God-centered' insofar as it was 'largely influenced by the Bible and Christianity.' In particular, it was believed that the ultimate authority resided in God, who, as Koshy states, 'is the Author of all being. He, being the first cause, creator, and sustainer, has an intrinsic, permanent, absolute, and final authority over all that is created (creations).'[25] As such, any attempt at understanding reality - and it's epiphenomenal concepts like truth - must incorporate the word of God, who is the ultimate authority over all creation.

To this end, we can observe two key methods by which people acquired truth through Christianity. The first was through the Bible, which was considered to be 'the written form of Truth revealed by God to man'[26] The second was '[t]he church, [who,] being the holders and interpreters of [the] revealed knowledge, were the primary authority source in premodern time.'[27] Public confidence in Christianity during this period meant that the truth was largely seen as that which corresponded to the facts given through the Bible, Church, and religious scholarship. In the context of axiology

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[21] Robert C. Coburn, "Morality, Truth, And Relativism", *Ethics*, 92.4 (1982), 661-669 <https://www.jstor.org/ stable/2380397> [Accessed 6 July 2020].

[22] Coburn, p. 661.

[23] Nietzsche, The Will to Power, 7.

[24] ibid, 139.

[25] Kunjachan Koshy, *Truth And Authority In Postmodernity* <https://www.academia.edu/8970176/ Truth_and_Authority_in_Postmodernity> [Accessed 7 February 2021], p. 3.

[26] ibid, p. 2.

[27] ibid, p. 2.

and normative ethics, a value was deemed true and *right* if it corresponded to the guidelines for behaviour set forth by Christian doctrines and authorities, a practice which held strong similarities to value realism.

It should be noted that by the time Nietzsche had started to write his radical rejection of the philosophical and theological traditions, it was common for European intellectuals to assume that the moral commitments found on Christianity were in dire need of 'a rational grounding independent from particular sectarian or even ecumenical religious commitments.'[28] However, although the Christian 'moral world-order' may have been difficult to justify as being true, it was equally as difficult of being *proven wrong*. Nonetheless, Nietzsche took it upon himself to embark on the difficult project of proposing an alternative method by which to understand the truth-conditions of value claims.

Perspectivism

Through his critiques of the Western philosophical and theological traditions, one of the core problems Nietzsche identifies with realism - and especially, moral realism - is the insistence that values must correspond to truths in order for them to be effective applied as a normative system. Yet, it is precisely because Nietzsche refutes the existence of an ontological true world, that he argues that the normative systems produced as a result of realist thinking are fundamentally flawed. In response, he constructs an alternative epistemological paradigm which can account for the lack of a fixed, singular, and objective notion of truth - perspectivism. In *The Will to Power*, Nietzsche argues that 'facts are precisely what there are not, only interpretations.'[29] Nietzsche's use of the term "facts" here is interchangeable with his use of the term "truth", such that when he states 'facts are precisely what there are not', he is also rejecting the possibility for truth. For example, in *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche states, 'there are no eternal facts, nor are there any absolute truths.'[30] It is from this basis of epistemological scepticism that Nietzsche builds the theory of perspectivism. Rather than ascribing to the realist's method of the correspondence theory, perspectivism offers that it is '[it] is our needs *which interpret the world*'[31], and in doing so, give it meaning, and definition. In this sense, concepts such as truths, facts, and knowledge are not discovered, but are rather *creations* which are bound to a particular, subjective, interpretation of the world.

Whilst perspectivism may be a popular strand in Nietzsche's body of work, defining it as a coherent epistemological theory is a difficult task. As Steven Hales finds, 'perspectivism is not one precisely defined doctrine, but a cluster of related ideas about the subjectivity of truth, anti-realist metaphysics, a bundle theory of objects, the revaluation of values and the creation of one's own virtues, and the role of varying interpretations in knowledge.'[32] It may therefore be easier to separate perspectivism into a series of its postulates: (1) there are no *absolute* objective facts, truths, or knowledge, (2) there is no one "true" world or reality, and (3) reality is a subjectively *interpreted* construct which is defined and limited by our perspectives.

This concept of perspectives is important to understanding how different individuals may interpret the same reality in different ways, but, as R. Lanier Anderson finds, 'Nietzsche's notion of a perspective is somewhat loose', and as such, difficult to define. Nonetheless, Anderson offers two analogies through which to better understand the concept.

One method is to view perspectives along broadly Kantian lines - that is, as organising one's experience in accordance with a "conceptual scheme." As Anderson finds, these schemes are 'composed of our basic concepts, among which Nietzsche often lists the very categories (e.g., causation, substance) and distinctions (e.g., form/content) that Kant

28 R. Lanier Anderson, "Friedrich Nietzsche", *The Stanford Encyclopedia Of Philosophy*, 2017 <https:// plato.stanford.edu/archives/ sum2017/entries/nietzsche/> [Accessed 6 July 2020].

29 Nietzsche, The Will to Power, 481.

30 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, trans. by Helen Zimmern, ed. by J.M. Kennedy, (Edinburgh: Morrison & Gibb Limited, 1910) <https://digitalassets.lib.berkeley.edu/main/ b20790001_v_1_B000773557.pdf> [Accessed 7 February 2021], 2.

31 Nietzsche, The Will to Power, 481.

32 Steven D. Hales, "Nietzsche's Epistemic Perspectivism", in *Knowledge From A Human Point Of View* (Cham: Springer, 2019), pp. 19-35 <https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-27041-4_2> [Accessed 7 February 2021].

identified as integral to the organizing conceptual structure we impose onto the world of experience.'[33] However, a crucial difference between Kant and Nietzsche is that where the former views these conceptual schemes as transcendental preconditions for our experience, Nietzsche considers conceptual schemes to be adopted because of their 'contingent (and potentially variable) relation to our needs, interests, and values.'[34] In this sense, perspectives can be thought of as a subjective framing mechanism, rather than an objective cognitive mechanism as Kant hypothesises. As Anderson states, we can only 'know things only from the "points of view" [our cognitive perspectives] define.'[35] The idea is expressed in *The Gay Science*, where Nietzsche invites the realists to: 'subtract the phantasm and every human contribution from [your perception of reality] [...] If you can' - a rhetorical remark which alludes to the impossibility of such a task.[36]

The second method is to understand perspectives via a visual metaphor. For Anderson, the concept of "perspectives" can be compared to the famous duck/rabbit line drawing, in which the same drawing can be seen as either a duck or a rabbit, even if it is viewed from the same *visual* perspective. In fact, as Anderson states, '[we] can even experience reversible "Gestalt switches", whereby what first appeared as a duck, later appears to be a rabbit, and now a duck again.'[37] In either scenario, it is not the drawing itself which changes, but rather, the perspective through which we view it. The rabbit/duck illusion demonstrates how '*our perception* is subject to the influence of two incompatible ways of seeing that govern our overall experience of the drawing' such that our perceptions do not combine to show us a drawing of something that looks like a cross between the duck and the rabbit, but rather, that the drawing appears *clearly* as either a duck or a rabbit 'depending on which conceptual mind set is employed by the viewer.'[38] It is by the same method that '[v]alue laden conceptual schemes exert [an] influence on the way we see things.'[39] An artefact of cognitive knowledge may accordingly be approached in various ways, with the result being contingent on the perspective through which it is received. This is not to say that the object in question has changed, but rather, that our perception of it, as it varies from perspective to perspective, influences its appearance to us and our consequent interpretation of it. For example, the psychologists Jerome Bruner and Cecile Goodman observed that 'children from poor backgrounds overestimate the size of coins to a greater degree than children whose families are financially well off.'[40] Here, the two test groups exhibit different perceptions of the same coin, with the differentiating factor being the socio-economic context that contributes to their perspective. Thus, Bruner and Goodman conclude that 'the visual experience of money, at least in the dimension of perceived size, is significantly influenced by its importance within the scheme of values which order a child's life.'[41] Using the visual metaphor in this way, we can understand how, just as visual perspectives precondition how an object is *seen*, cognitive perspectives may condition how something is *understood*.

The implications of a perspectivist epistemology for value-formation

Nietzsche's theory of perspectivism compels us to reconsider how we understand the truth conditions of the values we hold. If we deny the basis of moral realism, and argue that there are no objective, ontologically transcendent values, where can the values we hold be said to originate? Nietzsche proposes that, rather than discovering values through a

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[33] Anderson, Truth and Objectivity in Perspectivism, p. 2.

[34] ibid, p. 3.

[35] ibid, p. 3.

[36] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, trans. by Walter Kaufmann, (Random House, 1974) <https://philoslugs.files.wordpress.com/2016/12/the-gay-science-friedrich-nietzsche.pdf> [Accessed 7 February 2021], 57.

[37] Anderson, Truth and Objectivity in Perspectivism, p. 3.

[38] ibid, p. 3.

[39] ibid, p. 3.

[40] Jerome S. Bruner and Cecile C. Goodman, "Value And Need As Organizing Factors In Perception", *The Journal Of Abnormal And Social Psychology*, 42.1 (1947), 33–44 <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1037/ h0058484>.

[41] Anderson, Truth and Objectivity in Perspectivism, p. 3.

correspondence type method of epistemology, we ourselves construct and impart value onto essentially value-less things and actions. In doing so, it puts greater attention on the subjective dimensions of value-formation. In the Gay Science, he states,

> Whatever has value in our world now does not have value in itself, according to its nature - nature is always value-less, but has been given value at some time, as a present - and it was we who gave and bestowed it. Only we have created the world that concerns man![42]

Nietzsche's value-perspectivism is significant as the epistemological skepticism it implies can be considered a precedent for the notion of "post-truth", as argued by scholars such as Helmut Heit and Alexis Papazoglou.[43] Indeed, similarities are evident between Nietzsche's conception of a world in which there is no objective truth and the post-truth world which is characterised by its scepticism towards any singular objective framework of truth. The implications of this value-perspectivism are of particular importance to a post-truth world as it places the burden and responsibility for value-judgements onto the individual. Yet, by conceiving of values as subjective judgements, the question emerges, what reason do we have for adopting a particular value over another? An answer may be found by viewing perspectivism not as a theory of scepticism, which discredits value propositions on the basis of having no truth-value, but rather as one of pragmatism. The idea that Nietzsche may be viewed as a pragmatist rather than a skeptic is one shared by scholars such as Steven Hales, Arthur Danto, and Reudiger Grimm, who consider pragmatism to be a more mature interpretation of Nietzsche's core material.[44]

A pragmatic reading

Statements of the kind "there are no eternal facts"[45] may on the face of it give the impression that Nietzsche was a skeptic, but a pragmatic reading offers that he is not opposed to the existence of facts or truths as practical epistemic concepts, but rather, to *eternal* facts and *absolute* truths. Specifically, it is the habit of raising facts and truths to the standard of unchangeable *absolutes* to which Nietzsche is opposed. As elaborated in *On the Genealogy of Morals*,

> Let us be on guard against the dangerous old conceptual fiction that posited a 'pure, will-less, painless, timeless knowing subject'; let us guard against the snares of such contradictory concepts as 'pure reason', 'absolute spirituality', 'knowledge in itself': these always demand that we should think of an eye that is completely unthinkable, an eye turned in no particular direction, in which the active and interpreting forces, through which alone seeing becomes seeing *something*, are supposed to be lacking; these always demand of the eye an absurdity and a nonsense. There is *only* a perspective seeing, *only* a perspective knowing; and the *more* affects we allow to speak about one thing, the *more* eyes, different eyes, we can use to observe one thing, the more complete will our 'concept' of this thing, our 'objectivity' be (III: 12).

In the above passage, Nietzsche suggests that we should invite multiple perspectives to contribute to our understanding of a thing; in so doing, we can achieve a more comprehensive view of a thing than that achieved by the "conceptual fictions" of pure reason, realism, absolute spirituality, and knowledge-in-itself, which limit our understanding and perception of a thing to a singular perspective that is purported to be "truth." It implies that Nietzsche is not rejecting the existence of truths as an epistemic concept, but rather, re-evaluating its status, from a proposition which purports an absolute, to a *perspectival* concept which prioritises the ever-fluctuating nature of statements.This truth perspectivism is reiterated in *The Will to Power*, wherein Nietzsche states, ''There are many kinds of eyes. Even the Sphinx has eyes; and therefore there are many kinds of 'truths', and therefore there is no truth.'[46]

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[42] Nietzsche, *Gay Science*, 301.

[43] See Heit 2018 and Papazoglou 2016.

[44] See Hales 2019, Danto 1965, and Grimm 1977.

[45] Nietzsche, Human, All Too Human, 2.

[46] Nietzsche, The Will to Power, 540.

The consequence of this re-interpretation is that knowledge too becomes possible in a "perspectivist" sense; certainly, in various passages, Nietzsche makes positive remarks about the utility of knowledge, which supports the idea that he is no skeptic or pure relativist. In *Human, All Too Human*, he states that, 'no honey is sweeter than that of knowledge'[47] and as Hales finds, 'in *The Gay Science*, the source of much of Nietzsche's epistemological critique, he characterizes himself as a lover of knowledge (*GS* 14), a seeker of knowledge (*GS* 380), and as someone greedy for knowledge (*GS* 242, 249).'[48] These passages demonstrate that Nietzsche does not refute the possibility for knowledge *in general*, only as it is defined in the Platonic sense - that is, as a Justified True Belief. A more mature interpretation concedes that knowledge may take numerable, equally valid, forms. As Hales states, 'knowledge is perspectival because truth itself is'[49] Accordingly, Nietzsche actively encourages the pursuit of knowledge as a tool for the furtherance of human life. As Jacob Baker argues, for Nietzsche, knowledge must continue to be pursued, 'not because it leads to truth but because knowledge promotes life and well-being.'[50] It is important to note however that whilst Nietzsche's interpretation of knowledge may omit the truth condition, it does not *devalue* knowledge; as argued in the *Gay Science*, 'the strength of knowledge does not depend on its degree of truth but on its age, on the degree to which it has been incorporated, on its character as a condition of life.'[51] That is to say, the strength of knowledge lies not in the degree to which it bears truth, but rather the degree to which it is collectively believed to be a condition of life. It is precisely this "collective of perspectives" which Nietzsche argues will 'yield [a] new sort of "objectivity," not the objectivity of the "moral" foundation of science in which the world presents itself to us outside of any context, but an objectivity whereby 'one can exploit [the] very diversity of perspectives and affective interpretations in the interest of knowledge.'[52] This theme of utility is repeated in *The Will to Power*, where Nietzsche states that, 'The object[ive] is not "to know" but to schematize, to impose as much regularity and form upon chaos as our practical needs require.'[53] These statements lead Hales to the conclusion that 'Nietzsche was a pragmatist, where knowledge just consists in accepting those doctrines that are helpful or productive for our lives.'[54]

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[47] Nietzsche, Human, All Too Human, 292.

[48] Hales, "Nietzsche's Epistemic Perspectivism".

[49] ibid.

[50] Jacob Baker, "Nietzsche On Knowledge, Truth, And Life" (Claremont Graduate University, 2011), p. 14.

[51] Nietzsche, *Gay Science*, 110.

[52] Nietzsche, On the Genealogy of Morals, p. 98.

[53] Nietzsche, The Will to Power, 515.

[54] Hales, "Nietzsche's Epistemic Perspectivism".