

TRUTH, PARADOX, AND NIETZSCHEAN PERSPECTIVISM

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NIETZSCHE'S writings on truth are among the most elusive and difficult ones in his corpus. One indication of their obscurity is that on an initial reading he appears either blatantly inconsistent in his use of the words 'true' and 'truth', or subject to inexplicable vacillations on the value of truth. To get some idea of the depth of the problem, consider that in *HATH* 2 Nietzsche writes that "there are *no eternal facts*, nor are there any absolute truths" (Nietzsche's italics).¹ Other passages are likewise saturated with venom and contempt about truth. Yet in *AC* 50 he writes that

Truth has had to be fought for every step of the way, almost everything else dear to our hearts, on which our love and our trust in life depend, has had to be sacrificed to it. Greatness of soul is needed for it: the service of truth is the hardest service.

One can hardly imagine a more impassioned, indeed reverential, soliloquy on truth. Moreover, this passage seems to imply that Nietzsche believes that there is a univocal sense of truth which demands sacrifice and greatness of soul. But then the question about his views on truth becomes acute, and the easy choices mentioned above seem inadequate. What is required instead is an interpretation of the texts that acknowledges their complexities, and is capable of both respecting and explaining Nietzsche's venom and devotion towards truth.

One attractive approach is to recognize that Nietzsche neither always assigns the same sense to 'truth' nor always uses it in the same way, but show that this variability is not mere equivocation, but the result of his finding distinct senses of 'truth' in the philosophical tradition and so needing to distinguish among them when he promotes his alternatives to that tradition.² Nietzsche has different projects, both critical and constructive, with respect to these various senses of 'truth.' In this essay one of those projects is considered, the constructive one of providing the correct conception of the only sort of truth he thinks genuinely available to humans, the kind of truth sought by the philosophers of the future. This sense of 'truth' is perspectival truth, or perspectivism.

Unfortunately, interpretative problems with perspectivism do not end by isolating this constructive project, for perspectivism as a theory about the behavior of the truth predicate (as opposed, say, to ethical, ontological, or epistemological perspectivism) is not a topic that received extensive treatment

from Nietzsche. The remarks he makes about truth perspectivism are tantalizing but seldom more and are never developed systematically, as are his critiques of Christianity and morality. Moreover, most of what he says about the perspectivism of truth is found only in his notebooks, and these were published in an abridged form as the controversial *The Will to Power* only after his death. Still, it is undeniable that Nietzsche affirms truth perspectivism in his published writings and that many of his most infamous published claims would be ill-supported without it. So there is at least a *prima facie* case for digging a little into his views on truth perspectivism. The project of this paper is to engage in such philosophical archaeology, to mold the most coherent and plausible view we can from the fragments of Nietzsche's writings on perspectival truth.

The rough and disjointed nature of Nietzsche's writings on truth perspectivism cannot safely be ignored by the interpreter, in part because the interpretive risks are the greater for it. Indeed, the interpretation offered here is subject to a potential criticism that it tries to capitalize on the fragmentary nature of Nietzsche's remarks on truth. In this essay, Nietzsche's comments on perspectivism are embedded in a richer, more elaborate theory of perspectivism than any he explicitly developed. While what is defended here on Nietzsche's behalf entails what Nietzsche wrote on the topic, what he wrote does not entail what is here defended. Yet this should not be a criticism of either the adopted approach or the results, for no single theory of perspectivism is entailed by the remarks Nietzsche left. The interpretive task at hand more closely resembles the archaeological task of piecing together the broken remains of an unknown artifact to form a coherent whole than the restorative project of cleaning a painting to reveal its original colors. Although in neither case can the original be fully recovered, in the former there is no well-individuated whole with which to begin. Without such a whole, exegesis must rely more heavily on establishing coherence with the balance of Nietzsche's thought, while maintaining general philosophical consistency. The interpretation offered here is, we believe, one that respects both of these desiderata.

The *prima facie* case for this approach is strengthened by the fascination Nietzsche's commentators have had for his views on truth and the consequent proliferation of interpretations of those views. This fascination is to be expected given philosophers' obsession with truth and the interpretive proliferation is no doubt partially authorized by the subject matter itself. Unfortunately, the truth perspectivism one finds imputed to Nietzsche by some of his commentators is erroneously assimilated to other Nietzschean views such as epistemological perspectivism, his theory of fictions, or his version of the bundle theory, and is not therefore sufficiently sensitive to the logical structure of his views on truth.³ Of course, Nietzsche appeals to perspectives in many contexts and advocates perspectivism over main domains; moreover, perspectivism about truth works together with these other perspectivisms to form a more unified theory. However, it is not possible to interpret every kind of Nietzschean

perspectivism in a single article, and it must be emphasized at the outset that no attempt is made here to do so. The focus here is solely on those passages in which Nietzsche is concerned with the way in which the truth of the new philosopher is perspectival. Other applications of perspectivism and other related areas of Nietzsche's thought are beyond the purview of this paper.⁴

I

We propose to analyze Nietzsche's proposals more rigorously than is common in some quarters of Nietzsche commentary. This does not mean that we think interpreting Nietzsche as anticipating the latest fad in analytic or continental philosophy is legitimate interpretation, but we do intend to be cautious with the logic of perspectivism and unambiguous with our terms. This constraint on interpretation is justified, for Nietzsche is a philosopher whose views can withstand such scrutiny and one who demands it from his readers. Indeed, Nietzsche pleads for understanding among his interpreters in *EH* (pref. 1) and wishes for perfect readers who learn to read him well (*D*, pref.), and he claims that "speaking more and more precisely, demanding greater and greater precision . . . this alone is fitting for a philosopher" (*GM* pref. 2).

Not all of Nietzsche's interpreters agree that precision is an interpretive virtue. Some claim that no interpretation of Nietzsche is satisfactory unless it contains contradiction and ambiguity, while others argue not only that contradiction is an essential component of Nietzschean dialectic, but also that consistent readings of Nietzsche are inconsistent with his project of deconstructing logic. But the former methodology is most unappealing, and since there is little textual evidence that he ever wished to undermine argumentative consistency even though he is critical of certain aspects of logic, the second strategy is unappealing as well.⁵ Still, unrigorous interpreters of Nietzsche often cite Nietzsche himself as justification for their interpretive strategy, and it must be admitted that Nietzsche ridicules logic rather consistently, especially in *The Will to Power*. One might on these grounds chastise an interpretation that insists on rigor with begging the question against Nietzsche's views on truth or otherwise dealing with them unjustly. There are at least three responses to this kind of criticism.

First, Nietzsche's attacks on logic are rarely attacks on logical laws or rules of inference; more often he attacks the metaphysical assumption that there are entities in the world to which the formulae of logic apply. To put the claim in contemporary terms, what Nietzsche denies is the claim that there are extra-perspectival or non-logical entities available to serve as the values of terms in interpreted formulae. For instance, *WP* 516 holds that "logic . . . applies only to fictitious entities that we have created" and *WP* 558 claims that "thingness has only been invented by us owing to the requirements of logic." *BGE* 17 hopes for the day when "we and the logicians as well will . . . accustom ourselves to getting along without that little 'it,'" arguably a criticism of the very notion of variable (see also *WP* 488, 521 and *P* 150). *HATH* 11 declares that "logic . . .

rests on assumptions that do not correspond to anything in the real world." And consider *OTL*, p. 81, where Nietzsche claims that the axioms and theorems of logic are "empty husks." All of these claims entail rejection only of the thesis that interpreted logical formulae refer to anything ontologically independent of perspectives, in particular the perspective of logic. This is of course a substantive and provocative thesis for Nietzsche to advance, and it is a thesis that any interpretation of his perspectivism about truth *must* respect. But of itself it offers no support whatsoever for rejecting logic as the discipline that studies correct inference. At best, what is entailed by Nietzsche's thesis is rejection of extant semantic interpretations for formal and natural languages; proof theory survives unscathed. And of course Nietzsche himself, while not a formal logician, is a philosopher who knows the value of good argument and who engages in it with full knowledge of the rules of inference. He repeatedly inveighs against others for arguing fallaciously and prides himself on his own inferential prowess (cf. *BGE* 15).

Second, if Nietzsche is going so far as to reject proof theory, we find it very hard to see why anyone should take him seriously. A theory that rejects *all* rules of inference is impervious to critique, and the appropriate approach to any theory that cannot even in principle be criticized is deep suspicion. And of course Nietzsche agrees that his claims and views are subject to criticism; recall *BGE* 18: "It is not the least charm of a theory that it is refutable; it is precisely thereby that it attracts subtler minds." At *BGE* 22 and 43 Nietzsche even welcomes challengers who would offer their own interpretations and perspectives. But it is sophistry to infer from his desire for good readers and for diverse interpretations that what he desires is multiply and internally contradictory readings, much less contradictory readings backed by little more than appeals to his more hyperbolic claims and surface discrepancies of some of his texts. For that fails to take into account his own insistence that consistency and honesty are virtues among thinkers and it fails to respect his own warnings that not all interpretations and perspectives are of equal value.

Third, Nietzsche himself recognizes that we are unable to survive without logic it is necessary for us to continue our lives (cf. *WP* 493, 517). Hence, it is bootless to defend an inconsistent interpretation of Nietzsche by requiring that interpretations of him get along *without* logic, for to do so would entail rejection of something Nietzsche thinks necessary for life. More will be said in what follows about Nietzsche's claim that we need logic and what this view implies.

Nietzsche's perspectivism about truth was meant to accomplish several things, both rhetorical and philosophical. Strategically, perspectivism helped Nietzsche to cast off the rigid categories and ossified thinking of the philosophical tradition he inherited. Nietzsche found in his predecessors a rampant and often militant absolutism, which he considered detestable, dogmatic, and in need of displacement.⁶ Truth perspectivism is a central component of that project of displacement. Just as Nietzsche thumbed his nose at the canons of German philology by publishing *The Birth of Tragedy* as his first major work,

so too truth perspectivism helped to punctuate his radical rejection of nearly every element of the received philosophical tradition.⁷ In *HATH* 483 (cf. *AC* 54, 55) Nietzsche wrote that "convictions are more dangerous enemies of truth than lies;" perspectivism provided him with a principled means of attacking even the most sacred convictions.

Philosophically, truth perspectivism plays two major roles. First, truth perspectivism is coherent with Nietzsche's theory of objects as fictions, a theory whose case is well laid out in *BGE* 14, 21, and 34, and in numerous passages in *WP*, including 477, 480, 495, 515, 516, 549, 552, 568, and 636. Nietzsche holds that subjects, objects, and attributes are all fabricated distinctions that we invent to suit our ends. If he is right, there is nothing 'metaphysically' true that might be said about things in the world. Indeed, there is no perspective-independent world at all, as Nietzsche reminds us over and over: "[the world] is a mere fiction, constructed of fictitious entities" (*WP* 568, cf. *TI* IV). Hence, even if truth consists in correspondence, that correspondence cannot be to a thing-in-itself, or 'real' world. At best the correspondence would be to sets of fictitious entities whose elements vary from perspective to perspective. On this ontology, there seems to be no room for any kind of absolute truth that insists on privileged statements whose truth values are constant across perspectives. Nietzsche makes this point clearly in the already cited *HATH* 2: "there are *no eternal facts*, nor are there any absolute truths" (Nietzsche's italics). It is of course an interesting question, but one that cannot be addressed here, whether the ontological theory of fictions supplements and motivates truth perspectivism, or whether the former is supported and motivated by the latter. But at least the following is true: Nietzsche's views on the nature of objects and truth perspectivism are meant to be consistent with each other, and are often offered together by him as a pair.

Equally important is the foundational role that perspectivism plays in Nietzsche's ethics. He admits the connection at *BGE* 6: "If one would explain how the abstrusest metaphysical claims of a philosopher really came about, it is always well (and wise) to ask first: at what morality does all this (does he) aim?" Nietzsche endorses a morality that envisions new philosophers free from the tyranny of Christianity forging their own moral law: "each one of us should devise *his own* virtue, *his own* categorical imperative." (*AC* 11, Nietzsche's italics): By abolishing any kind of 'absolute' truth that even the new philosophers must acknowledge, Nietzsche prepares the ground for different persons to develop diverse moralities without fear of running afoul of 'the truth.' Moreover, the absence of cosmic moral truths allows Nietzsche to advocate the experimental life, a life of sampling new perspectives and ways of living, without permanent allegiance to any particular one (cf. *HATH* pref. 4, *GS* 290, 301, *BGE* 205, *WP* 944, 962).

Granted the importance of perspectivism to Nietzsche's other concerns, it is essential to be as clear about truth perspectivism as is possible. Perspectivism is easier to understand when contrasted with absolutism. The cardinal intui-

tion of truth absolutism is that statements, if true, are true for everyone and, if untrue, then untrue for everyone. The Nietzschean intuition behind truth perspectivism is that statements, if true, are true from, or in, some perspective, but are untrue from another, or in another, perspective.⁸ Truth perspectivism can be characterized as precisely this claim, viz., the claim that every statement is true in some perspective, yet untrue in another. Hence, a statement that is true for one person is untrue for another if the perspectives occupied by the two persons are distinct with respect to that statement. Truth absolutism is then contrasted negatively as the denial of truth perspectivism, viz., as the claim that it is not the case that every statement is true in some perspective and untrue in some other perspective. This thesis is logically equivalent to the thesis that there are some statements such that they are either true in all perspectives or untrue in all perspectives.⁹ It is this that Nietzsche seems to deny. Recall *Z* III 11.2: "This is my way; where is yours?" thus I answered those who asked me 'the way.' For the way that does not exist." and also *WP* 540, "There are many kinds of eyes. Even the sphinx has eyes and consequently there are many kinds of 'truths,' and consequently there is no truth." That is, it seems, consequently there is no *absolute* truth.

'Perspective' has yet to be defined, and it may not be possible to specify it precisely. One can begin to appreciate the relevant problems by considering the following question: are there only supra-individual perspectives e.g. the point of view of science or of religion or are there individual perspectives as well e.g. the point of view of individuals (pending an adequate Nietzschean account of individuals)? Answering this complex question entails answers to two, more fundamental and equally difficult, questions. First, what does Nietzsche take the nature of a perspective to be? Second, how, if at all, does Nietzsche think perspectives are to be individuated from one another? A beginning to an answer to these fundamental questions can be made by reviewing one tempting, but mistaken, answer.

Maudemarie Clark's claim that a perspective is a set of beliefs exemplifies the interpretation of Nietzsche that must be rejected. She holds that:

[Perspectivism] requires us to grant that every belief that can be derived from a consistent set of beliefs is true, or at least as true as any other belief. For each such set of beliefs may count as a perspective, a way in which the world manifests itself.¹⁰

But this view is an infelicitous interpretation of Nietzsche and unsupportable philosophically. It is too easy to think of the perspective we inhabit as being nothing more than a set of beliefs we have about the world; to do so is to slip from 'a statement is held true (or believed true) in a perspective' to 'a statement is true in a perspective.' Nietzsche nowhere advocates such a view and indeed champions positions inconsistent with it. After all, he holds that there can be untrue beliefs within a perspective, and this would not be possible if a perspective were defined as a set of beliefs. Nietzsche is explicit about the distinction between being believed true in a perspective and being true in a perspective

and is, moreover, quite justified in drawing this distinction. In *AC* 23 he writes "truth and the belief that something is true: two completely diverse worlds of interest." Compare *WP* 487: "a belief, however necessary it is for the preservation of a species, has nothing to do with truth" and *WP* 483: "a belief can be a condition of life and nonetheless be false." Other evidence for this may be found in Nietzsche's attacks on Christianity's reliance on faith (cf. *HATH* 483, *D* 89, *AC* 52, 54, 55). If a perspective were nothing more than a group of beliefs, Nietzsche's critique of faith could be justified only by appeal to the psychological ill effects of such beliefs. But that is not his only criticism, as even the most cursory reading of *GM* or *AC* shows. His repeated warnings against martyrdom (*BGE* 25, *GM* III 8, *AC* 53, *WP* 457) as proving nothing about truth also inveigh against identifying perspectives with belief sets.

In order to be both philosophically defensible and accurate to Nietzsche, then, a distinction needs to be made between the obvious claim that statements can be held true, or believed, in some perspectives and not in others and the interesting claim that statements are true in some perspectives and not in others.¹¹ It is only the latter thesis that has anything to do with the nature of truth, and it is the latter thesis, not the former, that best represents Nietzsche's views on perspectivism about truth.

A perspective is not then a class of beliefs. What is it? Any plausible answer to this question must begin by recalling *WP* 567, in which Nietzsche claims that a locus of will to power generates a perspective. For example, a person is such a locus, and Nietzsche thinks that if persons change themselves in the right way they will change their perspective: "interpretation is itself a means of becoming master over something" (*WP* 643). Adopting a perspective is then a way of mastering one's experiences, of coming to grips with them: "we can comprehend only a world that we ourselves have made" (*WP* 495, cf. *WP* 517). In itself, Nietzsche thinks the world is chaos (*WP* 508, 515, 569); it is we who categorize it and turn it into something intelligible. If truths vary across perspectives, as Nietzsche claims, then a set of true statements will be generated whenever one adopts or creates a perspective.¹² There will be minimal consistency constraints on perspectives; without such constraints, they could not be individuated. And, as noted, one could adopt a perspective and yet not believe all of the true statements entailed by it. Still, even if there is a dependency relation between loci of power and perspectives, it does not provide an answer to the issue of the kinds of entities that can have a perspective. Indeed, Nietzsche individuates perspectives broadly and narrowly. Consider *WP* 259: "all evaluation is made from a definite perspective: that of the preservation of the individual, a community, a race, a state, a church, a faith, a culture." All of these will be loci of power for Nietzsche, and so all will be entities which adopt or create perspectives. In short, Nietzsche seems to offer a non-reductive hierarchy of loci of power, each level of which contains a domain of entities, each one of which has or generates a perspective.

II

Nietzsche's perspectivism about truth is the target of a frequently encountered argument that claims that perspectivism is either self-referentially inconsistent or self-referentially paradoxical, or both. A simple version of the argument is offered by Danto: if perspectivism is a perspective, then there are perspectives in which statements are untrue only in a perspective; if perspectivism is not a perspective, then it is untrue that every statement is true in some perspectives and untrue in others.¹³ The argument has the form of a self-referential paradox, much like the Liar Paradox and the Russell Paradox of set-membership, both of which are members of the class of semantic paradoxes, paradoxes that obtain because there are no conditions in which the statement under scrutiny can be consistently assigned a truth value. Unfortunately, Danto's version of the paradox is not worked out in any detail. A more perspicuous statement of the paradox would make the distinction between perspectivism as a thesis and the conditions in which it is true explicit. In what follows, such a version of the paradox is formulated. For reasons that will become clear, this version will be called 'the real paradox of perspectivism.' Other versions of the paradox (e.g. Danto's) with the same general structure are notational variants of the real paradox.

Recall that absolutism is the denial of perspectivism. Since perspectivism is the claim that every statement is true in some perspective and untrue in another, the following is a rendering of absolutism: there is at least one statement which is either true in all perspectives or untrue in all perspectives. Clearly, either the thesis of perspectivism is true absolutely or perspectivally, that is, perspectivism is either true or untrue in all perspectives or it is true in some perspectives and untrue in others. Suppose that perspectivism is true in all perspectives. If so, then there is a statement which has the same truth value in all perspectives viz., the thesis of perspectivism itself. But, if there is some statement which has the same truth value in all perspectives, then absolutism is true. Thus if perspectivism is true in all perspectives, absolutism is true, or, to put the matter in an equivalent form, if perspectivism is true in all perspectives, then perspectivism is untrue. This conclusion is that which critics claim shows that perspectivism is self-refuting. The argument is sound, so it is of no help to a defender of perspectivism. Suppose then that perspectivism is untrue in any perspective. If so, absolutism is true in all perspectives, since there is a statement that is true in all perspectives viz., absolutism.

Suppose then that perspectivism is true in some perspectives and untrue in others. Consider the latter case, the perspective in which perspectivism is untrue. In such a perspective, not-perspectivism that is, absolutism is true. Now, absolutism is true only if there is some statement that is true or untrue in all perspectives. But there is no such statement: not the thesis of absolutism itself, since *ex hypothesi* there are perspectives in which it is untrue and perspectivism is true; not perspectivism, since *ex hypothesi* there are perspectives in which it is untrue; nor any other statement in the perspective in which

absolutism is true, since there are distinct perspectives in which all of those statements are untrue. Hence, there is no statement that is true in all perspectives; that is, for every statement there are perspectives in which it is true and perspectives in which it is untrue. But then perspectivism is true in all perspectives, and this, we have already shown, entails that perspectivism is untrue.

Another way of putting the argument is as follows. Suppose that perspectivism is true absolutely. Now consider the statement 'perspectivism is true absolutely.' When is a statement 'p' true? To get an answer, one must find the truth conditions of the statement. When is 'p' true absolutely? This is a bit more complex: 'p' is true absolutely if and only if 'p' is true at all perspectives. Of course, if any statement is true at all perspectives then it is absolutely true. If any statement is absolutely true, then absolutism is true. Thus perspectivism is true absolutely if and only if perspectivism is true at all perspectives. Transitivity and the supposition that perspectivism is true yield the truth of absolutism. But this is self-contradictory: there are no conditions in which both perspectivism and absolutism are true, since they are contradictories and contradictories cannot both be true. Hence, if perspectivism is true in all perspectives, a contradiction results the same conclusion reached two paragraphs back.

Suppose then that perspectivism is true in some perspectives but untrue in others. Perspectives in which perspectivism is true perspectivally pose no obvious problem for the defender of perspectivism, so consider a perspective in which perspectivism is untrue, that is, in which not-perspectivism is true. In this perspective there are only two possibilities: either not-perspectivism is true absolutely, or it is true perspectivally. If not-perspectivism is true absolutely, then absolutism is true. Assume then that not-perspectivism is true perspectivally. 'Not-perspectivism is true perspectivally' is a very peculiar statement; indeed, we submit that it is self-contradictory. Consider: a statement is true perspectivally if and only if there is some perspective in which it is true, and some perspective in which it is untrue. What if the statement in question is 'not-perspectivism'? This statement claims that there is some statement with the same truth value in all perspectives. But if this statement is *only perspectivally* true, then there cannot be a statement with the same truth value in *all* perspectives. After all, there are perspectives in which the thesis of 'not-perspectivism' is untrue. In such perspectives there is no statement with the same truth value in all perspectives. Thus 'not-perspectivism is true perspectivally' insists that there is some statement that has the same truth value in all perspectives, and also forbids the existence of a statement that has the same truth value in all perspectives. The problem of 'not-perspectivism is true perspectivally' is just the problem of 'perspectivism is true non-perspectivally' stood on its head.

Nowhere does Nietzsche explicitly address the problems raised here about perspectivism. However, there are passages that suggest that he was sensitive

to the general charge of self-reference, and that he was aware to some extent that self-reference constituted a threat to his views on truth. Moreover, Nietzsche seems to provide a response to this charge. Although he nowhere makes the obvious error of claiming his perspectivism to be absolutely true, he does appear to believe that maintaining perspectivism as perspectively true is a defensible position. Recall *BGE* 22: "Supposing that this also is only interpretation and you will be eager enough to make this objection? well, so much the better." There is also *BGE* 43: "it must offend [the] pride [of the new philosophers], also their taste, if their truth is supposed to be a truth for everyman . . . 'My judgment is my judgment': no one else is easily entitled to it that is what the philosopher of the future may perhaps say of himself." The route that Nietzsche takes does seem promising, and it avoids some conspicuous pitfalls. However, as has just been argued, the thesis of perspectivism cannot be perspectively true. To claim otherwise is to broach self-contradiction.

The paradox of perspectivism has been an irritant for Nietzsche's interpreters and has resulted in some strange defenses. Most unfortunately succumb to the mistake Nietzsche himself apparently makes, that of thinking that perspectivism can be saved from paradox by affirming that it is only perspectively true. Alan Schrift, for example, recognizes the problem of "[denying] truth while at the same time proclaiming a multiplicity of truths," and accurately spots the danger of "falling victim to the charge of self-reference."¹⁴ However, Schrift agrees with Nietzsche that the danger can be avoided if perspectivism is true only perspectively.¹⁵ Likewise, Lawrence Hinman, taking his cue largely from *OTL*, correctly attributes to Nietzsche the view that there is no ontologically privileged language game, or perspective, from which the truth of any particular truth claim within a language game may be assessed.¹⁶ Moreover, Hinman claims that Nietzsche thought that truth is fundamentally a property of metaphors, and that metaphors acquire this property at least in part by losing their metaphorical meaning within a particular language game.¹⁷ Nietzsche can say that his theory of metaphors is true, according to Hinman, by declaring the theory itself to be a dead metaphor that has become canonical, fixed, and obligatory in our language.¹⁸ This approach permits Nietzsche "to avoid logical difficulties about self-referentiality."¹⁹ But Hinman's defense of Nietzsche against paradox is really only the claim that he is allowed to declare the perspectivism thesis true so long as it is simply perspectively true. George Stack says much the same thing. He calls Nietzsche's perspectivism "paradoxical," and insists that "[Nietzsche] must adopt it as a provisional hypothesis, a perspectival interpretation . . ." ²⁰ A recent variation on this view is offered by Ken Gemes. Gemes notes that "an overly strident rejection of the unconditional," i.e. what we have been calling absolute truth, "can lead quickly to paradox."²¹ Gemes then offers this solution: "Nietzsche's rejection of the unconditional is itself a conditional rejection."²² In other words, the falsity of absolutism—or the truth of perspectivism—is only perspectively true.

Two other recent answers to the self-referential problems posed by perspectivism, offered by Alexander Nehamas and Maudemarie Clark, are much more sophisticated.²³ We turn first to Nehamas. When confronted with paradox, he offers up a modal argument that is supposed to accomplish two things: first, show how the paradox of perspectivism is not in the same class as the Liar Paradox and, second, show how the paradox is to be resolved. But the paradox is in the same class as the Liar, as shown earlier, and the proposed resolution is not successful anyway. Nehamas's argument is in fact irreparable: as it appears it argues for a tautology, and even if the tautology is replaced with a more substantive conclusion, the argument is still a red herring. The crux of the problem is that he mistakenly believes that introducing modality into perspectivism can salvage it from paradox. But, since perspectivism is not a modal thesis, pointing out that Nietzsche may allow that it is *possibly* untrue while maintaining that it is *actually* true, is irrelevant.²⁴

Clark declares that her interpretation of perspectivism is immune from the paradox. Her defense rests on a distinction introduced between what she calls a 'metaphysical correspondence theory of truth' and Davidson's quasi-Tarskian 'minimal correspondence theory of truth.'²⁵ The former doctrine is the thesis that true statements correspond to Kantian things-in-themselves whose "nature is determinately constituted independently" of cognitive abilities and are true because they correspond to those entities.²⁶ The latter derives from Tarski's Convention T, the thesis that an extensionally adequate theory of truth for some language L is one that entails all sentences of the form "S' is true in L if and only if S." With Nietzsche, Clark argues against the metaphysical correspondence theory of truth, but then claims not only that Nietzsche accepts Davidson's minimal correspondence theory of truth in *BGE*, *GM*, *AC*, *EH*, *TI*, and portions of *WP*, but also that he must accept it. We argue elsewhere that the Tarski-Davidson theory of truth is not the only plausible theory of truth; that it is neither consistent with nor entails perspectivism; and that it neither is nor must be accepted by Nietzsche.²⁷

III

Given the difficulties in avoiding the paradox of perspectivism, it may be a surprise to learn that we believe that there are at least two ways of defending Nietzsche's perspectivism and avoiding paradox. The one developed here depends upon distinguishing between perspectivisms and absolutisms of differing strengths.²⁸ In section (I) perspectivism was defined as the thesis that for every statement, there is some perspective in which it is true, and some perspective in which it is untrue. Call this sort of perspectivism *strong* perspectivism. There is a quite straightforward way of weakening this thesis abandon quantification over all statements and replace it with restricted quantification over only some statements. The result is a weaker form of perspectivism, so we call it *weak* perspectivism. Henceforth weak perspectivism shall be taken to be the thesis that there is at least one statement such that there is some perspective in which

it is true, and some perspective in which it is untrue.²⁹ Note that it is consistent with weak perspectivism that some statements have the same truth value in all perspectives, that is, one can maintain that very many nearly all statements have their truth values perspectivally, and yet hold that nevertheless some statements have their truth values absolutely.³⁰ In other words, some statements have their truth values across all or in all perspectives. This is the view about truth offered on Nietzsche's behalf.

There are several advantages to this proposal. The first is that the paradox of perspectivism is resolved if it is adopted. The argument against Nietzsche's perspectivism that results in paradox requires attributing to him the strong version of perspectivism; it is because strong perspectivism makes claims about *every* statement that perspectivism is self-referential and so refutes itself. Weak perspectivism lacks this consequence; since it talks about only some statements, it need not be talking about itself. Indeed, weak perspectivism is consistent with accepting as absolutely true the thesis that all statements distinct from perspectivism and the laws of logic (and whatever else is bedrock for Nietzsche) are perspectivally true. Hence, the paradox is defused if restricted quantification over statements is adopted, and so weak perspectivism is a simple and elegant solution to the paradox.

One might deny that avoidance of paradox is an advantage of weak perspectivism on the grounds that Nietzsche's aim in discussing truth and its perspectivism is precisely to generate paradox and puzzlement over truth. But such a complaint confuses the potential uses of perspectivism with its content. Legitimate philosophical purposes can be served by presenting puzzles and by showing the paradoxical results of a long-held view, and both are activities in which Nietzsche delighted. However, advancing a theory that is itself paradoxical is not much of a discovery, for although a paradoxical theory may help in negative ways e.g. as a way of illustrating the poverty of a strategy or way of thinking it cannot itself count as an acceptable positive theory. Since his texts seem to show that Nietzsche intended truth perspectivism to be an acceptable positive theory and not merely a provocative trick or negative example, he is best served by an interpretation of perspectivism that does not entail paradox. Weak perspectivism is just such a version.³¹

Likewise, it might be argued against this interpretation of perspectivism that the price of escaping the paws of paradox is to strip Nietzsche's perspectivism of whatever philosophical power it had to start with. Since the point of perspectivism is to provide grounds for rejecting absolutist metaphysics and dogmatic philosophical appeals to bivalence and other logical devices used to warrant such absolutism, our defense of perspectivism, which requires that there be some absolute truths, appears to relapse into the very militancy it was designed to avoid. But it must be emphasized that weak perspectivism makes no commitment to either bivalent or non-bivalent logic, and its admission that logical rules of inference are shared across perspectives only confirms what Nietzsche *himself* claims about their place in human thought (recall *WP* 522). Thus Nietzsche may consistently endorse both perspectivism and proof theory.

Moreover, weak perspectivism has systematic benefits for Nietzsche and his critique of morality and metaphysics. It is, for instance, easily strong enough to ground Nietzsche's insistence that there are no moral facts, only moral interpretations of phenomena (*BGE* 108, *TI* VII 1, *WP* 258) and that the absolutist proclamations by Christians, other religious types, and metaphysicians of all stripes are not, despite what is claimed on their behalf, absolutely true. Weak perspectivism is also consistent with Nietzsche's declaration that the claims of science lack cross-perspectival truth, and that "physics too is only an interpretation" (*BGE* 14, cf. *WP* 636). All that weak perspectivism imposes are minimal boundaries on the class of statements that have their truth values perspectivally; it does not preclude the provocative and substantive theses Nietzsche wants perspectivism to advance.

Still, there are some statements the perspectivism thesis itself and logical axioms for instance that are true in all, or across all, perspectives, and that is just to say that perspectivism and the rules of inference are true absolutely for humans, for a statement is absolutely true for humans if it is true in all human perspectives. However, it must be emphasized again that although logical axioms are absolutely true for human perspectives, nothing follows about *other* perspectives (although it should be noted that, at *WP* 616, Nietzsche uncharacteristically speculates on the possibility of non-human perspectives). As argued in the first section, Nietzsche thinks that, as humans, we are forced to accept the laws of logic, a position he makes explicit at *WP* 522, where he claims, "*rational thought is interpretation according to a scheme that we cannot throw off*" (Nietzsche's italics). It is important not to misinterpret Nietzsche's claims: nothing follows about an extra perspectival world from our inability to avoid or escape logic. That we are unable to conceive of the laws of logic not holding shows nothing except that we are forced to adopt a certain perspective in order to think at all (this we take to be one of the main points of *On Truth and Lie in a Nonmoral Sense*). Hence, there are, according to Nietzsche as interpreted here, universal or absolute truths *for* humans, only far fewer than philosophers have traditionally thought. Many have thought that all truths are absolute. The view here attributed to Nietzsche claims that only a small few are.³²

Note that in characterizing absolute human truths we do not say that they are true *outside* of perspectives or true *extra*-perspectivally. Rather, the claim is that there are truths that are truths *within all* human perspectives, that is, that there are *cross*-perspectival truths. The attempt to talk about truth values (indeed, the attempt to talk of anything) outside of human perspectives is to talk nonsense, or to commit a category mistake.³³ "As if a world would still remain over after one deducted the perspective!" (*WP* 567). Indeed, there is a pervasive problem in Nietzschean interpretation of failing to recognize the distinction between something being true *in all* perspectives and something being true *outside of all* perspectives. Nietzsche's commentators are rightly nervous about claiming on his behalf that some statements are true *outside of*

perspectives, but extension of this fear prevents them from saying that anything is *absolutely* true, that is, true in all perspectives. Nehamas's repeated insistence that there is nothing outside of interpretations that might serve as a bearer of truth is an instance of this fallacy if interpreted as implying rejection of some absolute truths.

Clark too falls victim to the temptation to conflate truth in all perspectives and truth outside perspectives. Although she writes that "it seems reasonable to equate nonperspectival knowledge with knowledge of things-in-themselves,"³⁴ she also states, "to consider knowledge nonperspectival would be to insist that it must be grounded in a set of . . . beliefs all rational beings must accept no matter what else they believe . . . [Nietzsche calls] nonperspectival knowledge 'an absurdity and a nonsense.'"³⁵ With the first claim there is no disagreement. Indeed, knowledge of Kantian things-in-themselves is precisely what perspectivism rules out, since such knowledge requires stepping outside of the human perspective, something Nietzsche thinks is an incoherent demand. But in the second passage she conflates extra-perspectival truth with truth in all human perspectives by equating non-perspectival truth not with extra-perspectival truth, but with absolute truth. The view proposed here forges a strict distinction between the two: it is *extra-perspectival* truth that Nietzsche considers to be an absurdity and a nonsense; to use truth predicates outside of the human perspective, which is the conjunction of all individual and group perspectives, is to speak gibberish or to commit a category mistake. However, Nietzsche can accept that there are truths *in all human perspectives*, statements that are true for all humans no matter what else is true in their perspective.

Another objection to the suggested interpretation is that attributing *any* absolute truths of *any* kind to Nietzsche is mistaken. After all, he frequently proclaims that untruth is a condition of life (*GS* 110, 121, *BGE* 4, *WP* 483, 487, 493, 507, 514), and declares that "everything is false! everything is permitted!" (*WP* 602, cf. *GM* III 24). Hence, so the objection goes, there are no absolute truths for humans; it is more accurate to say that there is falsity, but nothing that is true. Recall the passage from *WP* 487 cited earlier: "A belief, however necessary it may be for the preservation of a species, has nothing to do with truth." Grant that this objection has *prima facie* bite. However, the conflict is only superficial and can be explained away with less difficulty than might be expected. For the thesis that untruth is a condition of life is a variation of the *metaphysical* thesis that there are no non-fictional, extra-logical entities available to serve as elements in a domain of interpretation for the variables, constants, and predicates of our language. And this proposal, we believe, is endorsed by Nietzsche as true in all human perspectives. The claim that untruth is a condition of life thus amounts to no more than the claim that we cannot escape our human perspective. Our beliefs *are* untrue, for they are not extra-perspectivally true, but that is because there are no extra-perspectival truths of *any* kind. It is precisely extra-perspectival truth and non-truth that

Nietzsche ridicules and rejects outright: no matter how essential a belief is for the preservation and enhancement of life no matter even if it is absolutely true it still is not extra-perspectivally true. The belief that there is such extra-perspectival truth and non-truth is a fiction, and it is this kind of truth that is an illusion of which we have forgotten that it is an illusion, a worn out metaphor (*OTL* p. 84). Finally, it is the search for such truth *an sich* that Nietzsche finds quixotic at best and absurd at worst. But all of this is consistent with there being, within the set of humbler and non-dogmatic perspectival human truths, statements that are true in all perspectives. Indeed, "untruth is a condition of life" is itself an instance of the kind of statement that Nietzsche thinks is a human, all too human, absolute truth.

While the interpretation of perspectivism defended here provides an adequate interpretation of the vast majority of Nietzsche's texts and is a respectable thesis in its own right, some of the more hyperbolic claims about perspectivism from *BGE* 4, *WP* 480, 481, 516, 535 and 540, in which Nietzsche appears to argue for the self-referential applicability of perspectivism, seem to pose a problem for weak perspectivism, which precludes self-referentiality. What then are we to say of these problematic passages? There are at least three ways of responding to them. First, one might say that in these passages Nietzsche gets carried away by his own rhetoric and these passages do not represent his considered view. Second, these passages are largely from the *Nachlass*, which Nietzsche never intended to be published anyway. Hence, one might argue that it is unfair to assign him a view doomed to failure in order to save a few hyperbolic passages found in his notes. A third option is to claim that Nietzsche is only insisting that the absolute truths required to avoid the paradox have no ontological status outside of the human perspective. We opt minimally for the last, although it should be noted that the first two options are jointly consistent, as are the last two.

WP 481, for example, declares that "facts is precisely what there is not, only interpretations. We cannot establish any fact "in itself." perhaps it is folly to want to do such a thing." Passages such as this one are best understood not as denying that there are absolute truths, statements that denizens of any human perspective must accept in order to live, but as denying that there are facts or truths outside the structure of perspectives. According to the interpretation presented here, "we cannot establish any fact 'in itself'" is equivalent to the claim that there are no extra-perspectival truths. But Nietzsche can keep this claim and make the further point that weak perspectivism allows that there are still some statements which have their truth values absolutely. Or consider Nietzsche's insistence at *WP* 480 that truth is a fiction. To be sure, truth in the classical, extra-perspectival sense is a fiction by Nietzsche's lights. However, acceptance of this proposal still permits a set of perspectival human truths generated by "the will to be master over the multiplicity of sensations" (*WP* 517). And it permits the existence of absolute truths for humans.

Clearly, even if dispelling some of the fog of misinterpretations of truth

perspectivism puts us in a better position to see what Nietzsche is after when he promotes the perspectival life, there are many pressing issues raised by perspectivism that remain untouched by our investigations. To reiterate what we admitted in the introduction, truth perspectivism is only one component of Nietzsche's perspectivism. Other important facets pertain to ethics, epistemology, and, perhaps, most interesting, ontology. These other aspects have barely been touched in this essay, much less have the relations between them and truth perspectivism been investigated. While recent Nietzsche scholarship has begun to address these other concerns, it is our belief that much remains to be done. We hope to address some of these issues in future work.³⁶

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NOTES

1. Abbreviations for Nietzsche's texts are as follows:

HATH *Human, All Too Human*, ed. and trans. Marion Faber and Stephen Lehmann (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984; original edition: 1878).

D *Daybreak*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982; original edition: 1881).

P "The Philosopher: Reflections on the Struggle Between Art and Knowledge" in *Philosophy and Truth: Selections From Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's*, ed. and trans. Daniel Breazeale (London: Humanities Press International, 1979).

OTL "On Truth and Lie in a Nonmoral Sense" in *Philosophy and Truth: Selections From Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's*, ed. and trans. Daniel Breazeale (London: Humanities Press International, 1979).

GS *The Gay Science*, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1974; original edition: 1882).

Z *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann, in *The Portable Nietzsche* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1954; original edition: 1885).

BGE *Beyond Good and Evil*, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1966; original edition: 1886).

GM *On the Genealogy of Morals*, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1967; original edition: 1887).

AC *The Antichrist*, ed. and trans. R.J. Hollingdale (New York: Viking Penguin, 1968; original edition: 1895).

TI *The Twilight of the Idols*, ed. and trans. R.J. Hollingdale (New York: Viking Penguin, 1968; original edition: 1889).

EH *Ecce Homo*, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1967; original edition: 1908).

WP *The Will to Power*, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage Books, 1968).

2. See for example Richard Schacht's discussion of these different senses in chapter 2 of his book *Nietzsche* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983).

3. We do not deny that there are relations between truth perspectivism and the other kinds of perspectivism or that Nietzsche has interesting things to say about them. Again, we focus here only on perspectivism as a thesis about the nature of truth. For reflections on moral perspectivism and an application, see Robert C. Welshon, "Nietzsche's Peculiar Virtues and the Health of the Soul," *International Studies in Philosophy*, vol. 24 (1992), pp. 77-89.

4. We thank Richard Schacht for pointing out the need for these last remarks.

5. It is a matter of some delicacy just what Nietzsche rejects from logic. See below for some preliminary reflections. But there is one aspect of his critique of logic that might be pressed against the interpretation of perspectivism being offered here. Consider: does Nietzsche reject bivalence, the thesis that every statement has a truth-value, and this truth-value is either true or false? *WP* 516, 535, and *BGE* 34 offer some *prima facie* evidence that he does. Still, this matters not one bit for the interpretation of perspectivism offered here. The status of bivalence is *irrelevant* to the thesis of perspectivism formulated in this paper.

N.B.: some of Nietzsche's interpreters assume that he rejects bivalence and infer rather remarkable results from this. Some argue that views which reject bivalence or replace "binary oppositions" reject thereby an axiom of any logic and so entail rejection of all logic. Others argue that rejection of bivalence supports the need for a novel logic in which contradiction and paradox are paradigms of logicality. Still others argue that rejection of bivalence sanctions inconsistency or what is euphemistically called an "unconstrained play among ideas." Maudemarie Clark, in her *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) p. 66 uses the first argument; deconstructionists often use all three; cf. John Ellis, *Against Deconstruction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989) for textual citations of these claims. Unfortunately, these arguments are uniformly fallacious. Rejection of bivalence entails rejection of bivalent logic; there are plenty of alternative logics that remain intuitionist logics and many-valued logics of the sort proposed by Lukasiewicz, Kleene, and van Fraassen are logics despite rejection of bivalence. For each such logic consistency may be defined by introducing additional rules of inference to govern formulae with values other than true or false. One can scarcely imagine a proponent of non-bivalent logic indulging the suggestion that consistency lapses simply because bivalence lapses. And neither does Nietzsche: he holds that only a nihilist rejects logic altogether (*WP* 24), and in the end Nietzsche goes beyond nihilism.

6. Kant is Nietzsche's standard whipping boy, although Fichte's battle cry "let the truth be known though the heavens fall" also comes to mind. Cf. *D* 353.

7. Cf. Ken Gemes, "Nietzsche's Critique of Truth," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, vol. 52 (1992), pp. 47-65 for a good discussion of this rhetoric.

8. We take "true" and "untrue" to be contradictories. "Untrue" is the negation of "true." This does not commit the account to bivalence, however. Those who reject bivalence hold that "true" and "false" are contraries instead of contradictories, but they do *not* claim that there are no contradictories. Therefore we are not assuming that "untrue" and "false" mean the same for Nietzsche.

9. Let *P* be a one place predicate "is a statement," let *R* be a one place predicate "is a perspective," and let *T* be a two place predicate "is true in." The thesis of perspectivism is then defined as

$$(1) \forall x \exists y \exists z (Px \rightarrow (Ry \& Rz \& Txy \& \sim Txz))$$

Absolutism is simply the denial of perspectivism, viz.

$$(2) \sim (\forall x \exists y \exists z (Px \rightarrow (Ry \& Rz \& Txy \& \sim Txz)))$$

Absolutism may be restructured the following way:

$$(3) \exists x \forall y \forall z \sim (Px \rightarrow (Ry \& Rz \& Txy \& \sim Txz)) \quad \text{from 2, quantifier negation}$$

$$(4) \exists x \forall y \forall z (Px \& \sim (Ry \& Rz \& Txy \& \sim Txz)) \quad \text{from 3, equivalence}$$

$$(5) \exists x \forall y \forall z (Px \& ((Ry \& Rz \& Txy) \rightarrow Txz)) \quad \text{from 4, equivalence}$$

In English, (5) states that there is some statement such that, if it is true in any perspective, then it is true in all.

10. Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 139. It should be mentioned that Clark does add the provisos that cognitive capacities and practical interests are involved in perspectives (p. 133), and that different belief sets are to be commensurable (p. 141 *et passim*). But none of this affects our central points.

11. The former thesis, but not the latter, has to do with intentional attitudes of persons within a perspective. Nietzsche of course has interesting things to say about the intentional attitudes what they are, their formation, their truth, their justification, and the consequences of having particular ones but we do not have space to consider those things here and they are of little interest in determining the nature of truth anyway.

12. We take perspectives to determine the truth values of statements within a perspective in the same way that possible worlds determine the truth values of statements in possible world semantics. Perspectives are not possible worlds, but they seem to be intensional entities in an analogous way. Further elaboration of this intuition is not possible without developing a logical apparatus inappropriately technical for this paper.

13. Arthur Danto, *Nietzsche as Philosopher* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), p. 80.

14. Alan Schrift, *Nietzsche and the Question of Interpretation* (New York: Routledge, 1990) p. 153.

15. Schrift, *ibid.*, p. 153.

16. Lawrence Hinman, "Nietzsche, Metaphor, and Truth," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 43 (1982): pp. 179-199. The quotation is from pp. 197-8.

17. Hinman, *ibid.*, pp. 189-191.

18. Hinman, *ibid.*, p. 194.

19. Hinman, *ibid.*, p. 192.

20. George Stack, "Nietzsche and Perspectival Interpretation," *Philosophy Today*, vol. 25 (1981), pp. 221-241. The first quotation is from p. 221; the second from p. 238. However, it should be noted that at the end of his article (cf. p. 240), Stack claims that "the paradoxes generated by his thinking cannot really be resolved satisfactorily." In section III we show that this last claim of Stack's is mistaken the paradoxes facing Nietzsche can be resolved.

21. Gemes, *op. cit.* p. 55.

22. Gemes, *ibid.*, p. 56.

23. See Clark, *op. cit.*, and Alexander Nehamas, *Nietzsche: Life as Literature* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985).

24. See our "Nehamas on Nietzsche's Theory of Truth," March, 1994 issue.

25. Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-31.

26. Clark, *ibid.*, p. 41; cf. also p. 45.

27. See our "Review of Maudemarie Clark's *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, March 1994 issue.

28. See fn 31 for some discussion of the other option.

29. Strong perspectivism: $\forall x \exists y \exists z (Px \rightarrow (Ry \& Rz \& Txy \& \sim Txz))$

Weak perspectivism: $\exists x \exists y \exists z (Px \& Ry \& Rz \& Txy \& \sim Txz)$

30. It is easy to see how strong and weak versions of absolutism can be generated.

weak absolutism: $\exists x \forall y \forall z (Px \& ((Ry \& Rz \& Txy) \rightarrow Txz))$

strong absolutism: $\forall x \forall y \forall z (Px \& Ry \& Txy \rightarrow (Rz \rightarrow Txz))$

Weak absolutism is the negation of strong perspectivism, and strong absolutism is the negation of weak perspectivism. It is clear how weak absolutism and weak perspectivism are consistent and indeed we advocate them both on Nietzsche's behalf.

31. Perspectivism is a specific theory devised for Nietzsche's own idiosyncratic philosophical purposes and is not supposed to be a semi-apparent linguistic fact or intuition. As such, it is legitimate to tailor perspectivism to suit whatever philosophical claims and ends he wishes. Whether it works to solve other paradoxes with which the paradox of perspectivism is most closely associated is a matter that neither can nor needs be analyzed here. Granted, restricted quantification might be extended to solve other well-known paradoxes, such as Russell's paradox of set-membership or the liar, but restricted quantification (as suggested by Russell's theory of types) to exclude problematic cases is not the most popular solution to these paradoxes. There is a belief that preserving the possibility of unrestricted quantification in a language, whether it be about all sets, or this sentence, or some class, is worthwhile. If so, it is *ad hoc* to rule that a syntactic string cannot 'say of itself' that it has certain properties, particularly the property of untruth. In general, although a ban on self-reference works to avoid some of the paradoxes, it seems to be a case where the cure is worse than the disease. Among the alternatives to the theory of types, Alfred Tarski's distinction between object-and meta-level languages obviously comes to mind. Although we think that the Tarski treatment would dissolve the paradox of perspectivism, it is more technological than needed. But in brief: the perspectivism thesis would be a sentence in the metalanguage (say, a particular partition of English or German), which says of sentences in the object language (much of the rest of English or German) that they all have their truth values perspectivally. On Tarski's view no language can contain both its own truth predicate and the means to refer to its own expression. Thus the perspectivism thesis itself could never be within the range of its own quantifier. Colloquially put, every time we tried to put the perspectivism thesis within the language level over which its quantifier ranges, the thesis would get booted out of that language level and up to a higher one. Hence the paradox could never get generated. (We realize that these remarks are sketchy.) For the theory of types, see Bertrand Russell, "Mathematical Logic as Based on The Theory of Types," *Logic and Knowledge* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1956). The *locus classicus* of the Tarski approach is, of course, his "The Concept of Truth in Formalized Languages," in *Logic, Semantics, Metamathematics* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 2nd ed. 1983). Also in the Tarskian spirit is Saul Kripke, "Outline of a Theory of Truth," *Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 72 (1975), pp. 690-716. In general, we think that the problems facing the other paradoxes are harder to solve than the one facing perspectivism, so more complex and more controversial solutions are needed for them.

32. It is Nietzsche's advocacy of an overarching perspective that we are all forced to adopt as humans that we believe is partly responsible for Danto's misreading of Nietzsche as a pragmatist. Danto writes, "In the interests of life and survival, we are constrained to affirm the body of beliefs which passes for common sense and reject whatever conflicts with this" (Danto, *op. cit.*, p. 75). Danto may be right that this is representative of Nietzsche's views, but he is wrong to think it simple pragmatism. The class of statements that Danto has in mind are ones that are absolutely true for Nietzsche; they are true in all human perspectives.

33. On the nature of category mistakes, see Gilbert Ryle, *The Concept of Mind* (London: Hutchinson, 1949), p. 16 *et passim*.

34. Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

35. Clark, *ibid.*, p. 130.

36. We wish to thank Martha Nussbaum, Ernest Sosa, Richard Schmitt, Jaegwon Kim, Victor Caston, and an anonymous referee for *History of Philosophy Quarterly* for criticisms of ancestors of this paper and for helpful discussions.