

NIETZSCHE: STYLE AND PERSPECTIVISM

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By

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NOTE ON ABBREVIATIONS

The following is a list of the abbreviations I use when referring to texts written by Friedrich Nietzsche. Unless noted otherwise, the numbers always refer to section numbers of the text. In the case of Thus Spake Zarathustra the first number refers to the book, while the second refers to the section. Whenever the citation originates in a prologue or preface it will be noted (e.g. Zarathustra, prologue, 4). I refer to Ecce Homo by abbreviating the titles of its chapters, then citing the section number. For example, (EH, Books, 2) refers to the second section of the chapter "Why I Write Such Good Books". Further information on these and all other works by other authors can be found in the bibliography.

A	The Antichrist
BGE	Beyond Good and Evil
BT	The Birth of Tragedy
EH	Ecce Homo
GM	On the Genealogy of Morals
GS	The Gay Science
LNR	Lecture Notes on Rhetoric
TI	The Twilight of the Idols
WP	The Will to Power
Z	Thus Spake Zarathustra

ABSTRACT

Friedrich Nietzsche represents a radical departure from almost all of the philosophical tradition which preceded him. His stylistic differences from the tradition in philosophy find their basis in his perspectivism, a strong form of relativism. Perspectivism is the theory that there are an indefinite number of different perspectives on the world, none of which can legitimately claim to be the true definition of it. Nietzsche bases a number of interesting arguments about language, truth and logic on perspectivism. His perspectivism is problematic because it cannot be asserted as true without also encountering a paradox: if perspectivism is a definitive perspective on the world, then perspectivism is false. Nietzsche found a method of dealing with this paradox through his writing style itself, viz. through his style he exemplifies perspectivism without seriously asserting it. That means that his style constantly refers to and serves as an example of perspectivism, and yet he never plainly asserts that perspectivism is a true description of the world. Nietzsche's style is intended to distinguish him from the rest of the philosophical tradition because he thought that was the only way to have his ideas accepted: on his own terms standing in opposition to the rest of the tradition, especially Socrates.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis, like many commentaries upon Nietzsche's thought, begins with a discussion of Socrates. There are textual reasons for beginning here, such as the fact that Nietzsche accorded Socrates a prominent space in his first published book, The Birth of Tragedy. Socrates is also featured prominently in later works like The Twilight of the Idols. Socrates serves as a good beginning for considering Nietzsche for those reasons alone. But none of those is the main reason in this case.

Nietzsche thinks that Socrates is a pivotal figure in Western intellectual history because he represents a decisive change in the conception of rationality and its importance in life. Because of this and Socrates' support for a notion of truth which does not readily admit Nietzsche's ideas of perspectivism, Nietzsche disagrees with Socrates. "Perspectivism" refers to the theory that there are an indefinite number of perspectives on the world, none of which can legitimately claim to be the true description of it. Furthermore, Nietzsche thinks that Socrates' ideas manage to extend themselves in the philosophical tradition leading to Nietzsche's own era. In doing

so, Socrates implicitly represents a certain standard of interpretation which Nietzsche is forced to oppose in expounding his views. Yet Nietzsche faces some hermeneutic problems in reacting to Socrates, who never actually wrote anything himself.

Nietzsche's most important concept in combatting Socrates is perspectivism. It is also the key to understanding Nietzsche's critique of philosophy. The criticisms of philosophy take on some aspects of the criticism of Socrates because philosophy is, in a large part, an extension of those views. Although Nietzsche also respects philosophy for its vital force and similarity to the notion of the will to power, it is difficult to understand what all that means until one works through the critique of philosophy. Those criticisms wind up leaving Nietzsche with a paradox, viz. if he affirms perspectivism as the truth against the mistakes of philosophy, then he is actually saying that philosophy is false and perspectivism is true. But that would contradict the main idea behind perspectivism because it would amount to saying that perspectivism is the true description of the world. Nietzsche does not want to assert "perspectivism is true" because that statement contradicts the definition of perspectivism (p. 1), i.e. no perspective can legitimately claim to be the one true description of the world. I call this problem the paradox of perspectivism. It is my contention that Nietzsche recognized and understood this problem and spent a good deal of effort trying to avoid it. Nietzsche does not ever state any straightforward argument anywhere which can evade the paradox "perspectivism is true". I maintain that he did not ever publish an attempt to do so. Instead Nietzsche wished to address that paradox in a

different manner, through aspects of his writing style. I think Nietzsche's writing style might relieve this problem by allowing him to affirm his views without asserting them in "normal" philosophical statements.

In chapter two the problem of the paradox is therefore not actually found to be resolved in Nietzsche's writing. I show that Nietzsche wrestles with the same paradoxical problem in his criticisms of language, rationality and truth. Again, Nietzsche's thoughts are not intended to overcome the paradox of perspectivism. Either this shows that Nietzsche was completely incapable of making any assertions to overcome the problems of perspectivism or his arguments come in a different way. Given Nietzsche's brilliance, I can only conclude that he thought he had overcome his difficulties with the paradox via a different route. Did he? Readers of Nietzsche know that his writing style is unique and very different from other philosophers of his time. I think the issue of style and its components of self-reference, hyperbole, and so forth in his writing technique might have a deeper significance than one might suspect. In short, though Nietzsche asserts no arguments to overcome the difficulties involved with his thoughts on perspectivism and truth his writing style does overcome those difficulties. The discussion of language, truth and rationality in chapter two helps to base the consideration in chapter three of why style is important to Nietzsche.

The third chapter is devoted almost entirely to dissecting the notions of the previous two chapters. The discussion of style arises because it helps clarify how Nietzsche overcomes the paradox of

perspectivism in his critique of philosophy. Style does not arise as an issue due to any confusion over Nietzsche's jargon, e.g. I do not see style simply or primarily as a way of clarifying (or manifesting) difficult notions like the will to power. Yet because style helps to clarify the problems of Nietzsche's outlook on philosophy, it will ultimately help clarify notions like the will to power.

In chapter three I argue that style has two main functions: First it is a technique for coping with the paradox by clarifying Nietzsche's views through exemplifying them rather than simply asserting them. In this way style serves as the subject of arguments, or, to put it in more familiar terms, style can be part of the content of arguments. Second, style helps Nietzsche rethink rationality and its role in philosophy. In this way style serves as a vehicle of differentiation of various schools of thought and acts as a signature. Language, according to Nietzsche, is inherently stylistic, so it is not Nietzsche's desire to incorporate style into philosophy which makes philosophy stylistic. Nietzsche's style does help to reinforce his notion of perspectivism and acts as part of the subject of the arguments he offers. Style cannot be confined to this role, because saying that style makes Nietzsche's views more correct or more descriptively adequate through exemplification is actually tacitly saying that style is a different (and better) kind of language than the one he criticizes. I show in chapter two that Nietzsche will not accept the notion that there are better languages than the ones which we use to do philosophy. Nietzsche's style also allows him to differentiate himself from the tradition he criticizes because it helps him to

articulate his attempts at changing the Socratic standard of rationality. This in turn allows him to set himself up as an alternative to the tradition, to articulate his perspective. It is crucially important for Nietzsche to set up another standard because it is the only way to get perspectivism widely accepted--and Nietzsche very badly wanted perspectivism to be widely accepted. Ultimately, style does help to supply a method for understanding other Nietzschean concepts, like the will to power, although the resulting picture may not be entirely satisfactory. At the very least, understanding style is fundamentally important for understanding perspectivism.

CHAPTER ONE

For Nietzsche there is an identifiable trend which can be referred to as "Socratism" and which bears some relationship to the person whom Nietzsche identifies as Socrates (the historical figure). That is, Socratism is a trend based upon, to some significant degree, the philosophical style and views of Socrates (admittedly, this is problematic). I will begin by following Nietzsche's critique of philosophy from its beginning with Socrates through its legacy in the rest of philosophical history. The development of Socratism is the fundamental event in Western intellectual history. Nietzsche views and defines the philosophic tradition as a unitary, monolithic and singular expression of an idea refined over the course of history from Socrates down to his own era. He locates the guiding theme of the tradition in the emphasis on rationality in conscious life, encompassing logical reasoning in both conscious thought (including routine problem-solving) and its refinement in giving reasons to justify actions. He thinks Socrates introduced the increased emphasis upon reason into mental life: he thinks that Socratism crystallized around this emphasis on reason. Nietzsche holds Socrates responsible for adhering to a preoccupation with reason in the face of an ancient cultural tradition dominated by instinct, which Nietzsche claims was previously the dominant force in Greek life. Nietzsche sees Socrates as a pivotal

point of intellectual history because he represents the beginning of a tradition of interpretation. Socrates represents a standard of interpretation because he succeeded in maintaining his influence throughout the history of Western thought.

Nietzsche characterizes philosophy, too, as a certain sort of understanding of rationality. Rationality in this case associates quite strictly with the logical content of statements to the near exclusion of the style of their presentation. Take, for example, Socrates' warning to Crito to refrain from trying to persuade Socrates to escape from prison in deference to the force of the better argument:

Let us consider the matter together, and do you either refute me if you can, and I will be convinced; or else cease, my dear friend, from repeating to me that I ought to escape against the wishes of the Athenians: for I am extremely desirous to be persuaded by you, but not against the force of my better judgement. (p. 479)

Socrates represents the beginning of a particular view of rationality. Nietzsche is suspicious about granting this view of rationality privileged status, so part of his task is to try to undermine it through presenting a different view of rationality. That view more closely involves the style of an argument with the subject of an argument.

Arthur Danto echoes the recognition of Socrates as a decisive turning point (p. 59) and also recognizes Nietzsche's complaint against the narrowness of Socrates' conception of reason.

Socrates contrasted rational with artistic activity similarly to the way in which we contrast veracity with illusion. But it is Nietzsche's deepest conviction that art and science are together illusory and must be judged and distinguished on an altogether different basis [from the tradition]... in the service of life. (p.60)

For Nietzsche, art is a necessary complement to rational discourse (BT, 14), yet Nietzsche feels that this instinctive and necessary aspect of intellectual thought has been closed out of philosophy. He wishes to insinuate this concern for artistic discourse into philosophical thought.¹ Eventually this concern leads to the issue of style through Nietzsche's criticisms of Socrates and rationality in both actual statements about them and the style in which they are expressed.²

Nietzsche stands in a very complex relationship with Socrates. On one hand he portrays Socrates as a decadent who introduced an increased emphasis upon rationality to a declining Athens. Nietzsche derides him for his "ugliness" and denigrates him as an agent of the "lowest orders of society" (TI, II, 2-11). On the other hand, Nietzsche praises Socrates elsewhere for his ability to distinguish himself intellectually. The result is an ambivalent attitude toward Socrates, which eventually becomes a paradoxical relationship with the philosophical tradition. This relationship is based partly on Socrates' ability to set standards of philosophical interpretation, which

¹ I shall look at how he manages the mechanics of this artistic project in chapter three. Meanwhile, it is interesting to note how even the dialogues of Plato are widely regarded as having their own literary merits which can be enjoyed separately from the philosophical content of his dialogues.

² In common usage "Style" means, quite generally, how something is said as opposed to what is said. This definition does not suffice, though, for reasons which are explained in the third chapter. For now, style can be used to differentiate the what from the how of statements. Style can help distinguish the grammatical devices a certain author uses, his vocabulary, the frequency and kinds of metaphors and similes he uses, yet it can also be used to identify the assumptions he makes while writing. The list of possible stylistic elements could therefore be very long. Later on, I will discuss how one can distinguish between more and less important stylistic elements of writing. Also, I will show how style is related to exemplification.

Nietzsche must grudgingly accept, and partly on the general difficulties of scholarship on Socrates.

There is a general problem involved with Socratic scholarship because he did not actually write anything himself. The absence of any primary sources for the views or personality of Socrates creates problems because it renders "Socrates" and Socratism practically inseparable. Thus, Nietzsche necessarily engages in an act of discipleship simply because he cannot avoid praising Socrates apart from accepting at least some initial versions (Platonic or otherwise) of Socratism.³ Still, this limitation also prevents Nietzsche from making claims about "the truth of Socrates" in dogmatic terms, precisely the criticism he levels at the Socratism of the disciples of Socrates and, a fortiori, philosophy itself. The historical limitations Nietzsche faced result in what amounts to his own unashamedly individual perspective on a literary figure. The key problem Nietzsche must face is how to distinguish himself from both the Socratics and Socrates.

Nietzsche is acutely aware of the general problems of Socratic scholarship. Walter Kaufmann summarizes Nietzsche's position by saying "Quite generally, Nietzsche distinguishes between a)men whom he admires b)the ideas for which they stood and c)their followers....Nietzsche's fight against Socrates thus takes two forms: denunciations of his epigoni and respectful criticisms of his own doctrines" (Kaufmann,

³ Nietzsche realizes in EH, III, U3 that Plato uses Socrates as a signifier for his own views at times, so his acceptance of any formulation of Socrates' character is qualified.

p.398)⁴. This view is initially attractive because 1) accepting it portrays Nietzsche as a charitable man who could converse with others without making ad hominem statements, and 2) this separation reflects the notion of form and content in statements which Nietzsche ultimately denies. So I do not agree with Kaufmann here. Firstly, Nietzsche often makes derisive comments about his opponents. Secondly, in this case, one clearly cannot allow that Nietzsche differentiated between Socrates, the man, and "Socrates", as he has been understood as a philosopher, because of the hermeneutic difficulties involved in determining what the man did or did not say or believe. Otherwise he would presuppose a knowledge of Socrates as he existed for which there is no clear evidence from a primary source (there are only contradictory views from Xenophon and Plato).

Nietzsche does admit a distinction between Socrates' character and his disciples. However, he has little but criticism for the regime of rationality which Socrates insinuated into the culture of the day and which held such sway over his disciples and the rest of intellectual history. It would too easy to postulate a difference between character and views and followers (as though it were merely a matter of distinguishing between the form and content of Socrates) and

⁴ It is necessary to take Kaufmann's notion of "respectful criticism" advisedly; although it is all too easy to confuse Nietzsche's polemic criticism with an all out vindictive denunciation of Socrates because of some of the later writings, Kaufmann's nice reconciliation seems to gloss over the tension which obviously exists between Nietzsche and Socrates. Though he is quite right about the existence of Nietzsche's respect for Socrates, Kaufmann tends to make Nietzsche's attitude seem too amicable because it fails to account for the sharpness of Nietzsche's criticisms.

politely suggest that Nietzsche appreciated the character of Socrates while holding his views and followers in relative contempt.

Nietzsche refuses this view not only because he perceived the impossibility of separating men, ideas and personalities. He also refuses Kaufmann's interpretation because a follower is someone who emulates, and Nietzsche emulates Socrates insofar as he tries set his own standards of philosophical interpretation. So, in a way Nietzsche is also a follower of Socrates. This may bring him uncomfortably close to Socrates because Nietzsche feels Socrates' greatest accomplishment was setting standards of philosophical interpretation which have strongly influenced thousands of years of thought. In addition, later on⁵ it will become clear that distinguishing between a set of views and the style those views are presented in is an impossible task. There is a difficulty in separating what is said and how it is said. Furthermore, there is a connection between who is saying something and how it is said. Therefore there are two reasons to avoid Kaufmann's view of Nietzsche on Socrates, which claims that Nietzsche kept ideas and personalities separate.

Regarding Nietzsche's attitude toward Socrates, Nietzsche claims only to have qualified admiration: "Socrates, to confess it frankly, is so close⁶ to me that almost always I fight a fight against him" (translated by Kaufmann on p.398 of his Nietzsche). Nietzsche holds Socrates in high regard, for he managed to achieve a greatness

⁵ In chapter three.

⁶ Perhaps closeness is best suited to explaining the relation of these two figures, for it encompasses themes of profound respect and admiration as well as virulent disagreement and, by times, repulsion.

which awed Nietzsche and begged for duplication. Alexander Nehamas also recognizes Nietzsche's closeness to Socrates:

Nietzsche, as I have said, is always in direct competition with Socrates, and their relationship, like the relationship between many great opponents is inescapably ambiguous....What is ambivalent in Nietzsche's attitude toward Socrates is not his rage or enmity...[it] is his reaction to the gnawing question whether the protruding eyes that stare back at him when he squints at Socrates' portrait may not be his own, whether in looking at Socrates he may not after all be looking into a mirror. (p.30)

Nietzsche, then, harbors a great deal of anxiety over the question of whether he, too, is a Socratic by virtue of the magnificence which Socrates has held throughout the philosophical tradition. Since Socrates' influence over the philosophical tradition is strong, Nietzsche thinks that he may be imitating Socrates even through his critique of philosophy.

There are two ways in which Nietzsche resembles Socrates in his discussion of Socratism. First, there are elements of the disputed Socratic discourse in the very criticisms Nietzsche makes of Socrates. Secondly, Nietzsche and Socrates have similar stylistic goals, namely distinguishing themselves sharply from their intellectual peers. The result is that Nietzsche treats Socrates not as a set of arguments for which he can formulate a response, since that route would place him into the Socratic tradition he opposes. Instead, Nietzsche treats Socrates as a style of argument rather than either a man or a set of ideas. In fact, the stylistic approach to Socrates cuts across both of those alternatives: in treating Socrates as a style Nietzsche discusses both Socrates as a character and as a set of ideas. The danger in this option lies in the possibility that Nietzsche may discuss neither to

anyone's satisfaction, and this would surely happen had Nietzsche not made an effort to show that style is a serious intellectual issue. Nietzsche's discussion of both the character and ideas of Socrates in a stylistic critique of him reveals a key point in the definition of style: style is an integral part of both the "what" and the "how" of arguments.

In light of the extraordinary complexities he faced, Nietzsche tried to develop a writing style which would deal with the problems of the possibility that any criticism of Socrates might return to criticize Nietzsche himself. Nehamas' account of the relationship between Nietzsche and Socrates succeeds in identifying the style Nietzsche employed as a reaction to Socrates, i.e. one which includes hyperbole, hostility, and the use of self-reference to show he understood the complexity of the task. One cannot expect unequivocal statements from Nietzsche on the subject of Socrates. The writing styles employed in the critique of Socrates spill over into the entirety of Nietzsche's writing on the Socratic philosophical tradition.

Nietzsche's ambivalence about Socrates helps engender a self-referential quality in Nietzsche's writing. Here is an example of the complex use of self-reference in support of perspectivism:

This is the essence of phenomenism and perspectivism as I understand them: Owing to the nature of animal consciousness, the world of which we can become conscious is only a surface and sign world, a world that is made common... (GS 354, emphasis Nietzsche's)

The emphasis on the word "I" here is entirely characteristic of Nietzsche's approach to perspectivism. He constantly reminds his

readers that perspectivism is his view only, but he rarely states it in so many words so he can keep the attention of his readers. This is certainly due to the fact that the Socratic tradition is not oriented around people who voice their views as opinion, rather it is oriented around people who attempt to speak the truth. Nietzsche is left with the task of finding a perspectivist style which can hold the attention of readers of the Socratic tradition. Here also he promises to reveal the essence of perspectivism, perhaps the essence of his thought in its entirety, but instead he uses the occasion to make another perspectivist point which nullifies the promise of an essence. That is, Nietzsche uses self-reference to avoid asserting the essence of perspectivism; he delivers only the "essence" as he understands it-- hinting that "essences" may be understood in many different ways. Hence there may not be essences in the traditional sense of one fundamental quality. The example of self-reference in perspectivism is illustrative of Nietzsche's approach to Socrates, too. Nietzsche consistently uses the same self-reference to show that his views are a perspective on Socrates. In fact, he implies Socrates is only another perspective on the world and should be treated as though there are other competing views in the world (like Nietzsche's).

Nietzsche chiefly disagrees with two specific issues in Socratic rationality. First, Nietzsche criticizes Socrates because his standard of rationality intersects with morality⁷. The second major point of

⁷ Bernard Williams faintly echoes this suspicion about the effect of Socrates with regard to morality. He also suspects that Socrates (and most of morality, for that matter) tended towards the instantiation of a reductive enterprise in ethics: "In particular, why should [ethical theory] be simple, using only one or two ethical

disagreement is truth. Regarding the first issue Nietzsche thinks Socrates casts reason with a moral quality by attempting to equate reason, virtue, and happiness (TI, II, 10). Take Socrates' doubts that anyone would choose to be bad, rather bad men do wrong through ignorance. Good men are virtuous because they possess a certain kind of knowledge which allows them to behave in a way that creates a good state of affairs. When a good state of affairs has been attained, then the greatest happiness will come to those affected by it. Socrates also rejected the possibility of creating a good state of affairs through instinctive behaviour. Nietzsche doubts this. Those doubts are based on his support for a stronger connection between instinct and rationality. Socrates portrayed reason as the only means of living which can secure a good state of affairs.

So Nietzsche's objections to Socratic rationality are twofold: he primarily dislikes the dominance of reason over instinct (and artistic life) to the near exclusion of instinct, including the supposition that the two are in some way opposed; and, second, Nietzsche opposes the other side of this dominance: the connection of reason and virtue. Nietzsche assesses the value of rationality on the basis of the degree to which it has contributed to maintaining human life.* Nietzsche suggests that reason might merely be a defence

concepts, such as duty or good state of affairs rather than many?... This rests on an assumption about rationality, to the effect that two considerations cannot be rationally weighed against each other unless there is a common consideration in terms of which they can be compared. This assumption is at once very powerful and utterly baseless...." Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy, p.17.

* Danto shows how Nietzsche thinks art allowed the pre-Socratics to endure life (and thrive) in chapter two of his book.

mechanism that allows a more effective response to some sort of threat. He attempts to show how rationality is like instinct in this very important way. Nietzsche thinks the initial adoption of Socrates' notion that reason and virtue are somehow related is based not on its truth or moral value, but is instead based on a necessity of a more naturalistic kind, i.e. Nietzsche suggests that without Socrates there might have been some variety of collapse of his society.* The choice of dialectics is merely a last resort when faced with an increasingly volatile and dangerous Greek society. "What could possibly have precipitated such a shift in outlook if not decay?" he asks. In his later writings, Nietzsche admitted no explanation for the arrival of Socrates other than the idea that he represented a necessary step for Athens to make in order to avoid "some calamitous event"(TI, II, 2). When faced with a choice between either perishing or being more overtly rational, the Greeks resolutely chose the path of rationality. Perhaps reason and instinct are alike in important ways.

The attempt to render Socrates' accomplishments less spectacular by objectifying Socrates as an involuntary force of history represents an example of genealogy. In this case Nietzsche is trying to debunk philosophy by examining its origin. Why the harsh treatment for Socrates? First, it serves Nietzsche's purpose to portray Socrates as a force of history, since he wishes to explain the decline of Greek society in the post-Socratic era. On this view, the criticism of

*Nietzsche bases this on the generally accepted notion that Athens (and Greece) had begun its decline from its classical age by the end of Socrates' lifetime in 399 B.C. after the end of twenty-five years of the Peloponnesian wars in 404 B.C. By the end of Aristotle's life Athens would be increasingly dominated by the Macedonians.

Socrates is incidental to a larger critique of reason in general. Secondly, Nietzsche finds it simpler to differentiate himself from Socrates and his followers by changing the path of discourse away from some of the particular questions which Socrates focussed upon. Instead Nietzsche focusses mostly on questions of truth and rationality.

After Socrates, many of the Socratic presuppositions pass into philosophy rarely to be questioned. For example, Foucault thinks "The locus of emergence for metaphysics was surely Athenian demagoguery, the vulgar spite of Socrates and his belief in immortality, and Plato could have seized this Socratic philosophy to turn it against itself" (1984, p. 92). But Plato instead reinforced the Socratic view. In the wake of Socrates, every yielding to instinct becomes an instance of an inability to use the virtues of enlightened, reasoned thought. The Greeks began to think "One must be prudent, clear, bright at any cost: every yielding to the instincts leads away from the clear light of reason".

Contrary to the theme of the opposition of reason and instinct in the philosophic tradition, Nietzsche thinks that reason and instinct are intertwined. He thinks of reason as compatible with instinct. "Most of the conscious thinking of a philosopher is secretly guided and forced into certain channels by his instincts" (BGE, 3). So reason is not actually in opposition to instinct at all; it is a variation upon it. Nietzsche declares "by far the greater part of conscious thinking must still be included among instinctive activities, and that goes even for philosophical thinking" (Ibid.). In fact, all philosophical concepts are a result of a recognition, "a return and a homecoming to a

remote, primordial, and intensive household of the soul, out of which those concepts grew originally..."(BGE, 20). This not to suggest, however, that Socrates was heightening instinct.¹⁰ Clearly, Nietzsche thought Socrates had introduced a feature to thought that is, in fact, in conflict with instinct because it served to deny it. In fact, Nietzsche thought rationality has no basis for opposing instinct because they both do the same thing: supply a perspective on the world. Both instinct and rationality are perspectives and that is not a trivial assertion for Nietzsche (like saying they are both concepts or words). Nietzsche is saying that they at least have one important feature in common: they are both points of view upon the world which do not necessarily conflict. He thought he had shown that through his claim that Socrates instinctively chose rationality over instinctive and artistic discourse. He wished to show a deep connection between instinct and rationality.

The second major issue on which Nietzsche and Socrates disagree is truth. Nietzsche thinks Socrates was a dogmatist on truth, that Socrates thought there was one true perspective which one might eventually know if he were to live in the right way and think the right thoughts. The issues of perspectivism will be discussed in greater detail below, for now it is sufficient to say that Nietzsche thought

¹⁰ In speaking of the daimonion of Socrates in BT14, Nietzsche expresses this suspicion about instinct: "The voice, when it comes, always dissuades. In this utterly abnormal nature, instinctive wisdom appears only to hinder conscious knowledge occasionally. While in all productive men it is instinct that is the creative affirmative force, and consciousness acts critically and dissuasively, in Socrates it is instinct that becomes the critic and consciousness that becomes the creator--truly a monstrosity par defectum!"

that Socrates' dogmatic outlook on truth was extended as a legacy to the philosophical tradition. Likewise, Socrates' notion of rationality passed into the tradition.

SECTION ii--The Paradox of Perspectivism

Nietzsche does not surrender philosophy, although his critique of Socrates might indicate to some that he harbors anti-philosophical sentiments. Separation of his critique of the philosophical tradition from his views on philosophy as a way of thought helps alleviate the confusion produced by Nietzsche's ambiguous employment of the term "philosophy". Given the frequency of the favorable references to philosophy throughout Nietzsche's later writing, evidently Nietzsche does not want to eradicate all forms of thought which we would typify as belonging to the discipline of philosophy, nor would Nietzsche wish to obliterate all rationality. Nietzsche understood philosophy as beginning before the emergence of Socrates (WP, 437), so some qualities of philosophy pre-dating Socrates would persist after the critique of Socrates is finished. As well, Nietzsche's revised understanding of the term insinuates a greater meaning into the term, for Nietzsche's reinterpretation of philosophy is extensive.

The major issue Nietzsche faces with regard to reconceiving philosophy is how his revised notion of rationality changes his outlook on philosophy. Nietzsche's philosophy is one which has regained a prominent space for instinct and style, which no longer views instinct as antagonistic. Philosophy always "creates the world in its image... Philosophy is this tyrannical drive itself, the most spiritual will to

power, to the 'creation of the world', to the causa prima". A vital force is entrenched in philosophy; philosophy is capable of far more than the role to which it is confined during the Socratic tradition: Nietzsche thinks philosophy can begin to conceive of the world through a variety of interpretations without looking for a true one, it need not be confined to one (he alleges philosophy has been confined to the dogmatism of one perspective).

What does Nietzsche appreciate about philosophy as a way of thinking? Unsurprisingly, the praise which Nietzsche bestows upon early Greek philosophy and philosophy in general closely resembles his accounts of the will to power. Terms such as "overflowing" and "fruitfulness" abound while there is never much effort devoted toward clarifying them fully. Nietzsche's reluctance to simply assert the concepts behind his terminology should hardly be seen as a simple shortcoming in Nietzsche's abilities. There is another option. It must be allowed that Nietzsche's refusal to clarify himself or to plainly assert his unambiguous meaning rests on the same foundation as his defence of Greek culture against the dialectics of Socrates. Nietzsche is simply refusing to fall into the pattern of the tradition of philosophy which relies upon dialectics and the clear enunciation of reasons and descriptions for all terms used in those reasons. Nietzsche's vagueness forms part of his own opposition to the tradition of philosophy. Take, for example, Nietzsche's statement "one wishes just as surely not to be understood" when one writes. He hints "perhaps that was part of the author's intention--he did not want to be understood by just anyone" (GS, 381). In short, Nietzsche justifies his

often opaque meanderings by appealing to an anti-dialectical movement in philosophy. So he uses the existence of a pre-Socratic intellectual tradition to prove that it is at least possible to think in terms other than those of the Socratic tradition.

The real philosophers of Greece are those before Socrates... They are all notable persons, setting themselves apart from people and state, traveled, serious to the point of somberness... They anticipate all the great conceptions of things, they themselves represent these conceptions, they bring themselves into a system. Nothing gives a higher idea of the free spirit than this sudden fruitfulness in types, than this involuntary completeness in the erection of the great possibilities of the philosophical ideal... (WP, 437)

Two key concerns inform the problem of Nietzsche's vague description of pre-Socratic virtues. First, the pre-Socratic virtues represent an example of a certain vital force, which Nietzsche calls the will to power. Yet this vital force cannot be understood without also understanding the second concern: Nietzsche's perspectivism. He uses Greece to support his perspectivism, as examples of different perspectives.

I certainly do not claim that Nietzsche is simply nostalgic for pre-Socratic Greece. Nor do I claim that the rejection of Socrates is a rejection of metaphysics. Obviously Nietzsche still engages in metaphysical thinking, as evidenced by the whole notion of a will to power constituting the world (BGE, 36). Instead, I agree with Nehamas when he maintains that Nietzsche's opposition to philosophy is based on a rejection of the dogmatism which is one of its fundamental traits.

He attributes to them the view that their view is not simply a view but an accurate description of the real world which forces its own acceptance and makes an unconditional claim on everyone's assent....This...is

one of Nietzsche's most central criticisms of philosophers. (p.32)

The main tool of combatting dogmatism lies in Nietzsche's perspectivism. He wishes to force the admission of the possibility of several different competing views of the world (he would also like to illustrate that his view is better). Naturally, he must begin by challenging the dominant view of the world. However, there exists the pre-eminent concern that Nietzsche not baselessly assert the presence of a tradition in philosophy without showing it. The roots of this proof lay in Nietzsche's tracing of dogmatism and Socratic rationality down through the history of philosophy and their reinforcement in the conception of language and truth implicit in the Socratic tradition.¹¹ Those are the concerns in his scholarly account of that movement throughout the history of philosophy (especially chapters one and six of BGE).¹²

In reaction to those who would limit themselves to a Socratic understandings of philosophy, Nietzsche sarcastically suggests "Sir... it is improbable that you are not mistaken; but why insist on the truth?" (BGE, 16). The primary step in the process of overcoming the philosophical tradition is forcing those who form its mainstream into

¹¹ In the next chapter I show how language and truth manifest the Socratic values Nietzsche combats.

¹² Is Nietzsche correct in his account? One might be tempted to disqualify him because of his inflammatory style. Despite his irreverence, Nietzsche should not be disqualified because 1) Any challenge must be thoroughly investigated by a philosophical tradition which eschews dogmatism 2) The hyperbole in Nietzsche's writing may be a mask for other features of his thought which can only be implicit 3) Nietzsche may need to overstate his case as a necessary part of challenging philosophy.

admitting the possibility that they can be party to Nietzsche's conception of perspectivism. Of course, an admission of the possibility is not equivalent to proving that non-perspectivist ways of thinking and writing philosophy are false. Merely gaining the admission of fallibility from the philosophical tradition is not sufficient. The admission is not a victory for Nietzsche unless there is a problematic to which it applies, i.e. some situation where there must be an admission of the limitations in philosophy because of an inability to deal with the problem through the old methods. He presents himself and his perspectivism as that challenge.

The Socratic philosophical tradition is founded on the notion that discrepancies between our various individual interpretations are resolved when the individuals converge upon the truth. Admittedly, perspectivism will not allow for the ultimate determination of rightness and wrongness of judgement: the exorcism of dogmatism has its price, payable in terms of certainty. In effect, Nietzsche bars any recourse to the Socratic metaphysics of a real and apparent world by wholeheartedly endorsing the world of appearance. Therefore, Nietzsche discourages the discussion from being fixed on matters of the right perspective (on the real world) from the wrong perspective (of an apparent, illusory world). And, no less than Socrates, he yearns to impose on everyone the understanding that the world which appears is just interpretation. But this path leads Nietzsche to a paradox: if everything is just interpretation, and he forces the acceptance of this notion, then perspectivism is not just interpretation. It is accepted as true. Nietzsche has developed a paradox which confounds the

acceptance of perspectivism: simply saying "everything is interpretation" is potentially not itself mere interpretation, instead it is an attempt to say something true. If his statement is correct, then everything is not interpretation and he is incorrect. So he must not allow himself to be accepted on that old philosophical basis or his perspectivism becomes paradoxical and therefore uninteresting to philosophers. Obviously, Nietzsche must avoid this problem.

This problem illustrates Nietzsche's need to be taken seriously by his readership, he cannot tolerate indifference to himself or his writing (Nehamas, p.27-28). Nietzsche wishes to ensure that his option is considered by making the choice between either himself or the tradition clear. At the same time he wishes the tradition to be understood as flawed, so one cannot choose the tradition and one cannot choose to side with Nietzsche, either, since that would result in an implicit affirmation of the tradition. If one were to call Nietzsche correct, then that would result in the same dogmatism found in asserting that the Socratic world view is correct. Nietzsche's only defense against the charge of dogmatism is that he does not claim to have any authority over others, at least in the way philosophy generally attempts to legislate its view onto the entirety of the community.¹³

¹³ Take, for example, this quotation from the introduction of the Critique of Pure Reason:

For the chief question is simply this: what and how much can the understanding know apart from all experience? not: how is the faculty of thought possible? That latter is, as it were,... somewhat hypothetical in character (though as I shall show elsewhere it is not really so); and I would appear to be taking the liberty simply of expressing an opinion,

Although he faces a paradox, he deals with it by claiming that his interpretation is indeed only an interpretation: "Supposing that this is also interpretation--and you will be eager enough to make this objection--well, so much the better" (BGE, 22; cf. WP, 481). Alexander Nehamas writes: "Choosing, selecting, and simplifying do not amount to falsifying what is before us, unless we believe that there can be a representation of the world that depends on no selection at all, and that this representation constitutes the standard of accuracy" (p. 56). Nietzsche's greatest problem with the paradox is that it amounts to a denial of his authority, a denunciation of any ultimate authority to legislate what is true and false through straightforward assertion. The trend is perhaps peculiar in light of Nietzsche's discussion of will to power; wouldn't the will to power try to dominate those who assume there is truth by stating a straightforward denial? Nietzsche must find a way to regain some sort of power to affirm perspectivism without asserting it as true, as an actual state of affairs. Nietzsche does this by calling attention to his style of writing. Somehow that style will have to 1) reinforce the statements he makes about perspectivism, 2) allow him to set up his own standard of interpretation, or 3) do both of these things. That discussion comes in chapter three. Meanwhile

in which case the reader would be free to express a different opinion. For this reason I must forestall the reader's criticism by pointing out that the objective deduction with which I am chiefly concerned retains its full force even if my subjective deduction should fail to produce that complete conviction for which I hope...." (p. 12)

To put it in Kantian terms: Nietzsche is expressing a mere opinion which he wants to force others to accept without using terms like true and false.

Nietzsche's investigation of language, rationality and truth give good indications about why style is a necessary element of his thought.

CHAPTER TWO

SECTION 1--Perspectivism and Philosophy

Nietzsche's attempt to formulate a philosophy which avoids the dogmatic metaphysics of the Socratic tradition have a nagging problem: Nietzsche cannot directly assert that philosophy without falling into dogmatic metaphysics. That is the point of the paradox of perspectivism. The result: Nietzsche avoids making the sort of statement which would violate perspectivism and render him into the Socratic tradition. Yet Nietzsche still has an extraordinary amount to say. The number of texts he wrote attests to that. He clearly wants to talk philosophically, yet he just as clearly wishes that talk to defeat dogmatic metaphysics. There are two possible strategies, both of which he tries.

First, there is a type of artistic nay-saying which amounts to saying "It ain't necessarily so" in the face of the Socratic tradition. This strategy is found in Thus Spoke Zarathustra which is at once the most lyrical and the least philosophical of his texts. Nietzsche fully realized its difference from his other writings by proclaiming "This work stands altogether apart" (EH, 2, 6). It is an exercise in that

artistic nay-saying since it is utterly unlike any writing in the Socratic tradition.

"Whoever is the wisest among you is also a mere conflict and cross between plant and ghost. But do I bid you become ghosts and plants?"

"Behold I teach you the overman. The overman is the meaning of the earth. Let your will say: the overman shall be the meaning of the earth! I beseech you, my brothers, remain faithful to the earth, and do not believe those who speak to you of otherworldly hopes! (Z, prologue, 3)

Its philosophical significance is debatable, especially when read before any other Nietzschean text. This extreme form of writing might well have been forgotten were it not for the existence of Nietzsche's more philosophical texts.

If Nietzsche had only defined philosophy as a "manifestation of the will to power", then important questions are begged about the nature of will and power. How then could they be understood? Certainly they cannot be understood through the approach of the Socratic tradition:

Suppose, finally, we succeeded in explaining our entire instinctive life as a development and ramification of one basic form of the will--namely, of the will to power, as my proposition has it; suppose all organic functions could be traced back to this will to power and one could also find in it the solution of the problem of procreation and nourishment--it is one problem--then one would have gained the right to determine all efficient force univocally as--will to power. The world viewed from inside, the world defined and determined according to its "intelligible character"--it would be "will to power" and nothing else. (BGE, 36)

Nietzsche also uses this approach to defining what philosophy really is:

[A philosopher's] knowing is creating, their

creating is a legislation their will to truth is--will to power.(BGE, 211)

Nietzsche also realizes the necessity of replying to the Socratic tradition and refuting and reformulating the standards of philosophy. Otherwise, notions like the will to power seem inaccessible to the philosophers of the tradition because they seem mystical and/or literary. In short, Nietzsche must address the traditional philosophy if he wants to talk with its adherents.

In light of Zarathustra's mystic lyricism, the other texts hold great importance for defining Nietzsche's philosophical views, since they at least flirt with the sorts of arguments and statements made familiar through the Socratic tradition. My hypothesis is that the other later texts must serve as a basis for understanding the notions in Zarathustra simply because the other texts (e.g. BGE, GS) speak in roughly the same terms and syntax as the philosophical tradition. In this chapter those philosophical texts show Nietzsche's views on topics such as language, truth, and rationality. In doing so, these texts point to a new style of philosophy which might even shed some light on Zarathustra's mysticism.

Nietzsche addresses philosophy through his critiques of language, rationality and truth. Yet there is still the problem of the paradox of perspectivism. How does he avoid becoming part of the tradition he opposes? He wishes to show how dogmatic metaphysics is untenable, not how Friedrich Nietzsche is untenable. Nehamas suggests that Nietzsche's perspectivism avoids becoming problematic because Nietzsche says nothing about it: "His many styles are all part of a single project to present an interpretation that demands to be believed

even as it says it is only an interpretation" (p. 40). In this way, Nietzsche uses the paradox of perspectivism to combat belief in certain kinds of truth². He refuses to address the question of whether perspectivism is only interpretation. Instead he leaves that problem to his readers. There is good reason for doing so, since it may lead to allowing him to overcome the philosophical tradition (which will be examined in chapter three). Meanwhile Nietzsche signals that fundamental philosophical notions like truth should be carefully examined. He signals the necessity of ending belief in one truth by saying "these skeptics, ephectics, hectics of the spirit... these last idealists of knowledge... are far from being free spirits: for they still have faith in truth" (GM, 24). The end of belief in truth is not and cannot be the end of reliance upon either philosophical thinking or argumentation (as the above quote itself would serve to show). The most that can be said is that it signals the beginning of new styles of argument. These styles of argument do not rely solely upon the assertion of statements and their formulation into argument. Instead, Nietzsche searches for ways to affirm ideas without directly asserting them. Eventually I will show how Nietzsche uses exemplification to do this, yet this chapter is intended to lay the groundwork for that by showing how the problems of perspectivism spill into very familiar philosophical topics. An exploration of the parameters of these new styles of argument can begin with an examination of Nietzsche's

² In the section on truth below I will try to explain in greater depth what withdrawing belief in truth means. Nietzsche does continue to use the term and continues to think that belief in truth is possible. Instead of trying to escape the term he tries to alter it.

thoughts about language, rationality and truth. Through his discussion of these elements of the philosophical tradition he begins to delimit a space for alternatives to it.

SECTION ii--Language

Nietzsche has his own particular view of language. He thinks of language as a superficial coating of the psyche and merely a communicative device which finds its origins in its survival value. Nietzsche thinks that consciousness and language are interdependent and develop together: "consciousness has developed only under the pressure of the need for communication" (GS, 354). To him, language is a system of signs which acts as a medium for communicating the internal states (e.g. emotions, desires) of an individual to others². Given the claim that language is a system of signs, Nietzsche deduces much from the nature of signs and why they form the basis of communication. When coupled with the assertion that internal states are "incomparably personal, unique, and infinitely individual..." (Ibid) a consequence of this particular theory is that language, as the medium of translation, is not at all accurate because it is a system of signs. On this view we do not require language to understand our own experience, since, for example, we already have an intuitive grasp of experience via sense perceptions which we can interpret in a non-linguistic fashion. We do not use a running conscious commentary upon sense perceptions to

² In section four of chapter three I quote extensively from Nietzsche's early lecture notes on rhetoric, which show that Nietzsche understood language as a system of signs from very early on. I think he maintained that view throughout his writing career, so that his view of language is implicit in his perspectivism.

perceive them. Existence is not being conscious. Nietzsche is not claiming that we do not or cannot use language to become conscious of internal states based on the premiss that we need not use language to become sentient of sense perceptions, one type of internal state. On the contrary, he says we must use language to become conscious of internal states. Yet internal states can exist without consciousness of them. Consciousness is the process of bringing internal states to language. The result: Nietzsche believes language is oriented toward the community, "the herd", and is incapable of communicating internal states themselves. Language, a system of signs, is an unfaithful translation of individuality into the communal realm: "Whatever becomes conscious becomes by the same token shallow, thin, relatively stupid, general, sign, herd signal" (Ibid).

Nietzsche thinks that experience became dominated by language over the years, thereby elevating conscious experience and submerging the non-linguistic further into the sub-conscious, effectively denying it. Focussing on the conscious aspects of experience causes the tacit adoption of limitations on thought which Nietzsche finds problematic. That is, the regime of reason in language leads to a narrowing in the possibilities of thought and philosophy.

We find ourselves in the midst of a rude fetishism when we call to mind the basic presuppositions of the metaphysics of language--which is to say, of reason.... Reason in language: Oh what a deceitful old woman! I fear we are not getting rid of God because we still believe in grammar... (TI, III, 5)

The implication is clear: our language can lead us into certain styles of interpretation of the world. Nietzsche generally disagrees with the results of this style of interpretation though he feels it has become

pervasive throughout Western thought. Herein lies the fundamental feature constitutive of the philosophical tradition: disputes before Nietzsche had been focussed around a set of problems which allow for only a certain range of response and play within the framework of philosophy.

For example, Nietzsche suggests that the conception of ego as cause of actions, ultimately leading to all questions of moral responsibility, is a mere fiction, an explanation added afterwards through rationalization. Specifically, he thinks our grammatical structures lead to the conclusion that actions are the consequences of the will (WP, 488; cf. WP 551 and 554) because for some reason we have a language which implies the existence of causal wills because there are signs for them. For example, statements like "I think" imply that there is an "I" who does think. Yet Nietzsche thinks the causal will is a fiction because language generally demands a cause for every action³. Nietzsche follows the trend through to Descartes, who deduced that there is an agent who thinks because there is thinking (WP, 484). With human actions this demand causes us to postulate an agent which can be the efficient cause of an action in the world. Hence, we have arrived at the belief that wills and egos cause actions because wills and egos suit the idiosyncracies of our language.

³ This logical manoeuvre is a reason for the acceptance of Nietzsche's skepticism about the causal will. Nietzsche's mere supposition that belief in causal will is rooted in language does not refute the idea of causal will. He is not making a claim about ultimate reality, rather he tries to show a different perspective on the issue. He hopes his perspective will cast suspicion upon Descartes'.

Nietzsche realizes that it is possible for other linguistic traditions to think in other ways than our own:

It is highly probable that philosophers within the domain of the Ural-Altaiic languages (where the concept of the subject is least developed) look otherwise "into the world" and will be found on paths of thought different from those of Indo-Germanic peoples and the Muslims: the spell of certain grammatical functions is ultimately also the spell of physiological valuations and racial conditions. (BGE, 23)

Notably, Nietzsche refrains from making any claims about the reform of linguistic systems; he thinks that there is no hope in searching for a better form of language, one that is more true to the world. Inevitably, the idiosyncracies of other language groups yield a different set of presuppositions about the world.

Nietzsche is steadfast in his refusal to search for a better means of expression, and this refusal is of great importance. Nietzsche thinks "the demand for an adequate mode of expression is senseless" (Nehamas, p.95), likewise he also thinks that the demand for an adequate perspective on the world (i.e. adequate for yielding a truth about it) is also quite senseless. In short, languages are nothing more than perspectives, so there is no point in talking about one as being more or less true than another since such discussions make presuppositions about the real world which Nietzsche is certainly not prepared to make. "Nietzsche denies," Nehamas says, "that we can ever read the structure of the world from the structure of the means we have developed in order to make it livable by beings like us" (Ibid.). The world we construct may be necessary for our survival and may be "real" in that regard, but there is no basis for talk of truth in that notion.

Furthermore, Nehamas believes Nietzsche takes the view "Our error consists in believing our logic, language, mathematics, or any such practice is metaphysically loaded in the first place, that any such practice can be our guide to the nature of reality" (p.95). Nehamas suggests that Nietzsche avoids the error made by the philosophical tradition and its adherents: namely the assumption that there is a world to which we can be true or about which we can be in error through our language or logic itself. Up until Nietzsche there are two possibilities, either our language is somehow by structure or content true or false to the world. All but Nietzsche choose the former, according to Nehamas. "It is an assumption," continues Nehamas, "that is shared by... a large number of... philosophers: the view that logic (or language or mathematics, or physics, or any other particular endeavour) makes by itself such metaphysical commitments and claims to reflect on its own the world as it really is" (p.95). It is the nature and origin of linguistic signs which cause Nietzsche to be skeptical about language's ability to reflect the world as it is.

Both Derrida and Haar agree with Nehamas in his reading of Nietzsche (despite Nehamas' protestations)⁴. Our language makes a commitment about a world, but that commitment should receive no faith as the only real or true one. "He claims not that our language is wrong, but that we are wrong in taking it too seriously" (Nehamas, p.96). The only way to take language too seriously is to treat it as a sign-post with information on any ultimately real world. The mistake

⁴ This assumption is based upon a reading of Derrida's book on Nietzsche and Haar's article entitled "Nietzsche and Metaphysical Language" in Allison's anthology.

that all three commentators probably agree upon is the mistake of taking language too seriously by ascribing it any truth-value whatever. As Nietzsche reconceives the traditional conception of truth, we must be increasingly hesitant to seriously apply truth values to language (and statements as well).

But are Nietzsche's views on language a truly radical departure from those of the Socratics? Nehamas says that Nietzsche wishes to show that "our linguistic categories are compatible with different versions of the ontological structure of the world", but who would deny this? We have before us the evidence of thousands of years of writing and philosophizing showing a number of different incommensurable perspectives on the world. Nietzsche himself can talk about a world of becoming in the same language others talk about a world of being, stability and identity. The important point here is to reject the necessity of choosing one perspective as the truth. More interesting is Nehamas' insistence that Nietzsche aims to show that "the world has no ontological structure," that the world has no essence to which we can be true. The world is in no one way at all. And so there appears to be no reason to assign truth values to statements about its ontological structure.

What else can Nietzsche deduce from language as a system of signs? Ultimately there is a question of whether there is an ontological structure of the world which can be described through language. Nietzsche dismisses the idea that it can be described by language simply because of the nature of signs. Yet that leaves the question of whether there is indeed an ontological structure or whether

the world is indeterminate. Is it the case that we can produce different versions of the world's ontological structure because language cannot describe the world or because the world has no structure to truthfully describe? It might be the case that language itself gives us the concept of "one ontological structure" because linguistic signs do not frequently change. There is an answer to this question and that answer can be found in Nietzsche's understanding of style. Either Nietzsche's concern for style was due to striving for linguistic reform, or it is due to a completely different concern (like the battle against Socrates)⁵.

There are therefore several consequences of Nietzsche's view of language as a system of signs. It is important to remember that this has potentially far-reaching implications for Nietzsche, since it helps form part of Nietzsche's perspectivism. It does this by supporting the notion that there are several different views of the world by making things and these views dependent upon language. How, for example, does anyone know they are referring to the same thing when they talk about objects, ideas or the world? This problem is implicit in Nietzsche's views of language.

SECTION iii--Rationality

One problem associated with Nietzsche and rationality is his apparently vacillating view of it. Sometimes he is strongly critical,

⁵ This question can only be explained after an examination of style in the next chapter. For now, though, I will say that Nietzsche chooses the second option. Style is not aimed at linguistic reform. It is aimed at Socrates.

other times he is strongly supportive. I rely on two ideas to sort out the various opinions. First, reason is difficult to characterize because it is not clear that the word refers to just one static thing or faculty. This difficulty is based upon Nietzsche's conception of language as a system of signs. The word "rationality" may not refer to a singular thing despite usage which might imply that it does; although the sound and spelling of the sign does not change, the thing it refers to might vary from user to user. The thingness might even be only implied. The second idea is that, although the Socratic tradition brought rationality forth into consciousness, its strong alliance with consciousness and language is perhaps not necessary and even misleading. Nietzsche bases his conception of reason on these ideas.

One of the tactics he attempts is throwing aspersions onto the origin of reason, thereby calling it into question: "How could anything originate out of its opposite? for example truth out of error? or the will to truth out of the will to deception?... The fundamental faith of metaphysicians is faith in opposite values" (BGE, 2). Indeed, how could reason originate out of unreason, passion or instinct and yet be opposite to them? In his notes Nietzsche tends to think they interpenetrate one another, that there is no clear essential difference between them. Nietzsche's strategy is to push rationality to its limits, where it must incorporate and welcome the paradoxes within Nietzsche's thought⁶. Nietzsche calls the origin of reason into

⁶ Nietzsche does not bring contradiction to rationality. Instead he thinks that this self-destructiveness is inherent. He calls this phenomenon nihilism (and decadence, WP, 2). There is some discussion of nihilism below.

question by looking at its foundation. He finds no reason underlying the existence of rationality. In many places Nietzsche speaks fondly of reason and thinks it a desirable characteristic. For example, he claims that religious people regularly repudiate reason "But we, we others who thirst after reason, are determined to scrutinize our experiences as severely as a scientific experiment..." (GS, 319). Elsewhere, Nietzsche wishes to characterize reason as a human trait which is most properly analogous to a corporeal function: "The body is a great reason, a plurality with one sense, a war and a peace, a herd and a shepherd....There is more reason in your body than in your best wisdom" (Z, I, 4). Striking though this view appears, the idea which underlies appears throughout Nietzsche's references to reason: the instincts and passions (of the body) are the source of reason, so they should not be denied by concepts of Socratic rationality. Nietzsche often refers to reason as a scheme or process (WP 522, WP 487). He could easily also use the term "world-view" or "perspective" for that is what he hints at throughout his overt references to reason, e.g., "Rational thought is interpretation according to a scheme we cannot throw off" (WP, 522). Thus, Nietzsche's reformulation of rationality is partly critique of the tradition and partly reintegration of reason and instinct.

Many of Nietzsche's views on rationality appear as a critique of Socratic philosophy and rationality. Nietzsche would prefer to think of reason as a power which can be integrated into the entirety of a life. He thinks conceiving of reason as one power among many will set us back upon a better road. Presumably rationality must be integrated

into the fuller context of an individual and his life. Reason is generally portrayed as something judged in terms of the complete individual not necessarily as a supreme faculty at the head of the hierarchy⁷. By contrast, Plato thought of reason as a charioteer driving the wild horses of human passion. Do Nietzsche and Plato really differ on this issue? For on Plato's view the horses of passion must be pulling for the charioteer to drive. The phrase "reason over passion" sums his views nicely. Kaufmann, too, is relatively close to Plato's idea of reason as the master of passions. Kaufmann, for example, thought that reason is a powerful order-creating faculty capable of contributing to self-mastery (Kaufmann, p.230). I do think there is a big difference between the views of Nietzsche and Plato on rationality's relation to instinct. That difference lies in Nietzsche's emphasis upon rationality's integration with instinct.

As with language, it would be wrong to read too much into the scheme of rationality, i.e. to say that rationality makes by itself such metaphysical commitments or claims to reflect the real world on its own (Nehamas, p.95). Such an overestimation of reason amounts to what Nietzsche calls "taking it too seriously", insofar as it uses reason as a signpost to ultimately true and false interpretations of the world. Nietzsche hints that philosophical thought deserves less respect when it makes a rational explanation of the world. Perhaps philosophy is revealing things about the structure of the interpreter

⁷ Kaufmann calls reason the highest faculty which we possess, although later I will try to show that this is not the case; style and the capacity for ordering stylistically is the most powerful human faculty (especially when considered in its Dionysian incarnation), for it dominates reason, too.

(BGE, 6) rather than revealing the particulars of a text-like world laying before us like an open book. Rational thought is appealing to people of our intellectual tradition, but Nietzsche allows it no authority from its relationship with truth.

Instead of introducing irrationalism to combat Socratic rationality Nietzsche is trying to break the sovereignty reason holds over Western intellects. Reason holds a sovereign position because it is coupled with the regime of true and false; it is through reason that judgments of true and false are possible. The value commonly associated with truth in turn confers value upon the scheme which makes it possible. What value is generally conferred upon truth? According to Nietzsche, nothing short of goodness itself--it is good to have the truth. Knowing the truth is the highest aim and greatest result of intellectual life. Should it be, though? "We asked about the value of this will [to truth]. Suppose we want truth: why not rather untruth? and uncertainty? and even ignorance?"(BGE, 1).

Nietzsche's suspicions about the value of truth are based upon two presuppositions involved with the association of truth and goodness. First, that there is truth, the truth, which can be approached. Second, that having or knowing the truth is always good or desirable. That is, truth (and reason) are elevated to values in themselves simply because of a certain set of properties which they purportedly possess. This set of properties is centred around the origin and nature of value*. Nietzsche thinks belief is valuation and

* This brings up the critical issue of why we value anything or think of anything as good. Although I will not concentrate upon the minute details of this aspect of Nietzsche's philosophy, understanding

the essence of truth: "In valuation are expressed conditions of preservation and growth" (WP, 509). He thinks that there is no reason to elevate truth to a value in itself. Instead he thinks that the creation of values is related to an individual's specific interests. For example, he frequently cites survival pressures as a motivator behind values, even behind the desire for truth. (But value for survival seems no proof of truth). Ultimately, Nietzsche thinks the act of valuing is an idiosyncratic action, for example the truth would not be good at all times everywhere⁹. If we accept that there may be times when the truth is not a desirable thing to have or something that will not be valued by all, then the only other reason to think of the truth as a value-in-itself is that there is goodness in truth. And Nietzsche is not interested in accepting that notion.

Instead of accepting the traditional idea that rationality is a value in itself, Nietzsche ties rationality to individual interests. He supports the view that there are any number of different perspectives on value and that reason can help determine which things are desirable based upon an individual's inclinations. Reason can help to establish perspectives on value, even though the notions of the truth and the connection between the good and the true are no longer generalizable¹⁰. Reason does this because it orders things and that ordering is

value is necessary for understanding Nietzsche's thought (see section IV below).

⁹ Take, for a crude example, the ethical dilemma about whether to tell a medical patient the whole truth about her condition, especially when knowing the whole truth might worsen that condition.

¹⁰ Nietzsche also frequently claims that untruth is a condition of life. I will attempt to clarify such a notion in the next section, below.

compelling. Thus Nietzsche would adamantly maintain that reason can help to establish perspectives, and therefore is not eradicated by the critique of reason which he undertakes. On this view rational ordering amounts to establishing a perspective because it supplies a focal point of a world view or a medium of interpretation. He simply modifies the concept of reason to which we have perhaps become accustomed. He begins to conceive of reason as a system of relations between various passions and desires, i.e. one which is reflected in the previous quote from Zarathustra (Z, 1, 4) and associated with value.

Nietzsche views rationality as a powerful ordering force, and an overwhelming vehicle of persuasion. Yet this particular view is not far different from the view which Plato held. What, then, would differentiate the two? Walter Kaufmann sees little difference between the two views, claiming that Nietzsche thought "If [a man's] reason is strong enough it will naturally control his passions" (p.234). Kaufmann does note that both reason and instinct are "manifestations of the will to power"¹¹. When Kaufmann understands reason and instinct as being interdependent upon one another "as if every passion did not contain in itself its own quantum of reason"(WP, 387), he tends to think of rationality as always a welcomed developmental step forward because of the power of self-control is always beneficial: "Reason is pictured as the fulfillment of the will to power" (Kaufmann, P.234).

Although Nietzsche speaks fondly and thinks highly of reason in a number of places by praising "dialectical clarity" and admitting that

¹¹ This notion might contribute very little to fleshing out the idea of the will to power. Indeed, it might only serve to obfuscate it.

he "thirsts after reason", it is spurious to claim that the will to power develops rationality. This would suggest that Nietzsche believed rationality is always a desirable quality. He had long abandoned the notion that nature purposely develops rationality as an end of man by the time his later books were written. In fact, he cites at least one case where rationality could be a sign of decay:

Could it be possible that, in spite of all modern ideas... prejudices and the triumph of optimism, the gradual prevalence of rationality, practical and theoretical utilitarianism, no less than democracy itself which developed at the same time, might have been symptoms of a decline in strength, of impending old age, and of psychological weariness?(BT, new preface, 4)

Clearly in this case (the case of Ancient Greece) Nietzsche views increased rationality as a sign of and reaction to decline. He is not essentially anti-rational, though, since under different circumstances he would welcome increased rationality. That is his point: rationality can be either good or bad depending upon who one is and how or when one uses it. So there are two reasons to avoid both Plato's and Kaufmann's views on rationality. 1) Nietzsche's ideas on rationality do not conform with the traditionally held notion of the oppositional structure of reason and instinct in Plato and Kaufmann. 2) Nietzsche thinks that increased rationality is not always a developmental step for mankind. The result of these differences is that Nietzsche's view of rationality as an ordering force in life differs markedly from those views of the Socratic tradition in philosophy¹².

¹² I think that this leaves open the possibility that rationality may be tied closer to the styles of a writer than previously thought. I discuss the possibility in the next chapter.

Nietzsche carries out his critique of rationality without falling into dogmatism because he avoids postulating an authoritative standard of reason, i.e. one which claims to show the truth of reason. Had he not done so he would have ended up using the techniques and language of the philosophical tradition of reason to set up yet another dogmatic standard of reason. Instead he gives a competing view of rationality which uses some techniques of reason, but qualifies them through his perspectivism. The whole enterprise is founded on a conception of reason where truth is not the primary value or end and a conception of truth which allows for its own devaluation.

There will still be meaning for rationality, but that is to say it will still have significance for individuals. Nietzsche will allow no more. Rationality has a history; Nietzsche's intention is to bring that history forth so that everyone can see it. This history may not be clear, insofar as its theories of the origin of rationality may be speculative, not scientific. There could now be an indefinite number of perspectives on reason which could intertwine with each other.

Section iv--Truth

Nietzsche thinks that the structures of language and reason give us a predilection for truth. This takes different forms, but within the philosophical tradition Nietzsche identifies the tendency to suppose that there is a world to which we can be true. Such a supposition is one unifying feature of the philosophical tradition which Nietzsche criticizes. He denies not only the urge to think of a more real true world which opposes the material world of the senses, he

furthermore denies that there is one material world "out there" upon which we can all converge. It is essential to deny that there is one world out there in order to protect his perspectivism. Otherwise his perspectivism would become rather like some contemporary notions of science where there is a world out there, but we can have no certain explanations of any of its elements. Thus, within perspectivism it is possible to have many different views of truth: "There are many different kinds of 'truths' and consequently there is no [one] truth" (WP, 540).

It is possible to argue that perspectivism allows a notion of a singular world out there which we can approach but never quite pin down. That is, we can have degrees of accuracy but never certainty about any explanation. This picture approximates a scientific view of the world which is more or less adhered to by contemporary science. But Nietzsche denies this world view: "The thing in itself is nonsensical. If I remove all the relationships, all the properties, all the 'activities' of a thing, the thing does not remain over; because thingness has only been invented by us owing to the requirements of logic..." (WP, 558). Perspectivism cannot be reconciled with this theory of science because he does not share a world view which admits a singular world upon which perspectives can converge. Nietzsche's perspectivism is more radical. This can be deduced from Nietzsche's theory of language (section two above). Elsewhere Nietzsche speaks of the role of language in presupposing a world of beings and things for which there has hitherto been general acceptance.

Nietzsche has a radical idea of truth. His most concise formulation of a theory of truth states that truth is a kind of belief which has become a condition of life. Although he sometimes uses more spectacular formulations in saying that all of one's truths are really falsehoods or that truths are institutionalized fictions and lies, his theory of truth really focusses upon the notion of beliefs becoming institutionalized and therefore truths (WP, 532). Frequently, Nietzsche refers to the primacy of belief for truth. Most notably, he claims that "The valuation 'I believe this and that is so' [is] the essence of 'truth'" (WP, 507). Elsewhere he calls believing the primal beginning "even in every sense impression... A 'holding true' in the beginning!" (WP, 506). Nietzsche does not believe that any belief does become a truth, rather he thinks that any belief might potentially become institutionalized and generally accepted as true if circumstances allow. These circumstances would be a combination of cultural features allowing the acceptance of that belief. Part of Nietzsche's project is to see if he can manipulate that combination to force the acceptance of his beliefs. He thinks that belief has always served as the fundamental activity of knowledge. What is knowledge save a certain kind of judgement? And judgement is a belief in the truth or falsity of a certain proposition. All talk of knowledge must pivot on belief. The turn towards belief is a reflection of Nietzsche's concern that notions of epistemology and truth must be expressed from a psychological standpoint since knowing (judging) is an individual experience.

The root of knowledge is belief, but what of belief? Nietzsche reduces belief to his most common currency: valuation. The act of

belief is an expression of valuation. Holding true is the indication of a preference which is understood through the history of the being who makes the preference. There are necessarily many different patterns of belief, each an expression of an individual. Nietzsche thinks the chief way that individuals differentiate themselves from one another is through the act of valuation. The expression of belief forms the basis of perspectivism, as well: "every belief, every considering-something-true, is necessarily false because there simply is no true world. Thus: a perspectival appearance whose origin lies in us..." (WP, 15). Perspectives on the world are sets of beliefs about the world.

At the individual level Nietzsche tries to explain particular sets of beliefs as the expression of an individual's concern for one thing or another. Belief evaluates certain forms of life or actions, etc. and deems them "good" or "useful" or whatever. Nietzsche thinks the greatest error hitherto was calling something the one truth because it was useful or desirable or pleasurable. He feels this has been predominantly the case. Opposition to that act is a necessary step for Nietzsche. He must obstruct it by thinking of the practical utilities of certain given beliefs, including his famous attacks upon Christianity. For example, "The proof [of God] by 'pleasure' is a proof of pleasure--that is all; when on earth was it established that true judgments give more enjoyment than false ones and, in accordance with a predetermined harmony, necessarily bring pleasant feelings in their train" (A, 50). Therefore, valuation is seeing the world in a particular sort of way. Nietzsche thinks judgements which cause pleasure or comfort are the likeliest candidates for being enshrined

into truths--though he does not claim that they are only judgements called truths.

Valuation is one of man's fundamental activities, since it is a way of expressing interest and manufacturing truth. It must therefore be bound with other basic primordial drives; it must express certain features of living. Part of Nietzsche's task is to identify the conditions of valuation either psychologically or genealogically or both. Nietzsche thinks that the conditions which allow something to be institutionalized as an individual's belief (and perhaps eventually as a truth) are expressed in the belief itself or presumptions behind the belief. For example, the belief that the sky is blue presupposes a number of things about the nature of the sky and the perceiver. In fact, Nietzsche's reasons for focussing on the beliefs of the Socratics about the world (its knowability and singularity) come from his belief in his ability to evaluate the presumptions about the world by examining beliefs about it. The truths we live by are still significant and still seem real, yet we need not think there is only one truth.

Evidently we cannot live without belief in truth or talk of truth, for that is what our linguistic and philosophical system maintains. Nietzsche tacitly endorses it through giving his own theory of truth in perspectivism, and by keeping the talk of truth which preceded him. But note that this non-dogmatic sense of truth differs from the one which he does think we can live without. Although he critiques the philosophical systems before him, he faces up to the same issues as scads of predecessors did. Frequently he hints at a cataclysmic change in the direction of philosophy, the "philosophy of

the future", and so forth, yet he cannot completely escape from the tradition. He could not bring about a cataclysmic change (he would have were he able). Instead he remains mired in paradox. The debilitating aspect of the paradoxes he cultivates is that he becomes entrapped by them, though he tries to make the best of it by employing them as critical tools and evading them through style. He might very well have preferred to dispose of them because they are pictures of nihilism and potentially self-destructive. He avoids saying "The truth is that there is no truth" by saying we can live without one truth but we cannot live without our "truths". This is the only conclusion which he can arrive at, because of the cultivation of paradox and the restrictions of language.

As it turns out, Nietzsche becomes fully compatible with virtually any theory of truth. Arthur Danto can call him a pragmatist while others can dispute this evaluation and maintain that he had a rock-bottom correspondence theory of truth. Both camps can find passages to justify their views, all of which seem consistent and compatible with his thought. Nietzsche is compatible with both because he has no essential truth to get at either. He defies truth, but is also open to any particular formulation of "truth". Although there may be passages which sound as though Nietzsche holds a correspondence theory of truth or that he believes that a certain description accurately describes what the world is, those passages are misleading. They are misleading because perspectivism is the most important issue in all of Nietzsche's later writings, so there may be statements which support perspectivism even though seem to contradict it. Therefore,

statements which make Nietzsche sound like he is stating that the world just is X are tempered by his perspectivism and his writing style. His perspectivism, too, defies ultimate characterization. For scholars, for anyone, Nietzsche is what his interpreters value him for. He is part of the world of perspectivism, not some transcendent god who legislates truths.

Nietzsche's way of dealing with perspectivism forms the basis of his writing style. Yet is style an adequate escape from the philosophical tradition? Rationality fails us, though this comes as no surprise since Nietzsche states it clearly and frequently: "What does nihilism mean? That the highest values devaluate themselves. The aim is lacking; "why?" finds no answer" (WP, 2). How is it that he escapes nihilism? Perhaps he does not, but he certainly seems to escape his own nihilistic critique of philosophy through the sheer brilliance of his writing. He almost persuades us out of the disbelief he himself brings on. Does style allow him to evade the problems of the paradox of perspectivism? The next chapter will be partially dedicated to closely looking at the style of his writing which may give an avenue of escape.

CHAPTER THREE

SECTION 1--Style

As far as his philosophical goals are concerned, Nietzsche wishes to accomplish two things. First, as a reaction to the tradition begun with Socrates, Nietzsche wishes to insinuate an expanded concept of reason into philosophy and, subsequently, Western intellectual history. This expanded notion of reason has room for the instinctive or artistic compared with the strict rationality of Socrates. Secondly, Nietzsche offers an interpretation of the world based on perspectivism which may include the concepts of the will to power and the philosophy of the future. Regarding the first goal, the most direct and obvious reason for Nietzsche to desire it is because it would serve the doctrine of perspectivism which is the central notion of his philosophical speculations, at least those which are a reaction to the philosophical tradition. (Remember, he cannot simply step outside of the tradition by asserting a nay-saying alternative). Although the philosophical concerns have a place in establishing a basis for the notions of the will to power, etc., they can be dealt with, thought about and perhaps accepted upon a level which is exclusive of those grander concepts. That is, one need not be concerned with the will to

power in order to understand style and perspectivism. In fact, the will to power need not be a concern at all until the very end of any speculations on Nietzsche and philosophy.

In what follows, I seek to show how Nietzsche's concern with style clarifies and enhances the notions of perspectivism and provides an escape from the major problems of perspectivism. Nietzsche's concern with style accomplishes two important things in the first step of Nietzsche's philosophy: 1) Nietzsche's employment of style is an example of how he can use a philosophical style to achieve the expansion of rationality which he wants to insinuate. 2) Through this revised notion of rationality, Nietzsche can relieve the logical paradox he stumbled into while undertaking his critique of philosophy. The paradox could not be dealt with upon a level of assertion. In examining the problems Nietzsche ends up with his back against the wall of a question: why do we want to recoup a place for the aesthetic dimension in the philosophical realm?

In order to provide some kind of answer to the above question, one must necessarily retrace the steps of chapters one and two. At the end of chapter two, Nietzsche is left with making the rational critique of rationality, which is part of the process of instituting perspectivism instead of a correspondence theory of truth (or any other dogmatic form of truth). Nietzsche thinks that these outdated notions of truth are the result of a philosophical system concerned with a narrow form of rationality first introduced by Socrates. Armed with the tool of philosophical style it is now possible to retrace the steps and then try to supply an answer to the very big question: why is the

aesthetic necessary in the rational? or why is style needful? Certainly answering this question is the major part of what Nietzsche conceives as the problem of Socrates (and perhaps even life itself).

Section II--Style as Subject

Before broaching the questions associated with why Nietzsche champions the artistic side of rationality, some considerable amount of time should be spent upon what exactly Nietzsche thinks style is. Clearly, he thinks style and the aesthetic sensibilities are related. Quite obviously he wants style to play a central role in philosophy--that much is clear if only because the stylistic idiosyncracies of his philosophical works are so prominent. Undoubtedly he calls attention to his style because it serves a function, Nietzsche could be concerned with style because it represents the aesthetic side of rationality, and it has been shown that Nietzsche opposes the strict sense of rationality he thought philosophy embodies. It is possible that Nietzsche saw himself as an advertisement for style and the pet project of an aesthetic rationality. No doubt this is partially true, but Nietzsche's prime motivations seem not to come from a conscious desire to change the nature of rationality. He is not a reformer by moral inclination.

Instead, Nietzsche's primary motivation comes from a view of language which dictates that language itself (and hence philosophical writing) forces its users to take style into account:

What is called "rhetorical" as a means of conscious art had been active as a means of unconscious art in language and its development, indeed... the rhetorical is a farther development... of the artistic

means that are already found in language. There is obviously no unrhetorical "naturalness" of language to which one could appeal; the language itself is the result of available rhetorical arts. (LNR, p.106)²

Nietzsche thinks that language is inherently rhetorical for two reasons. First, our written language originates from an oral tradition which was more concerned with and susceptible to the effects of oral rhetoric. It is generally easier to agree with a verbal sales pitch than a written one. Ancient literature, because of its close association with an oral tradition, appeals to the ear. Second, because of Nietzsche's views of language and consciousness², he thinks that language conveys information about things which are perspective-dependent--not the things themselves. The listener or reader receives signs, not things. Signs are contrivances which have no inherent relation to things, rather they relate to the views of the person which presents them (LNR, p.107):

But, with respect to their meanings, all words are tropes in themselves, and from the beginning. Instead of that which truly takes place, they present a sound image, which fades with time: language never expresses something completely but displays a characteristic which appears to be prominent to it. (LNR, P.107)

Language is inherently rhetorical, and, hence stylistic. This is not to say that rhetoric and style are identical. The description of rhetoric

² The lecture notes on rhetoric are the only early source I use which has no explicit connection to his later works. The Birth of Tragedy, by contrast, has such a connection because of his later comments upon it, viz. his second preface and comments in Ecce Homo. Therefore I use the notes cautiously. Fortunately, the view of language found in the notes is later reiterated in notes from The Will to Power and in The Gay Science. In light of this, my use of the early notes is not anachronistic.

² See chapter two.

in the early notes differs quite markedly from the references to style made elsewhere. Style encompasses rhetoric so that rhetoric is an example of a specific use of style. Nietzsche's advocacy of style does not amount to a revival of rhetoric or sophistry. So, although style is not identical with rhetoric, it arises through the nature of language. Yet what specific elements of language are stylistic?

In chapter one I said that there is a tendency to view subject as what is said and style as how it is said. Yet that formula is quite problematic (Goodman, p.23). In Nietzsche's case, the style/subject distinction is suspect because he seems an ideal example of a writer whose style and subject matter are intimately intertwined so that a separation is not possible. It seems that virtually any property of language could conceivably be stylistic. But if it is allowed that all features of language are stylistic, then does the whole notion of style become trivial? For example, if style is identical with grammar or particular sorts of sentence structures, then it is uninteresting to claim that language and philosophy are stylistic. One could simply say Nietzsche's style (sentences or grammar) are different (and perhaps worse) than most other philosophical styles.

Using different terms in two statements which mean even roughly the same thing is still saying different things because the web of language has been cast differently.

- 1) "The sky is very blue today"
- 2) "The atmosphere is reflecting a lot of blue light today"

Because these two statements use different words they have different meanings. But they have roughly the same subject matter and say roughly

the same thing. They are stylistically different, and hence have different meanings for different people. Both statements talk about how the sky looks today in different ways: one talking about the sky being blue the other talking about the amount of visible light being reflected. In this case style makes a difference in meaning because the word selection process is part of a style. One might object that the sample sentences are simply two different sentences because of different vocabulary (and different speakers). If they represent a stylistic difference, then perhaps style is hardly worth talking about because the list of potential stylistic elements is so broad. Despite this problem, I still think that style is a significant issue for Nietzsche.

Although any property of language can become stylistic, there are certain properties which in certain contexts are stylistic, and in others not stylistic. In Nietzsche's writing the proliferation of interrogative and exclamatory sentences indicate a certain mood and might therefore be considered stylistic. But elsewhere the use of such sentence-types might be of relatively small significance. One particular author might use certain grammatical quirks or selections of word order which would associate all his works and therefore be considered part of his style. One of his grammatical quirks could be employed (consciously or not) by another author on one occasion, yet not identify his works at all. The problem lies in distinguishing interesting aspects from uninteresting aspects of a person's writing.

Fortunately, Goodman suggests a scheme to differentiate between trivial and genuine (or interesting) stylistic elements:

Though our [trivial sample] property indeed belongs to the novels in question and even identifies them as by a given author, it is hardly exemplified or symbolized in any way by them as works. In this it is like the size or shape of a tailors's swatch that serves as a sample not of these properties but of colour and texture. Since our properties are not symbolized by the novels it does not satisfy our definition of style. (p. 37)

That is, a sample qualifies as being interesting and stylistic and stands in a relation of exemplification to a larger work, group, or school of works when it has and refers to a certain property or set of properties. That tailor's swatch exemplifies colour and weave but not the size and shape of the original bolt from which it was cut. So in the "blue sky" example, the difference in vocabulary between the two examples is interesting insofar as it relates the statements to a work or school of thought characterized by that property.

Despite the philosophical scrutiny Nietzsche has received here and elsewhere it seems foolish to suggest that there is a set of views which can be completely divorced from his writing style. Otherwise one would have to suggest that there are different ways of saying exactly the same thing. That notion of synonymy is opposed by an increasingly large group of thinkers including Saussure, Derrida and Nietzsche. In fact, when one couples Nietzsche's view that "the 'thing in itself' is nonsensical. If I remove all of the relationships, all the 'properties', all the 'activities' of a thing, the thing does not remain over" (WP, 558) with his assertion that "The full essence of things will never be grasped... the sensation takes in only a sign" (LNR, p.107), then one finds a view which remarkably anticipates certain contemporary trends in linguistic theory. Nietzsche's views

suggest that a particular sign indicates relationships between signs, not the presence of things. For example, almost twenty years later Ferdinand de Saussure taught: "In a language, there are only differences. Even more important, a difference implies positive terms between which the difference is set up: but in language there are only differences without positive terms" (p.120)

Style cuts across the formula of what/how and causes Nietzsche to conceive of style as a crucial part of philosophy itself. He thought style reinforced his statements by adding to or reinforcing their content. Thus it is pointless to speculate that Nietzsche's philosophy might be more widely read or respected than it has been if only he had not written in such an idiosyncratic fashion. Nietzsche thinks that philosophy itself is inherently stylistic insofar as the style of writing alludes to or reveals aspects of the thought behind the writing. He states quite plainly that he thinks of all philosophies as the personal confessions of their authors, certainly because style partially reveals aspects of the thinker who writes it (BGE, 6) whether the author intends it or not. Likewise, style also can betray presuppositions underlying the philosophy. For example, had Nietzsche disregarded the paradox of perspectivism in his critique of reason it would have been easy to conclude that he held a rock-bottom correspondence theory of truth or that he fundamentally agreed with the picture of rationality presented by Socrates. Philosophy is always a stylistic art. Furthermore, Nietzsche does not need to insinuate an aesthetic dimension into philosophy, rather he only reveals that all along it was not lacking--just ignored. In fact, philosophy contains

the seeds of the aesthetic dimension of argument Nietzsche is concerned with. Nietzsche's job is calling attention to this aspect of philosophical writing.

Nietzsche's experiments with different techniques of writing are meant to call attention to the stylistic side of philosophy. One of the techniques is putting (relatively) excessive emphasis on style. It is impossible to ignore the varieties of hyperbolic claims and phrases, experiments with different essay styles ranging from one line aphorisms in Twilight of the Idols to longer essay length sections in The Genealogy of Morals, mystic literature in Thus Spake Zarathustra, and even adding poems in The Gay Science. Although the emphasis on calling attention to style makes Nietzsche appear to some as a philosophical clown or monstrosity, there is perhaps no reason to consider him essentially outrageous: "this comparison may leave open the possibility that the excess may after all be more accurate than the literal standard, which may itself come to be seen as a trope in its own right, as a litotes, or understatement" (Nehamas, p.31). Nietzsche's styles matter because they help him to make a philosophical point, or, more accurately, a philosophical critique of philosophy which necessarily allows for style and artistry.

Here are some examples of how Nietzsche's style exemplifies perspectivism in his writing. (Additionally, one can refer to GS 354, which I cited in chapter one.) First of all, one can look to Nietzsche's stylistic pluralism itself as the best example of how Nietzsche's style exemplifies perspectivism. There are other particular examples though:

Facing a world of "modern ideas" that would banish everybody into a corner and "speciality", a philosopher--if today there could be philosophers--would be compelled to find the greatness of man, the concept of "greatness" precisely in his range and multiplicity, in his wholeness in manifoldness. (BGE, 212)

This passage gives an example of how Nietzsche verges upon asserting that "greatness is attained by the multiplicity of perspectivism", yet he uses a number of devices to avoid asserting just that. "Greatness" was placed into quotation marks because he does not wish to talk about the greatness of man, rather he wishes to talk about his own perspective on the term. Note also how Nietzsche plaintively laments "if today there could be philosophers" rather than suggesting that he is one such philosopher. He leaves that conclusion for the reader to make according to his inclinations. Nietzsche also placed a question mark around the term "range and multiplicity" by associating it with the apparently contradictory phrase "wholeness in manifoldness". These stylistic techniques do not amount to mere obfuscation, rather they render much of Nietzsche's writing into an open-ended form so the reader can draw his own individual conclusions. Nietzsche opens himself to perspectivist interpretation. These stylistic techniques are by no means rare in Nietzsche's writing, nor peculiar to one work:

Our new "infinite"--How far the perspective character of existence extends or indeed whether existence has any other character than this; whether existence without interpretation, without "sense", does not become "nonsense"; whether on the one hand, all existence is not essentially actively engaged in interpretation--that cannot be decided even by the most industrious and most scrupulously conscientious analysis and self-examination of the intellect; for in the course of this analysis the human intellect cannot avoid seeing itself in its own perspectives, and only in these.... But I should think that today we are at

least far from that ridiculous immodesty that would be involved in decreeing from our corner that perspectives are permitted only from this corner. Rather the world becomes infinite for us all over again, inasmuch as we cannot reject the possibility that it may include infinite interpretations. Once more we are seized by a great shudder; but who would feel inclined immediately to deify all over again after the old manner this monster of an unknown world?... Alas, too many ungodly possibilities of interpretation are included in the unknown, too much devilry, stupidity, and foolishness of interpretation--even our own human, all too human folly, which we know. (GS, 374)

Nietzsche avoids deifying the new infinite. Instead, he calls the question of perspectivism itself the new infinite, one which could occupy man for eternity. Yet the question of perspectivism itself, if addressed by others, is for Nietzsche also a partial endorsement of his point of view. He feels that the mere consideration of his views is enough to begin the reaction to Socratism. Note also how in this this passage Nietzsche uses a seemingly endless sentence to give one the impression of the infinity of perspectivism.

Section III--Style and Perspectivism

Style is a necessary part of statement making, even in philosophy. Kathleen Higgins sees Nietzsche's styles as inherently goal oriented, such that a certain philosophical style is suited to a certain kind of philosophical statement. This view is plausible, yet I cannot agree with it. Insofar as style reinforces the philosophical statements Nietzsche is making Higgins and I agree, but her view implies a strict connection between style and content. Largely the idea that style reinforces content rests on the notion of language being a system of signs described in the previous chapter: "The word is by its

very nature incapable of reflecting the uniqueness of any particular to which it refers" (Higgins, p.68). If language cannot convey the internal states of a person because of the herd origin of language, then perhaps insofar as style is goal-oriented and clarifies statements style is a more efficient means of communication than language (Higgins, p.72). That is, perhaps Nietzsche emphasized style in order to get across his philosophical points in a more effective manner. Tempting though this view is, it is ultimately untenable for reasons both textual and logical. I maintain that Higgins' view must say that there is a proper style for every statement, depending on the goal of that statement. This version of style suggests that it is a kind of assertion. Yet I think that Nietzsche understood style as a more expansive thing, which focusses on exemplification and not assertion. A close look at Nietzsche's statements on style will reveal why.

What are Nietzsche's specific comments upon style, anyway? In general he thinks it is necessary, because of the nature of language:

One thing is needful- To "give style" to one's character--a great and rare art! It is practiced by all those who survey all of the strengths and weaknesses of their nature and then fit them into an artistic plan until every one of them appears as art and reason and even weaknesses delight the eye.... In the end, when the work is finished, it becomes evident how the constraint of a single taste governed and informed everything large and small. Whether this taste was good or bad is less important than one might suppose, if only it were a single taste! It will be the strong and domineering that enjoy their finest gaiety in such a constraint... (GS, 290)

This single section has informed an enormous amount of Nietzsche scholarship. Kaufmann notes that it is the key to understanding the phrase "beyond good and evil", for when one's taste fashions a

character from one's idiosyncracies the presence of what might normally be considered "evil" in its own right is tolerated as a necessary and even a desirable part of the whole character (GS, 289n). Furthermore, Nehamas uses the notion of integrating good and bad into a whole character as the fundamental urge of Nietzsche's whole life. Through this urge, Nehamas claims, he tries to gain recognition and immortality through turning himself into a literary character. (This also by means of clarifying the notion of "beyond good and evil".) In Nietzsche's view it is therefore needful to give style to one's character and writing because of the very nature of writing, and, most importantly, as a matter of individuation.

In general, style is necessary, but what about the specific? What are Nietzsche's thoughts on the particular role of style for his own writings? He is of two minds. First:

To communicate a state, an inward tension of pathos, by means of signs, including the tempo of those signs--that is the meaning of every style; and considering that the multiplicity of inward states is exceptionally large in my case, I have many possibilities--the most multifarious art of style that has ever been at the disposal of one man. Good is any style that really communicates an inward state, that makes no mistake about the signs, the tempo of the signs, the gestures.... all the laws about long periods are concerned with the art of gestures.... Good style in itself--a pure folly, mere "idealism", on a level with the "beautiful in itself", the "good in itself", the "thing in itself". (EH, Books, 4)

That is to say that good styles reinforce the content of the statements made, but there is no one good style for any given set of statements. Second, Nietzsche says that he always presupposes that there are those capable of understanding him and his style, now or in future. That group of readers is probably quite small in Nietzsche's mind. Elsewhere

he admits that he writes selectively so that he is not understood by just anybody (GS, 381), which is a marked stylistic contrast to the aims of most philosophy which usually aims to make the group of potential readers as large as possible. None would dispute that he attained his goal of a selected audience.

Nietzsche's style is a reinforcement of his perspectivism insofar as his style exemplifies it. The multifariousness of his writing is an example of how one can take a different view of something (in this case perspectivism and Nietzsche himself). So in every case, his style can mean a different thing. Nietzsche is once removed from his own doctrine of perspectivism through his style, i.e he has perspectives on his own view that there are an unlimited number of perspectives on the world. At one level, this is an exemplification and reinforcement of perspectivism.

There are some problems with Higgins on style. First, Higgins is entitled to claim that style is fundamentally a tool of communicative praxis directed toward exposing the essential germ of thought which underlies Nietzsche's every sentence. That is, style is a gestural manner which reflects the individual who writes. There is no doubt that Nietzsche's style did serve as an example of perspectivism and reinforced the content of his statements, to reinforce the idea his style is so multi-faceted it precludes the possibility that any one style itself represents Nietzsche's perspectivism. So even though Higgins can try to focus her talk upon whether the style reflects the unique and proper individual internal state, that step is misleading and does not take the self-referential character of Nietzsche's writing

into account. In James Risser's comments upon Higgins' paper he states that the issue of style should be focussed upon "a theory of interpretation" instead of an encounter with an inner self (p. 85). (Indeed, Nietzsche expresses skepticism about the whole notion of a self in many places throughout his writing.) Second, Higgins tends toward the view that Nietzsche's style is another (better) way to assert something: that is a mistake. It is a mistake because Higgins implicitly suggests that style serves as a better language by virtue of its more accurate rendering of Nietzsche's moods or ideas. Earlier I showed that Nietzsche does not believe in better forms of language for making assertions. That includes style. I maintain that style is a reinforcement of the content of statements. That reinforcement could come from different styles, there is no one style to express Nietzsche's thoughts. When associated with perspectivism, the notion of style serving as a reinforcement of the content of statements can not be simply asserted. It is advanced in a complex self-referential way which does not seriously assert it. It denies the idea that there is one proper style for one set of statements about perspectivism.

What is the difference between assertion and exemplification? Exemplification was defined in the previous section. John Searle has a theory about asserting statements. He calls assertion an act: "asserting is a (very special kind of) commitment to the truth of a proposition" (p. 29). Statements consist of illocutionary acts coupled with propositional content, roughly coinciding with the form/content distinction since illocutionary acts are identified by something called an "illocutionary force indicator" which involves properties like word

order, stress and intonation. In his explanation of the rules surrounding assertions, Searle maintains that it is essential to understand that assertion "counts as an undertaking to the effect that p represents an actual state of affairs" and that assertion implies belief in the truth of the proposition (Searle, p. 66). The problem here is that in Nietzsche's case these are exactly the two main conditions which Nietzsche wishes to avoid by exemplifying perspectivism through style. He does not wish to present his views as the truth. And if he implicitly does so at all he presents it as a very special sort of truth which is completely counter to stating that perspectivism corresponds to an actual state of affairs. Because Nietzsche's style is motivated by the paradox, he intends it to run counter to the notions of belief in truth as an actual state of affairs that is presupposed in Searle. The exemplification of Nietzsche's views through style achieves an open-endedness regarding truth which Nietzsche cannot achieve by simply asserting his views, since that ends in paradox.

Higgins' concern with issues such as authentic and inauthentic encounters with the self through a serious employment of style is misdirected and ultimately runs counter to Nietzsche's desire to escape the tradition. There is always room for another style or perspective on any issue and "honest introspection" is antagonistic to it. As Derrida wishes to show by means of the "I have forgotten my umbrella section" of Spurs, Nietzsche has no truth to get at--only styles of interpretation:

... the insinuation of the woman (of) Nietzsche is that, if there is going to be style, there can only

be more than one. The debt falls due. At least two spurs (epérons). The anchor is lowered, risked, lost maybe in the abyss between them. (p. 139)

Thus, if style is merely a reinforcement of philosophical views, then the problem motivating the previous chapter (style as an escape from the problems of the paradox) would presumably find a solution in style's better description of Nietzsche's intentions and views. If style is an alternative form of philosophical argument, then it is a proposal which presumes that style has the right answer to problems which the philosophical tradition could not solve. Nietzsche must avoid the self-defeating paradox here (namely, style succeeds at conveying the truth of perspectivism better than non-stylistic statements, which bogs down in paradox) which would place Nietzsche in the position of saying that style corresponds to the truth of perspectivism and hence the truth of the world. That would be tantamount to saying that Nietzsche's style is true or good in itself. So there must be more than one style. Nietzsche must therefore take his self-referential view of his own writing style, indeed making it the most multifarious of all.

Another weakness of any account of philosophical style which sees it as essentially a reinforcement of the view of the subject of the argument is the related implication that style constitutes part of and only part of the subject of an argument. Goodman makes a strong argument in favour of viewing style as a part of not only the subject but also a part of the emotion and the structure of the argument. Furthermore, if style were just a matter of subject, then, once analyzed and understood, Nietzsche's style would no longer hold our interest. But Nietzsche continues to enthrall his readers. Most

importantly, however, Goodman sees the primary role of style as the way in which it constitutes the signature of the writing or work of art in question: "a property--whether of statement made, structure displayed, or feeling conveyed--counts as stylistic only when it associates a work with one rather than another artist, region, period, school, etc. A style is a complex characteristic that seems somewhat as an individual or group signature..." (Goodman, p.34). Nietzsche's own general views on style (GS, 290) indicate that style "is needful" for this same reason: a differentiation of one trend or viewpoint from another. Furthermore, he thinks that the differentiation of individual tastes or schools of tastes will reveal the differences between the weak and strong.

SECTION iv--Style as Standard

Very early Nietzsche had begun to understand the relationship of style to the standard of the day. In the early notes on rhetoric he thinks that styles of speech are understood as good or bad only in comparison to the standards of the day, and standards (contemporary or ancient) ebb and flow through history. Standards are arbitrary. Standards appropriate for Greek are inappropriate for Latin or English. Poetry which sounded dignified fifty years ago can sound pompous and dated to today's ears.

The characteristic style is the proper domain of the art of the orator: here he practices a free plastic art; the language is his material which has already been prepared.... It is in this way that the listener perceives the naturalness, viz. the absolute appropriateness and uniformity, whereas with each deviation of the natural, he perceives the

artificiality and becomes distrustful of the matter presented. (LNR, pp.113-114)

Yet he also thought of the standards of appropriateness as aiming at a moral effect. Interestingly, Nietzsche applied that same theme as the key issue of The Genealogy of Morals: standards of morality change over time, what is good today may have been unthinkable in the last century, but why? The answer to that is found by looking at the origins of the standards in place by doing genealogy. Through his critique of philosophy, Nietzsche tries to establish a style which is in contrast to the standards of philosophical style received through Socrates.

In bringing forth the stylistic nature of language Nietzsche was not trying to apologize for the Sophists, rather he was trying to show that philosophy had never left sophistry behind it, i.e. there is no essential difference between philosophic and rhetorical argument. Instead they are two different styles of argument and neither has any inherent force over the other, except as it is conferred by historical periods. When Nietzsche conceives of himself as a reaction to Socrates, he means that Socrates represents a style of thought and writing with which he disagrees. Thus he avoids treating Socrates as an argument and concentrates upon Socrates as a style. When he claims he respects Socrates for everything he said and did not say ("he was equally great in silence" GS, 340), he means that he respects the arguments for what they represent (Socrates as the timely proponent of rationality in the declining age of Greece) and the style for what it represents (a historical turning point, BT 15). The struggle for the recognition of style happens to be a struggle against Socrates. For although they are alike in aim, their styles contrast to one another. For this reason I

think that Kaufmann's account of Nietzsche and Socrates is inadequate. Kaufmann suggests that it is possible for Nietzsche to conceive of men distinctly from their views and praise the former while criticizing the latter (P. 399). Yet Nietzsche never makes a great effort to distinguish the two, especially in the later writings. In fact, he relishes treating Socrates ambiguously, for there is no prospect of separating the form and content of his views. Nietzsche concentrates on the clash of styles.

On this issue Nehamas serves as an ally against Kaufmann³. Nehamas notes (p. 32) that Nietzsche's disagreement with the content of Socrates' views does not account for the magnitude of suspicion levelled against him. He takes the fight against Socrates as a fight between dogmatism and perspectivism on the matter of truth and concludes that Nietzsche's style is a reinforcement (and hence also the subject) of his views. Nehamas fixates on Nietzsche's styles as subject because he states "They transmit information through the very forms, the very styles, in which they are represented." His version is different from the rejected one of Higgins because Nehamas recognizes that Nietzsche offers his styles tentatively by affirming them as examples but refusing to say anything about them as answers (which could be assigned truth values). I do not disagree with that view (of Nehamas), except insofar as it does not go far enough in formulating a new standard. There is nothing in Nehamas to prevent him from agreeing with this view, yet he does not reach it. Once he even verges upon it: "Nietzsche's many styles," he says, "are therefore to be explained

³ See the discussion of Kaufmann in chapter one, section one.

through his relation to Socrates and to philosophy: they are an essential part of his constant war against them." Yet I disagree when he continues to say "His manner of writing is not an invitation to interpret him in an unending number of ways but an ever present reminder that if we are convinced by it, we are convinced by his writing which is... a product of himself" (pp.37-38).

A better account of style takes Nietzsche's attempt to set up his own philosophical standard through his writings more strictly. I think Nietzsche wished to set a new standard of philosophical interpretation; I also think his emphasis on style is one of his sharpest tools for doing so. This interpretation of style does not deny the part of Nietzsche's style which acts as subject in the process of affirming the importance of creating new standards in Nietzsche's style.

Nehamas acknowledges the many interpretations of Nietzsche without attempting to outrightly claim that his is the best or truest, nor will he offer his view as one equally true one among other interpretations--none of which claim to get at the truth of Nietzsche. Instead he imitates his view of what Nietzsche does by offering a perspective without saying anything about it "in view of what this introductory discussion has claimed in regard to style and to discipleship, it may be better to let the rest of the book speak for itself" (P. 40).

Nehamas has done two important and clever things by avoiding assigning a truth value to Nietzsche's writing and likewise avoiding assigning a truth value to his interpretation of Nietzsche, at least

one which he would state to others. His interpretation of Nietzsche is open-ended because it leaves room for an indefinite amount of further interpretations of Nietzsche. Yet in his own writing Nehamas gives away too much by telling us that his style is only subject and not standard. Perhaps he hopes it will become standard, yet because it has been given an analysis here which identifies the finite nature of Nehamas' style it fails to retain our interest because it can now be assigned a truth value and treated philosophically according to the tradition. The problem with Nehamas' work is that it remains in the philosophic camp of Socrates, while Nietzsche actually tried to assert his own standard.

The immediate objection is to wonder how Nehamas, who tries to imitate Nietzsche's strategy as a way of describing it, differs from Nietzsche. The difference is in the style of writing. Nietzsche tried to write so as to defy philosophical interpretation as it was defined for him, while Nehamas writes in a way that encourages that philosophical interpretation. There seems to be little of Nietzsche's literary qualities in Nehamas' commentary (outstanding though it is). Meanwhile, Nietzsche did write Thus Spake Zarathustra, integrated poems into his work, used aphorisms, angered his contemporaries and enthralled readers since his time. The point is not that Nehamas writes philosophy and Nietzsche wrote literature, for that assumes an essential difference between the two which Nietzsche tried to undermine. Rather, Nehamas writes in a way which begs to be understood philosophically, while Nietzsche tries to write in a way that defies it. Nehamas submits to the style and clarity of the philosophical tradition as it has been refined over the years; Nietzsche tries to

undermine that tradition and define one of his own. Strangely enough, Nehamas' own most brilliant interpretation of Nietzsche is a testament to the ongoing failure of Nietzsche to accomplish his goal of really reevaluating the standards of writing. The difference between Nehamas and Nietzsche is that the latter actually does reach for the stars through his writing. Nietzsche showed real strength of styling while Nehamas is like "The weak characters without power over themselves that hate the constraint of style. They feel that if this bitter and evil constraint were imposed on them they would be demeaned; they become slaves as soon as they serve; they hate to serve" (GS, 290).

Meanwhile the struggle between Nietzsche and Socrates continues. Nietzsche is now constrained by his own relativism, though. He becomes the advocate of a world where a (good) strong style is an interesting one and a (bad) weak one is simply uninteresting and unattractive. Yet Nietzsche does not want a world like that because he thinks that is the way it should be, rather he wants the world to be recognized as such because that is the way it appears to him. A second problem arises because Nietzsche begs to be understood on his own terms, though such a task is obviously outside the scope of the present work because the concepts involved (like the will to power) defy philosophical interpretation in the old style. Once submitted they become baffling or laughable.

CONCLUSION

Nietzsche ultimately wants to be understood through his own terms. In one sense there is nothing particularly interesting about that. Every philosopher ultimately wants to be understood through his or her own terms, whether they include "will to power", "unity of apperception", "Being" etc. Nietzsche is exceptional because he demands more than a strict philosophical interpretation, although he can be understood as a philosopher like any other before him. But why does he aspire to be more than any other philosopher? That is the question which underlies this paper. As it turns out, the answer to that question cannot receive a satisfactory answer through this type of interpretation because of the intrinsic conflict between Nietzsche and philosophy.

The philosophical investigation of Nietzsche undertaken here does reveal that he wanted to surpass philosophy largely for reasons of style as standard or signature. Style can serve as the subject of arguments because it reinforces their contents. But style is also an important part of Nietzsche's signature because it serves as a basis for comparison between him and others who dared distinguish themselves stylistically from their predecessors. In this case a philosophical understanding of style as signature serves as a preface to further non-

philosophical investigations. This is for two reasons. First, the strict philosophical interpretation of style as subject begins to fail because it threatens to undermine Nietzsche's views of language and philosophy because it threatens to lead into a paradox: if style is only subject, then it challenges Nietzsche's fundamental views by implying that style can correspond to the truth of perspectivism and hence the world. The less philosophical route of style as standard must therefore try to gain some sort of purchase on the terms which block the philosophical challenge. These terms (e.g. will to power) seem opaque to philosophic inquiry because (in part) they serve to deny it. Insofar as they can be understood that way, they sound like jargon.

So far there has been very little mention of the will to power for precisely that reason. It contributes little to the discussion of style unless good style is understood as a manifestation of the will to power, a fulfillment of the potential of style. At the very end of this discussion an appeal could have been made to explain the will to power on that very basis. I will not make that appeal because it actually supports a notion that must necessarily be refuted in order to defend the importance of style to Nietzsche.

That notion is: if everything (including style) is a manifestation of the will to power, then all things are configurations of power. The will to power is an analogue of matter while individual entities constitute the various forms it can take. Style, rationality, master moralities and blonde beasts can all be understood as fulfillments of the will to power. Supporters of this interpretation are tacitly endorsing a form/content dichotomy of the world which

actually conflicts with the thrust of the discussion of style: it denies both the conclusions of the discussions of style as subject and style as signature. I propose to discard the interpretation of style as a form of the will to power, because the will to power can only be understood when the breakdown of that scheme of form/content is complete.

On this view, the will to power is an example of a concept that tries to bridge the form/content distinction. Nietzsche uses the will to power to describe actions, trends, or varieties of thought. Although this stylistic characterization may not say exactly what the will to power is (it may not even be possible to do so), style can help identify how he uses the term and therefore help to show what lies behind it.

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