

A Life-Affirming Method for Truth: Nietzsche and Wittgenstein on Truth, Dogmatism, and
Relativism

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Philosophy 452: Senior Tutorial

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03 March 2010

I. Introduction

Throughout his work, and especially in his later work of *Beyond Good and Evil* and *On the Genealogy of Morality*, Nietzsche is preoccupied with the notion of truth, and the problematic philosophical truth claims of the past. In his later work Wittgenstein explores the notion of language-games and how they serve as a mechanism for asserting and assessing knowledge in truth claims. In this paper I argue that Wittgenstein's grammatical method of contexts and rule-following provides a solution to the problem of truth that Nietzsche was never able to resolve, but illustrates vividly, especially in the final sections of *GMIII*.

I have divided my argument into four main sections: the first regards a debate over Nietzsche's account of truth, the second is my interpretation of Nietzsche's illustration of the truth problem, the third regards Wittgenstein's account of truth and his method as a solution to the problem, and the fourth addresses possible fundamental inconsistencies in their philosophies.

In the first section I lay out a detailed debate between two Nietzsche scholars: Maudmarie Clark and Alexander Nehamas. I consider their distinct accounts of truth and dogmatism in Nietzsche's philosophy and conclude that each of them offers a helpful but incomplete analysis of Nietzsche's position. Both articulate in different way a central issue in the paper – the conflict between dogmatic truth claims and the rejection of the metaphysical or Platonic notion of the thing-in-itself.

In the second section, I go on to show that Clark and Nehamas' failing may have been in trying to construct and defend a totally complete account in Nietzsche. I argue that Nietzsche never offered a fully developed account of truth, but rather that he offered criticisms of traditional philosophical truth claims, and hoped to initiate a reassessment of the value of truth in contemporary philosophy.

In the third section I argue that Wittgenstein provides a coherent and defensible account of truth and that his account satisfies the basic demands in Nietzsche's account of the problem. I argue that Wittgenstein's method, composed of language-games and grammatical rule following, amounts to the limited notion of truth that Nietzsche had in mind, and that his method is ultimately quite tenable.

In the fourth section I consider the objection that Wittgenstein's method entails a sort of relativism that Nietzsche clearly denies. This follows from Clark's inability to determine how to resolve the issue of competing perspectives and Nietzsche's various assertions that he does not think that truth is relative to the individual. I argue that the criticism recognizes an under-development in Nietzsche's philosophy. Ultimately, I conclude that, while Nietzsche did not foresee all of the changes Wittgenstein's method would make to traditional philosophical truth claims, Wittgenstein's method does, in the end, provide a solution to the basic components of Nietzsche's illustration of the problem.

II. Clark/Nehamas Debate Illustrating Their Interpretation of Nietzsche's Account of Truth

In the preface to *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche explains his project of breaking from the dogmatism of traditional philosophical practice. It remains unclear, however, what exactly Nietzsche finds dogmatic and problematic about traditional philosophy, and how exactly his views fix and avoid the problem. Alexander Nehamas and Maudemarie Clark offer interpretations of Nietzsche's work which aim to elucidate the aphorisms and defend a single dialectical position. Nehamas claims that Nietzsche wants his life to be read as literature; meant to show the way rather than to tell the way, so as to avoid the dogmatism in telling. Clark argues that Nehamas misinterprets Nietzsche's understanding of dogmatism (and therefore various other

elements of his philosophy), and offers her own account of Nietzsche's positions. The central issue I want to address in Nehamas and Clark's interpretations is whether or not Nietzsche thinks his views are true for everyone and if he does, whether this undermines his anti-dogmatic position. I will argue that Clark offers a convincing case for why Nehamas is wrong to assert that Nietzsche doesn't think his views are true for everyone, but that she fails to show how her interpretation can amount to anything more than an unjustified and arbitrary claim that leaves Nietzsche with an indefensible account of truth. I go on to give evidence that, contrary to Nehamas and Clark's interpretation, Nietzsche might not have intended to offer a totally comprehensive account of truth, but rather merely to illuminate a problem with traditional philosophical truth claims.

Though there seems to be disagreement about what exactly Nietzsche finds problematic in traditional philosophical dogmatism, it is clear that he understands the major flaw of traditional philosophy to be a dogmatic one. In the preface to *Beyond Good and Evil* Nietzsche briefly explains what he calls "the dogmatist's error." He says, "it must certainly be conceded that the worst, most durable, and most dangerous of all errors so far was a dogmatist's error – namely, Plato's invention of the pure spirit and the good as such" (*BGE*, pp.2). Nietzsche clearly characterizes Plato's creation of the Forms as an explicit form of philosophical dogmatism. He indicates two problems that I recognize: the invention of the Forms as metaphysical things-in-themselves, and the inclusion of "the good" as one of such essential forms. The fabrication of morality (notions of "the good" and "the bad") is something Nietzsche addresses later in *BGE*, and covers in great depth in *On the Genealogy of Morality*. What this line in the preface indicates, however, is that Nietzsche ties the fabrication of morality to the problem of dogmatism.

Later in the preface, Nietzsche explains that Plato's dogmatic error arose from his failure to adopt a proper perspectivism. Nietzsche explains that the struggle to overcome the dogmatic error "meant standing truth on her head and denying *perspective*, the basic condition of all life, when one spoke of the spirit and the good as Plato did" (2). The problem, then, is philosophical dogmatism which arises from a misunderstanding of truth and an inability to properly recognize perspectival limits. The solution comes from "standing truth on her head" or completely reversing the traditional notion of the nature of truth and perspective. Nietzsche, then, introduces, though tentatively, the problem, how it arose, and how one might find the solution.

Nehamas and Clark agree that there is a tentative relationship among dogmatism, truth, and perspective. They disagree about how exactly Nietzsche understands the three to be related. Though their definitions of dogmatism are a bit ambiguous, I see Nehamas and Clark as representing different notions of dogmatism. For Nehamas, dogmatism means thinking that one's views are true for everyone (Nehamas, 33). For Clark, dogmatism is the belief in metaphysical things-in-themselves (Clark, 202). These definitions are closely related but the distinction brings about much of the disagreement in Nehamas and Clark's account of Nietzsche's position. Nehamas thinks that Nietzsche works very hard to represent the dogmatic problem while not falling into dogmatism, himself (Nehamas, 137). Clark does not see Nehamas' view of dogmatism to be such a threat to Nietzsche's philosophy, but rather, sees a more "mature perspectivism", and rejection of truth-in-itself, to free Nietzsche from any fear of falling into dogmatism. Clark argues that Nietzsche's earlier work was plagued by some of the problems that Nehamas recognizes, but that in his later work Nietzsche broke from the fear that his own work would suffer from dogmatic errors. However, while their interpretations of

Nietzsche's conception of dogmatism differ, both Clark and Nehamas think that Nietzsche's perspectivism allows him to posit non-dogmatic truths.

Neither Clark nor Nehamas agrees with the radical claim that Nietzsche is being dogmatic if he thinks that his beliefs are true. In an effort to define properly the dogmatism to which Nietzsche objects, Clark and Nehamas need to show that he is able to make truth claims without being paradoxically dogmatic. This leads them into a discussion of Nietzsche's perspectivism. There seems to be a paradox when Nietzsche claims that his views are true, but he simultaneously believes that all views are perspectival.

One might claim that if all views are perspectival, then there is no way Nietzsche could claim to posit truth because his own view is merely a perspective among others – there is no reason to assume his truth is any more valuable than any other person's truth. Nehamas defends Nietzsche's claim for truth within perspectivism by rejecting the assertion that all interpretations within perspectivism are equal. Clark summarizes Nehamas' claims as follows:

Perspectivism commits us, he thinks, to the thesis that for any interpretation "an alternative *could*, in principle, always be devised" (1985, 63). But he denies that this gives a basis for dismissing theories as "mere interpretations" (i.e., as false), unless we actually have a better interpretation to offer, an interpretation whose truth can then be called into doubt only by a still better interpretation. Perspectivism commits us to the claim that any view may be false, not that it is false. (Clark, 154)

Thus, Nietzsche's perspectivism doesn't require that all perspectives be equally valid. He explains that each perspective deserves consideration, but one can only be devalued if a more plausible perspective is presented. Nietzsche's position is not that all views are equal, but rather that they are all a matter of perspective – though, some perspectives are better than others.

Nietzsche draws this distinction between relativism and perspectivism in *BGE* section 3 when he claims that "not just man is 'measure of things'" – referring to Protagorean relativism.

Protagoras claims that all truth is relative to each individual and that there is not objective truth. Nietzsche clearly rejects the relativist claim that there is no truth or that all truth is relative to each individual. He wants to say that some perspectives are better than others but it remains ambiguous to what extent truth can be objectively determined within his perspectivism.¹

An opponent of Nehamas' characterization of Nietzsche's perspectivism might still claim that even if there is room for truth within Nietzsche's perspectivism, the perspectivism fails by way of self-reference. That is, if all views are a matter of perspective, then Nietzsche's view is a perspective and cannot be trusted as such. Nehamas explains the possible self-referential paradox as follows

Suppose that we characterize Nietzsche's perspectivism as the thesis (P) that every view is an interpretation. Now it appears that if (P) is true, and if every view is in fact an interpretation, this would apply to (P) itself. In that case (P) also turns out to be an interpretation. But if this is so, then not every view need be an interpretation, and (P) seems to have refuted itself. (Nehamas, 66)

Nehamas explains the apparent paradox that arises from the thesis that all views are merely an interpretation. It would seem that if all views are an interpretation, then the view that all views are interpretations is itself an interpretation and that there are indeed some views that are not interpretations and so (P) must be false. But Nehamas does not accept this formulation. He agrees that if (P) is true then there *may* be some views that are not interpretations, but not that there *are* views that are not interpretations. (P) merely allows for the possibility that there are views that are not interpretations; it does not prove that there are. Nehamas' position is that Nietzsche fully believes his thesis (P) that all views are an interpretation, but believing this Nietzsche must concede that there is some possibility that he is wrong and that (P) is false. For

¹ Later in the paper I discuss relativism in greater detail. Clark's account of Nietzsche's opposition to knowledge as a falsified version of reality provides a sort of rejection of relativism. Also, in considering Wittgenstein's account of truth, I consider the objection that Nietzsche's opposition to relativism represents an incompatible feature of the two accounts.

the critic to successfully disprove (P) they would need to show that (P) *is* false, not that it *may be* false. Nehamas explains further,

Both these approaches [(self-reference and equality of perspective)] rely on the same wrong conception of interpretation: they presuppose that to consider a view an interpretation is to concede that it is false... The view that all views are interpretations *may* be false; of what view does this not hold? But this is itself not an objection to perspectivism. (66-7)

Nehamas explains that merely claiming that something could be false does not entail that it is false. Thus, he defends his view of Nietzsche's perspectivism against the problems of equality of perspective and the self-referential paradox.

Clark agrees that this is a successful defense against the given criticisms, but she thinks that by making this argument Nehamas limits Nietzsche to what she calls an "anti-foundationalist" view which she characterizes as "the claim that any view might be false" (Clark, 155). What she means is that by offering this defense of Nietzsche, Nehamas merely assumes that Nietzsche is willing to accept the fact that he might be incorrect, but that his is the most convincing available view, and so he has no reason to believe that he is incorrect. Clark argues that Nehamas wants to make a stronger claim than this.

Nehamas' adoption of the falsification thesis, or the view that all beliefs are a falsified version of a "true reality", and his account of why Nietzsche is not dogmatic both require not just that Nietzsche's views may be false, but that they are necessarily falsified perspectives of a single reality. Further, Clark believes that claiming that Nietzsche is an anti-foundationalist not only puts inappropriate limits on Nietzsche's philosophy, but also directly contradicts Nehamas' earlier position that equally legitimate competing claims can both be true. That is, Nehamas' position that Nietzsche is committed to the idea that his perspective is his own truth, but need not be for everyone. Nehamas explains,

Nietzsche's opposition to dogmatism does not consist in the paradoxical idea that it is wrong to think that one's beliefs are true, but only in the view that one's beliefs are not, and need not be, true for everyone... Like every other writer Nietzsche wants his audience to accept his views. (Nehamas, 33)

In order to present an interpretation of Nietzsche that avoids traditional dogmatism, Nehamas claims that Nietzsche wants his views to be accepted, but does not claim that they are true for everyone.

Nehamas can say that Nietzsche escapes the self-referential paradox by claiming that his views may be false, but are not necessarily. Nehamas can also say that Nietzsche escapes dogmatism by accepting the fact that all views are falsified versions of reality, and thus that competing claims can both be true. The problem arises when Nehamas tries to claim both. Either all views are necessarily falsified versions of reality and so they can conflict with other views without requiring that either be totally incorrect or totally correct, or all views may be incorrect but are not necessarily and so Nietzsche does not have the problem of self-reference. One cannot, however, suppose that Nietzsche's views are both necessarily falsified, and not necessarily falsified.

Nehamas says that Nietzsche is willing to accept the fact that equally legitimate competing perspectives can co-exist. Clark claims that "in making all beliefs equally true, his interpretation makes them all false. Only the whole that incorporates them all is true. Thus, if we accept Nehamas' account of how our beliefs falsify, we make perspectivism vulnerable to the very objections against which he wanted to defend it" (Clark, 158). In assuming that there is a whole that incorporates them all, Nehamas assumes that there is a full truth of which perspectives are only a necessarily false image. If this is the case, however, then he is assuming the foundationalist position with which he disagreed – that there *are* some views that are not interpretations, not just that there *may be*. Nehamas constructs a detailed argument to show how

Nietzsche can posit truths but in doing so he rejects his original position that Nietzsche escapes dogmatism by believing that his beliefs are not true for everyone.

Clark thinks that she escapes this problem by offering an account of Nietzsche's position which allows him to make truth claims without the qualification that they are not true for everyone. She says that the falsification thesis, or the idea that knowledge is limited and falsified by perspective, is a feature of Nietzsche's early philosophy, but not his later philosophy. She explains,

My solution to these problems has been to demote the falsification thesis to Nietzsche's earlier works and to interpret the metaphor of perspective as a rhetorical device designed to help us overcome the devaluation of human knowledge involved in the falsification thesis. According to my interpretation, the perspectival character of knowledge is perfectly compatible with some interpretations being true, and it introduces no paradoxes of self-reference. Perspectivism is, of course, a perspectival truth, but this does not imply that any competing claim is also true. (158)

Clark thinks that she offers an account of perspectivism which does not fall to either of the criticisms that Nehamas defends against, but also does not participate in the contradiction that Nehamas' does.

Clark's account of Nietzsche's position assumes that his mature perspectivism does not require that knowledge be distorting or falsifying. In other words, she claims that Nietzsche has no problem making non-dogmatic truth claims that are expected to be true for everyone. This position seems to conflict with some rather explicit statements in Nietzsche's work. For example in *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche says, "the world of which we can become conscious is only a surface and sign-world... all becoming conscious involves a great and thorough corruption, falsification, reduction to superficialities, and generalization" (*GS* 354). This aligns exactly with Nehamas' claim that knowledge falsifies the truth. It would seem to follow, then, that no single perspective can be said to be true for everyone, but rather equally legitimate

competing perspectives can be true – neither being wholly true. But this leads to the contradiction that Clark recognizes in Nehamas’ account and explains why Clark wants to portray a more coherent account of Nietzsche’s perspectival truth.

Clark explains that this belief that knowledge falsifies is merely a flaw of Nietzsche’s earlier work. She explains that later Nietzsche is able to escape such limitations on perspective. But even in Nietzsche’s later work he maintains a certain sort of perspectivism; in fact one of Nietzsche’s most comprehensive accounts of perspectivism comes from *On the Genealogy of Morality*. Thus, Clark must show that the perspectivism that Nietzsche promotes in *GM III* is a perspectivism that does not include the falsification thesis, or the notion promoted in *GS* that knowledge is a limited conception of truth. That is, Clark must show that Nietzsche’s ‘mature’ perspectivism does away with any sense of a “larger truth” of which perspectives are merely a limited portrayal.

Nietzsche’s account goes as follows,

From now on, my philosophical colleagues, let us be more wary of the dangerous old conceptual fairy-tale which has set up a ‘pure, will-less, painless, timeless, subject of knowledge’, let us be wary of the tentacles of such contradictory concepts as ‘pure reason’, ‘absolute spirituality’, ‘knowledge as such’: - here we are asked to think an of eye which cannot be thought at all, an eye turned in no direction at all, an eye where the active and interpretive powers are to be suppressed, absent but through which seeing still becomes a seeing-something, so it is an absurdity and non-concept of eye that is demanded. There is *only* a perspectival seeing, *only* a perspectival ‘knowing’; the *more* affects we are able to put into words about a thing, the more complete will be our ‘concept’ of the thing, our ‘objectivity’. But to eliminate the will completely and turn off all the emotions without exception, assuming we could: well? would that not mean to *castrate* the intellect?... (*GM III*, 12)

Clark takes this to be a demonstration of Nietzsche’s rejection of truth as a metaphysical thing-in-itself. She sees this as a metaphor for Nietzsche’s view that “nonperspectival seeing would be a view from nowhere” (Clark, 129). What she means is that Nietzsche is trying to show us that

there is no view that is not itself a perspective. Clark does not, however, take this to mean that all views are relative, but that one can work to understand a more and more comprehensive perspective. For example, there are an incomprehensible number of facts about birds, but we can still know certain facts to be truth without knowing all of the fact. Perspectivism shows that all perspectives are limited, *not* that all perspectives are falsified. She sees Nietzsche's statements on perspectivism, then, to be a metaphor meant to inform the way we think about "knowing".

Clark thinks that Nietzsche "uses the metaphor of perspective to promote recognition of *both* the nonfoundational character of knowledge and of the contradiction involved in the idea of the thing-in-itself" (131). The nonfoundational character of knowledge is the quality of Nietzsche's perspectivism that Nehamas defends but, as Clark realizes, contradicts his own position on the falsification thesis. She explains,

To consider knowledge nonperspectival would be to insist that it must be grounded in a set of foundational beliefs, beliefs all rational beings must accept no matter what else they believe, beliefs that could therefore constitute a neutral corner from which the justifiability of other beliefs might be assessed. In calling nonperspectival knowledge "an absurdity and a nonsense," Nietzsche suggests the impossibility of such self-justifying foundations for knowledge. (130)

Clark states that under her reading, Nietzsche's perspectivism is meant to reject the idea in Cartesian foundationalism that we must justify our beliefs by stating certain unquestionable truths that all rational beings must share. She infers from this that, for Nietzsche, "all justification is contextual, dependent on other beliefs held unchallengeable for the moment, but themselves capable of only a similarly contextual justification" (130).

In representing this element of Nietzsche's perspectivism as contextual, Clark is able to explain both Nietzsche's capacity to make truth claims, and his rejection of the foundationalist view that truths are self-justifying, or true in-themselves. She explains, "If we deny that our

beliefs possess an absolute or neutral foundation, we must admit that they could be false, or that we may have reason to revise them in the future. But absence of certainty does not entail absence of truth” (131). By rejecting the falsification thesis (which Nehamas does not do), Clark can accept this non-foundationalist defense, but she thinks that Nietzsche’s perspectivism is more than mere anti-foundationalism; she thinks it also a rejection of the notion of the thing-in-itself.

Clark claims that by rejecting the thing-in-itself, perspectivism allows Nietzsche to promote a coherent account of truth. She says, “a perspectivist denies that there is any truth in the metaphysical sense” and so perspectivism allows Nietzsche to make truth claims (based on contextual affirmations), without assuming that they relate to any notion of truth outside of a certain perspective, or truth-in-itself (134). The rejection of the things-in-themselves, then, is the element of his perspectivism that moves it beyond mere anti-foundationalism and allows him to make truth claims without implying that there are competing claims that are also true. This does not imply that our capacity for truth is not limited – there are always more truths that can be discovered, but the fact that our capacity for truths are limited does not mean that our conception of truth is somehow false, or that a competing claim is also true.

Nehamas would seem to think that this is where Clark’s view becomes problematic. He does not deny that Nietzsche’s perspectivism allows him to promote truths but he asserts that equally legitimate competing claims must also be considered true. According to Nehamas, if Nietzsche claims that his truth is true for everyone, then he is being dogmatic in the same way that he rejects in Plato’s Forms. Nehamas claims that “Nietzsche wants to warn others against dogmatism without taking a dogmatic stand himself. His unparalleled solution to this problem is

to try consciously to fashion a literary character out of himself and a literary work out of his life” (Nehamas, 137).

To support Nehamas’ view, one might cite *BGE* 43 which, in explaining Nietzsche’s ideal philosophers, says,

Are these coming philosophers new friends of “truth”? That is probable enough, for all philosophers so far have loved their truths. But they will certainly not be dogmatists. It must offend their pride, also their taste, if their truth is supposed to be a truth for everyman – which has so far been the secret wish and hidden meaning of all dogmatic aspirations. (*BGE*, 43)

This seems to imply that Nietzsche finds it dogmatic to consider one’s own beliefs to be true for everyman. Further if, as was determined earlier, Nietzsche understands dogmatism to be the worst problem plaguing traditional philosophy, then it seems he must deny the claim that his views are true for every man. Even if Nehamas’ view participates in the contradiction that was explained earlier, his interpretation of Nietzsche as anti-dogmatic still presents a noteworthy criticism of Clark’s view. If Clark is going to present Nietzsche’s views as a coherent position, she must be able to defend her interpretation against this criticism.

Clark argues that Nehamas is mischaracterizing Nietzsche’s view of dogmatism. She claims that Nietzsche does not find it dogmatic to assume that one’s views are true for everyone. She thinks that the dogmatism that Nietzsche refers to, especially in *BGE*, is the notion of things-in-themselves. That is, she thinks that Nietzsche’s problem is with the assumption that one’s claims reflect a neutral and unquestionable account of truth – the thing-in-itself. She argues that Nehamas’ account of Nietzsche’s dogmatism is problematic because it, in the end, prevents Nietzsche from positing any coherent truth at all. If Nietzsche believes that someone can present equally legitimate competing beliefs that are also true, then he isn’t really offering a position that survives the self-referential or equality of perspective criticism, offered above.

Further, Clark could claim that the view expressed in *BGE* 43 is not suggesting that the philosophers can't expect their truths to be accepted by others, merely that they should not be ignorant of the fact that truth is perspectival. That is, the new philosophers would recognize that all truth is limited to a finite perspective and that this perspective isn't based on neutral or objective grounds. They cannot assume that there is a metaphysical foundation or unquestionable and objective truth.

It seems to me that Clark is right to claim that Nietzsche would be contradicting himself if he made truth claims but did not expect them to be true for everybody. However, this itself does not seem to show that Nietzsche presents a coherent account of truth and dogmatism. Clark and Nehamas want to present Nietzsche's philosophy as a coherent account truth, but it seems that they both illuminate problems that, when considered together, deny that Nietzsche's position on dogmatism is coherent with his making primordial truth claims.

Clark believes that Nietzsche can non-dogmatically say that something is true for everyone by admitting that no truth is certain, in the sense that it has a metaphysical foundation or that it is unrevisable, but that his is the most convincing account. She says that Nietzsche can say his truth is true for everyone, even those with competing perspectives. She also says that equally legitimate competing perspectives cannot both be true because this would imply a greater truth-in-itself, of which they are both a falsified perspective. This implies that an equally legitimate competing perspective cannot exist if Nietzsche is going to claim that his beliefs are true. She says Nietzsche does claim that his beliefs are true, so an equally legitimate competing perspective must not exist.

But a problem arises when a philosopher with a competing perspective claims that his views are true. Nietzsche would either have to show that his view is more convincing, or adopt

the other philosopher's view because it is more convincing. If there is no truth to which these perspectives refer, though, then their relative convincingness is merely a matter of appearance or some other means of judgment that does not refer to a thing-in-itself. But things appear differently to different people and Clark gives no viable alternative system of judgment. Even if one view appears contextually superior from one perspective, it can still appear contextually inferior from another. According to Clark, then, Nietzsche cannot say that both perspectives are true. Though, he surely cannot say that his perspective is true based merely on the way that things appear to him. Even if he doesn't rely on an objective or neutral foundation, Nietzsche must give some account of why his perspective should be trusted before another's.

Nietzsche clearly makes truth claims that he thinks are supported by his perspectivism, but he does not explain, what exactly makes them true. Clark says that Nietzsche justifies this by contextual affirmation, but this, alone, seems insufficient. If Nietzsche wants to say that his view is true and another is not, then he must have some way to determine which was better – not to do so would be dogmatic in any sense. No such way is given, and so we must assume that Clark's defense is insufficient.

Clark, then, seems to defend an incoherent account of Nietzsche's philosophy. This does not mean that her criticism of Nehamas is incorrect but it means that she does not present a coherent account of the view that Nietzsche can posit non-dogmatic truth that is meant to be true for everyone. Both Clark and Nehamas run into contradictions when they claim that Nietzsche presents a coherent and defensible account of non-dogmatic truth. Clark helps to show that Nehamas might be wrong to assume that Nietzsche can make truth claims and not expect them to be true for everyone, but Nehamas shows that in order to present a coherent account of Nietzsche's views on truth, one must take seriously his account of the problem of dogmatism.

III. Nietzsche's Concept of the Truth Problem

Thus, after examining the Clark-Nehamas debate, we understand that Nietzsche is concerned with the status of 'truth' in philosophy. We also understand that, though Nietzsche illustrates several problems with traditional philosophical truth claims, neither Clark nor Nehamas is able to show that he provides a comprehensive and defensible alternative. While I think this reflects a flaw in both Nehamas and Clark's arguments, I do not think that it entails a flaw in Nietzsche's account of truth. Nietzsche's aim, rather, seems to be to illustrate a problem with the traditional understanding of truth – namely, the misconception that it can be asserted objectively outside of any perspective. His goal is to call truth into question - to initiate a reassessment of truth - not to posit a fully developed account of what truth really is, and how he is justified in asserting it.

My criticism of Clark suggests that if one wants to defend an interpretation of Nietzsche that claims that he wants his truth to be true for everyone, then they would need to justify his method for determining that truth. I have suggested here that it might not be Nietzsche's intention to provide such an account, but whether or not Nietzsche thinks his views are true for everyone, he doesn't seem to think that he provides a sufficient method for determining truth but rather seems to suggest that a reassessment of truth is necessary, before the method for determining truth can be established.

The greatest inconsistency in Clark's interpretation of Nietzsche's account is that he seems to want to say that his views are true for everyone but he doesn't offer a method for determining the superior of two competing claims. Additionally, at the end of *GM*, where Nietzsche gives his clearest account of truth and perspectivism, he clearly does not claim to have solved the problem of truth, but claims only to have initiated a reassessment of truth. He says,

“...*there is a new problem as well: that of the value of truth.* – The will to truth needs a critique – let us define our own task with this -, the value of truth is tentatively to be *called into question...*” (GM III, 24). Rather than claiming to have found the solution to the problem of truth, Nietzsche claims to call truth into question.

Nietzsche claims that men have assumed that a “presuppositionless” knowledge is possible. Even after many men have denied the other-worldly aspirations of Christianity and Platonism, they still rely on the same dogmatic foundations that deny that their truth is predicated on presuppositions. But Nietzsche says,

Strictly speaking, there is no ‘presuppositionless’ knowledge, the thought of such a thing is unthinkable, paralogical: a philosophy, a ‘faith’ always has to be there first, for knowledge to win from it a direction, a meaning, a limit, a method, a right to exist. (Whoever understands it the other way round and, for example, tries to place philosophy ‘on a strictly scientific foundation’, must first *stand on its head* not just philosophy, but also truth itself...)” (GMIII, 24)

Nietzsche claims that all knowledge is formulated by certain presuppositions. He, then, wants to call into question the nature of truth in order to construct a new notion that does not suffer the fallacies of traditional notions, and from that new notion of truth he believes a meaning and method will follow.

Nietzsche thinks that the new notion of truth should be life-affirming which he characterizes as something that does not rely on other-worldly aspirations. He says that those who assume their knowledge is absolute or presuppositionless “*thus affirm another world* from the one of life, nature and history; and inasmuch as he affirms this “other world”, must he not therefore deny its opposite, this world, *our* world, in doing so?” (24) In placing their faith in something “purely true”, without presuppositions, philosophers have placed their faith in something beyond this world and, therefore, denied this life.

Nietzsche accuses the Platonists and the Christians of doing this first – the Platonists associated truth with the Forms, and the Christians associated truth with God. Both of these metaphysical concepts ground traditional ideas of truth in notions that deny this life. But Nietzsche claims that even those who deny this metaphysical other world, and place their faith in “objective truth” or in “science”, still assume that their knowledge is presuppositionless and ultimately make similarly dogmatic propositions. He says,

Our faith in science is still based on *metaphysical faith*, - even we knowers of today, we godless anti-metaphysicians, still take our fire from the blaze set alight by a faith thousands of years old, that faith of the Christians, which was also Plato’s faith, that God is truth, that truth is *divine*... On this question, turn to the most ancient and the most modern philosophies: all of them lack a consciousness of the extent to which the will to truth itself needs justification, here is a gap in every philosophy... (24)

Unlike Clark’s interpretation, here Nietzsche seems to associate the problem of truth with more than just the metaphysical notion of the thing-in-itself or the Platonic notion of the forms. The problem is in the justification for truth itself, for which there is no criteria. Thus, he thinks we should recognize the limitations of knowledge. He thinks that our new account of truth should be a sort of truth that is not assumed, without question, to be objectively true, but rather should recognize that such a proof is impossible. Beyond this, however, Nietzsche doesn’t construct a comprehensive account of truth. He thinks that it can be re-assessed, but he doesn’t claim to have completed the reassessment. He leaves the ‘problem of truth’ to friends and colleagues as yet unknown to him (*GMII*, 27).

Therefore, if one is to provide an account of truth that avoids Nietzsche’s concept of the truth problem in philosophy, then one would need to have an account that is life-affirming and that does not dogmatically assume a presuppositionless knowledge. Christianity and Platonism are both life-denying and dogmatic, and science, while it doesn’t rely on other-worldly

correspondence, does dogmatically presuppose an objective truth. Nietzsche says, “Both of them, science and the ascetic ideal, are still on the same foundation...; that is to say, both overestimate truth (more correctly: they share the same faith that truth *cannot* be assessed or criticized)...” (*GMII*, 25) Therefore, to get beyond the failings of the ascetic ideal and scientific knowledge, we need an account that doesn’t dogmatically assume its objective foundation.

Further, if one is to have such an account, they will need to provide some sort of justifiable method for determining truth. That is, they must go beyond agreeing with Nietzsche to actually establishing a method for mediating truth claims and justifying how truth can be asserted non-dogmatically or without presuppositions. Nietzsche recognizes a problem in asserting views without providing sufficient justification, but he cannot provide such a justification for his own views and he provides no method for mediating competing truth claims.

IV. Wittgenstein’s Basic Account of Truth

I argue that Wittgenstein provides a solution to the problem that Nietzsche illustrates above. The issue I want to address in this section is whether or not Wittgenstein presents a coherent and defensible account of truth. I argue that he does by claiming that the truth or falsity of a statement is determined by its success in a language-game that is governed by agreed upon rules or criteria. If Wittgenstein provides a coherent and defensible method for truth, and his account is neither life-denying nor dogmatically presumptive of a presuppositionless knowledge, then it would appear that his method meets Nietzsche’s criteria for a satisfactory account of truth. In following sections I will consider two objections arising from apparent inconsistencies in the two philosophies. My aim in this section, however, is only to show that Wittgenstein’s method is coherent and defensible, which it needs to be in order to be a viable solution to

Nietzsche's account of the truth problem, and that it meets the two criteria (life-affirming, non-dogmatic) that Nietzsche establishes for a satisfactory account.

Wittgenstein, like Nietzsche, does not say that truth is determined by correspondence to a metaphysical form of truth. Wittgenstein's account is not that truth is explained in terms of a Platonic Form, but rather that it needs to be understood in terms of our agreed upon rules of what it means for something to be 'true' or 'false'. In her book, *Wittgenstein's Account of Truth*, Sara Ellenbogen explains that "[Wittgenstein] held that it is only within a language in which human beings agree on conventions for predicating "is true" of their statements that statements can be said to be true or false" (3). Thus, truth or falsity can be judged as a function of language rather than a function of what previous epistemologists have called 'presuppositionless reality'.

Ellenbogen goes on to clarify, "rather than saying that human agreement decides what is true and false, it would be more accurate to say that human agreement creates the conditions under which it is *correct* for us to predicate "is true" or "is false" of our statements" (3).

Ellenbogen's point is to divest the terms "truth" and "falsity" of their Platonic meaning as something metaphysical that corresponds to reality, but is more real. Wittgenstein explains this in *Philosophical Investigations*, when he says, "to say that a proposition is whatever can be true or false amounts to saying: we call something a proposition when *in our language* we apply the calculus of truth functions to it" (*PI*, 136). In each case that we use either of these terms it does mean that whatever we assert as 'true' is thereby unequivocally the case. Rather, we mean that, based on agreements in our public language, it is correct to assert the truth or falsity of a given statement in a specific context.

'Correctness', here, does not assert that whatever is correct is unconditionally or unrevisably the case. It merely means that what is being asserted is in agreement with our

shared foundations of knowledge and understanding – that is, it is in agreement with the foundations of our language-games. Wittgenstein explains this in *On Certainty* section 403, “To say of man, in Moore’s sense, that he *knows* something; that what he says is unconditionally the truth, seems wrong to me. – It is the truth only inasmuch as it is an unmoving foundation of his language-games” (*OC*, 403). Truth, then, is not the metaphysical Form that Nietzsche attributes to Plato’s account, nor is it objectively certain in the sense that Nietzsche’s scientist wants to say it is; rather, it is a function of our language. Wittgenstein’s point is that our foundations for knowledge are not unconditional and absolute, but rather, they are varied and are, ultimately, products of our language.

The passage quoted above, however, would seem to complicate our notion of truth. The complicating issue is whether truth is the “unmoving foundation” of language-games that Wittgenstein refers to, or that thing which can be asserted only by means of language-games as Ellenbogen explains. That is, is language the foundation of truth or is truth the foundation of language? I think Wittgenstein wants to say that we mean different things here. The generalization made above seems to over-simplify the issue. There is the unmoving foundation of language and then there is language used for the purpose of asserting truth. Those things which are the unmoving foundations of our language are accepted as true because, as Wittgenstein explains, we must be content to accept many things (*OC*, 344). Wittgenstein’s point is to show that truth cannot be asserted as something that is unconditionally and unrevisably the case, as G.E. Moore and other epistemologists try to assert. Thus, truth does not lie at the foundation of our language, but rather we accept the rules of our language games as unquestionable or as a starting point for our investigation, in order to be able to have framework

within which it makes sense to regard a certain proposition as true or false – to participate in language-games.

Language-games, for Wittgenstein, are instances in which language is used in a certain way. For example, for the baker a dozen means thirteen. In his bakery he always uses the word ‘dozen’ to mean thirteen. Thus, in the baker’s language-game a dozen means thirteen. For most of us, ‘dozen’ means twelve. Thus, in our everyday language-game a dozen means twelve. In his use of language-games, Wittgenstein allows for both of these two uses be correct assertions of the term ‘dozen’. He does not want to say that there is an essentially true characteristic of ‘dozen’, only that a given use of ‘dozen’ is true based on its success within a given language-game. Thus if a man, who is baker, goes to the store on instructions to buy a dozen tomatoes, it would be incorrect, according to our every-day use of ‘dozen’ for him to buy thirteen tomatoes, even though earlier in the day it was correct for him to make thirteen cookies for an order of a dozen. Language sets the parameters by which we are able to determine the ‘correctness’ of certain propositions within a given language-game.

In his book, *Wittgenstein on the Arbitrariness of Grammar*, Michael Forster further elucidates this distinction. He explains that the language-games and the grammatical principles that serve as rules that govern the language-games are two distinct, but often intermingling, features of Wittgenstein’s account of truth. Forster says,

The role of the grammar of “true-false games” is a special case of the role of the grammar of a language-game in general... Here the main linguistic moves which are regulated by the grammar and made possible by its constitution of their concepts, and whose success or failure is adjudicated by means of a standard set by the grammar, are what Wittgenstein describes as “empirical” or “factual” assertions. Their success is truth and their failure falsehood (Forster, 9).

Forster, in an account similar to Ellenbogen’s, explains that “grammar” is the body of rules that governs the “true-false games” - or the language-games in which truth or falsity is being asserted

- and that it is by these rules of grammar that the truth or falsity of a given proposition can be asserted.

Forster shows that Wittgenstein's "true-false games" can be explained by their two essential features: the factual claims, and the rules that adjudicate those claims. He explains that this characterization of the true-false games is represented in Wittgenstein's river analogy. Forster says, "[Wittgenstein] likens empirical propositions to the waters of a river and grammar to the channel or bed of the river" (10). Thus, like the interplay between the waters of river and the sediments composing the bed of that river, rules of grammar and the subsequent "true-false" assertions are at one time unquestioned, and at the next heavily scrutinized. The only stipulation of this interplay is that all of the rules and assertions cannot be scrutinized at once – this would be participating in a game without rules, achieving nothing.

Wittgenstein presents the river analogy starting with section 94 of *OC*. He says, "I did not get my picture of the world by satisfying myself of its correctness; nor do I have it because I am satisfied of its correctness. No: it is the inherited background against which I distinguish between true and false" (*OC*, 94). That is, his picture of the world is not "true" or "false", "correct" or "incorrect", it is the inherited and unquestioned background by which he is able to use the terms "true" and "false" – it is his grammar or his rules. To question this background would be to question something without having any tools for discerning its validity because those very tools themselves would be questioned.

Wittgenstein then goes on to explain how propositions and rules interact, are established and possibly disestablished. He says, "It might be imagined that some propositions, of the form of empirical propositions, were hardened and functioned as channels for such empirical propositions as were not hardened but fluid; and that this relation altered with time, in that fluid

propositions hardened, and hard ones became fluid” (96). Thus, the grammatical rules, by which we determine the truth or falsity of a given empirical proposition, may themselves be empirical propositions that are, at this moment, not questioned.

For example, we say that that grass is green. The truth or falsity of this empirical proposition is determined by a number of rules like: it is possible to assert the color of grass, we have a concept of the color green, grass appears to have the quality that we associate with the color green, etc. All of these rules could themselves be propositions, but at this moment, in order to assess the validity of the original empirical proposition, we accept the propositions as rules with an unquestioned truth value. The rules are followed and do not undergo examination for truth or falsity. This does not mean that, in some sort of certain or unrevisable way², we are correct to assert that “it is true that grass is green”, only that within this specific true-false language-game, based on accepted rules or criteria, it is correct to make that assertion.

Forster goes on to explain that, though the distinction between empirical propositions and grammatical rules is a bit ambiguous, Wittgenstein readily accepts this ambiguity and maintains that there is a distinction to be made. Forster says, “Wittgenstein is happy to allow that the line between empirical or factual propositions, on the one hand, and grammatical rules, on the other, is not a sharp one, and also that it may shift with time so that principles on one side of the line cross over to the other; but he nonetheless insists that there is such a line to be drawn” (Forster, 10). Wittgenstein has no interest in appealing to a meta-grammatical rule – or rule that transcends any individual language-game – for “true” correctness. He says that he is perfectly content for this interplay between rules and propositions to determine when it is correct for us to assert truth or falsity of given proposition.

² Wittgenstein might even say that the qualifications: ‘unequivocally’, ‘unrevisably’, ‘unconditionally’, make no sense as they seem to imply a notion of truth distinct from the various notions of truth embedded in our language games. I use the words, as Wittgenstein does, to address potential concerns from the interlocutor.

One might argue that there must be some concept of truth beyond grammatical rules and empirical propositions because various propositions that we once held to be true, we now see as false. Wittgenstein needs to be able to account for reality beyond mere linguistic propositions if his method is to have any practical use. One could contend that if our beliefs can at one time be held to be true, and at later time determined to be false, then there must be something that is “true” outside of our current knowledge or our language structures. For example, if there were no people, there would still be mountains (that is, even if people did not exist on earth, we would have every reason to believe that mountains would continue to exist). Thus, if there were no people, it would still be true that there are mountains. Subsequently, if there were no people, it would still be a truth that there are mountains (Ellenbogen, 15-6). This line of logic intends to show that truth exists independent of human construction. If this is the case, then Wittgenstein is wrong to assert that our conception of truth is limited contextual language-games.

Ellenbogen addresses this realist criticism of Wittgenstein in the first part of her book. She says, “The fact that we revise the conditions under which we apply the truth predicate to particular statements does not mean that ‘is true’ applies to what is independent of our current knowledge” (15). Ellenbogen, then, takes on the critics premise that revision of previously held beliefs necessitates a ‘truth’ outside of our current knowledge. She claims that, for Wittgenstein, ‘is true’ is merely a way of asserting a given proposition within a limited language game. Knowledge is continually expanding and, thus, language-games are continually revised. This does not entail a knowledge independent truth, only a truth in terms of revisable grammatical rules. Ellenbogen explains as follows,

Its meaning [The meaning of ‘is true’] which, on a Wittgensteinian view, boils down to its correct use – depends on our normative agreement on how we are to apply it in particular cases. The conditions under which it is correct to predicate “is true” of a sentence depend on our agreement on how the predicate is to be

applied to a particular kind of sentence. They depend on our agreement on what counts as an adequate test of particular kind of statement, that is, of a statement within a particular kind of language game. This means that the predicate 'is true' can only be meaningfully applied to a sentence for which we have some criterion or some convention whereby we predicate 'is true' or 'is false' of it. We cannot give content to calling something true where we have no criterion for determining its truth or falsehood. (15)

Ellenbogen argues that truth is, in every conceivable way, a notion created and limited by human language. It would make no sense to speak of truth in the absence of language in the same way that it would make no sense to speak of sentences in the absence of language. Both 'truth' and 'sentence' are meaningful only inasmuch as they are used to express a certain proposition within a given grammatical structure.

Ellenbogen cites Richard Rorty in responding to the realist's logical outline of a truth independent of humans. He explains that while it is true that the things that we call "mountains" would still exist in the absence of humans, it does not follow that "truth" can exist in the absence of humans. "Truth" is a quality of a given proposition, propositions are functions of language, and language a function of humans, in the absence of humans "truth" has no meaning. Rorty says, "What is 'be true' supposed to mean in a world in which there are no statements to be true nor minds to have true beliefs?" Ellenbogen continues, "According to Rorty, the realist cannot reply to this question without dogmatically presupposing his account of truth" (16). While it makes sense to say that what we call "mountains" will exist in the absence of humans, it does not follow that truth will also exist independent of humans. Mountains are physical structures that we have assigned a certain name, truth is a quality limited entirely to language. If people did not speak, people could still walk up mountains but they could not speak of, or have a notion of "truth".

Wittgenstein's account of truth aims to clarify when it is appropriate for truth to be discussed in philosophy. He provides a method by which truth can be asserted in terms of the success of an empirical proposition in a given "true-false game" governed by grammatical rules. Truth, then, is not the metaphysical Platonic Form but is a grammatical concept that functions as a means to adjudicate true-false games. It asserts when a given proposition has satisfied agreed upon criterion. Unlike many philosophers before him, Wittgenstein does not appeal to any sort implicit or explicit Form of truth, but claims that what can be truthfully asserted lies within individual language-games.

Thus, Nietzsche illuminates a problem in traditional philosophical truth claims. He says that, traditionally, knowledge has been thought to be objective or "presuppositionless". He calls for a reassessment of what can be known and what can be asserted as "true". Nietzsche claims that a new notion of truth should arise and from that a new method for determining truth should follow. This method should be life-affirming and should recognize the limitations that previous philosophical accounts have not. The account and method that Wittgenstein presents in *On Certainty* and in *Philosophical Investigations*, which I have explained above, seems to satisfy Nietzsche's demands. Wittgenstein's method observes the limitations of knowledge and truth that Nietzsche illuminates, but goes beyond Nietzsche's account (and Clark's interpretation of Nietzsche's account) to actually present a method by which truth can be asserted and assessed.

V. Possible Inconsistencies Regarding Relativism

Nietzsche takes an anti-relativist position in asserting that "not just man is the measure of things" (*BGE*, 3), which I take to mean that truth is not just relative to the individual – some accounts are better than others. In order to show that Wittgenstein's method is an appropriate

solution to Nietzsche's truth problem, I need to show that the two philosophers have compatible accounts of how to address competing perspectives. Specifically, I will address how Wittgenstein confronts competing perspectives without dogmatically presupposing that his account is correct. Wittgenstein needs to go beyond Clark's interpretation of Nietzsche which asserts that truth is based on contextual affirmations. He needs to show that, at least in some cases, there are non-dogmatic criteria for asserting truth. I explain that he provides several ways for handling apparent disagreements. In some cases there is a definitive set of criteria to which the competing empirical propositions can refer, in other cases no such criteria has been established and, thus, we must accept that some competing views may not be resolved. In offering criteria for adjudicating competing claims, however, Wittgenstein offers a more developed method for assessing truth claims than Nietzsche does in claiming that "not just man is the measure of things."

Wittgenstein addresses the issue of competing worldviews in section 92 of *OC*. He sets up a scenario between Moore and a king. The king has been told all of his life that the world began when he was born and, up until this point, he has had no serious reason to doubt this conviction. Wittgenstein says that if Moore and the king were to meet and discuss their worldviews, it would be possible for Moore to convert the king to his own worldview – say, by showing books of science and history. Wittgenstein says, "I do not say that Moore could not convert the king to his view, but it would be a conversion of a special kind; the king would be brought to look at the world in a different way" (*OC*, 92). Thus, in the case of competing worldviews, one could potentially convert another to accept his worldview, but Wittgenstein does not say that this *must* be possible – only that it *could* be possible.

Wittgenstein, then, offers us several alternatives for dealing with two persons of competing views. It is possible that the two are working within the same worldview and the same language-game, and one or both is merely mistaken. In this case the two would have the same notions but one or both would have mistaken a certain fact and would, thereby, incorrectly assert a certain proposition. For example David could assert that Duke won the basketball game last night, while Lee asserts that Baylor won the game. In the end David misread the score in the newspaper, and, thus, the disagreement was merely a feature of a mistaken assertion within a shared language-game and worldview.

It is also possible that two people are merely working within different language-games but have generally the same worldview. For example, the baker is on the phone with his wife and claims that he is bringing home a dozen cookies. When he gets home the baker's wife says that he said he was bringing home 12 (because she is working with the everyday use of "dozen") cookies when actually he brought 13. The baker asserts that he always said he was going to bring home 13. The confusion and subsequent disagreement is between language games but the basic worldview of both the baker and his wife is the same. The baker can be correct to assert that 13 is a dozen in his context and the wife correct to assert that 12 is a dozen in her context.

The last potential case of competing views is that explained in the example with Moore and the King. They are working within different worldviews, and while it is possible for one to convert the other, Wittgenstein does not say that one is necessarily *more* correct than the other. He only says that they maintain worldviews so distinct that their competing perspectives might be irreconcilable. Thus, Wittgenstein provides several potential alternatives to solve problems of apparently competing truth claims, but he does not say that two competing perspectives can necessarily be reconciled.

Wittgenstein does not assert that “man is the measure of things” but he also does not say that “man is not the measure of things”. He does give ways for resolving issues arising from competing philosophical perspectives, but, ultimately, he does not say that they must be able to be resolved. Similarly, He does not assert that his worldview (or any worldview) must be accepted by everyone. If he were to assert either of these things, he would need to appeal to something beyond basic grammatical rules for asserting truth. For example, to say that it is true that all truth is relative to the individual, would be to generalize truth to the extent that each individual “true-false game” would be governed by a single principle that supersedes all individual grammatical rules, rather than a nest of inherited beliefs. There are certain instances when truth is not relative to the individual, like the basketball game example. But there are also instances in which truth can be relative to the individual, like in the case that Moore not be able to convert the king to see things differently.

Nietzsche’s anti-relativism, at least implicitly, relies on a platonic conception of truth – a conception he wants to reject. It is reasonable to suggest that in most instances of our shared language-games, there is a criterion of authority to consult – that is, shared normative agreement. But Nietzsche cannot say that all truth claims are governed by a criterion of authority beyond the scope of language – this would be assuming that there is a transcendent and presuppositionless feature of truth beyond normative agreement. This inconsistency in the two philosophies merely illustrates Wittgenstein’s substantial development of Nietzsche’s original concept of non-dogmatic truth. Ultimately, there is a sense in which man is the measure of things (because man, not Platonic Form, determines truth in language games) but there is also a sense in which man is

not the measure of thing (criteria rather than individuals determine the success or failure of a language game).³

VI. Conclusion

At the end of *GMIII*, Nietzsche claims that a proper account of truth should be life-affirming (in not relying on a metaphysical or Platonic thing-in-itself) and should recognize the limitations of knowledge (that it cannot be “presuppositionless”). Wittgenstein’s method neither relies on a metaphysical truth, nor steps beyond the limits of knowledge as set by our language. Wittgenstein’s account of truth is both complex and rigorous and seems to satisfy all of the elements of Nietzsche’s account of the truth problem. He offers a method or a framework for determining truth that is governed by accepted and inherited linguistic criteria. He argues that those propositions that Nietzsche found problematic are products of a generalization of the concept of truth, which is only properly exercised within the limits of “true-false games”.

After Clark’s detailed analysis of Nietzsche’s account of truth, Nietzsche is left without a method for determining truth and, thus, without a justification for his truth claims. I argued that Clark’s mistake was trying to present a single coherent account of Nietzsche’s view, and that his account is best understood as a question – meant to initiate discussion not posit the final word. Wittgenstein provides a method that solves Nietzsche’s account, with his language-games and true-false games. I have argued that, based on my own interpretation of Nietzsche’s account of the truth problem, Wittgenstein’s method serves to fulfill all of the missing elements in Nietzsche’s account, without undermining the basic sentiment of Nietzsche’s philosophy.

³ One also might argue that Wittgenstein’s limiting truth-criteria would ultimately lead to what Nietzsche rejects in the “herd mentality”. That is, if everyone recognizes linguistic limitations, wouldn’t this promote a universalized mediocrity? While this issue is not one I address directly in the paper, I think the simple answer is that what Nietzsche objects to in the herd mentality is that it is life-denying. Christianity, in Nietzsche’s view, promotes a mentality that denies this life by relying on a more real “Truth” beyond this world. As I explained earlier, Wittgenstein’s method does not entail life-denial and so is not classified under Nietzsche’s basic objection to the herd mentality.

It is likely that with these amendments, Nietzsche's philosophy would take a slightly different path, but Wittgenstein's method does not overtly reject any specific feature of Nietzsche's philosophy. Wittgenstein is neither relativist nor non-relativist in the sense that making such a claim would entail appeal to criterion outside of any individual language game, but rather than showing a rejection of Nietzsche's philosophy, this represents a development of Nietzsche basic sense that our notion of truth needs stricter limitations.

Ultimately, it must be recognized that Wittgenstein and Nietzsche undertook many distinct projects in their philosophical practices, but both philosophies share a fundamental concern for an honest and non-dogmatic account of truth and knowledge. Wittgenstein's method serves to answer the questions that Nietzsche's genealogy earnestly uncovered.

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