We return to Joyce and an irony directed at religious belief that is, nevertheless, not satire. Finally, beliefs about heaven and hell are rooted in the moral world within. Nietzsche's perspectivism is relevant to that. Our image of heaven and hell is finally an image of how we judge ourselves.

The impact of Nietzsche's engagement with the Greek skeptics has never been systematically explored in a book-length work—an inattention that belies the interpretive weight Nietzsche scholars otherwise attribute to his early career as a professor of classical philology and to the fascination with Greek literature and culture that persisted throughout his productive academic life. This book brings together and expands on previously published work on Nietzsche and the Greek skeptics to fill this gap in the literature on Nietzsche by demonstrating how an understanding of ancient skepticism—the Pyrrhonian tradition in particular—promises to illuminate Nietzsche's own reflections on truth, knowledge, and ultimately, the nature and value of philosophic inquiry. It also presents an entirely new reading of Nietzsche's epistemological and ethical views, one that promises to make sense out of some of his most perplexing remarks on these topics. The reading of Nietzsche's work developed here helps to make clear and render coherent his provocative but often opaque remarks on the topics of truth and knowledge and to
grant us further insight into his ethics, since the Greek skeptics, like Nietzsche, take up the position they do as a means of promoting well-being and psychological health. In addition, it allows us to recover a portrait of Nietzsche as a philologist and philosophical psychologist that has been too often obscured by commentaries on his thought.

Standing Problems
Andrew Vincent
in The Nature of Political Theory
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Item type: chapter

The core argument in this chapter is that conventionalist argument, if pursued, is profoundly reductionist. Radical conventionalism can mutate into the thesis of perspectivism. In this scenario, conventionalism links up with the intellectual movements of postmodernism and poststructuralism. The committed postmodern or poststructural critic aims to search out foundationalism in all the remote and hidden corners of political theory. The chapter examines the diverse contributions of Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, William Connolly, Richard Rorty, and Jean-François Lyotard to political theory.

Conclusion
DUNCAN LARGE
in Nietzsche and Proust: A Comparative Study
Published in print: 2001 Published Online: January 2010
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Item type: chapter

This book has argued that Marcel Proust's philosophy of perspectivism finds its most appropriate expression in fiction. It is no surprise that Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophy should have been, and should continue to be, a potent force in spurring the literary creativity of novelists, poets, and dramatists since his time. Proust was certainly no Nietzschean in this sense, but perhaps this book, by setting up its own dialogue between the two writers, will have established that a comparative reading of Nietzsche and Proust can be more productive than either might themselves have conceded.
This book presents a full commentary on Nietzsche's On the Genealogy of Morality and combines close reading of key passages with an overview of Nietzsche's wider aims. It argues that Nietzsche's practice of genealogy pursues psychological and historical truths concerning the origins of modern moral values, but also emphasizes the significance of his rhetorical methods as an instrument of persuasion. Nietzsche's outlook is broadly one of naturalism, but he is critical of typical scientific and philosophical methods for their advocacy of impersonality and suppression of the affects. Nietzsche's principal opponents are Schopenhauer and Paul Rée, both of whom account for morality in terms of selflessness. Nietzsche believes that our allegiance to a post-Christian morality that centres around selflessness, compassion, guilt, and denial of the instincts is not primarily rational but affective: underlying feelings, often ambivalent and poorly grasped in conscious thought, explain our moral beliefs. The Genealogy is designed to detach the reader from his or her allegiance to morality and prepare for the possibility of new values. According to Nietzsche's 'perspectivism', this book argues that one can best understand a topic such as morality through allowing as many of one's feelings as possible to speak about it. And Nietzsche's further aim is to enable us to 'feel differently': to this end his provocation of the reader's affects both helps us grasp the affective origins of our attitudes and prepares the way for healthier values such as the affirmation of life and the self-satisfaction to be attained by 'giving style to one's character'.

Perspectival Knowing and the Affects

Christopher Janaway

in Beyond Selflessness: Reading Nietzsche's Genealogy
perspectives for Nietzsche means multiplying the number of affects one feels towards a subject matter: this, he suggests, enables and enhances knowledge of it. Nietzsche's own procedure of understanding morality via an exploration of various moral feelings is taken as a case in point. The multiplicity of perspectives arises from Nietzsche's radical conception of the self as a collection of drives. The chapter explores whether this conception of the self is sufficient for a conception of knowledge, and whether Nietzsche should require the self to be more of a unified agent in order for his notion of having one's affects ‘in one's power’ and ‘shifting them in out’ to be intelligible.

**Humanity between gods and beasts?**

G. E. R. Lloyd

in *Being, Humanity, and Understanding*


Wherein lies the humanity of human beings? Many conflicting answers have been given in ancient and in modern times, with many focussing on what differentiates humans from gods and beasts. This chapter reviews a wide range of suggestions, from some of those of ancient Greeks, ancient Chinese, and Christians, to recent anthropological studies, notably Viveiros de Castro’s perspectivism and Descola’s four-fold classification of ontologies based on differing conceptions of physicality and interiority. This great variety of views certainly challenges many of our usual preconceptions, but should not lead us to a conclusion that we inhabit mutually unintelligible worlds. Rather they offer resources for exploring the substantive questions of how humans, with a rich talent for investigation and speculation, have understood the world and one another. That sets the agenda for the studies that follow.

**Perspectivism and Ephexesis in Interpretation**

Jessica N. Berry

in *Nietzsche and the Ancient Skeptical Tradition*


This chapter presents a careful exegesis of Genealogy 3: 12, the famous passage in which Nietzsche declares that there is “only a perspectival
seeing, only a perspectival “knowing,” in order to illuminate the parallels between this idea and some stock arguments—the so-called “Modes” of skepticism—used by Pyrrhonists to motivate suspension of judgment. This exegesis is set against a history of rival interpretations, all of which commit Nietzsche to more, and to more ambitious, metaphysical or epistemological theses than his texts can support. Finally, the argument of this chapter aims to expose the asceticism of our attachment to epistemic “objectivity” and to illuminate Nietzsche's own attempts to combat this asceticism by motivating suspension of judgment himself by means of skeptical equipollence.

Autonomy, Affect, and the Self in Nietzsche's Project of Genealogy
Christopher Janaway

in Nietzsche on Freedom and Autonomy

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Item type: chapter

The chapter focuses on two areas of Nietzsche's mature philosophy: his perspectivism and his treatment of free will and autonomy. It argues that the notion of ‘perspectival knowing’ put forward in Genealogy of Morality III,12 should be understood as tightly linked with a notion of interpretation achieved through the feeling of multiple affects. Nietzsche's own project of understanding morality in Genealogy, undertaken with a rhetorical technique that highlights and provokes the affects, provides a good example of such ‘perspectival knowing’; but this raises difficult questions about the nature of the self. Nietzsche seeks to dissolve the self into a mere structure of drives and affects; the latter, rather than any unitary ‘subject’, being the sole locus of interpretations. Yet the notions of ‘controlling’ one's affects and ‘shifting them in and out’, which are requisite for ‘perspectival knowing’, suggest that Nietzsche must after all accept a relatively unified and autonomous self. Nietzsche rejects a radical metaphysical conception of free will and autonomy, but in his mature works he is more concerned with the psychological origins of such beliefs, and less concerned to argue that no kind of freedom exists. There is also evidence of a positive conception of free will, associated with his conception of the ‘sovereign individual’, which embraces a kind of wholeness of character, acceptance of what constitutes and constrains oneself as an individual, and a creation of one's own values. It is argued that Nietzsche's prominent notion of a revaluation of values presupposes a self capable of self-knowledge and possessing the autonomy to align itself with alternative sets of values as
opposed to those it has unthinkingly inherited from the tradition of post-Christian morality.

The Perspectivity of History
Dray William H.

in History as Re-Enactment: R. G. Collingwood's Idea of History
Published in print: 1999 Published Online: October 2011

This chapter examines some other things which R. G. Collingwood had to say which have at times been interpreted as denying the objectivity of history. These include his claim that historians' conclusions are necessarily expressions of their own points of view, that what history offers is thus a view of the past from a present perspective, and that it can therefore be expected to be continually rewritten. His views on the nature of narrative in history are also considered. It is argued that nothing which Collingwood says about history being relative to a point of view justifies describing him as a sceptic. However, taking historical relativism to mean that the knowledge claimed by historians is conditioned by their points of view, Collingwood appeared to be an historical relativist. Collingwood's perspectivism often takes the more specific form of maintaining that what historians offer is accounts of the past from a present point of view. This chapter also discusses retrospective historical understanding, as well as presentism, retrospectivity, reality, and anachronism in Collingwood's theory of re-enactment.

Nietzsche's System
John Richardson

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My overall project is to show that Nietzsche's ideas do cohere into a philosophical system comparable to his predecessors’ – despite his own strong attacks on the system, and on these predecessors. This system centers around his view of the world as will to power. I work to make this notion conceptually precise, and to show how it extends into his wealth of other thoughts, including his analysis of the basic types of persons and societies, his insistence that the world is “not being but becoming,” his values of individuality and self-creating, his attacks
on morality, and his critique and affirmation of truth. The claim that
Nietzsche promotes such a systematic view seems inconsistent with
his well-known “perspectivism”; I argue that the latter issues from his
conception of these wills to power as perspectives, and that this source
shows us both the forces and limits of that doctrine.

Nietzsche and Proust
Duncan Large

This book combines a Nietzschean reading of Marcel Proust's novel
À la recherche du temps perdu with a Proustian reading of time
and transcendence in Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophy. Drawing in
particular on Gilles Deleuze's early studies of the two writers, it argues
(against Jacques Derrida and Julia Kristeva) that they pursue a parallel
programme of overcoming post-Kantian idealism through an emphasis
on the materiality of the body and the ‘genealogy’ of its interpretations.
‘Proust's perspectivism’ is analysed in the context of Nietzsche's radical
epistemological relativism, the key themes of involuntary memory and
eternal recurrence are read together as elements in a shared aesthetics
of self-creation, and in conclusion the complex temporalities of Nietzsche
and Proust's ‘untimely’ texts are shown to issue into the problematics of
postmodernity.

All Thoughts Are Equal
John Ó Maoilearca

All Thoughts Are Equal is an introduction to the work of French
philosopher François Laruelle and an experiment in nonhuman thinking.
For Laruelle, standard forms of philosophy continue to dominate our
models of what counts as exemplary thought and knowledge. By
contrast, what Laruelle calls his “non-standard” approach attempts to
bring democracy into thought, because all forms of thinking are equal in
value. Philosophy—the discipline that posits itself as the power to think at
the highest level—does not have a monopoly on reason. Such democracy
clearly has relevance for the nonhuman, too. If non-philosophy hopes
to extend what we mean by thinking beyond the boundaries set by
classical approaches, then such a project has important implications as
regards the existence and value of nonhuman forms of thought. This study strives to see how philosophy might appear when we look at it with non-philosophical and nonhuman eyes. And it does so by refusing to explain Laruelle through orthodox philosophy, opting instead to follow the structure of a film, Lars von Trier’s The Five Obstructions, to introduce the non-standard method. Von Trier’s documentary is a meditation on the creative constraints set by film, both technologically and aesthetically, and how they can push our experience of film, and of ourselves, beyond what is normally deemed “the perfect human.” All Thoughts Are Equal adopts those constraints in its own experiment by showing how Laruelle’s radically new style of philosophy is best introduced using our most nonhuman form of thought, that found in cinema itself.

Praying and Preying
Aparecida Vilaça

Praying and Preying offers one of the rare anthropological monographs on the Christian experience of contemporary Amazonian indigenous peoples, based on an ethnographic study of the relationship between the Wari’, inhabitants of Brazilian Amazonia, and the evangelical missionaries of the New Tribes Mission, which first began in the 1950s. Vilaça turns to a vast range of historical, ethnographic, and mythological material related to both the Wari’ and Christian perspectives, including the New Tribes literature, interviews with New Tribes missionaries, translation practices and translated Christian texts, and the author’s own ethnographic field notes from her more than thirty-year involvement with the Wari’ community. Developing a close dialogue between the Melanesian literature, which informs much of the recent work in the anthropology of Christianity, and the concepts and theories deriving from Amazonian ethnology, in particular the notions of openness to the other, unstable dualism, and perspectivism, the author provides a fine-grained analysis of the equivocations and paradoxes that underlie the translation processes performed by the different agents involved and their implications for the transformation of the native notion of personhood.
Troeltsch and the ‘Cumulative Case’ against Incarnational Christology
Sarah Coakley

in Christ without Absolutes: A Study of the Christology of Ernst Troeltsch
Published in print: 1994 Published Online: October 2011

This chapter evaluates the full range of reasons which compelled Troeltsch to reject incarnational Christology. His arguments against incarnational Christology are somewhat scattered among his theological writings. The discussion arranges his reasons into a ‘cumulative case’. This case is divided into three parts: first, the arguments that spring from Troeltsch's commitment to Historismus; second, the points emerging from his doctrines of God, redemption, and revelation; and third, difficulties arising directly from Christological reflection.

nietzsche ad hominem
Robert C. Solomon

in Living with Nietzsche: What the Great "Immoralist" has to Teach Us
Published in print: 2004 Published Online: January 2005

Nietzsche often employs ad hominem arguments, usually considered fallacies by most philosophers and logic teachers. But I argue that Nietzsche makes good use of these on the grounds that in philosophy, at least, a person’s character is certainly relevant to his or her moral claims and theories. Ad hominem arguments have also bee used against Nietzsche, but I argue that he would have to accept this as proper to his theory of perspectivism and what he explains as the varying perspectives of morality (for example, “slave morality”).

Nietzsche's Moral Perspectivism
Robert C. Solomon

in Living with Nietzsche: What the Great "Immoralist" has to Teach Us
Published in print: 2004 Published Online: January 2005
Nietzsche's moral perspectivism is one of the central and best-known themes of his philosophy. I interpret his genealogical argument in On the Genealogy of Morals as an ad hominem argument, not so much history as moral psychology. In particular, Nietzsche mentions resentment (ressentiment) as a diagnostic tool in moral criticism. But Nietzsche has mixed intentions here. On the one hand, he adopts what I call a “blaming” perspective.” On the other, he urges us to get “beyond judgment.”

Scientific Perspectivism
Ronald N. Giere

Many people assume that the claims of scientists are objective truths. But historians, sociologists, and philosophers of science have long argued that scientific claims reflect the particular historical, cultural, and social context in which those claims were made. The nature of scientific knowledge is not absolute because it is influenced by the practice and perspective of human agents. This book argues that the acts of observing and theorizing are both perspectival, and that this nature makes scientific knowledge contingent, as Thomas Kuhn theorized forty years ago. Using the example of color vision in humans to illustrate how his theory of “perspectivism” works, the author argues that colors do not actually exist in objects; rather, color is the result of an interaction between aspects of the world and the human visual system. He extends this argument into a general interpretation of human perception and, more controversially, to scientific observation, conjecturing that the output of scientific instruments is perspectival. Furthermore, complex scientific principles—such as Maxwell's equations describing the behavior of both the electric and magnetic fields—make no claims about the world, but models based on those principles can be used to make claims about specific aspects of the world. The book offers a solution to the most contentious debate in the philosophy of science over the past thirty years.

Epistemoptics: Proust’s Perspectivism
DUNCAN LARGE

in Nietzsche and Proust: A Comparative Study

Page 10 of 11
This chapter examines Marcel Proust's philosophy of perspectivism and ‘epistemoptics’ and the link it establishes with Friedrich Nietzsche. The first critic to make the move from relativity of perspective to perspectivism was Ernst Robert Curtius, in his groundbreaking study Marcel Proust. Nietzsche's philosophical view regarding the question ‘What is truth?’, which was asked by Pilate in the New Testament, is also discussed, along with his attack on the metaphysics of truth and his critique of language, his perspectivist deconstruction of truth, and Proust's adoption of Nietzsche's epistemological position or rather, his new definition of epistemology itself as a ‘perspective theory of affects’.

Introduction: Nietzsche And Proust? Nietzsche And Proust?
DUNCAN LARGE

in Nietzsche and Proust: A Comparative Study

This book presents a comparative study of German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche and French writer Marcel Proust in order to demonstrate the often striking affinities between two individuals who were in many ways exploring similar problems and developing parallel responses to them in the undoubtedly different, but in their cases overlapping, fields of philosophy and literature. This study explores the more substantial points of philosophical agreement between Proust and Nietzsche which they betray, including their perspectivism and postmodernity. It presents a reading of Nietzsche which attends to the eminently Proustian problematics of involuted temporality and involuntary memory, the experience of transcendence, and the status of ‘essences’.