

# The Future of Nietzsche's Perspectivism as Political Consensus

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## Abstract

*In this paper, I delve on Nietzsche's concept of perspectivism and how it becomes relevant amid contemporary society's openness to relative standpoints. The foremost era that reflects this description points to postmodernism as a politics of difference. Nietzsche's perspectivism is generally a critique of the conditions that absolutize truth. While this may seem a valiant opening for a welcoming era on an epistemological standpoint, it does not however do away with its own paradoxes. I contend whether this fits well with postmodernism and its ironic relationship to truth and asserts further that the conditions for Nietzsche's perspectivism can only achieve its future if it hermeneutically stands as political consensus. Later, I will present the features of this perspectivism as political consensus and how it can be viable in postmodernity.*

Keywords: *Nietzsche, Perspectivism, Paradoxes, Political Consensus, Postmodernism*

## 1.0 Introduction

The *Udana* Buddhist text mentioned a narrative of blind men and an elephant. In the narrative, a king asked the blind men, who were made to hold different body parts of the elephant, to describe what they are holding. And as it should, the men replied in different manners, depending on the tactile objects they were made to hold: the one holding the tail said that it was a rope, the one holding the foot said it was a tree trunk, and so on. The Buddha in the end asserted that different perspectives, which are blind, resort to petty quarrels and disputes. It is important to retell this account since it provides a purview of the

pervading issue of perspectivism in association to the Eastern thought. Yet whether or not Nietzsche's perspectivism was an offshoot from this account is beyond the scope of this paper. Perspectivism's point is that perspectives vary and the different multi-angular facades of an object also give off diverse interpretations. For Nietzsche, this perspectivism is directed against truth, hence allowing diverse interpretations.

From this standpoint, the diversity of interpretations specifically defines the backdrop of postmodernity where Nietzsche is associated with and where difference is prized more than the political dealings of identity by modernity. While it

may serve as blatant permission for the relativity of views in the multiplicities that it allows, postmodernity creates nonetheless a loophole that reverts to its paradoxical misgivings. This setup begs the question whether political consensus can be possible. The term 'political' needs to be clarified: adding to the initial merits of consensus being the general agreement of things, politics here is not the systematized governance ordering the relations of citizenship, public space, and the exercise of rights and civility, but simply the relation itself that sustains the very kernel of dynamism inherent within human or state affairs. This is so that political consensus in this paper is not a subsequent particularization to political science *per se* – that it applies to a particular country or that the idea becomes limited as a policy-prescribing act capable of providing a panacea, albeit it hints the possibilities of an idea to contextualization – but owes its birthright as a philosophical venture when it asks the right questions as critique of the problems at hand and further opens possibilities for viability. With the prospect of relativism, the significance of the study points to political consensus here as putting together the element of dynamism in the constant project of agreements and continuous agreements within relations in general. As scope and limitation of this paper, it does not yet particularly point to, although it recommends, consensus theories or projects of decision-making in legislations as for example in "Consensus" by Gianfranco Pasquino (2016) or the further explorations of Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951), Jürgen Habermas (1929–), and Richard Rorty (1931-2007) to promote the public consensus theory of truth that decides on a rational discourse of a community but is insufficient to be leveled

as a criterion for truth since the *biases* of subjectivity paradoxically stand in opposition to objectivity (Ashley, 2009). The only question here is: how can this paper contend that the conditions for Nietzsche's perspectivism can sustain the paradoxes of postmodernity as precisely this political consensus?

## 2.0 Objective

In this research, I aim to: 1) explore Friedrich Nietzsche's concept of perspectivism, its perspectives and paradoxes, thereby relating to Nietzsche's thinking in general; 2) situate the concept in its supposed future that is postmodernity; and in order to contribute to the existing literature on Nietzsche's perspectivism 3) present his perspectivism by construing it as political consensus paradoxically amid postmodernity's relative standpoints.

## 3.0 Methodology

I will make use of a research design according to analysis. I will attempt to isolate and identify elements of the research and interpret them according to an accepted criterion for content analysis. In particular, this criterion corresponds to Author-based Analysis, specifically Manheim's Sociological Method of Interpretation where the author's concept and the author's type of thinking is analyzed. In applying this method, I put Nietzsche's text *as is* and then analyze Nietzsche's concept of perspectivism by delving further on its perspectives and paradoxes. Then, to avoid relativistic detours from Manheim's warning, I will propose and focus on political consensus as

the hermeneutical rejoinder to sustain the paradoxes of perspectivism in postmodernity.

#### 4.0 Result and Discussion

##### Nietzsche's Perspectivism as Critique of Truth

That interpretations, following from the early Eastern account above, come from the sense-object that produces appearances or thought-appearances (e.g. rope, tree trunk), Nietzsche (1997b) remarks that such interpretations are all there is: he calls it the Apollonian sparks (1927) or for Deleuze (1994), the 'image of thought'. These interpretations however are not to be taken as facts. The image of thought differs itself from a concept, which is factual in character (Nietzsche, 1997b). As Nietzsche says in *The Will to Power* (1968): "Facts are precisely what there is not; only interpretations."

Kauffman's translation of *The Gay Science* fundamentally points to the author's underpinnings of perspectivism in the aphorism of the new infinite:

*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 other hand, all existence is not essentially actively engaged in interpretation . . . Rather has the world become "infinite" for us all over again, inasmuch as we cannot reject the possibility*

that it may include *infinite interpretations* (Nietzsche, 1974; Italics mine).

In the same passage, the equation is made clear between interpretations and perspectives: 'in the course of this analysis the human intellect cannot avoid seeing itself in its *own perspectives, and only these* (Nietzsche, 1974).' In its elementary point, perspectivism 'is the view that any claim to knowledge is bound to the perspective formed by the contingent interests of the knower' (Reginster, 2001). The assertion to withhold interpretations as truths would be to betray its connection to appearances which are charming and interesting only *contingently* to the knower. To petrify such interpretations would also solidify the movement of the appearances. For Nietzsche, appearance as the boundary of life is conscious, always dancing and moving:

*The consciousness of appearance – Appearance is for me that which is effective and living itself, that which goes so far in its own self-mockery that it makes me feel that here there is appearance and will-o'-the-wisp and a dance of spirits and nothing more – that amidst all these dreamers, I too, the 'knower', am dancing my dance; that the knower is a means of prolonging the earthly dance and to that end belongs to the festive spirits of existence; and that the sublime consistency and interrelatedness of all*

knowledge perhaps is and will be the highest means of *maintaining* the commonality of dreaming and the mutual understanding of all these dreamers and therewith *the continuation of dream* (Nietzsche, 1974).

The Apollonian dream as the *appearance of appearances*, a mirror of reality (Nietzsche, 1927), creates the continual movement of nature's impulse in that character of the dream which utters 'dream on!' The sense experience, the plane of experiences, the world of matter, the world of the phenomenon, that element of becoming which for the most part philosophers of the Western tradition since Plato has undermined, are precisely what Nietzsche favors more than the world of transcendence. For Nietzsche, we are entitled for the Metaphysics of becoming and would even go forward as to betray the name and present it as ontology: 'Reality is Parmenidean Being for Heidegger, but Heraclitean becoming for Nietzsche' (Der Luft, 1984).

Existence as *our* life only truly exists in, to use Deleuze's term, *the plane of immanence*. When this immanence is interpreted into *isms* that assume the character of dogma and thereby suspending the movement of the appearances within it, the effect is a life that is singly and statically determined. To put it in broad strokes, Metaphysics, Ethics, Epistemology, and even Politics are only interpretations which appear in a systematized manner, in ideologizing patterns, claiming their own objective stands or truths. In their standing, Kantian elements can be found in Nietzsche, especially in the take that the

phenomenon or world of appearances conditions the 'true to the world of the *noumena*' but to accept it easily would make Nietzsche non-innovative (Gemes, 1992). It has to be clarified that while Kant (1997) asserts that 'our inquiry here, extends not to things in themselves, but to things as objects of possible experience,' Nietzsche further says that *there is no thing-in-itself*. He warns in the *Genealogy of Morals* (Nietzsche, 1996b): 'my dear philosophers, let us be on guard against the dangerous old conceptual fiction that posited a 'pure, will-less, painless, timeless knowing subject'; let us guard against the snares of such contradictory concepts as 'pure reason,' 'absolute spirituality,' 'knowledge-in-itself' (Nietzsche, 1996b).' Diverting the focus from the noumena to the phenomena, objectivity contingently depends on one's unique experience (Schenck, 1985).

Nietzsche's perspectivism is hostile to the conventional understanding of *truth*. What does this imply? His critique of truth pertains firstly to truth's falseness of value when he says in *Beyond Good and Evil* that 'the falseness of a judgment is for us not necessarily an objection to a judgment' (Nietzsche, 1997a). Secondly, because it is already false, the desirability of truth becomes derisive. Nietzsche says in the *Gay Science*: 'no this is bad taste, this will to truth, to *truth at any price*, this youthful madness in the love of truth – have lost their charm for us (Nietzsche, 1974).' And since falseness and desirability are no longer the bases for its adherence, he regards the extermination of its existence in *The Will to Power*: 'There exists neither *spirit*, nor reason, nor thinking, nor consciousness, nor soul, nor will, nor truth (Nietzsche, 1968).' After which, that is, in

abolishing the existence of an Absolute Truth he proposes the extreme contrary:

A powerful seduction fights on our behalf, the most powerful that there has ever been – the seduction of truth – “Truth?” Who has forced this word on me? But I repudiate it; but I disdain this proud word: no, we do not need even this: we shall conquer and come to power even without truth. The spell that fights on our behalf, the eye of Venus that charms and blinds even our opponents, is *the magic of the extreme*, the seduction that everything extreme exercises: we immoralists – we are the most extreme (Nietzsche, 1968).

The eye of Venus blinds those who believe in those things external to *this* world, because ‘belief, however necessary it may be for the preservation of the species, has *nothing to do with truth* (Nietzsche, 1968).’ Nietzsche is more drawn towards the seduction of another extreme rather than truth that is only an error valuing itself in vain. The name of this extreme is *untruth*.

Nietzsche does not claim to understand the whole of nature or reality as it is. His Dionysian lens can only embrace it, not comprehend it fully. Reginster (2006) opines that the figure of Dionysus symbolizes the affirmation of life. Merleau-Ponty (1963) too refuses to think of a world that is altogether knowable. The multi-angular facades of a cube cannot be known holistically and is limited only to one perspective since the world is ungraspable

as a whole to the mind. Because the world cannot be known as it is, Merleau-Ponty states the significance of perspectivism (in reference to Nietzsche):

this “perspectivism” of perception is not an indifferent fact, since without it the two subjects would not be aware of perceiving an existent cube subsisting beyond the sensible contents. If all the sides of the cube could be known at once, I would no longer be dealing with a thing which offers itself for inspection little by little, but with an idea which my mind would truly possess (1963).

Perspectivism offers a rejection of the absolutizing conditions of truth and rejects even the notion of truth – this is its primary meaning. Nietzsche is direct when he claims in *Human All Too Human* that ‘there are *no eternal facts*, nor are there any absolute truths (Nietzsche, 1996a).’ This view however is still governed not only by many perspectives but also paradoxes.

### **Perspectives on Perspectivism**

Hudgens (2007) devotes her opus to perspectivism’s perspectives while she puts forward the concept that perspectivism is an *omniperspectival seeing*, an idea coined by Clark (1990), which implies seeing all perspectives as opposed to non-perspectival seeing or God’s view that is unconditional and ungrounded knowledge. Omniperspectival seeing is supported by Clark’s own translation of Nietzsche’s *Genealogy of Morals*:

There is only a perspectival seeing, only a perspectival “knowing”; and the more affects we allow to speak about a thing [...] the more complete will be our ‘concept’ of the thing, our ‘objectivity’ (Nietzsche, 1998).

Anderson (1998) orates that because the uniqueness of truth becomes absent to measure our beliefs, we are drawn more easily to alternatives and different perspectives. Hudgens brands this as *pluralist internal coherentism*. That is to say, plurality arises when objectivity is attacked.

Crox’s (1999) perspectivism, in another, states that because Nietzsche rejects ‘God’s eye view,’ we can now conceive of knowledge and reality in a holistic view and thereby can be classified as a *Naturalist, Holist, Anti-foundationalist Theory of Knowledge*. Crox here acknowledges a kind of knowing that directly touches the conditions of nature rather than a dogmatic perspective that universally reifies reality.

Wilcox (1974) is explicit in his perspectivism as *rejection of the Thing-in-itself* when he reckoned that Nietzsche’s thinking proceeds from the unknowability of Kant’s position of thing-in-itself, to doubting the thing-in-itself, and conclusively to reject the thing-in-itself as a contradiction.

Leiter’s (1994) perspectivism is called *Distorted, Inexhaustible and Plural Source of Knowledge* by Hudgens when Leiter claims that there has to be no facts because those cannot be known directly and further since we can only know variedly as interpreting knowers. Hudgens (2007)

goes on further to say that Leiter’s pluralism sits well with Anderson’s pluralism and Cox’s holism. She rejects however, in particular, Clark’s perspectivism as *Minimal Correspondence Realism* because it still presupposes a necessity for understanding truth as independent of our cognitive interests and therefore assumes a dichotomy of real world and true world. Nietzsche (1968, 1997b) reminds that ‘[the world] is a mere fiction, constructed of fictitious entities.’ Hales and Welshon (1994) relevantly noticed that even if truth happens in moments of correspondence, it still cannot guarantee that such correspondence can be called a thing-in-itself, or ‘real’ world.

### Paradoxes of Perspectivism

The above perceptions of perspectivism are basically interpretations of the primary meaning of perspectivism as a critique of truth. Underlying such foundations however lies, as Reginster (2001) calls it, a *self-referential paradox*, that is: ‘if every view is irretrievably bound to a perspective, how could Nietzsche advocate views in ethics and metaphysics, and indeed how he could consistently advocate perspectivism itself?’ Or as Clark (1990) restates, ‘how can a philosopher make any claims at all which are valid outside his personal perspective?’ In other words, what this paradox basically says is: Is Nietzsche’s contradiction to truth in itself truth?

The paradox becomes more complicated when lastly, as a contribution and conclusion to her opus, Hudgens (2007) proposed her own interpretations of Nietzsche’s perspectivism as *coherence of knowledge* and *constructivism of Truth*. She says that ‘I will define ‘knowledge coherentism’ as *internal coherence* within a

*system of knowledge* or accepted ‘truths,’ where coherence is defined as logical consistency (Hudgens, p. 45).’ By the looks of it, Hudgens seems to contradict Nietzsche’s mistrust for systems when he says ‘I mistrust all systematizers. The will to a system is a lack of integrity (Nietzsche, 1997b).’ Her constructivist truth on the other hand rests on the claim that *intersubjectivity* can create truth by perception or interpretation and then comparing it to another’s perception or interpretation through *discourse* (Hudgens, p. 47). But this claim also creates a paradox that if there is still truth created in intersubjectivity, then this perspective denies perspectivism as critique of truth itself.

Other than self-referential paradox, this paper also adds by coining the *Exupéryan paradox*, or the paradox of the *Little Prince* (De Saint-Exupéry, 1943). This furthers the notion of perspectivism in the account of the blind men, only that, the *elephant was eaten by a boa constrictor*. In the short novel, the narrator and at the same time author of the story as a little kid finds it hard for grown-ups to understand that his drawing was actually an elephant inside a boa constrictor, which externally appears like a hat. Most people would thereby suggest that the drawing *is* a hat, and that makes truth as intersubjectivity questionable when those who perceive the object only presupposes the object as an appearance – it never looks at the underlying object intended by the presenter, which in this case is the elephant inside a boa. However, the real Exupéryan paradox lies not in visual or epistemological enterprise: not in the seeing and not in the knowing, but in the *sensing*. The knowers in the paradox are blind men. Their only test for truth lies in their affectivity – in tactile

sensing. This means that the blind men, though in position of withholding different body parts of the elephant, might fully assume upon touching the external boa skin that it is a boa. But the man on top and those other blind men who felt that there is something huge inside would utter that the object really was an elephant inside a boa constrictor. Here lies then the idiosyncrasy and esoterism of Nietzsche. He challenges his readers to dig deep, and those few who have found the truth, that is, those who have perceived what Nietzsche’s perspective is, must share it to others. For he wishes for his readers to read him well (Nietzsche, 1982) and ‘speak more and more precisely, demanding greater and greater precision... this alone is fitting for a philosopher (Nietzsche, 1996b).’ In short, the Exupéryan paradox caters to the idea that even if Nietzsche disdains the conditions that absolutize truth, he nonetheless forwards this as a challenge without succumbing to the pitfalls of absolutizing.

### **The Possibility for Consensus**

While the perspectives and paradoxes of perspectivism suggest an improbability in the conception of notions and truths, the crucial midpoint discussion is to find a possibility for *consensus*. In embracing the perspectives and going over the paradoxes, there opens a demanding rejoinder that can be found in *The Antichrist* when Nietzsche says,

Truth has had to be fought for every step of the way, almost everything else dear to our hearts, on which our love and our trust in life depend, has had to be sacrificed to it, Greatness of



soul is needed for it: the service of truth is the hardest service (Nietzsche, 1976).

In this war for truth, the foremost solution to the self-referential paradox and Exupéryan paradox that seems to betray Nietzsche's writings against truth is the *perspectivist solution*. Accordingly, perspectivism is a license that Nietzsche utilizes consistently stating his views as *his own*. The challenge is to accept Nietzsche's paradoxes and reveal one's own created thoughts in the process. He says: 'Lured by my style and tendency, you follow and come after me? Follow your own self faithfully – take time – and thus you follow me (Nietzsche, 1974).' Accepting the paradoxes then means that if the individual follows his own path, he paradoxically heeds to Nietzsche's words as an initial ground for consensus. Nietzsche presents his perspectivism 'in a highly idiosyncratic variety of styles... to remind his readers that his views do not represent some objective truth, but *only his own perspective*' (Reginster, 2006). As James Conant puts it,

Nietzsche first worries about what it would mean to try to take this conclusion seriously, then becomes increasingly suspicious of the route via which he earlier allowed himself to reach it, and, finally, becomes centrally concerned to expose and criticize both it and the tacit opposition between the subjective (or affective) and the objective (or knowledge-involving) that he comes to diagnose as its

crucial presupposition (Conant, 2005).

This is possible when it will be conceived that Nietzsche's thoughts are not separated from his person as an *ad hominem* reference (Solomon, 1996) and this is done by reading him well (Nietzsche, 1976, p. 657ff). Conant adds to his first article and argues further that 'Nietzsche's rejection of certain metaphysical conceptions of truth is not a rejection of the ideal of truthfulness as such, but rather only of certain untruthful understandings wherein truthfulness must consist – what it requires, what it can guarantee, and where it may lead (Conant, 2006).' Meaning to say, that Nietzsche only attacks the conditions that absolutize truth and not replace the core or absolute truth. Olson moreover critically points out that 'one, however, ought to look at Nietzsche's philosophical *truths* not in a metaphysical manner but as, when taken collectively, the best way to live one's life in the absence of an absolute truth (Olson, 2001).'

The possibility of consensus then opens at the moment when the presentation of truth becomes not a rejection of any sort of presentation but precisely when it is offered merely as a presentation. The true paradox is not that we cannot say things seriously when we mean them seriously, but that we can mean things seriously without appearing too seriously to the point of imposition or proselytizing. In this manner, Nietzsche's Zarathustrian doctrines of *Eternal Recurrence*, *Will to Power* and *the Superman* are best interpreted not as grand philosophical theses but as attitudes toward life. These are the very doctrines that Nietzsche wants to see as attitudes of the *future* that points to, as Heidegger coins



and as Abulad (2004) theologizes the *here-and-now* or *already at hand*, the consciousness that sweeps in the contemporary skins as *postmodernism*.

### **The Future of Perspectivism:**

#### ***Postmodernity and Political Consensus***

Hornedo (2001) clarifies that *postmodernity* is the era (c. 1960's) and *postmodernism* is the consciousness, and that postmodernity, as the future that Nietzsche envisions, is the *Condition of the Present*. As such, it is necessary to take a prelude from modernity.

Modernity in philosophy is the era that transformed truth into meaning (Tassi, 1986). *Meaning* is a criterion that man ascribed to his worldview via his rationality. *Truth* is well explicated in the pre-modern era, or in medieval times, when the scholastics personified it as God and the idea of God. This is observable through the writings, arts, and political regimes of that time since that was the core consciousness or, to use Foucault's term, the *episteme* of that age. It is vital to start with this term since it also covers the discussion of political consensus-building, that is to say, the conditional grounding in the heart of relations in the form of discursive regularities. Foucault, as a Nietzschean, is essential since he had 'the advantage of seeing what the twentieth century had brought (O'Leary, 2002).' He says,

The *episteme* refers to the total set of relations that unite, at a given period, the discursive practices that give rise to epistemological figures, sciences, and possibly formalized systems. The *episteme* is neither a form of knowledge nor a

type of rationality which, crossing the boundaries of the most varied sciences, manifests the sovereign unity of a subject, a spirit, or a period. It is the totality of relations that can be discovered for a given period, between the sciences when one analyzes them at the level of *discursive regularities* (Foucault, 1972).

As an impulse to meaning, modernity transforms truth that takes into account the totality of relations into a highly subjectivized rationality, which promotes and exaggerates an established *ego* of meaning. Modernism is 'grounded on the rationalism and epistemologic realism of the *Enlightenment* (Hornedo, p. 103).' This means that this era is *Anthropocentric* since the scientific analyses and regulations had set forth a purely objectified-man-made knowledge system that in turn offered humanity a new meaning, but a meaning which is ironically less meaningful and egoistic in character. Charles Chaput echoes what Frank Sheed observes in the advent of science in modernity,

It's incredible how long science has succeeded in keeping men's minds off their fundamental unhappiness and its own very limited power to remedy their fundamental. The soul of man is crying for hope or purpose or meaning; and the scientist says, "Here is a telephone" or "Look! Television!" – exactly as one

tries to distract a baby crying for its mother by offering it sugar-sticks and making funny faces (Chaput, 2007).

This meaninglessness which in the beginning of this *modern* configuration of ideas made Alexander Koyré (1957) 'lost his place in the world, or more recently perhaps, lost the very world in which he was living and about which he was thinking, and had to transform and replace not only his fundamental concepts and attributes, but even the very framework of his thought.' It comes as no surprise that the impulse of the modern man is to project objectivity somewhere else, seen in Descartes' absolute epistemologizing where ideas arise out of critical distance from reality (Bordo, 1987). Modernity was a *politics of identity* (Natoli, 1997) – a purely egocentric identity – which centers on man and his inventions yet alas, a centrality that bloats explosively to his end which paves way for us a new horizon. This is what Nietzsche meant when he envisaged the new horizon of perspectivism, the future of possibilities and permissions, or the plane where infinite interpretations can have their place.

*In the Horizon of the Infinite* – we have left the land and have gone to sea! We have demolished the bridges behind us, indeed, we have destroyed the very land behind us! ... Woe, when you are assailed by homesickness for the land, as if there more freedom were to be found – and there is no 'land' any longer (Nietzsche, 1974).

In effect then is Nietzsche's allusion of the madman in the wake of the dead God, the metonymy of supreme objectifications and expectations of an external world other than the phenomena, when he dared proclaim: 'Where is God? [...] I shall tell you! *We have killed him* – you and I (Nietzsche, 1974).' The horizon following it is vast and infinite that the only deed after Nietzsche is to create a new, because 'there is no *land* any longer.' In the wake of God, there is void and vacancy (Marsden, 2002).

However, postmodernity as the new era does not necessarily call for postmodernism as its primary consciousness. Postmodernism as a *politics of difference* (Natoli, 1997, p. 17), is an epochal consciousness which in itself is also part and parcel of that difference. It is, to qualify, *perspectivism as postmodernism*. Yet postmodernism's self-referential paradox cannot sustain a perspectivist solution since it does not centralize on a single view or a static *episteme* but only *difference*, different perspectives – different interpretations. Postmodernism as an epochal consciousness, 'no longer caught up in the web of any ideology or system' (Abulad, 2004, p. 57) is only one of the different consciousness that postmodernity as its referent-era offers. Robert Schreiter puts it succinctly,

Many people self-consciously describe themselves as "*postmodern*," as living in this fragmented, heterogeneous world where *difference is prized in its very difference* ... *Postmodernity* is a useful way of describing the difference, discontinuity, and fragmentation we are

experiencing provided that this difference, discontinuity, and fragmentation does not undermine a basic sense of security and safety (Schreiter, 2005).

In short, what characterizes this postmodernism is a highly relativist consciousness, which so happens to use and abuse Nietzsche as its foreseer and father. For Gemes (2001), Nietzsche is commonly invoked as a prophet of the postmodern whereby both sympathizers and critics of the postmodern share this invocation. Most critics reinterpret him especially his perspectivism as 'his suspicion of metaphysics (ultimate ontology), his radical skepticism and interrogation of conventional notions of truth, have been taken to mark him as an agent of dissolution, of polyphony, a practitioner of the *hermeneutics of suspicion*. Nietzsche is cited as a model of *deconstruction* (Gemes, p. 338).' Nietzsche is viewed as a spur of revolutionary consciousness, an attacker, and an obliterator of modern mind calling forth a postmodern perspective. There is a view that labels him as a relativist (Solomon & Higgins, 2000). His *via negativa* as a description draws more attention than what he prescribes. For instance, his pronouncement of the death of God is mostly taken as a nihilistic view of life often interpreted as a description of a dead-end rather than a prescription of overcoming. However, to interpret also what he prescribes is another thing, and this is where postmodernity encourages claims from all directions and contexts. But in order not to move farther from constant negations, the motion for political consensus must be opened and characterized. The query at hand is: how

can Nietzsche's perspectivism thrive as political consensus and why it must be viable?

The first feature or condition of this perspectivism points to the essential element of discourse. Political consensus means that the evident radical scepticism which is apparent in the marking of postmodernism can only be clarified if put into *discourse*. The imperative thus is to initiate dialogue, and the future and function of perspectivism is 'the means of access to the substantiality of the external, intersubjective world whose self-evidence wrecks every solipsism (Schenck, p. 309).' Consensus would be impossible if postmodernists would only utilize perspectivism's internality as mere selfish subjective acts that nourish one's hubris apart from relating to others (Nietzsche, 1996a). Nietzsche, 'against the Christian and Cartesian tradition, takes things to be defined by their *relational*, rather than any *intrinsic*, properties (Gemes, 2001, p. 342)' – that objects are not merely specimens for reification but is open in their properties to be related despite the differences. In this multi-scheme of differences, the main task and watchword is *dialogue* (Cobb et.al, 1990).

In the bigger picture, postmodernism concerns not only to a physical space but to the relationship-in-between – 'there is no land any longer.' And globalization, with the fast developments of technology, transportation, and communication as exemplified in the internet, in planes and phones, makes both 'space and time shrunk' (Schreiter, p. 2).

The second feature of perspectivism as political consensus must have to do with these innovations when intensified even further in the importance of politics, from

whence it means the inherent dynamism of human and state affairs, to a more intimate *episteme*, which points and makes room for the creation of a *unified self*. What does this unified self as the second feature connote? Hudgen's interpretation of perspectivism as *coherence of knowledge* and *constructivism of Truth* offers its point. While on the one hand, Lyotard's (1984) celebrated *Report on Knowledge* defines 'postmodernism as incredulity towards meta-narratives,' Nietzsche on the other hand prescribes a *unified* construction of a future from a genealogical exploration:

When the past speaks it always speaks as an oracle: only if you are an architect of the future and know the present will you understand it...*only he who constructs the future* has the right to judge the past. If you look ahead and set yourself a great goal, you at the same time restrain that rank analytical impulse which makes the present a desert. Form within yourself an *image* to which the *future* will correspond and *forget* the supposition that you are epigones (Nietzsche, 1997c).

That is to say, in Nietzsche, postmodernism is not anymore the playing of perspectives and paradoxes of truth, a practice that also ironically reflects the paradoxes of Zeno and other pre-Socratics. Nietzsche here, in wanting to bring back the dream that dreams on, highlights the importance of forgetting, but also of moving on— towards the *future* and the construction of an *image* worthy of an

inspiration: *a unified self*. The instability of postmodernism has conjured a collectivity of hubris which the rising ideologies of those who claim more power to dominate misunderstood Nietzsche. In postmodernism where there is supposed to be an exploded ego, a dead god, we find instead multiple originators that continue to use will to power for domination: the rise of fascism and Nazism.

In this second feature of perspectivism as political consensus, to live within the paradoxical confinement of Nietzsche's ontology of becoming means that we cannot be forever stuck in an ever-changing Heraclitean flux – we must hold on to something constant: a unified self that follows from the initial call and challenge of consensus in finding one's self.

In furthering the second feature, the third feature will have to deal with Nietzsche's perspective of *will to power* that sustains such a unified self from within, which although is continually reshaping itself still remains a substratum of a power quanta. It would point to how Nietzsche caters the intrinsic properties within that are also needed in the foundation of a whole *strong will*, a 'coordination under a single pre-dominant impulse (Nietzsche, 1968),' a 'room for an immanent authority, an authority that comes from within (Gemes, 2001).' This third feature finds a parallel movement in politics where the constant avenue for overcoming in dialogue continues to adhere to that constant struggle for consensus.

The *world as will to power* (Nietzsche, 1968) directs the different forces and power relations that increase proportionally with the interpretations. Nietzsche's perspectivism bears a consequence of the will to power. Citing Soner Soysal's thesis,

For Nietzsche, truth is not something waiting to be discovered, but something created through power struggle which occurs through interpretation, in which power centers structure and shape the world and their environment (Soysal, 2007).

Because interpretations under the frame of a stream of becoming are in a constant process, a way to measure this is through the criterion of an increase of power (Soysal, p. 196). Perspectives here are not anymore dismissible relative standpoints but because there is a criterion, they are measured and are hierarchically ordered in rank according to their power quanta, for people who have more will to power to achieve. That is to say, the warrant truth is not given easily in the views of people who are less powerful or people who have no conviction and ability to overcome. Followed personages are models of achievement and who have amassed all inspirations and toiled greatly just to overcome a goal. Nietzsche (1982) illustrates such models or personages as those who are striving for excellence and thereby inspiring excellence too: 'The striving for excellence is the striving to overwhelm one's neighbor, even if only very indirectly or only in one's own feelings or even dreams.' The emergence of new modernity as a more complex instability calls for a reevaluation of values to see the bigger picture.

Unlimited difference may work when other aspects of society are secure, but when

society itself appears under threat, our actions need to be more deliberate, and we need a place to stand from which we can see the bigger picture (Schreiter, 2005, p. 12).

Perspectivism as political consensus stands to see that bigger picture: amid postmodernity as a politics of difference, paradoxically inherent with unlimited difference, we can sum up in the three salient features a pattern of perspectivism that connotes an initiation of dialogue to construct a unified subjectivity that makes room for constant overcoming. Here, Nietzsche (1969) does not contradict himself when he says that it is essential to treat a friend also as one's enemy. In this sense, war is a consensus – two nations, two kingdoms create a treaty of war before engaging in skirmish. From *internal coherence* of the self towards the *construction of truth*, we can sum up a perspectivism that answers to its own paradoxes: a view that is asserted but is also in agreement with other views. This answer is a perspectivism as political consensus, a view that finds close resemblance in Schreiter's term, 'a new *convivência*, a capacity for an engaged living together amidst, and indeed with, people and identities that are quite different (Schreiter, p. 20).'

Nietzsche's perspectivism interpreted here as political consensus can offer a viable option in such a way that the constant struggle for consensus functions precisely as the war for truth: it does not offer a dogmatic standpoint but a constant avenue for self-overcoming. Perspectives may vary but they must not remain relative to one another. For Nietzsche, there is unity

in ontology of becoming and that paradox sustains its own view.

Perspectivism as political consensus needs to sustain itself in that struggle of one's will to power for the future. Nietzsche exhorts to manifest that eternal affirmative consensus as the *Faustian pact* where Faust bargains his soul to the devil in favor of this world of becoming, to make his drives ever fiery and his will to power ever increasing to overcome his unending desires. That consensus as pact between the subject and the world is the attitude – and not the absolute truth – of the will to power. In this perspective, political consensus holds on to a drive that overcomes itself again and again: the future that this holds is not an ultimate project such as an absolute truth, but an attitude that opens, makes room for, and welcomes the future.

## 5.0 Conclusion

From the discussion above, one sees that Nietzsche's fundamental perspective of perspectivism is its critique of truth. His words denote the perspective that there are no facts but only interpretations – these having the characteristic of infinity and are always changing and conscious. Because of this non-adherence to truth and going instead to an untruth, Nietzsche deplors the conditions that valorize absolute objective thinking and opens the floodgates not only of more perspectives but also paradoxes. Nietzsche also lays target of his assertions whether they warrant the same critique of themselves if they are posited as truth. Within this scheme of perspectives and paradoxes however, the possibility of consensus rests on Nietzsche's perspectivist solution – that his thoughts are taken as his own and not as absolute truths – and that

this further seeks the challenge of his war for truth: truth must be a constant process emanating from interpretations.

Postmodernity where perspectivism abounds is here the context of Nietzsche's vision of the future, the era where infinite interpretations thrive. Postmodernity was presented as a politics of difference where relative standpoints are most welcome contra modernity's fetishizing of identity. In this relative context, what one needs to project are not the same dogmatic and supremely objective conditions that absolutize truth but features or conditions that sustain along with it Nietzsche's perspectivism. The kind of perspectivism that succeeds amidst a politics of difference is here interpreted as political consensus.

The research above finds three salient features or conditions for political consensus. One is that it has the condition of dialogue. The watchword for interpretation finds grounding in initiating discourse. Second, it has the feature of a unified subjectivity as an image of the future. And third, it bears consequence to Nietzsche's perspective of will to power, which provides avenues for constant overcoming, making sure that perspectivism is never the intact canon that secures a static and objective standing.

In political consensus, Nietzsche's perspectivism can be sustained in postmodernity when, following the conditions, it does not again generate the same regress to relativity and absence of a construct of the future. In this paper, we find that Nietzsche seeks for architects of the future who are creators of unified selves where dialogue is not the end of the conversation but is an avenue for self-overcoming. In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, we can find the lesson of seeking co-creators:



Zarathustra seeks companions, not corpses or herds or believers. The creator seeks fellow-creators, those who inscribe new values on new tables. The creator seeks fellow-harvesters: for with him everything is ripe for harvesting. Zarathustra seeks fellow-creators, fellow-harvesters, and fellow-rejoicers (Nietzsche, 1969, p. 52).

What this means is a call for perspectivism as political consensus: corpses are no longer alive and not possible for politics, herds are all the same and do not need consensus, and believers seem to be allergic to critiques of their own truth. On a deeper level, fellow-creators dialogue to further creation, fellow-harvesters pick up the pieces of their lives to put themselves together as unified selves, and fellow-rejoicers are agents of will to power whose love is to overcome life again and again. For as long as life is the stream of becoming, the future always stands and political consensus never ends.

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