Friedrich Nietzsche

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2afrV4f-9Ei

https://imslp.org/wiki/Category:Nietzsche,_Friedrich
Two-level Theories

Surface level, to be explained

Hidden, deep level, which explains the surface level
Wilfrid Sellars (1912-1989)
Philosophy

- The aim of philosophy, abstractly formulated, is to understand how things in the broadest possible sense of the term hang together in the broadest possible sense of the term.
Two Images

- For the philosopher is confronted not by one complex many dimensional picture, the unity of which, such as it is, he must come to appreciate; but by two pictures of essentially the same order of complexity, each of which purports to be a complete picture of man-in-the-world, and which, after separate scrutiny, he must fuse into one vision. Let me refer to these two perspectives, respectively, as the manifest and the scientific images of man-in-the-world.
Stereoscopic Vision
The 'manifest' image of man-in-the-world can be characterized in two ways, which are supplementary rather than alternative. It is, first, the framework in terms of which man came to be aware of himself as man-in-the-world. It is the framework in terms of which, to use an existentialist turn of phrase, man first encountered himself—which is, of course, when he came to be man.
Objects

• The basic objects of the manifest image: “persons, animals, lower forms of life and ‘merely material’ things, like rivers and stones.”
Scientific Image

• The scientific image arises out of the manifest image, by the scientific method: careful observation and measurement, hypothesis testing, experimentation

• But something new happens with the introduction of theoretical entities (atoms, microparticles, genes, etc.) that are unobservable but causally active
Macro v. micro

- Manifest image: Macro-level
- Scientific image: Micro-level
The Images

Manifest image: rationality, morality, responsibility, freedom, practical reason

Scientific image: governed by causal laws, value-free, purely determined
Clash of the Images

• How, then, are we to evaluate the conflicting claims of the manifest image and the scientific image thus provisionally interpreted to constitute the true and, in principle, complete account of man-in-the-world?
Normativity

• …the irreducibility of the personal is the irreducibility of the 'ought' to the 'is'....
The Space of Reasons

- The irreducible element of the manifest image is *normativity*.
- The scientific image describes the realm of law.
- But in the manifest image we conceive ourselves as bring in the space of *reasons*.
- Not a different realm, but a different way of seeing the same realm.
Manifest image

- Surface (Space of Reasons):
  - We think of ourselves as free
  - We act for reasons
  - We act rightly or wrongly, virtuously or viciously
  - We have responsibility
Depth (Realm of Law):

- We are determined by something we aren’t conscious of
- Our reasons are mere rationalizations
- Morality is either nonsense or reduces to something else
- Since we are not free, we have no responsibility
Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900)
Relativism

• Relativism: There are no universally valid truths about the world

• Protagoras: “Man is the measure of all things. . . .”
Relativism

- Beliefs are true only relative to a
  - society
  - culture
  - historical epoch
  - interpretative community
  - individual person
Friedrich Nietzsche

- Historicism: truth is relative to a historical period
Truths that are relative:
Truths that are NOT relative:
Norms that are relative:
Norms that are NOT relative:
Hegel

- Hegel advocates historical relativism in general
- But he does claim to uncover absolute, general, dynamic, “meta”-level laws about the development of thought
Hegel’s Historicism

- Theories about theories (absolute)
- Theories about the world (relative)
Hegel’s Logic

Thesis → Antithesis → Synthesis
Dynamic Patterns of Thought

Thesis

Antithesis

Synthesis
Thesis

People adopt a certain way of looking at and thinking about the world (the thesis).

Because it is only partially correct, over time people encounter contrary evidence, counterexamples, anomalies, and contradictions.
Antithesis

Inspired by these, they shift to a new and contrary way of looking at and thinking about things (the antithesis).

That too is only a partial truth, however, so it also gradually confronts contrary evidence, counterexamples, anomalies, and contradictions.
The conflict between thesis and antithesis is eventually transcended in a synthesis that draws elements from both while transforming the way people see and think.

That becomes a new thesis, and the process begins again.
C. S. Peirce: Scientific Method

• Science is *self-correcting*:
  • make observations
  • formulate hypotheses
  • test their consequences by experiment
  • revise hypotheses in light of new evidence
Social Character of Thought

Hegel sees human thought as essentially social.

The social and historical context of thought is crucial.

We learn our language, which provides our basic categories of thought, from other people, at a particular time, in the context of a particular society.

What Kant and other rationalists take as stemming from our nature as knowers Hegel sees as reflecting a specific social background.
Norms

• We construct norms
• They are relative to a historical period and social context
• They express the World Spirit in its current state of development
• But they progress toward the Absolute
• “Whatever is, is right!”—for that time and place
Irrationalism

• But what if thought doesn’t change in rational, law-governed ways?
Irrationalism

• But what if thought doesn’t change in rational, law-governed ways?

• There’s no reason to think that the norms in force at any time or place have any rational justification
Is => Ought?

- Phase 1, Description: ... is .... **Realm of Law**
- Phase 2: ??????????????????????? **??????????????**
- Phase 3, Normativity: ... ought .... **Space of Reasons**
Possible Answers

- Aristotle, Bentham, Mill: Happiness, well-being, flourishing
- *Divine Command Theory*: Divine approval and disapproval
- *Kant*: Rationality, respect
- *Hume*: Feelings
Happiness

- Eudaimonia: happiness, well-being, flourishing, thriving—living well
Irrationalism

- Happiness, well-being, flourishing: superficial
- What is well-being?
- What is flourishing?
- What counts as a life well-lived?
Relativism

- Theories about theories (relative)

- Theories about the world (relative)
Stages of Nietzsche’s Thought

- Dionysus vs. Apollo (1872)
- Naturalism, Relativism (1878–1882)
- Übermensch, Beyond Good and Evil, Genealogy of Morals (1883–1887)
- Attacks on Christianity, Will to Power (1888–1889)
- Throughout, two-level naturalism
Two-Level Theories

“Nearly all philosophical problems once again raise the same form of question as they did two thousand years ago: How can something develop from its opposite—for example, reason from the unreasonable, feeling from the dead, logic from the illogical, disinterested gaze from covetous wanting, altruism from egoism, truth from error?”
Two-Level Theories

“Everything that we need and which can be given to us only now that the individual sciences have reached their present height, is a chemistry of the moral, religious, and aesthetic conceptions and sensations.”
Nietzsche

- Truth doesn’t develop rationally, according to any discernible laws

- It is irrational, driven by Dionysian and Apollonian forces, or biochemistry, or the will to power

- Two-level theory: “What if this chemistry would reveal that in these areas too the most glorious colors arise from low, despised materials?”
Historicism

“They [philosophers] automatically think of man as an aeterna veritas (eternal truth), as a constant in the flux, as a safe measure of things to come. Everything that philosophers say about man is no longer fundamental, but tells us something about the men of a very limited period of time. Lack of historical sense is the hereditary error of all philosophers.”
Historicism and Relativism

• “Everything, however, became what it is. There are no eternal facts. There are no absolute truths.”
Historicism and Relativism

- “Therefore what is needed from now on is historical philosophizing and with it the virtue of modesty.”
No Reality

• “There is no ‘reality’ for us—not for you either, my sober friends.”
Historicism and Relativism

- “What we call now the world is the result of a number of errors and fantasies, which have gradually developed throughout the whole evolution of organic nature, have intertwined with one another, and are now left to us as the cumulative treasure of the entire past—*as treasure, because the value of our humanity rests on it.*”
Errors and Fantasties

• “Over immense periods of time the intellect produced nothing but errors. A few of these proved to be useful and helped to preserve the species.... Such erroneous articles of faith... include the following: that there are enduring things; that there are equal things; that there are things, substances, bodies; that a thing is what it appears to be; that our will is free; that what is good for me is also good in itself.”
Norms and Origins

• “But everything so far that has made metaphysical assumptions valuable, frightful, delightful, is passion, error, and self-deception—the worst methods of attaining knowledge, not the very best, have taught us to believe in them. If one uncovers these methods as the foundation of all existing religions and metaphysical systems, one disproves them.”
Revaluation of Values

• “Thoughts. — Thoughts are the shadows of our feelings — always darker, emptier, simpler.”
Interpretation

- Knowledge doesn’t progress according to laws
- It doesn’t necessarily progress at all
- Science must become playful, developing new ways of seeing and interpreting the world
World as Projection

• “Because we looked at the world for thousands of years with moral, aesthetic, religious demands, with blind inclination, passion, or fear, and abandoned ourselves to the bad habits of illogical thinking, this world has gradually become so wondrously multicolored, terrible, meaningful, soulful, that it has taken on color—but we have been the colorists. The human intellect projected its errors as appearances and its basic assumptions into things.”
“New struggles.—After Buddha was dead, his shadow was still shown for centuries in a cave—a tremendous, shiver-inducing shadow. God is dead; but given humans as they are, there may be caves for thousands of years in which his shadow is shown.—And we—we still have to defeat his shadow!”
The Madman

“Have you not heard of that madman, who lit a lantern in the bright morning, ran to the market and cried incessantly: —‘I’m looking for God! I’m looking for God!’”
The Madman
The Madman

“As there were many who stood together there who did not believe in God, he excited much laughter. Is he lost? said one. Did he wander off like a child? said another. Or does he keep himself hidden? Is he afraid of us? Did he go to sea? emigrate?—in such a way they laughed and yelled in disorder.”
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Nietzsche here echoes Elijah taunting the priests of Ba’al (1 Kings 18:27): ‘At noon Elijah began to taunt them. “Shout louder!” he said. “Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened.”’
The Madman

“The madman jumped into their midst and pierced them with his gaze. “Where is God?” he cried. “I will tell you! We killed him—you and I! We all are his murderers!”
The Madman

• “God is dead! God remains dead! And we killed him! How can we comfort ourselves, the murderers of all murderers?”
The Madman

• “Isn’t the size of this deed too large for us? Don’t we have to become gods just to appear worthy of it?”
Is God Dead?
“God is dead.”
- Nietzsche, 1883

“Nietzsche is dead.”
- God, 1900
God is Dead

• “To sacrifice God for nothingness—this is the paradoxical mystery of ultimate cruelty that remained in store for the generation now growing up. All of us know something about it already.”
No Absolutes

• “In the horizon of the infinite.—We have left the land and gone to sea! We have burned the bridge behind us—even more, we have destroyed the land behind us! Now, ship, look out! Look ahead! Beside you lies the Ocean. To be sure, it does not always roar, and every now and then it lies there, like silk and gold and a fantasy of grace. But hours will come when you will recognize that it is infinite and that there is nothing more terrible than infinity. Oh, the poor bird that felt free and now pushes against the walls of this cage! Woe, if homesickness for the land strikes you, as if there would have been more liberty there—and there is no longer any “land”!”
Values

- “There are no moral phenomena, only a moral interpretation of phenomena....”
Values

- “None of our aesthetic and moral judgments apply to [the world].”

- “Whatever has value in our world now does not have value in itself, according to its nature—nature is always value-less, but has been given value at some time, as a present—and it was we who gave and bestowed it.”
Revaluation of Values

• “What do you believe?—This: that the weights of all things must be determined afresh.”
Child

- “Man’s maturity—to have regained the seriousness that he had as a child at play.”
Authenticity

“What does your conscience say?—‘You are to become the person you are.'”