

Friedrich Nietzsche, (1844-1900) a brief historical sketch:

1. His dad was a Lutheran pastor. So he grew up in a Christian environment.
2. He abandoned Christianity at an early age.
3. He was very bright. went to the most prestigious schools and was successful academically.
4. He was a strange fellow with bad health that compromised his academic career.
5. The last ten years of his life were lived in seclusion as he was completely insane.
6. Like Marx there are many ideas, (1000's) but only time to look at a couple of them.
7. He is still very influential today politically and privately. He wrote aphoristically.
8. He studied Philology: the study of words and their usage. This became his preoccupation.
 - a. *Nietzsche had a great influence on Sartre and Foucault.*
 - b. *Nietzsche's protocols and the policing of language are rampant in Sartre and Foucault.*

Friedrich Nietzsche and atheism:

1. He is best known for his death of God material: "God is dead and we killed Him."
This is probably his most famous line. (Marx's was, *religion is the opiate of the people.*)
Because of this, he is very similar, therefore, to Feuerbach and Marx via his atheism.
2. He states that the foundation for truth and meaning that has held sway over people from ancient times through biblical times to the present is now giving way. This is monumental.
 - a. This was happening because of the Enlightenment.
3. What does this mean?
 - a. For most of western thought, theology from the Bible and philosophy from ancient Greece stated that God served as the foundation for objective truth and objective moral value: God is the Logos (Supreme Reason) and, therefore, all good, truth, and value are grounded in Him and find their justification in Him.
 - b. But if God is dead, there is no foundation for objective truth or value.
4. So what are we left with?
 - a. Nietzsche calls it *perspective-ism*. This means that everyone now has their own perspective on things. This leads to a radical relativizing of truth and moral value.
 - b. Truth is now relative: what's true for you is not true for me.
 - c. There is no longer any basis or foundation for objective truth, value or good in itself.
 - d. Thus, the situation is bleak because there is no longer any objective truth or value outside of yourself. Remember God is dead and no one is coming to rescue you.
5. So what are you supposed to do?
 - a. Nietzsche says you must now assert your will to power: become your own superman.
 - b. A clash of powerful wills will ensue because there is no longer any ground for arguing for truth because all objective truth and value are gone: so you assert your will over others.
 - c. Now I know what to do: pursue and assert my power of will over others.
6. *This pursuit of power in both Marx and Nietzsche will be embraced and further nuanced by both Sartre and Foucault.*

Friedrich Nietzsche and Christianity:

1. Nietzsche becomes a harsh critic of the morality coming out of Christianity because it stresses pity, compassion, love, forgiveness, and non-violence. He says that is a slave morality.
2. Those who have been put down and oppressed are now petitioning the powerful people to have pity on them and help them. This is enslavement. (*Recall Feuerbach and the slave motif.*)
3. Furthermore, with God dead (and with him all objective truth or value) there is no way to measure/evaluate/critique which person is more right or justified by their actions, because there is no foundation for doing this, given that all truth is relative. This is why each person must will themselves to power. (*Remember: all that had held sway was giving way.*)
4. *Do you see any syllogisms in Nietzsche?*
5. *Do you see anything giving way today?*
6. *Do you see any perspective-ism today?*
7. *Is philology apropos for today?*