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NIETZSCHE AND RHETORIC

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CONTENTS

Introduction: Nietzsche and the Rhetorical Tradition	1
1 Excluding Rhetoric: From Descartes to Plato	13
2 The Manipulation of Rhetoric	34
3 Nietzsche's Pragmatism	73
4 Nietzsche's Argumentation	124
5 The Value of Eloquence	173
Conclusion: Rhetoric and Wisdom	224
Notes	233
Bibliography	295

DECLARATION

1. The discussion of the claim that Nietzsche held a pragmatist theory of truth (chapter three, pp92-3) is a slightly amended version of a section of my M.A. Dissertation, "Nietzsche and the problem of relativism", submitted to the University of Warwick, September 1988.

2. Some of the ideas expressed in chapter four, particularly those relating to Nietzsche's commitment to science and Enlightenment, and to the possibility of a "productive logic", have appeared in an article entitled "Nietzsche's productive logic", submitted to the *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*. The pages of the thesis where some overlap occurs are: pp138-41, 143-7, 167-8 and 169-70.

SUMMARY

The thesis maintained here is that Nietzsche belongs to and revitalizes a rhetorical tradition which has competed with philosophy for cultural and educational dominance. The general strategy of the thesis is to draw comparisons between Nietzsche and those aspects of the Sophists' activity that were attacked by Plato, in order to challenge philosophy's claim to moral and intellectual superiority over rhetoric.

The first chapter considers the allegation that philosophy is demonstrably superior to rhetoric because it has a proper method and can achieve positive results. Against this, it is argued that philosophy is distinguished from rhetoric by its values, not its methodological purity; the remaining chapters probe this conflict of values.

Chapter two explores the charge that rhetoric is both manipulative and open to manipulation, notes how Nietzsche's texts have been subject to these two criticisms, and counters them by challenging philosophy's models of manipulation and education.

Chapter three examines the rival educational ideals of philosophy and rhetoric, arguing that the key differentiating feature is rhetoric's pragmatism. It shows how this feature has been used to disparage rhetoric, and argues that Nietzsche develops a form of pragmatism that meets the philosophical attack effectively.

Chapter four considers the suggestion that rhetoric is less rational than philosophy because it employs looser argumentation, and argues that, at least as manifested by Nietzsche, rhetorical argumentation produces a superior rationality - according to an alternative perspective on reason and science.

Chapter five considers the claim that the eloquence of rhetoric is to be condemned for seducing and confusing the seeker after truth; this is countered by developing the Nietzschean dictum that art is worth more than truth.

The main conclusion is that, through Nietzsche's development of the ancient tradition, rhetoric emerges as a real alternative "love of wisdom".

Introduction

Nietzsche and the Rhetorical Tradition

It could be said, with some justification, that a thesis on *Nietzsche and Rhetoric* requires no introduction. Ever since Nietzsche was first published his use of language has been one of the most controversial aspects of his work, and in the recent explosion of secondary literature the question of rhetoric has if anything become even more prominent. On the other hand, a familiar theme is in many ways in more need of introduction than an unfamiliar one, even if that introduction will be of a somewhat different nature: when so many thinkers have concentrated already on a very particular subject, any new treatment will have to meet the charge that it merely repeats what has gone before. Such a charge cannot be refuted in an introduction, but it is at least possible to show here that the opportunity for an original treatment exists, by indicating what previous discussions of Nietzsche and rhetoric have ignored. This is, in fact, a great deal: it is not so much that the answers given hitherto are inadequate as that the whole approach to the subject of rhetoric has been thoroughly one-sided; what is absent, above all, is any *historical* dimension to the debate. In this introductory chapter I will outline why such a dimension is required, and how I propose to incorporate it in the structure of my own thesis.

The problem of "Nietzsche and rhetoric" that has come to dominate discussion has many resolutions but always essentially the same

framework. It arises from the obvious fact that Nietzsche is an exciting writer - really rather too good to be a philosopher. The appeal of his literary skill is (at least initially) accorded a separate status, as "rhetoric", with the problem then being how this level of Nietzsche's texts relates to his philosophy, and how philosophers should react to it. Even if we consider only those commentators who are broadly sympathetic to Nietzsche, there are at least four significantly different ways of reacting to this rhetorical aspect. The first is to ignore it, on the grounds that it has nothing to do with Nietzsche's philosophy. Interestingly, this approach crosses the boundary between "analytic" and "continental" philosophers who otherwise have little in common. On the analytic side, Danto refrains from condemning Nietzsche's style outright, but justifies ignoring it on the grounds that it will perplex analytic philosophers; his self-appointed task is to reduce Nietzsche's style to one that they will more readily comprehend.¹ Heidegger, who has no such concerns, is nevertheless equally uninterested in anything outside the traditional philosophical terms of reference. His preference for the posthumously collated "book" of Nietzsche's notes, *The Will to Power*, is in part precisely because it was not prepared by Nietzsche for publication, and thus was not distracted from the concerns of pure thinking by the rhetorical requirement to communicate with and influence an audience. Those (like Heidegger) concerned to piece together Nietzsche's essential metaphysical contribution should concentrate on the one work in which his thinking is unadulterated.²

Other philosophers have sought to make more constructive use of Nietzsche's rhetoric. *Psychologistic* readings seek to interpret Nietzsche's flamboyant style in terms of irrepressible psychological needs for self-assertion, literary self-expression, and so forth. Some

of these interpretations even suggest the possibility of detailed decodings of Nietzsche's texts to discover the psyche of their author.³

Literary-critical readings, on the other hand, concentrate more on the detail of Nietzsche's rhetoric, hoping to achieve insights into his work through close analysis of his style; the significance of recurring metaphors has been a particularly fruitful topic of discussion.⁴ Needless to say, by treating the text as in the first instance literary, this is the antithesis of the Heidegger-Danto method of approaching Nietzsche.

Finally, Nietzsche's rhetoric can be treated as *performative* - a level of the text that performs certain key functions which would be difficult or impossible to achieve by direct statements. Nehamas contends that it performs a task of literary self-creation, which he regards as the primary objective of Nietzsche's entire philosophical activity. Nietzschean texts are the active creation of a literary-philosophical character that is Nietzsche himself; this process sets an example for others to follow, and rhetoric is a central part of it.⁵ Deconstructive readings, on the other hand, do not find in the rhetoric something to enforce a general interpretation of Nietzsche's philosophy, but rather a level which thwarts any such general interpretation. In de Man's case, textual rhetoric is interpreted as those forces in a text which subvert the production of meaning and turn the text towards "undecidability".⁶ Derrida's reading arrives at a similar conclusion, but goes a step further: Nietzsche's styles function to ensure that his writings are structurally open to an almost infinite variety of interpretations, so that any determinate reading is automatically overflowed - even that which asserts the text's "undecipherability".⁷

I shall return to consider many of these approaches in more

detail in later chapters;⁸ for the present, I shall concern myself only with what they hold in common, and what is problematic about it. Perhaps it will seem implausible that there can be any meaningful connection between such diverse readings; but for all their differences, they share an objective the significance of which should not be underestimated: to try to assess the contribution made by rhetoric to the meaning of the text. This is not obviously controversial - how else, one might wonder, is a philosopher supposed to approach a subject? But with respect to rhetoric, this is not an ironic question, but an entirely serious one. Rhetoric is, after all, defined in most dictionaries as an "art of persuasion", whereas across the entire spectrum of interpretations considered above, the concern is essentially cognitive: "what, if anything, does rhetoric contribute to our understanding?" Insofar as it is still recognized as actively persuasive, Nietzsche's rhetoric tends to be despised; by the same token, those who praise it admire the intelligence (in both senses) added by it. De Man goes so far as to speak for rhetoric as something that denies and negates the explicit textual message, thereby withdrawing the work's immediate impact. Rhetoric, in other words, becomes an anti-persuasive element, the very antithesis of what the term has traditionally stood for.⁹ There can be no clearer sign that rhetoric, as an art of persuasion, is of no interest to Nietzsche's philosophical readers.

Of course, that de Man's understanding of the term "rhetoric" is innovative does not prove that it is mistaken, for there are often good reasons for modifying the meanings of one's terms; nevertheless, it will be instructive to ask how he has come to make such a drastic revision. Perhaps it is at this point that the general absence of an historical perspective starts to become significant: de Man thinks of

rhetoric as the tropes and figures of speech in a text, the function of which he then seeks to determine; in comparison with the conception of rhetoric developed in the ancient world, this is both a reduction and a reification. It is a reduction, because it makes the whole of rhetoric what was for the ancients only one part of one element of rhetoric (the *elocutio* or eloquence with which a case is presented);¹⁰ it is a reification, because it ignores the objective of rhetoric - to persuade an audience through language - and instead fixes it as a particular type of language use. Thus what was originally the *function* of rhetoric can actually disappear from a modern account altogether.

It would be quite wrong, however, to condemn this reification as an historical blunder, notwithstanding the ignorance of history manifested by many of its adherents. For in a certain sense it actually encapsulates an historical fact - that rhetoric *has become* a thing, a mummy. While philosophy still has philosophers, rhetoric no longer has rhetoricians (or *rhetors*,¹¹ as I shall refer to its practitioners here). Many today employ techniques of persuasion, but no-one makes the case for rhetoric as an art to rival philosophy, as the Sophists¹² once did; rhetoric has been reduced to fragments. The main reason for this is that, in the struggle between philosophy and rhetoric for intellectual hegemony, philosophy triumphed. Plato, in particular, made rhetoric appear insignificant and even sordid by comparison: its larger claims were made to look like vain boasts; its real justification was seen to be no more than the temporary personal advantage it could bring to its practitioners. Thus the reduction of the term "rhetoric" to a purely formal meaning comes to seem a natural development - a reflection of rhetoric's utterly marginal status.

Against this trend, the primary objective of my thesis is to challenge philosophy to prove itself once again, to see whether the Sophists' master art of rhetoric can yet be resurrected. There are two main reasons why such a reappraisal is worth undertaking now, in spite of the aforementioned torpor of rhetoric. In the first place, there are already signs that rhetoric is, if not reviving, then at least undead, and that philosophy has, conversely, passed the height of its powers. In recent decades it has been increasingly recognized that the various attempts to distinguish philosophy from rhetoric through its superior method, which were long considered an established achievement, have run into trouble; this gives some limited encouragement to rhetoric, and forces philosophy back to other arguments against it. I consider the significance of these developments in chapter one.

The second reason for a reappraisal is the possibility that an exception exists to the rule just announced, that there are no modern rhetors - the exception being Nietzsche. If so, it may be that a new force can be given to the rhetors' side of the argument through exploring Nietzsche's rhetoric. This is, in fact, precisely the hypothesis underlying chapters two to five, each of which considers Nietzsche's relevance to a particular aspect of the ancient philosophy-rhetoric conflict.

Though it receives thorough examination in the later stages of the thesis, this hypothesis is a somewhat startling one, and deserves some preliminary commentary here, to meet the most basic objections to it. For if rhetoric is a matter, not of tropes and figures, but of a general art of persuasion, it seems on the face of it less likely that Nietzsche can be considered a figure central to its practice and development. "Nietzsche's rhetoric" is, as we have seen, an acceptable topic for discussion; Nietzsche as rhetor is something

else entirely.

The main objection to considering Nietzsche as a rhetor is that he does not do so himself. The Sophists are only mentioned occasionally, and when they are considered, the comments on them are often rather critical. To the extent that Nietzsche has clear affinities with the Greeks, it is with the dramatists and poets of the Golden Age, not the rhetors who followed them.

As a brief summary of his comments on the Greeks this has some credibility; but it by no means refutes the hypothesis of Nietzsche as rhetor. In the first place, he does not clearly condemn rhetoric and the rhetors in the way that, for example, he condemns Socrates; in the mature work, there is actually considerable admiration for their achievements. But in any case, Nietzsche's own remarks are only one part of the story. When one goes on to consider how his rhetorical practice relates in various ways to the ancient dispute between philosophers and rhetors, how many of his arguments seem to echo voices belonging to the rhetorical tradition, and how his reception displays many analogies to the reception accorded the rhetors, the hypothesis no longer seems so dubious. It is with these questions of practice, argument and reception that the bulk of the thesis is concerned, and so I will restrict my introductory comments on them to the bare minimum. By contrast, Nietzsche's explicit statements on rhetors and rhetoric do not receive any systematic treatment elsewhere, and so some discussion of their general significance - and some justification for the limited value I have accorded them - is required here.

There are three principal sources for determining Nietzsche's attitude towards rhetoric and its practitioners: the 1872-3 lecture series on classical rhetoric delivered at Basle;¹³ the so-called

Philosophenbuch, which contains Nietzsche's notes, plans and essays from the period 1872-5;¹⁴ and *The Will to Power*.¹⁵ The first source has received considerable attention of late, particularly as a result of the emphasis placed upon it by de Man, for whom it represents an important innovation in the theory of rhetoric, moving it towards tropes and figures of speech.¹⁶ However, reading through the lecture notes, it is hard to see this as more than a rather flamboyant attempt on de Man's part to invent an intellectually respectable precursor of his own theory. Neither here nor anywhere else does Nietzsche reduce rhetoric to a theory of tropes; if anything, the lectures are notable (among Nietzsche's productions) for their lack of originality, and the highly visible influence of contemporary German theorists upon them.¹⁷ From our perspective, their main value is as a clear proof of the extent of Nietzsche's familiarity with the theory and history of rhetoric, which could otherwise be doubted by those who had seen only his other, more pithy contributions to the subject. The other two sources contain Nietzsche's direct evaluations of rhetoric and the Sophists. The *Philosophenbuch* is primarily remarkable, given its close attention to the historical development of Greek philosophy, for the absence of any serious treatment of the Sophists: its primary concern is to praise the pre-Socratics and to mark out Socrates as the source of decline. Nevertheless, at one point a significant - negative - evaluation of rhetoric is woven into this framework:

With Socrates the virtuosos of living begin. Socrates, the newer dithyramb, the newer tragedy, the invention of the rhetorician. The rhetorician is a Greek invention of later times! They invented "form in itself" (and also the philosopher for it). How is Plato's struggle against rhetoric to be understood? He envied its influence.¹⁸

This reads like what it is - an entry in a notebook - and no attempt was made to fill in the picture it sketches so roughly. Its main significance is that by suggesting (rather implausibly) that Socrates invents the rhetorician, Nietzsche assimilates rhetoric to the figure whom he blames for virtually everything that went wrong in Greece. If this suggestion appears to conflict with the insistence on 'Plato's struggle against rhetoric', it should be remembered that throughout his career, but especially in the early writings, Nietzsche tried in various ways to separate and exonerate Plato from Socrates's legacy. Indeed, it is quite likely that this concern explains why the rhetoricians were mentioned in the first place: they provide one more opportunity to distance Plato from Socrates. Needless to say, the judgement contained in this passage does not accord with the argument I will be presenting here; but then neither does it with Nietzsche's own comments a decade later in *The Will to Power*. There he retains the division between pre- and post-Socratic Greece, but with the crucial difference that the rhetoricians have changed sides:

The appearance of the Greek philosophers from Socrates onwards is a symptom of decadence; the anti-Hellenic instincts come to the top___The "Sophist" is still completely Hellenic...Gradually everything genuinely Hellenic is made responsible for the state of decay (and Plato is just as ungrateful to Pericles, Homer, tragedy, rhetoric, as the prophets were to David and Saul).¹⁹

This judgement is quite admirable, but it must be admitted straight away that it no more proves the hypothesis of Nietzsche as a modern rhetor than the earlier judgement refutes such an hypothesis; in neither case does Nietzsche expend much effort in justifying his allegation. Besides, it is never much more than a question of sympathy

or lack of sympathy for the *rhetors* - any more profound alliance would have to be justified by other means than Nietzsche's comments upon them. The important point to be drawn from these comments is that there is a clear development in Nietzsche's relationship to the *rhetors*; so one can anticipate that his later works will be more attuned to the rhetorical tradition than the early writings.²⁰

Nietzsche's direct statements on rhetoric, then, are slight and inconclusive. The hypothesis of a strong connection with the rhetorical tradition arises from another source, namely *those aspects of his work which have provoked philosophers into treating him as a rhetor*. There are two important clarificatory remarks to be made concerning this formula. First, it does not imply any especial reliance on Nietzsche's reception: it is part of my general case that those elements which have caused disquiet are integral to Nietzsche's work - *the provocation is inevitable*. Secondly, I am not claiming that Nietzsche has been explicitly identified by his critics as a *rhetor*. Rather, my claim is that many of the broad criticisms of Nietzsche's work have important parallels with the arguments that were used by philosophers to undermine the *rhetors*, and that this *prima facie* kinship deserves a more systematic study than it has hitherto received.

There are three main areas of this parallel criticism, to each of which I devote a chapter. The first is the already familiar question of Nietzsche's style and its appropriateness for philosophy. Precisely because this has so dominated the modern understanding of rhetoric, however, I have postponed discussion of it until the final chapter (chapter five), to allow space for a broader conception of rhetoric to develop. The next area of criticism concerns the emotive nature of much of Nietzsche's writing, which gives the impression of wanting to win the argument without caring about the means employed to

do it or about the validity of the argument (naturally, this was also a central criticism of the Sophists' "art of persuasion"); I consider the matter under the title of *manipulation*, in chapter two. The third important area of criticism concerns Nietzsche's *argumentation*, and in particular the aphoristic "method", which contrasts with the general insistence of philosophers on thoroughness and logical structure; this is considered in chapter four. Finally, there is an aspect of Nietzsche's work which has not attracted the same degree of attention and criticism, but which nevertheless is inescapable if the comparison with the rhetorical tradition is to be serious. This is the question of *pragmatism*, which was important for differentiating the Greek rhetors from their philosophical rivals and which, I argue, is also an urgent problem for Nietzsche; it is dealt with in chapter three.

This, then, is a brief outline of the structure of the thesis and how it arose; but before the exploration of Nietzsche and rhetoric begins in earnest, it is only proper to give some indication of the purposes it is intended to serve, in the light of which its success or failure may perhaps be judged. The first objective is the straightforwardly scholarly one of producing a thorough comparative study of Nietzsche and the Sophists, which can be judged according to the canons of scholarship: does it provide a more thorough and plausible account of the relationship than has been produced before? However, the mere fact that a comparative study has not been done before is no kind of *philosophical* justification, and there are indeed two rather more polemical concerns driving the scholarly elements of the thesis. The first relates to Nietzsche. Just as the question of his style was once

given prominence in order to challenge certain prejudices of Nietzsche-interpretation, so now raising the question of the rhetorical tradition is a useful way to challenge new orthodoxies, to reposition Nietzsche and to rethink his role. But this in turn has an ulterior purpose (otherwise it would merely be a matter of changing the intellectual fashion), which is to provide a challenging presentation of rhetoric as not simply "an aspect of texts", but a dynamic force in conflict with philosophy, at bottom over nothing less than the nature of wisdom. Nietzsche is only a means towards the main thesis defended here - that rhetoric can defend itself as a "love of wisdom" without recourse to the values employed by philosophers to attack it - and yet it is only through Nietzsche that an affirmation of alternative values, rather than an appeal to existing ones, becomes imaginable as a way of defending rhetoric. In the face of the long predominance of the forces hostile to rhetoric, maintaining such an approach is, to say the least, a tricky undertaking, and I would not claim that appeal back to traditional values has always been avoided here. Nevertheless, that is the objective, and it is that which accounts for the two sides of my thesis: Nietzsche and rhetoric - to honour rhetoric, but to do so in a Nietzschean way, which means, above all, *immorally*:

Grote's tactics in defence of the Sophists are false: he wants to raise them to the rank of men of honour and ensigns of morality - but it was their honour not to indulge in any swindle with big words and virtues__²¹

Excluding Rhetoric: From Descartes to Plato

Until very recently, a defence of rhetoric - of whatever kind - would have been dismissed by most philosophers as an irrelevance; even today, there are doubtless many who still adhere to this view. Their reasoning is straightforward: rhetoric is not a part of philosophy - it has been excluded from philosophy - and so, however interesting a discussion of it might be, it is simply not their concern. By way of preparation for the defence of rhetoric that follows in chapters two to five, I shall consider this proposition in some detail here.

Naturally, it will be objected that there is nothing to be gained from such a discussion. In the first place, it is hard to imagine the audience that will be impressed by it - and the question of the audience is always important for a rhetorician. Those who are interested in a consideration of rhetoric no doubt already accept that philosophy has not excluded rhetoric, and require at most an acknowledgement of this failure. On the other hand, those diehards who insist that philosophy is only about logic and deduction are unlikely to be moved by the assertion that it is not; for they are, naturally, quite deaf to persuasion. Furthermore, it can be argued that, if the case against rhetoric's exclusion is to be put at all, it requires more than a chapter to do it, given the already huge literature on the subject.

These objections presume that my ambition here is simply to reject philosophy's claim to have excluded rhetoric, but while I do indeed reject the claim, this move is closer to a postulate than a *demonstrandum*. The main objective of this chapter is to highlight the

consequences of philosophy's failure to exclude rhetoric, and my conclusions here help to explain the basic framework adopted in the ensuing chapters. Two of these conclusions are particularly important for the thesis as a whole. First, I argue that a general historical survey indicates why Plato is, now more than ever, the essential figure when considering the conflict between philosophy and rhetoric (hence the chapter subheading: "from Descartes to Plato"); this provides the justification for Plato's prominence in the remainder of the thesis. But, more importantly, this chapter provides good reasons for the stress on the value of rhetoric that underpins my approach to the subject. Only when the exclusion of rhetoric is seen not as an abstract methodological question but as a moral necessity does the general significance of Nietzsche's role become apparent.

Methodology cannot be lightly dismissed, however, given the important role it has played in philosophy's conflict with rhetoric, and in this chapter I propose to give it serious consideration. A natural route exists for such an exploration to follow, for while various philosophers have introduced rules of method which, if adhered to, would have the effect of excluding elements of rhetoric, in Descartes this exclusion is absolute and uncompromising: if his method works, then rhetoric is no longer any part of philosophy. As the apotheosis of methodological exclusion, and as the key moment in determining modern philosophy's relationship to rhetoric, it is the obvious starting point for our survey.

Descartes's fullest treatment of method is contained in his early work, the *Regulae ad Directionem Ingenii* (Rules for the direction

of the mind), and it is on this that the account given here is based.¹ The most important and inescapable element of Descartes's thinking is the deep impression made upon it by geometry and mathematics, which he insists must set the standard for all future efforts to gain knowledge:

in seeking the right path of truth we ought to concern ourselves only with objects which admit of as much certainty as the demonstrations of mathematics and geometry.²

All speculative forms of reasoning are ruled out: Descartes allows into his system only two "actions of the intellect", which he terms *intuition* and *deduction*. As is well known, "intuition" has a very special meaning in Descartes; in the *Regulae*, it is defined as 'the conception of a clear and attentive mind, which is so easy and distinct that there can be no room for doubt about what we are understanding.'³ Deduction is simply a chain of reasoning, too long to be taken in at a glance, but in which each link is intuitively certain, as is its connection to those before and after. How these two legitimate elements of reasoning are employed by the method to produce knowledge is announced in Rule five:

We shall be following this method exactly if we first reduce complicated and obscure propositions step by step to simpler ones, and then, starting with the intuition of the simplest ones of all, try to ascend through the same steps to a knowledge of all the rest.

These are the two sides of the Cartesian method: the *analytic* movement consists in the steps up to the "simplest" intuition; the *synthetic* movement comprises the steps back down from that basic element. The remaining essential element of the method is *enumeration*, which

'consists in a thorough investigation of all the points relating to the problem at hand'.⁴ The purpose of this survey is to make sure that nothing has been omitted from the chain of reasoning; if, after such an enumeration has been conducted, the problem remains unsolved, it must be considered *insoluble* and outside the bounds of human knowledge.

Descartes predicts that this method will bring tremendous benefits to mankind. It can be applied to all areas of intellectual activity and not only produces indubitable positive knowledge but also allows insoluble problems to be abandoned. Moreover, the rules themselves are in essence so simple that, notwithstanding the tremendous advances in human understanding that they must assuredly produce, they can be followed by any human being of average intelligence; knowledge will no longer be the prerogative of the intellectual elite:

Throughout this treatise we shall try to pursue every humanly accessible path which leads to knowledge of the truth. We shall do this very carefully, and show the paths to be very easy, so that anyone who has mastered the whole method, however mediocre his intelligence, may see that there are no paths closed to him that are open to others...⁵

While Descartes does not dwell on the exclusion of rhetoric, this is clearly an important by-product of his method, given the views he expresses on the subject elsewhere:

One can talk of persuasion whenever there is ground for further doubt. One can talk of science, however, only when there is an unshakeable ground.⁶

According to the *Regulae*, there is "unshakeable ground" in the form of

the absolutely simple intuitions, and the geometrical method more or less abolishes persuasion even in the process of pedagogy: the student does not take the lessons of his teachers on trust, but has them proved to him; knowledge and proof go hand in hand. At all points, then, rhetoric is excluded.

Though few philosophers have accepted the Cartesian method in all its particulars, elements of it have had a powerful effect on modern philosophy. Perhaps most influential of all has been the scientism at the heart of Descartes's method - the belief that philosophy can and must look to the sciences for its model. Even thinkers whose work diverges greatly from the simple geometric model have often stressed the importance of turning philosophy towards positive, assured knowledge; it is an important part of Descartes's legacy that discussion of *method* has become almost obsessive in modern philosophy. Thus Kant, for example, makes it plain that his primary objective is to set philosophy on the 'secure path of a science', and says of his own work:

This attempt to alter the procedure which has hitherto prevailed in metaphysics, by completely revolutionizing it in accordance with the example set by the geometers and physicists, forms indeed the main purpose of this critique of pure speculative reason. It is a treatise on the method, not a system of the science itself. But at the same time it marks out the whole plan of the science, both as regards its limits and as regards its entire internal structure.⁷

In more recent times, the various programmes of analytic philosophy owe far more to the Cartesian method than just the analogy with science. "Reducing complicated and obscure propositions to simpler ones" is at the very heart of the analytic movement and, under the influence of

logical atomism, the Cartesian belief in "absolutely simple" propositions that could act as foundations for a logical reconstruction of the world was widely held in the first third of the twentieth century. Many analytic philosophers also shared Descartes's belief that the thorough enumeration of problems could determine the limits of possible knowledge, so that the remainder could be removed from the sphere of philosophy.⁸ Thus both in general terms and in its specifics, Descartes's effort to make philosophy a scientific enterprise has been hugely influential.

This leads on to the question of whether the Cartesian method has been successful and, in particular, whether the methodological exclusion of rhetoric has been effective. One rather trite but nevertheless unavoidable observation is that the recurring "Cartesian" efforts to establish philosophy as a science demonstrate more powerfully than any critique the failure of Descartes's geometrical model. Consider Kant's justification for his project:

Metaphysics...has not yet had the good fortune to enter upon the secure path of a science. For in it reason is perpetually being brought to a stand, even when the laws into which it is seeking to have, as it professes, an *a priori* insight are those that are confirmed by our most common experiences. Ever and again we have to retrace our steps, as not leading us in the direction in which we desire to go.⁹

This echoes Descartes, but it was written one hundred and fifty years after the *Regulae*. In other words, Descartes's belief that *his* method would prove the correct one has not prevailed, and still today there is no "established way" of doing philosophy.

Apart from this general problem, neither the analytic nor synthetic side of the method has met the success Descartes claimed for

it. There have been many programmes of reductive analysis, but none of them has established the absolutely simple intuitions upon which a positive system could be built. Descartes's own *cogito* has been by far the most enduring candidate, but the patent lack of success of all foundationalist projects has led to a widespread disillusionment with the very possibility of foundationalism.¹⁰ If the analytic side met with failure, however, the project of a *synthetic* demonstrative system has scarcely even been attempted: Spinoza's *Ethics* is the only major work of philosophy that has sought to derive a system from a small set of fundamental axioms, and nobody would today pretend that it works as a demonstration.

Of course, there are important elements of the Cartesian system which are still very much alive - in particular, the ambition to "clarify" obscure and complex concepts that is the surviving element of analytic philosophy. The trouble is that this is pretty much the only objective to which today's analytic philosophers are willing to commit themselves,¹¹ and in itself it is simply not enough to constitute an exclusion of rhetoric. If the possibility of a demonstrative system is ruled out, it would appear that conceptual analysis must either make contentious assertions about the meaning of statements - in which case it enters the sphere of persuasion - or it can say nothing at all.¹²

The failure to establish philosophy as a scientific activity has serious consequences for its efforts to exclude rhetoric. By streamlining discourse into the two categories of "pure science" and "persuasion", modern philosophy stares into the abyss once its path to the first category is blocked. Deconstructive close readings can show and have shown rhetorical elements creeping into texts that claim to exclude them; the distinction between philosophy and rhetoric becomes blurred, and is in danger of disappearing altogether.¹³ What started

off as a project that would give philosophy a strong identity, radically independent from rhetoric, has ended up producing the opposite effect.

Given this general failure of the geometric model, there can surely be no objection to a re-examination of Plato's approach to rhetoric in the search for a way out of the impasse: he was, after all, the first philosopher openly to attack rhetoric and seek to exclude it from rational discourse. Naturally, no miracle solution is to be expected - the perceived failure of ancient and mediaeval thinkers to set philosophy on a secure basis was what led Descartes towards his new method in the first place, so it can be assumed fairly confidently that the procedures laid down by Plato were less than totally successful. Viewed from a Cartesian perspective, it will be seen that Plato's procedures are full of loopholes; but it may be that Plato never saw the problem in Cartesian terms, and that his strategy has to be assessed from an altogether different standpoint.

Plato's efforts to distinguish philosophy from rhetoric revolve around the two closely connected ideas of *dialogue* and *dialectic*, both of which I shall briefly consider here.

Dialogue concerns the fundamental structures of discourse. Socrates often suggests that his procedure is marked by an openness that the rhetors lack, because while he prefers conversation with an individual, they prefer speeches made to crowds. So there are basically two injunctions that go under the heading of dialogue. The first is that it be between two individuals, rather than between an (active) orator and a (passive) crowd or audience. The other point is

that the dialogue should not consist of a series of long speeches, but of a session of question-and-answer, through which the participants probe each other's ideas on a given subject. Although the importance of this kind of dialogue is affirmed periodically throughout Plato's writings, its strongest articulation is in the *Protagoras*, in which Socrates and the Sophist Protagoras share a heated discussion about the form that their debate should take. While Protagoras suggests that each speaker should take as long as he deems appropriate to discuss the matter in hand, Socrates protests that his memory is not good enough to cope with anything other than the question-and-answer format. It is left to Alcibiades to articulate the real reason for Socrates's insistence on the strict dialogue form:

let him [Protagoras] continue the discussion with question and answer, not meeting every question with a long oration, eluding the arguments and refusing to meet them properly, spinning it out until most of his hearers have forgotten what the question was about - not that Socrates will be the one to forget it: I'll guarantee that, in spite of his little joke about being forgetful.¹⁴

The long speeches of the Sophists are thus seen as diversionary tactics, deflecting attention away from what should be the real purpose: to pursue in earnest a rational discussion of a serious intellectual problem.

Dialectic, or the art of critical discussion,¹⁵ developed gradually in Plato's work; three distinct phases in its evolution can be distinguished.¹⁶ The early Socratic dialogues are marked by an almost complete absence of positive doctrine and even of positive results. Socrates asks the respondent to answer a very general question, usually on an ethical matter, and then proceeds to cross-

examine his response. The invariable outcome is that the answers given to the detailed questions are seen to conflict with the original general statement, which is thereby shown to be inadequate; this procedure is known as *elenchus*. Naturally enough, the strategy often greatly irritates its victims, but Socrates insists that it is a necessary part of the philosophical process. People must first be brought to the realization that they are ignorant before they will aspire to the true and certain knowledge that is the goal of philosophy; if they think that their opinions are already adequate, there will be no incentive to travel along this path.¹⁷

However important this preliminary step may be, if there were no promise of anything more constructive to follow, it could encourage only scepticism - and that is certainly not Plato's intention. So while the *elenchus* never entirely disappears it gradually becomes less significant, and the attempt to arrive at positive knowledge of the world is made through the art of *dialectic*. This project of coming to know the essences of things is always the aim of the dialectic, but the method itself undergoes a gradual change. In fact, in the middle dialogues, while Plato makes reference to an art of dialectic, he never explicitly states its nature, and the method - such as it is - can only be pieced together from scattered comments. Nevertheless, there is a consistency to them, and the term that describes the middle period dialectic most succinctly is *hypothesis*.

To hypothesize is to posit as a preliminary. It conveys the notion of laying down a proposition as the beginning of a process of thinking, in order to work on the basis thereof.¹⁸

A Platonic hypothesis is believed to be true, and deductions are made from it, forming an ever greater system of belief. This differs from

the Cartesian process of synthesis in the crucial respect that the hypothesized proposition is not an "absolutely simple intuition" the truth of which is indubitable. On the contrary, it is quite possible that an hypothesis will have to be rejected, if the deductions arising from it conflict with more fundamental beliefs.¹⁹ The procedure thus produces a gradual attunement of opinions rather than a scientific demonstration.

Plato's later theory of dialectic requires no reconstruction, since it is stated in several dialogues in which he appears particularly optimistic about the prospects for attaining knowledge of ultimate truth. It is deemed possible to fix the essence of a concept by a combination of movements up to the more general and down to the more particular, which Plato terms *synthesis* (combination) and *diairesis* (division) respectively. For example, suppose the question before us is, as in the *Phaedrus*, "what is love?" The answer should, according to Socrates, be given by an exhaustive procedure which would give love foundation as one species of a "higher" genus,²⁰ and divide love into several different sub-species, such as "love of a lover", "love of a non-lover", etc. Plato insists that this procedure is more than an exercise in reporting the standard usages of words: the skill of the dialectician lies precisely in founding and dividing along the right lines. He is not playing with words, he is mapping out being; and he must do this in a careful, step-by-step manner, never omitting intermediate stages.²¹

These, then, are the bare essentials of Plato's method; as with the geometric model, my interest in it concerns its capacity to exclude rhetoric. In general, it can be said that the two methods are weak at opposite points: the Cartesian method would provide a complete exclusion of rhetoric but has proved impossible to implement in

anything remotely approaching its complete form; the Platonic method, on the other hand, is quite credible as a description of actual philosophical practice but, even if fully implemented, cannot guarantee the exclusion of rhetoric. Nevertheless, there are a few significant "problems of implementation" facing the Platonic method; before turning to its major drawbacks, I shall give these brief consideration.

While it is not difficult to find places where Plato follows his own rules, it is also easy to find points at which he breaks them; Socrates's propensity for telling myths, for example, has nothing to do with the proper procedures of dialogue or dialectic. So long as these lapses are considered idiosyncrasies on Plato's part, they are not of any great concern to us. The real question is whether the practice can meet the theory, not whether it always does, and there are good reasons for believing that in certain respects it cannot. One particular problem is the nature of dialogue in Plato's late works: "to all intents and purposes, "dialogues" like the *Sophist* and *Statesman* are monologues with occasional interruptions, and certainly display none of the qualities that made Plato such a keen advocate of the dialogue form. This has sometimes been passed off as the sign of an old man's declining literary powers, but a more interesting explanation is that the lack of genuine dialogue is directly connected to the seriousness with which these works pursue the late conception of dialectic. *Diairesis* and *synthesis* are techniques for producing a systematic and comprehensive ontology, and would seem to require no questions other than "what comes next?", which can just as well be asked by the lone inquirer as by an interlocutor. Thus if dialogue and late dialectic are not actually *incompatible*, they can hardly be said to complement one another. There is also a more general doubt concerning dialogue in Plato: despite the protestations about the supreme value of speech and

discussion, there is no escaping the fact that these "dialogues" are written, and that the debates are *stagings* of the ideas of a single thinker rather than a genuine dialogic interaction. By the same token, the reader is a *spectator* of the dialogue rather than a participant, and therefore neither scrutinizes nor is scrutinized, but simply watches the scene unfold. Genuine dialogue is thus hard to reconcile with the simple fact of a written text as well as with other features of Plato's own method.

But even if the procedures of Plato's method all worked perfectly and harmoniously, they could not, either individually or collectively, guarantee the exclusion of rhetoric. To understand this we need only recall Descartes's comment that "one can talk of persuasion whenever there is ground for further doubt"; in Plato there is always ground for further doubt. Here, once again, the insistence on dialogue is the most obviously problematic. From a Cartesian perspective it can only be a sign of failure, an indication that knowledge has not yet been attained. There is, after all, no need for a geometer to allow the right of challenge to his theorem; a demonstration is all that is required for any reasonable person to accept it.

Allied to this is the general question of why Plato should have paid so much attention to pedagogical matters. Why, for instance, is *elenchus* so important? When such weight is attached to the importance of forcing people to confront their ignorance it implies that there is no easy way for them to find knowledge and that they must be *inspired* to look for it. This problem is nicely illustrated by the analogy of the cave in Book Seven of the *Republic* - after Plato has started to talk of dialectical method. The philosopher is compared to a man who has seen daylight returning to a group of perpetual cave-

dwellers. His difficulty is not simply how to lead them out into the light, but how to make them understand that there is more than the cave's darkness in the first place. The philosopher somehow has to get them to turn round, towards the light, before he can make any progress.²² Thus there is a preliminary step to be taken, when faced by a sceptical audience, before the work of dialectic can begin: to make them have *faith* in the possibilities of dialectic. This beginning is not in itself a dialectical move, so one might say that, while Plato warns against the seductions of rhetoric, philosophy itself must first of all seduce people away from their condition of "darkness". They are persuaded of the value of dialectic - it is not proved to them. Moreover, these mysteries of initiation seem perfectly attuned to the hypothetical method of dialectic advocated in the middle dialogues, which promises no more than a gradual ascent towards knowledge, and gives no indication of how certainty can be attained. Indeed, there seems every reason to suppose that the testing of hypotheses is an endless task, and that ground for doubt - and therefore persuasion - always remains. In direct contradiction of the Platonic model, Descartes dismisses "knowledge of ignorance" and hypothesizing as utterly worthless:

All knowledge is certain and evident cognition. Someone who has doubts about many things is no wiser than one who has never given them a thought...Hence it is better never to study than to occupy ourselves with objects which are so difficult that we are unable to distinguish what is true from what is false, and are forced to take the doubtful as certain...we reject all such probable cognition and resolve to believe only what is perfectly known and incapable of being doubted.²³

While in these respects Plato and Descartes clearly have

almost nothing in common, it is possible to believe that the late dialectic method marks a considerable advance towards the Cartesian model: the two sides of division and composition obviously bear a considerable resemblance to the Cartesian analysis and synthesis. However, the procedure is less closely described in Plato, and the details he does give seem insufficient to exclude rhetoric. A particularly intriguing phrase occurs in the description of dialectic given in the *Phaedrus*:

we are enabled to divide into forms, according to the objective articulation: we are not to attempt to hack off parts like a clumsy butcher...²⁴

This simile is problematic: the good butcher, or the anatomist, cuts incisively along the natural divisions of the body; he thus already knows these natural divisions. But the dialectician, who must allegedly do the same, faces the problem of *habeas corpus*. How does one know the universe resembles a body, let alone one with "objective articulations", until after one has completed the dialectical procedure? Or does one know in advance, through some other process than dialectics? It does not seem contradictory to the rules laid down by Plato to suppose that two dialecticians could produce two different dialectical divisions of the same subject, and both claim that theirs followed the "objective articulation" while their rival's amounted to "clumsy hacking". Assuming that both passed the *elenchus* test of logical consistency, how would one choose between them? There appears to be no objective test, and yet to resort to claims about relative plausibility is to fall back into rhetoric. The same applies here as applies to the rest of Plato's method: for all his insistence that philosophy shall attain certainty, he never achieves that certainty

himself, and so the absolute exclusion of rhetoric remains a mere promise. It will have been proved - by the master dialectician who, after more than two thousand years, is still yet to come into existence.

In the light of these criticisms, the Cartesian method is liable to look much more impressive - until the extent of its failure is recalled. In any case, the complaints just outlined have all made the assumption that Plato was attempting something very similar to Descartes - an exclusion of rhetoric based on a sound and scientific method. And there is one very good reason for supposing that this is not an accurate description of Plato's approach to rhetoric, which is that he himself made "criticisms" of his "method" very similar to those just recited. This fact requires some kind of explanation.

The absence of effective guarantees against rhetoric is fully discussed in Plato's *Seventh Letter*. There, he criticizes treatises that claim to offer knowledge on philosophical subjects, by arguing that words are incapable of directly approaching the real essence of things. More specifically, Plato lists four elements of human apprehension of objects - names, descriptions, particular expressions, and concepts - and warns that even the last of these, the understanding in the mind, always falls short of the thing itself. This has an unfortunate consequence, as Plato points out:

In those cases...where we demand answers and proofs in regard to the fifth entity [the object itself], anyone who pleases among those who have skill in confutation gains the victory and makes most of the audience think that the man who was first to speak or write or answer has no acquaintance with the matters of which he attempts to write or speak...To sum it all up succinctly, natural intelligence and a good memory are equally powerless to aid the man who has not an inborn affinity with the subject.²⁵

This is an extraordinary passage, for it not only seems to anticipate and reject the Cartesian demands for "answers and proofs", it is even aware of what these demands will lead to and in our century have led to - a situation where "those who have skill in confutation gain the victory". Plato has nothing in principle against attaining wisdom through proofs - other than his conviction that it is not possible, which today seems a far better estimation than Descartes's bland assurance that "the paths to truth are very easy". The *Seventh Letter* in fact continues with a description of the arduous journey the would-be dialectician must undergo before he can even hope to carry off the prize:

The study of virtue and vice must be accompanied by an inquiry into what is false and true of existence in general and must be carried on by constant practice throughout a long period of time...after practising detailed comparisons of names and definitions and visual and other sense perceptions, after scrutinizing them in benevolent disputation by the use of question and answer without jealousy, at last, in a flash, understanding of each blazes up, and the mind, as it exerts all its powers to the limits of human capacity, is flooded with light.²⁶

If certain knowledge is only the final goal, as Plato insists, rather than something present at every step along the way, then it is no longer reasonable to criticize Plato's method for allowing in elements of persuasion. Testing his texts for traces of rhetoric entirely misses the point, for Plato does not use the simple opposition between the presence and absence of rhetoric: in the *Phaedrus*, for example, the distinction is drawn between "true" and "false" rhetoric, the former recognizing the importance of truth as the foundation of persuasion, the latter taking no concern for truth and

only bothering about persuasion. What I am suggesting is that Plato should not be seen as presenting, like Descartes, a method which has as one of its attributes the exclusion of rhetoric. Because of the difficulty of attaining certain truth, it is not possible simply to sweep rhetoric away: rather than an absolute exclusion, what is required is a continuous process of excluding which would only be completed with the attainment of absolute knowledge. As a distinguished modern Platonist has put it:

The philosopher and the sophist are all too easy to mistake for each other. Hence it must be the task of philosophy to separate them and to separate itself from the impurity of sophism within itself, a task which creates the perpetual tension in which philosophy has found itself since Plato's time.²⁷

Does this illustrate Plato's failure, or his success? For Descartes, of course, it is a failure: Plato does not succeed in establishing philosophy as clearly distinct from rhetoric. But there is another sense in which Plato has achieved virtually complete success: he has turned philosophy against rhetoric, and made it regard sophism as an "impurity" to be attacked and expelled. That this achievement generally passes unnoticed only shows that the victory is total: philosophers after Plato have scarcely bothered to point out why rhetoric should be excluded; like Descartes, if they are interested in the question at all, it is to determine how that exclusion is to be carried out. Plato separated philosophy and rhetoric, if not in practice, then at least as rival values; the attempts to separate them in practice flow from this crucial first step.

In this chapter I have considered only Plato's "practical" measures to deal with rhetoric; but if I am right, then his really important contribution is to expose the unacceptable values inherent in rhetoric so convincingly that philosophy has been committed to the struggle against it ever since. From now on, my focus will be exclusively on this devaluation of rhetoric.

It is not particularly easy to organize Plato's attacks on rhetoric into neat categories, since they occur haphazardly throughout his work and many different criticisms are often subtly blended together; one commentator has even suggested that the whole of Plato's work is in essence an attack on rhetoric.²⁸ My tactic in the chapters that follow is to group together the attacks on rhetoric into four major themes, each of which is treated in turn.²⁹ The next chapter (chapter two) considers the significance of the commitment to dialogue and reasoned debate, in contrast with the rhetorical objective of *winning* an argument and thus trying to direct an audience towards a particular viewpoint, often by dubious means. Chapter three explores philosophy's commitment to the cultivation of the intellect and the pursuit of knowledge, in contrast with rhetoric's more pragmatic educational objectives. Chapter four looks at philosophy's commitment to a standard of rational argumentation in comparison with rhetoric's less rigorous requirement of *persuasive* argumentation.³⁰ Finally, chapter five looks at philosophy's commitment to plain prose and clear thinking, in contrast to rhetoric's stress on *beautiful* speech and writing which, it is claimed, clouds the reason both of its practitioners and its audience. These four attacks can, alternatively, be regarded as four species of a generic criticism of rhetoric: it does not value truth.

It may be objected at this point that the jump from the

failure of modern efforts at excluding rhetoric to a major re-examination of the value of rhetoric is a rather large one. Certainly, there is nothing necessary about it. One could continue to search for new ways of making philosophy scientific - no doubt there will be those who will do that; one could equally accept that rhetoric is an ever-present possibility, and regard the fact with concern or indifference, as temperament dictates. But for all this, the exploration of Plato's devaluation of rhetoric is of more than merely antiquarian interest. In the first place, the failure of efforts to exclude rhetoric completely from philosophy means that rhetoric is still an issue for philosophers to confront, one way or another, and to preclude *a priori* any serious consideration of why philosophy should be hostile to rhetoric seems under these circumstances to be more than a trifle dogmatic. Moreover, unless the rival values involved come into question, the conflict between rhetoric and philosophy is liable to remain rather uninteresting - trapped in the technicalities of whether or not rhetoric has been excluded. At the very least, such discussions deserve to be *supplemented* by a thorough understanding of why this should matter.

As the introduction made clear, however, there is a far more concrete ambition driving the exploration of Plato's attack on rhetoric pursued here than simply to add a new perspective on philosophy's revived interest in the subject. For the hypothesis of the thesis is that the value of truth, the supremacy of which underpins all the individual attacks on rhetoric, may itself be suspect. As a result, Plato appears here as both prosecutor and defendant. On the one hand, it is his critique of rhetoric that underlies all the most important and enduring suspicions of Nietzsche's work; on the other hand, in Nietzsche lie the resources to counter that critique and make the

positive revaluation of rhetoric a possibility. Plato versus Nietzsche:
this is the heart of philosophy's conflict with rhetoric.

Chapter Two

The Manipulation of Rhetoric

Of all the suspicions of Nietzsche's rhetoric, none is more commonplace than the idea that it is in some sense dangerous. It is often seen either as the deliberate technique of a preacher and sponsor of power politics or, more charitably, as the unfortunate excess of an otherwise great philosopher, a power that others have been able to harness for their own sinister purposes. Either way, it is the language that is the problem, and the essence of that problem is identifiable by a single term: *manipulation*.

This term is of no little significance in the history of philosophy's struggle with rhetoric, for it has been used to set up an opposition between the two which emphasizes philosophy's superiority. Thus it is claimed that rhetoric manipulates, whereas philosophy does not, because the rhetor uses language to enhance his power, whereas the philosopher uses language only to learn. It is even suggested at times that philosophy does not really use language at all; that the very term "use" already suggests something too instrumental: the philosopher only wants to enlighten, not to control his audience, and the source of this enlightenment lies outside both him and his addressee, in the essence of things.

These assertions will be examined fully below. At this stage, it is enough to see what the argument is about: to put it in the most general terms, it is a question of the relations of power flowing between a source and an addressee through written and spoken messages.¹ Using these terms it is possible to construct the limit cases that will be seen to dominate the debate: at one extreme, the message serves to

increase the power of the source and diminish that of the addressee. Through the medium of the message, the addressee is moved towards courses of action desirable to the source; the message acts, in other words, as a form of control or manipulation. At the other extreme, the message serves to augment the capacity and power of the addressee. The source gains nothing; indeed, due to the relative increase in the power of the addressee, it might be thought to have lost power, or at least given it up. In this case, then, the message acts as a form of empowering or education. The complex relationship between these apparent opposites of manipulation and education will be the guiding theme of this chapter.

While my primary concern here is to consider how the contrast between manipulation and education relates to Nietzsche, I will preface this with an exploration of Plato's *Gorgias*, in which the opposition is vividly expressed. Beyond the intrinsic interest of an historical parallel, there are two main reasons for beginning the discussion here. In the first place, it shows the extent to which both Nietzsche and his modern critics are re-enacting an ancient antagonism between philosophy and rhetoric rather than creating a new controversy of their own. But as well as indicating the historical pedigree of the problem, and far more importantly, the *Gorgias* matters here because through it certain prejudices and assumptions about the status of philosophy are established as beyond debate. To break free from the web of Platonic assumptions, questions have to be raised that Plato did not even allow Socrates's opponents to voice. In particular, there are good reasons for believing that the historical *Gorgias* could have produced a far

more radical and confident assertion of the role of rhetoric than he manages in the *Gorgias* dialogue. And the case of Gorgias parallels that of Nietzsche, precisely because Nietzsche's apologists have so often sought to defend him using categories that remain within the Platonic code of philosophical conduct, rather than using Nietzsche (or Gorgias) to challenge that code.

The *Gorgias* is one of Plato's greatest dialogues, and by far the most important source when it comes to determining his relationship to rhetoric. In this chapter, attention is fixed purely on the criticism that rhetoric concentrates power dangerously in the hands of its practitioners, but it must at once be confessed that this is not Plato's main line of attack. His principal explicit criticism is that rhetoric is a form of pandering to the audience's desires, and is therefore corrupt because its practitioners offer the people what they want rather than what is good for them; this and other aspects of the dialogue will be considered in later chapters.²

Pandering, however, is a problem of democracy, and quite different from the complaint that rhetoric abets the would-be tyrant. The latter "criticism" is in fact an idea voiced by the rhetors themselves, which Socrates does no more - but also no less - than confirm. Polus, Callicles, and Gorgias - the three adversaries of Socrates in this dialogue - all defend the manipulative power of rhetoric in different ways. I want briefly to explore the differences between them here, mainly because echoes of these "defences" turn up in the attacks made on Nietzsche.

Let us take Polus first, since his position is the most straightforward. He makes no attempt at an ethical or in any sense universalizable defence of rhetoric's manipulative power. The simple fact that rhetoric can be used by an aspiring politician to increase

his control is justification enough, in the eyes of Polus. The argument is blindingly simple: rhetors have power,³ and those who have such power are in an admirable position. Ethical considerations are an irrelevance: Polus is an advocate of pure political cynicism.⁴ Socrates, for his part, does not dispute that the rhetor has such powers of manipulation at his disposal, but rather tries to show that this does not amount to effective power, because this model politician, if he has not studied philosophy, will not know where his true interests lie, and may thus be able to effect states of affairs, including tyranny, which, if he were enlightened, he would not want.

Most of the debate between Socrates and Polus turns around this question, and yet it is not the truly important one. Whether or not Socrates loses this particular argument, he surely wins the struggle in a more general sense; for even if Polus is right, he proves only that rhetoric helps tyrants, and one does not need to be a Platonist to be disturbed and threatened by an art of speech that might have such consequences. Polus gives no indication that the addressees of rhetoric are anything more than its dupes.

But while Polus makes no attempt to defend the manipulative power of rhetoric in any general sense, both Callicles and Gorgias offer arguments that could provide for it a more serious justification; they provide, indeed, the only serious defences that Plato allows his opponents.

The approach of Callicles is to offer an uncompromising vindication of manipulation. He argues that in the natural social state (*physis*) all creatures seek to maximize their pleasures and in the process struggle against one another for the power so to do. Inevitably, the stronger members of society come out on top, and rule the rest. But the majority of weaklings, disliking this state of

affairs, seek to establish a society based on rules and conventions (*nomos*) in which the strong will be restricted. General rules always in practice inhibit only the strong, Callicles argues, because the weak are incapable of breaking them anyway. Dissatisfied with this tyranny of convention, he advocates a return to the natural order in which the strong are once more unrestricted in their power; and while rhetoric is not directly mentioned at this point, it clearly has a role to play in restoring the strong to their rightful place as leaders of society. Central to Callicles's argument is the notion that justice resides in a certain type of social organization, rather than in a set of procedures; thus the apparent unfairness of rhetoric's manipulative powers can be defended by reference to the state of affairs they help to bring about - an important principle when it comes to considering Nietzsche's position.

Once again, the details of Socrates's response to this position are of little relevance to the discussion of rhetoric as manipulation, and can be dealt with briefly.⁵ He tackles Callicles by arguing that it is better to suffer than to do wrong and, therefore, that the type of society idealized by Callicles, in which all men seek to maximize their freedom to do as they like, is undesirable. By doing as they please, the strong are likely to do wrong and hence to damage themselves. The implication is the same as in the debate with Polus: the power of rhetoric is illusory because it produces effects willy-nilly, without discrimination in terms of their ethical value.

The conversation with Gorgias (the dialogue's first confrontation) is markedly different from the other two. While Polus and Callicles are both students of rhetoric, interested in it only for its political benefits, Gorgias is a teacher of the art and therefore predisposed to offer a defence of his work other than that of

expediency or a "might is right" doctrine. Unlike Polus and Callicles, he desires to make rhetoric appear respectable, and his approach to its manipulative abilities is therefore more circumspect. He, too, emphasizes the power it puts in the hands of its practitioners, but he immediately adds that 'there are of course limits to its proper use, as there are to the use of any other accomplishment.'⁶ This caveat is used by Socrates to wring from Gorgias the promise that if someone came to him unaware, as it were, of the "proper use" of rhetoric (i.e. for moral aims), then he would have to teach him.⁷ But such a concession is a gift, as is recognized even within the dialogue by Polus and Callicles. It allows Socrates to draw the conclusion that, according to Gorgias, the rhetor can never do wrong; an opinion which clashes with the warning Gorgias gives about the potential misuse of rhetoric. The argument is, as so often, dependent on the "Socratic paradox" (that knowledge = virtue). If Gorgias's pupils are already ethically knowledgeable or are taught ethics by him, they must use rhetoric for virtuous purposes (because to know what is right is to do what is right). Thus the possible abuses of rhetoric mentioned by Gorgias would be impossible: he would be arguing against an illusory danger. Nonetheless, as we have seen, Polus presents unchallenged by Socrates the idea that rhetoric is in practice used by tyrants - the threat is real, in other words. Moreover, the way in which Polus and Callicles go about defending rhetoric shows that they at least have no compunctions about "immoral" uses. The implication of all of this is plainly that the ethical education of rhetors has not always been successful, which to Plato is no great surprise: one has to have a thorough grasp of dialectics to know what is right. This fits in with a central claim of the *Phaedrus* (a dialogue sometimes thought to be in conflict with the *Gorgias*) that dialectic is the true foundation of rhetoric.⁸ Without

ethical knowledge, which Gorgias accepts rhetoric does not teach, rhetoric cannot help its practitioner (as Socrates "demonstrates" in his arguments with Polus and Callicles). Ethical knowledge is thus the cornerstone of true mastery - and this, of course, is Socrates's home territory.

The dramatic development of the dialogue, as much as Socrates's arguments, indicates that Gorgias is well-meaning but rather naïve. He may hope that rhetoric is put to good ends, but his own pupils undermine this idea and demonstrate that in practice Gorgias's teaching opens a Pandora's box. It is important to note that, so far as the estimation of Gorgias is concerned, the validity or otherwise of the Socratic paradox is an irrelevance: Gorgias loses either way. If the paradox is accepted, then rhetoric will be an acceptable activity, but only as an ancilla to philosophy. If, however, it is rejected, the desirability of rhetoric is diminished still further. It will then be dangerous not only in the hands of the ignorant, but also in the hands of the knowledgeable but vicious.⁹

Running through all the debates within the *Gorgias* is the common assumption that rhetoric is an art of manipulation which gives its practitioners enormous potential power over their addressees, and while this power is welcomed by all of rhetoric's defenders, it nonetheless puts a great pressure on them. Gorgias's insistence that this power be used responsibly ties him in knots, while Callicles justifies rhetoric within the framework of an "ideal" society that bears strong resemblances to a fascist state. So perhaps it is this unqualified assumption, that rhetoric is a means for its practitioners to control its addressees, that is the real problem for the rhetors. Because it is a point agreed by all the participants, the question of quite how rhetoric exercises such powers is never really examined, and

yet this is a question that clearly must be addressed if Plato's understanding of rhetoric is to be fully scrutinized. The way I propose to do this is to see just how Nietzsche has been attacked for manipulative use of language, and to follow that up with a more general consideration of the nature of linguistic manipulation.

I mentioned earlier that the attacks on Nietzsche echo the discussions within the *Gorgias*,¹⁰ and it is now time to make that point in more detail. Essentially, there are two ways of conceiving Nietzsche in the role of rhetorical manipulator, and these correspond respectively to the position of Callicles and to that of Gorgias.

The first line of attack is that some of Nietzsche's doctrines advocate, or at least accommodate, manipulation. His admiration for many of the more ruthless figures in history, such as Napoleon and Cesare Borgia, suggests an affinity with Callicles's defence of rhetoric as a weapon in the hands of the strong. On the basis of such attitudes it has been claimed that Nietzsche shares Callicles's elitist cynicism and uses language accordingly, to help bring about a shift in the political order in favour of the strong. E.R. Dodds, for example, argues that

there can...be little doubt that certain of the most notorious of [Nietzsche's] own doctrines were in some measure inspired...by the anti-Plato in Plato whose persona is Callicles.¹¹

So the stress here falls on Nietzsche the author, who is accused of using language to manipulate his readers in order to benefit the most ruthless and power-hungry elements of society.

The argument that Nietzsche was an advocate for some kind of power-politics is actually less commonly put than the claim that he was an out-and-out Nazi. This is rather curious, since the distinguishing features of Nazism, such as the German race myth and virulent anti-semitism, are doctrines that Nietzsche quite explicitly rejects. His liberal apologists give themselves rather too easy a task by concentrating their fire so insistently on the distortions of the Nazi propagandists; perhaps they hope that these refutations will silently bury the more serious doubts about Nietzsche's liberal credentials. At any rate, I take it as read here that Nietzsche cannot seriously be taken as an intellectual forerunner of German Nazism.¹²

Nonetheless, there are plenty of Nietzsche passages that cause disquiet to liberals and seem to have affinities with non-racialist fascist doctrines. The suggestion is that these comments would allow Nietzsche to defend the manipulative force of rhetoric à la Callicles, as useful to the élite. I reproduce a few of them here.

The most concentrated source of evidence for such a Nietzschean power doctrine lies in the notes collected within *The Will to Power* under the heading "Discipline and breeding".¹³ Nietzsche sees the relation between élite and mass as one of exploitation:

The dwarfing of man must for a long time count as the only goal; because a broad foundation has first to be created so that a stronger species of man can stand upon it. (To what extent every strengthened species of man has stood upon a level of the lower____)¹⁴

What is particularly important in this passage is that there is no attempt to justify the superior type of man by invoking benefits it might produce for the inferior. On the contrary, so far as Nietzsche is

concerned the inferior type - numerically, the vast majority - finds its justification for existing at all solely in the benefits it can provide the "masters".¹⁵

The Calliclean understanding of rhetoric as a weapon in the struggle of the strong to reassume their rightful place is echoed in Nietzsche's repeated insistence that the new masters must be hard and have the instincts of warriors; to the weaker elements of society they will even appear as barbarians.¹⁶ In a famous passage from *The Genealogy of Morals* Nietzsche goes out of his way to emphasize the immense forces unleashed with the advent of these new barbarians:

once they go outside, where the strange, the stranger is found, they are not much better than uncaged beasts of prey. There they savour a freedom from all social constraints, they compensate themselves in the wilderness for the tension engendered by protracted confinement and enclosure within the peace of society, they go back to the innocent conscience of the beast of prey, as triumphant monsters who perhaps emerge from a disgusting procession of murder, arson, rape, and torture, exhilarated and undisturbed of soul, as if it were no more than a students' prank, convinced they have provided the poets with a lot more material for song and praise. One cannot fail to see at bottom of all these noble races the splendid blond beast prowling about avidly in search of spoil and victory; this hidden core needs to erupt from time to time, the animal has to get out again and go back to the wilderness...¹⁷

Kaufmann points out that the "blond beast" is not a racial concept, since Nietzsche immediately goes on to mention the Arabic and Japanese nobility as examples of the type; 'the "blondness" obviously refers to the beast, the lion.'¹⁸ But why use this flamboyant metaphor if it has no resonances? The fact is that Callicles makes not only a similar point about society, but actually uses the same image:

We mould the best and strongest among ourselves, catching them young like lion cubs, and by spells and incantations we make slaves of them, saying that they must be content with equality and that this is what is right and fair. But if a man arises endowed with a nature sufficiently strong, he will, I believe, shake off all these controls, burst his fetters, and break loose.¹⁹

What I have been trying to suggest here is the plausibility of a Nietzschean politics that could justify rhetoric's powers of manipulation through the results that such manipulation might achieve, and which in so doing follows closely the line adopted by Callicles. While Nietzsche could not be described as Calliclean in all respects,²⁰ he does appear to be in the sense that is crucial for determining the role of rhetoric, in that his standard of valuation is a thing's propensity to advance or to obstruct the would-be masters, and if this involves exploiting the mass, then so be it—or rather, so much the better!

There are various ways of responding to this challenge, but the most popular of them - the appeal to "good interpretation" - is less than convincing. For the awkward fact is that liberal Nietzsche scholars have their prejudices too, and are just as likely as their fanatical opponents to be blinded by them in the face of conflicting textual evidence. A fascinating cautionary tale here is Kaufmann's attempt to dismiss Nietzsche's alleged admiration for Cesare Borgia on the strength of a passage from *Ecce Homo* which states, according to Kaufmann,

that one should look 'even for a Cesare Borgia rather than for a Parsifal' (EH III I). Translators and interpreters have not always minded the *eher noch*: 'even for a Borgia rather than a Parsifal.' This *eher noch* leaves no doubt that Nietzsche considered Cesare Borgia far from admirable but preferred even him to the Parsifal

All is not what it seems, however. One of the ancillary passages which Kaufmann mentions, presumably to support his claim, actually states that

Confusion went so far that one branded the very virtuosi of life...with the most opprobrious names. Even now one believes one must disapprove of a Cesare Borgia; that is simply laughable.²²

It will take considerable exegetical skills for that passage to be squared with Kaufmann's view of the matter. Worse follows, however, because the very passage Kaufmann accuses others of mistranslating, he misquotes from the German. The sentence actually runs:

Wem ich ins Ohr flüsterte, er solle sich eher nach einem Cesare Borgia als nach einem Parsifal umsehn, der traute seinen Ohren nicht.²³

Translated, the passage states simply: "rather a Cesare Borgia than a Parsifal"; there is no "even" in sight. Clearly Kaufmann is one of those "der traute seinen Ohren nicht"!

There may be other ways to give Nietzsche a more liberal face, and to undermine the Calliclean image of him that has so far been presented;²⁴ but even if we "assume the worst", there are three important reasons for rejecting a deduction from a politics of manipulation to a manipulative rhetorical practice.

In the first place, it is highly presumptuous to assume that for either Nietzsche or Callicles the rule of the strong automatically implies the employment of deceptive, manipulative techniques. Indeed it may be a defining feature of this politics that it does not need such

techniques:

The princes of Europe should consider carefully whether they can do without our support. We immoralists - we are today the only power that needs no allies in order to conquer: thus we are by far the strongest of the strong. We do not even need to tell lies: what other power can dispense with that?²⁵

This passage is admittedly ambiguous, since it leaves open the possibility that while the "immoralists" can do without deception, no other power can. This alternative interpretation, however, suggests another reason for rejecting a commitment to rhetorical manipulation, namely that, even if it is appropriate for politicians to adopt such practices, the vocation of the thinker imposes different demands, and indeed requires uncompromising frankness. After all, Nietzsche is forever ready to insist (exceptionally among philosophers) that the same rules of conduct cannot and should not be applied indifferently to all walks of life.

One need not take it on Nietzsche's authority, though, that different roles imply different strategies: so far as manipulation is concerned, there is a structural logic involved, which might be termed the "paradox of propaganda".²⁶ In simple terms, this means that a figure who advocates rhetorical manipulation cannot at the same time be practising it, since the first function obstructs the second: the practitioner of deception is lost if he tells the world what he is doing. Or, to put it another way: if Nietzsche is a modern Machiavelli, he cannot for that very reason be a Cesare Borgia. So even if he advocates an art of political manipulation in theory, this makes him less rather than more likely to be a rhetorical manipulator in practice.

If this defence gets Nietzsche off one hook, however, it would appear to do so only at the price of fixing him far more firmly upon another. This is because the dismissal of authorial intentions cuts both ways: if bad intentions do not prove Nietzsche guilty of rhetorical manipulation, it is just as certain that good intentions are insufficient grounds for pronouncing him innocent. Moreover, at the level of textual structures and their effects, there is a considerable case to answer: Nietzsche is well-known for his rhetorical excesses, and equally notorious for the uses to which they have been put; in two world wars, his works were used to help justify imperialism and fascism.²⁷ Once the shield of good intentions is removed, the fact that Nietzsche's works proved so easy to "exploit" inevitably leads to suspicions of irresponsibility and negligence in his use of language. Derrida accurately expresses the position:

if one no longer considers only intent...when reading a text, then the law that makes the perverting simplification possible must lie in the structure of the text "remaining"...Even if one of the signatories or shareholders in the huge "Nietzsche Corporation" had nothing to do with it, it cannot be entirely fortuitous that the discourse bearing his name in society...has served as a legitimating reference for ideologues.²⁸

What I aim to do in the following pages is to enact the project outlined but not undertaken by Derrida: to explore the features of Nietzsche's texts that allow the "perverting simplification" of the "ideologues" - the dangerous elements. However, while I begin by identifying particular textual structures in Nietzsche and asking what is problematic about them, the discussion soon becomes much broader.

For when philosophy's warning about the abuses of rhetoric remains essentially unchanged from Socrates's attack on Gorgias to the worries of the present day, it is clear that more than a straightforward piece of exegesis will be required here.

I will turn first to a detailed consideration of Nietzsche's alleged rhetorical excesses: what are the features that have caused peace-loving philosophers disquiet, and given succour to the wild men? In general terms, the element in Nietzsche that has consistently aroused suspicion among philosophers and scholars is his propensity to crusade for various causes, to write texts that seem to be imploring, cajoling, sometimes even bullying their readers. Nor is this suspicion a modern one: it was the first response of Nietzsche's contemporaries to the publication of *The Birth of Tragedy* in 1872. As Strong has noted, the work

appeared to the academic world as the writing of a man obsessed with the most dubious of contemporary artistic phenomena, Richard Wagner, and Nietzsche was immediately cast as a man who had given up scholarship for propaganda.²⁹

And yet Nietzsche never did anything to try to refute this hostile reaction, and if anything seemed to revel in the role allotted him. *The Genealogy of Morals* is actually subtitled 'eine Schreitschrift' ('a polemic'), indicating Nietzsche's disdain for academic respectability. In most of his late work, he is seeking out enemies and picking fights with them; he seems never more at home than when he is in the middle of a battle. The suspicion is that such an approach stirs up passions against Nietzsche's opponents, but does nothing to further understanding, which - these critics would contend - is the task of the genuine philosopher. Heidegger has made this point succinctly:

Any kind of polemics fails from the outset to assume the attitude of thinking. The opponent's role is not the thinking role. Thinking is thinking only when it pursues whatever speaks for a subject.

For Heidegger, this rather puts the late published works of Nietzsche under a cloud, as he goes on to make plain:

Nietzsche never did publish what he really thought after Zarathustra - something we tend to overlook. All his writings after Zarathustra are polemics; they are outcries. What he really thought became known only through the largely inadequate posthumous publications.³⁰

Here, we have the essence of the philosophers' dislike of rhetorical manipulation: it strikes poses, it aims to produce effects on its audience. The philosopher's true goal of saying "what he really thinks" is sidetracked and subverted by his desire to win victories over his enemies. Heidegger's inference is plainly that rage makes blind.

To come to specifics, one can point to Nietzsche's use of highly emotive terms in these polemical works, which agitate the reader towards certain conclusions purely through their unconscious associations. In *The Genealogy of Morals* there are phrases like "the slave revolt in morals" and "reactive man", which are opposed by terms with positive connotations - "master" and "active". In *The Antichrist*, too, the enemy is often attacked in a highly aggressive fashion. For example:

it is Christianity...which translates every revolution into mere blood and crime! Christianity is a revolt of everything that crawls along the ground directed against that which is elevated: the Gospel of the "lowly" makes low.³¹

But as well as producing and vilifying enemies, Nietzsche's works resound with positive appeals to the emotions of their readers, with dramatic slogans and powerful exhortations. Thus *Spoke Zarathustra* contains many, such as the speech in which Zarathustra thunders to the crowd:

Behold, I teach you the Overman (Übermensch).

The Overman is the meaning of the earth. Let your will say: The Overman shall be the meaning of the earth!³²

In other works, the reader is not even the witness of these onslaughts, but is directly apostrophized, as in the much-quoted demand: 'Live dangerously! Build your cities on the slopes of Vesuvius! Send your ships into uncharted seas!'³³

The passage just cited is particularly potent, since it not only produces a sense of purpose, but directly challenges the audience to accept this ethic as its own. Adopting the imperative mood is one of the clearest ways of seeking to direct and influence an audience; it is too intrusive to be easily ignored. One need only think of the power of Kitchener's pointing finger with the slogan "your country needs YOU!" to recognize the propaganda potential of Nietzsche's language.

Nor is this all. Another technique for encouraging participation, to which Nietzsche frequently resorts, is what might be called the "conspiratorial 'we'". Of course, the occurrence of the first person plural is common, even commonplace, in philosophical texts; but it does not often assume an important rhetorical function: it could, by and large, be substituted by "I" or "one" without altering the text's impact. With Nietzsche, the situation is often different, for instance in the closing sections of *The Gay Science*. Here, the "we" operates to denote a group sharing certain ideals and rejecting others;

it is a group with a strong definition, with clear limits. An example:

We children of the future, how could we be at home in this today?
We feel disfavour for all ideals that might lead one to feel at
home even in this fragile, broken time of transition...³⁴

In this and in many other instances the reader is virtually obliged either to accept or reject this group. He is forced to ask himself: could I be at home in this today? If not - and agitational rhetoric always works best on the discontented - the reader is encouraged to believe himself part of this "we", and is drawn towards those who have understood him and his needs so well. Nietzsche's "we" helps to forge a group identity.

One final technique worth noting in this context is Nietzsche's use of hyperbole, which of course reaches its zenith in *Ecce Homo*. The audience is encouraged to believe that the cause is not merely worthy but of earth-shattering significance; the stakes are raised, the tension is heightened:

I know my fate. One day there will be associated with my name the recollection of something frightful - of a crisis like no other before on earth, of the profoundest collision of conscience, of a decision evoked against everything that until then had been believed in, demanded, sanctified. I am not a man, I am dynamite.³⁵

But even in the earliest works there is an immodesty evident, a sense of uniqueness and innovation. Nietzsche excites his readers with the promise that they are witnesses of something special - something which cannot be ignored.

What all these techniques have in common is their tendency to

agitate the reader, and the allegation is that this renders them irresponsible and dangerous. For whether or not Nietzsche intended them to be used to forward any kind of political or social programme, they are perfect for those who do have such designs. The slogans and exhortations and sheer exuberance of Nietzsche's texts have provided not only material to be cynically used, but genuine inspiration for the twentieth century's most fanatical figures. The leading French fascist, Marcel Déat, was not simply "making propaganda" when he wrote that

Nietzsche's idea of the selection of "good Europeans" is now being realized on the battlefield, by the LFV and the Waffen SS. An aristocracy, a knighthood is being created by the war which will be the hard, pure nucleus of the Europe of the future.³⁶

In the light of this kind of reception, it is argued, Nietzsche's rhetoric has to be considered an error of taste and judgement. The key complaint against it is that it is too easily used.

While this discussion has concentrated on particular structures in Nietzsche's texts, they have been deemed problematic because of their alleged effects: some account is therefore required of how and why these effects are supposed to be achieved - and, for that matter, how they are to be measured. No really satisfactory general method exists for resolving these problems;³⁷ but this is not a major obstacle, since the criticisms of the allegedly manipulative rhetorical techniques in Nietzsche's texts are clearly reliant on certain presuppositions about what makes such language manipulative.³⁸ To put it in a formula, the fear is that Nietzsche = agitation = propaganda. All the complaints are against techniques which cajole or blackmail readers towards adopting particular viewpoints. The use of emotive terms allegedly plays on unconscious fears and desires to direct

the reader on a particular course. This may be good for producing action, since it holds up certain paths as desirable and others as detestable, but it is surely not good for encouraging careful thinking and reflection (so the argument goes). Such agitation belongs to the realm of politics, not philosophy; indeed, due to its widespread use by the Bolsheviks, a new word has even come into the English language: *agitprop*. In his comments on its use by Lenin, Mao, and Hitler, Ellul gives an indication of its revolutionary potential:

Agitation propaganda...addresses itself to the interior of each one of us, but it always translates itself into a material engagement in tense and overexcited activity. By being socialized into this activity, the inner brakes and psychological bolts on the individual's habits, beliefs and judgements are blown apart.³⁹

There are two main problems with this neat analysis of Nietzsche's texts as manipulative. The first is that we have as yet heard insufficient about the alternative; how are other texts, especially philosophical texts, supposed to be non-manipulative? It may prove impossible to give out a formula defining the non-manipulative; perhaps indeed there is no such thing as a pure, non-manipulative text? If this is the case, then plainly the problem of manipulation becomes a quite general one, and the attack on Nietzsche loses the force provided by a meaningful alternative. The second problem is with the assumption that agitation implies manipulation in all cases. It may be that within a certain framework, Nietzsche's polemics operate differently, and that the term "manipulation" is in this case misapplied.

Let us turn, then, to the efforts to establish philosophy as "outside" manipulation. How might this be done?

The most simple idea is that the philosopher and manipulator

are just different types. While the political figure uses language to direct his audience, the philosopher is essentially an explorer in language, unconcerned with any notion of effects; the philosopher is an inquirer tout court. The contrast is thus between the politician, who knows what he wants and is merely concerned with how to get it, and the philosopher, who asks what he (and everyone else) should want. But this distinction would only be perfect if the philosopher never ended his inquiry and therefore never took any decisions and never reported back any results. Notwithstanding those critics of the *vita contemplativa* who regard it as an excuse for inactivity, philosophers do, at least in part, aim to produce right action, based on sound and thorough reflection;⁴⁰ so, once the philosopher has decided what constitutes right action, he is presumably duty-bound to report these findings and seek to convince others to act in the same way. The problem he faces is how this report can possibly be distinguished from that of the propagandist, who also claims to know what is right, and advocates accordingly. It looks as if inquiry and propaganda need not be the activities of two distinct types, but may perhaps be merely two different stages of a single process.

Still, to persist, it could be claimed that, even at the point of communication to an audience, the philosopher and propagandist are clearly distinguishable on account of their different goals. Philosophy, it can be argued, does not treat its audience as means, since it is concerned to work out action that is to the benefit of all. This distinguishes it from propaganda, which has no concern for the interests of its audience, and indeed will use that audience if at all possible to further the propagandist's private goals.⁴¹

This amounts to saying no more than that the philosopher comes to his audience with good intentions. A cynic might contest the

point, but it can be accepted quite happily; it does not salvage the argument. For, in the first place, good intentions are not a quality likely to make the philosopher distinguishable from the propagandist. As we saw when considering the case of Nietzsche, the propagandist would for tactical reasons clearly not reveal his intention to dupe people, and so it is not a difference that could in any way be read directly from the respective texts.⁴² And in any case, the propagandist - certainly the modern propagandist - is not likely to be motivated purely by self-interest, greed and opportunism. On the contrary, he is likely to believe fervently that his ideology is beneficial to his audience. He probably believes, like the philosopher, that he has the best interests of the people at heart. Goebbels, for example, wrote that

What matters is that my political perception should, like the artist's aesthetic one, be genuine and true, that is to say beneficial to society. Detail doesn't matter. Truth consists in what benefits my country.⁴³

Is Goebbels not talking like a good philosopher here? His language suggests the intriguing possibility that, rather than helping to distinguish philosophy from propaganda, the desire to help the audience discover its true interests actually makes philosophy *more likely* to manipulate. In part, the problem is simply that the emphasis on "true interests" adds a moral force to the process of argument and intensifies the urge to convince. But, more importantly, it increases the susceptibility of the audience. Since Plato, philosophers have tended to claim that they can help people discover their true interests, and suggested that reflection may help to determine whether an action is right or wrong. The dialogue *Euthyphro*, indeed, is

fundamentally concerned with the importance of *justifying* actions, and as it progresses Euthyphro's dogmatic assurance that he should prosecute his own father is brought into doubt. Socrates's (ironic) comment towards the end of the dialogue clearly signals the educative role philosophy can play in helping people discover their true interests:

If you did not know precisely what is holy and unholy, it is unthinkable that for a simple labourer you ever would have moved to prosecute your aged father on a charge of murder. No, you would have feared to risk the wrath of the gods on the chance that you were not doing right, and would have been afraid of the talk of men.⁴⁴

While this may indicate Socrates's "good intentions", it also has the effect of increasing the possible scope of manipulation. The message to Euthyphro is to doubt his instincts concerning how to behave: those instincts must be certified by argument. Once he accepts that his "best interests" are a matter of knowledge rather than instinct, he accepts that someone else may be able to tell him where they lie, and the scope for the propagandist is then enormously enlarged. As well as suggesting action based on argument from perceived interests, propaganda can suggest action based on *attacking* perceived interests, which opens up far more radical possibilities.

But if manipulation does not structurally require self-interest or mischievous intentions on the part of its producers, neither does it necessarily involve the agitational techniques associated with Nietzsche. Ellul draws a distinction between what he terms "agitation propaganda" and "integration propaganda". While the former tends to be used on ill-educated people, in less developed

countries, and aims to activate the people, propaganda of integration aims to make people conform and accept what is: it inhibits change, rather than encouraging it. Moreover, it is the form par excellence of twentieth-century propaganda. In the United States, which Ellul regards as the prime producer of integration propaganda,

it is evident that this propaganda is much more subtle, much more complex and nuanced than the other type [agitation propaganda]. It does not seek exultation but rather a total, in-depth modelling.⁴⁵

The importance of this new category of propaganda is that it dispels the naive idea that linguistic manipulation can only occur under a narrow set of circumstances, in which posters, politicians or newspapers scream out messages of hate or desire. If there were a Master Propagandist, He would want us to believe exactly that, and would no doubt feed us some pieces of stereotypical agitation propaganda so that we could congratulate ourselves on how good we were at resisting it!

The devil is most powerful when he is least expected. More and more, argues Ellul, propaganda is not emotional and irrational, but quiet, rational and informative, because modern man does not like being bullied. He sums up the reason for the increased reliance on information pithily:

A reference to fact is necessary for modern man - a self-justification which allows him to convince himself that in acting thus he is obeying reason, he is following what is proven.⁴⁶

One might perhaps characterize this tendency of modern man as Socratic. People are doing as Socrates advised Euthyphro: believing in something

only once its value has been proved to them.

The key question is whether this represents an advance in scepticism or merely an aging world's attempt to retain room for faith: faith in truth, in right ways of doing things. Certainly there can be no doubt about Plato's Socrates: for him, scepticism is only a means; as an outcome, as a final result, he detests it.⁴⁷ He is certain that there is a general truth, but he is equally certain that one must be careful and methodical if one is to find it - that is perhaps the core of his teaching. And, of course, the aim of the philosopher must then be to find that truth, so that he can know how to live. Along the way, he will come across many manipulators who either do not know or do not care about the truth; when this happens, his aim will always be to expose them.⁴⁸

It would not be melodramatic to assert that the entire edifice of philosophy's traditional pose against propaganda and manipulation rests on these optimistic ontological and epistemological assumptions. If there is an essential ontological "truth of things" and this truth of things is capable of being known, or at least approximated, then the exposure of propaganda can proceed apace. If, on the other hand, there are only interpretations, then the ability to pass off an interpretation as a description is one of the most effective propaganda devices available: the philosopher may ultimately be a manipulator of a superior type!

Once one begins to look at philosophy in this light, the suspicions rapidly multiply. For example, the widespread insistence among philosophers on "rigorous" and logical debate, which is vaunted by its adherents as a symbol of their rectitude, could be viewed instead as an effective tool of manipulation, since it helps to set its users above suspicion. In ancient Greece it was common practice for

rhetors to protest their ignorance of the art of speaking and bemoan their plainness of speech, because elaborate techniques were liable to arouse the audience's suspicion. Such ploys actually formed a recognized element of rhetoric: *ethos*, or the attempt to establish the speaker's good character.⁴⁹

One might even suspect, in a cynical moment, that it is precisely the philosopher's "love of truth" that helps keep propaganda in business. Demystification always follows the same logic: "this is not telling the truth, but someone, somewhere, sometime, will be telling it to you; perhaps, indeed, you yourself will discover it." In other words, it is only *particular instances* of alleged truth-telling that are criticized - the general principle is always left unchallenged. More than that: it is precisely in order to defend that principle that the debunking of propaganda takes place; it gives truth a bad reputation. But if the main aim were to reduce susceptibility to manipulation, the most effective route would be to cast suspicion on the very possibility of finding the truth. That way, the next prophet who claims to have the answers could be met with the simple response that answers are not to be found; the credulity on which propaganda plays would be undermined.⁵⁰

The obvious objection to this line of argument is that it amounts to a programme of complete cynicism, since it suggests that all discourses are equally bad, equally manipulative, and all alike should therefore be disregarded. Apart from the fact that this would be an impossible task, is a doctrine that would equate a Kantian treatise with a fascist broadsheet anything other than an absurdity? Does it not take suspicion to a self-destructive extreme? And does its advocacy not in any case involve a performative paradox, since in affirming the doctrine one must ignore the very text that propounds it? Above all,

surely there is an empowering potential in philosophy, such that it cannot be all manipulation and no education?

These criticisms are serious, but they misread the trajectory of my argument. There is no question here of somehow sheltering the addressee from all discourse on the grounds that none of it is pure and honest enough: such a response would manifest the nihilism that derives from the deflation of ideals, whereas my aim here is rather to challenge these ideals; consequently, the performative problem does not arise. This need to challenge the ideal of a pure discourse is further demonstrated by the inevitable instinct of philosophers that only their work retains an educational ideal, even if it is difficult always to show how it differs from the charlatans and propagandists, and even if it does not always attain the ideal. The real shock to the system will only come if the rhetorical alternative is seen to have its own "empowering potential"; with this in mind, I want to return now to Nietzsche, to consider afresh his "manipulation".

Resources are available for attempts to deny, or at least to modify, the claim that Nietzsche's writings are agitational,⁵¹ but I am happy not to explore these, and instead to ask more thoroughly about the effects of the agitational rhetoric. They are not as straightforward as was earlier suggested; other ways of looking at the rhetoric lead towards very different conclusions. I will first give detailed responses to the criticisms made earlier, and then outline what are perhaps the fundamental clashes and contradictions between the two perspectives.

First, consider polemics, which, as we have seen, Heidegger (among others) regards as obstructive to genuine thinking. But why should this be? Not, surely, because thinking is the pure, indiscriminate affirmation of all things. If that were the case, it

would be nothing but the braying of Zarathustra's ass, which can only affirm.⁵² Presumably, Heidegger's point is that forging an attack on something does nothing to further understanding, which must be the goal of thinking. Does one not understand something better, he suggests, when one has looked at it from all sides, without the prejudice and blindness of the opponent? This claim should not be allowed to go uncontested: why must the opponent's role imply a lack of perspicacity? It may be that one sees only the weaknesses of one's opponent, not his strengths, but this is not as a consequence of being in opposition, but because one is a type of human being that requires its enemies to be purely evil - and Nietzsche quite explicitly repudiates this kind of enmity.⁵³ Contra Heidegger, it is precisely the opponent's role which demands the most thorough understanding of "whatever speaks for a subject" in order to oppose it effectively: the two processes are not in any sense contradictory. Moreover, there is no iron law which suggests that understanding a subject better means that one will like it any better (only politicians who lose elections cling to this claim); nor is there a converse implication that one will understand something better if one likes it. Here, the opposite danger is present to that of the opponent: namely, that one will not see the weaknesses of one's friends. Nietzsche is just as aware of this danger as he is of the danger of slandering one's enemies, and opposes all complacent friendship.⁵⁴

Heidegger's criticism of polemics clearly emanates from some of the traditional prejudices concerning philosophy and the standpoint of the philosopher. The aim is to lose particularity and approach Being by a careful process of listening: one might say that the best philosopher is the one with the biggest ear; the one who has made himself *nothing but an ear*.⁵⁵ Given such an understanding, polemics

will inevitably be a desecration of the process of thinking, which requires peace and quiet rather than shouting. But what if Being is silent, and the sounds the philosopher hears emanate from *inside*? If that is the case, then the relative propaganda values of "neutral" and polemical prose change radically: the "neutral" work will then, just as much as the polemic, be the expression of a philosopher's "for and against", only with the critical difference that it no longer presents itself as such. This sublimated expression of interests is still *implicitly* in conflict with rival versions, but it either refuses to recognize the alternatives altogether or, like Hegel, recognizes them only as subsumed within a more complete understanding: conflict is either denied or resolved. By contrast, the visibility of the opponent within polemics implicitly rejects the possibility of a value-neutral truth-telling or truth-hearing exercise. In *The Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche even points out directly that Hesiod divided the same epoch into two, "silver" and "bronze", as the only way of expressing the incompatibility of meaning experienced by oppressors and oppressed within that epoch.⁵⁶

The other criticisms of Nietzsche's "manipulative" writing can be challenged along similar lines. Just as polemic makes blatant the fact that philosophical texts exist within and as part of various struggles and conflicts, so the other features mentioned make blatant the intervention of the author in ways normally considered beneath the dignity of philosophy. It is suggested that these devices may pressgang the reader into blind acceptance of the Nietzschean message; the reader may be overwhelmed by the prophetic tones and injunctions, the conspiratorial "we", and by the assurances that both the work and its author are of world-historical importance. But is this really so certain?

It is true that agitation propaganda needs to attempt to involve the addressee, and to convince him/her that the cause is important. But the usual appeal in such cases is to accepted commonplaces, whereas in Nietzsche's case the appeal is to the author's own authority. And doesn't this reflexive appeal actually undermine the propaganda value by causing the addressee to speculate about its nature? In contrast to the Kitchener poster, which appeals in the name of patriotism and military authority, Nietzsche appeals only in his own name. And who is he? Any reader with the merest sprinkling of scepticism will surely ask this question, and thus come to question and perhaps doubt the status of the "messages" contained within the texts. And of course, this is precisely the opposite to the requirements of propaganda, which above all else needs to preserve respect for its status in order to function effectively. Seen in these terms, *Ecce Homo* is an astoundingly unegotistical work of philosophy, since it almost completely lacks the mechanisms to control and compel assent, without which a philosopher feels naked in front of his readers. One of the most effective of these mechanisms is, of course, to create the impression that *nobody at all is speaking*: that way, the reader is encouraged to concentrate exclusively on the "message" and to treat it with respect as emanating from the vaults of reason rather than from some living, desiring, idiosyncratic human organism (as is actually the case). Nietzsche's self-advertising detracts from this customary respect; indeed, through its sheer assertiveness, the text disqualifies itself from all claims to have the right to be heard.

These points lead towards the general idea that what matters, from the point of view of manipulation, is whether the text produces a series of predictable, automatic responses, or whether it surprises and provokes the addressee. Clearly, however, this depends not only on what

is in the text, but also on the character of the addressee, which is inevitably variable and unpredictable. It is remarkable how crudely philosophers have tended to deal with the whole question of "effects": the guiding assumption of much of the critique of Nietzsche's emotive writing, for example, is that there is a simple cause-effect relationship involved; but, granting that the addressee is agitated or "set in motion", is that necessarily an indication of manipulation? Certainly, if emotive writing were like a doctor's hammer, producing reflex responses when applied to the correct part of the body, then one would be quite justified in making such a claim; and this crude model is the one most post-Platonic philosophers have quite happily accepted. They give the impression that once the emotions are aroused judgement disappears completely, and human beings become hyperactive automata until the passion has passed. But isn't this just one more aspect of the very old prejudice splitting the "animal" (physical/passionate) part of *homo sapiens* from the "fully human" (rational) side?⁵⁷

My suggestion is that the provocation of the "animal" passions can, under the right circumstances, produce more intense reflection than straightforward cerebral writing. Nietzsche's writing is full of agitation that runs "against the grain", against what in our tradition are deep-set prejudices, and from the point of view of manipulation, this is highly significant. Successful propaganda, in order to have something on which to bite, has to be preceded by a process of "softening up", which will proceed slowly and steadily over a number of years, conditioning individuals to respond positively to certain stimuli and negatively to others. There are many words for this process; "moral education" is certainly not the least appropriate. Ellul terms it "sub-propaganda", and comments that

it has as its goal to mobilize individuals in the etymological sense, that is to say to make them mobile, to make them mobilizable, so that they can be pressed into action at the appropriate moment.⁵⁸

Now while agitational writing clearly can be what mobilizes, it is hard to believe this in Nietzsche's case, since he tends to praise what sub-propaganda would suggest be condemned, and fights against causes and values that are victorious, or at least in the ascendancy.⁵⁹ Thus the controversial passage from *The Genealogy of Morals* cited above⁶⁰ appeals against deep-seated, commonplace assumptions, not in their name. Negative values are given to: "justice", "concord", "humane", "righteous", and "peace", while positive values are given to "war", "slavery", "beast of prey", "arson", "rape" and "torture", among others. Surely this will only act as propaganda for the "blond beast" on those who have already made this inversion of values? For the rest, it brings into question values which they may have thought unchallengeable, and this increases the obstacles facing "active" propaganda. For to be effective, it will no longer be sufficient merely to label someone or something as "unjust" or "evil". These terms will no longer produce automatic reflex-responses, because Nietzsche raises the doubt: what is wrong with being "unjust" or "evil"? In other words, his agitation can be seen as striking against the structures supporting propaganda, rather than itself being propaganda.

What this amounts to is a response to manipulation very different from that advocated by Socrates in the *Gorgias*. For Socrates, the problem was that

the rhetor...does not teach courts and other bodies about right and wrong - he merely persuades them; he could hardly teach so large a number of people matters of such importance in a short

time.⁶¹

The implicit judgement is that, given more time, in private, such a moral education would be possible. Rhetoric and education are presented as contrasting methods for overcoming doubt and uncertainty on a matter; and since education produces conviction and knowledge, while rhetoric merely produces conviction, the former is clearly to be preferred. Socrates's key assumption is that the manipulator's enchantment will be ineffective against an enlightened audience, and so this kind of knowledge-producing education will provide an antidote to it:

Socrates: A rhetor will be more persuasive than a doctor regarding health?

Gorgias: Yes, I said so, before a crowd.

Socrates: And before a crowd means among the ignorant, for surely, among those who know, he will not be more convincing than the doctor?

Gorgias: That is quite true.⁶²

Is a moral education the answer, or merely part of the problem? If propaganda is conceived as "distortion of the truth", then the antidote to it will be to find and disseminate the truth; but if there is no "truth", then all attempts to claim otherwise will themselves be exercises in propaganda, or at least in sub-propaganda - disseminating the values on which propaganda plays. According to the latter view, the only way in which education can counter propaganda is by *bringing into question* fundamental values, not trying to establish them. This means, of course, that there can be no ultimate bulwarks against propaganda, only a series of shifting strategies, because as soon as anything is assigned a fixed and certain value, it is a

potential resource for manipulation. Against Socrates: the fundamental requirement of an audience for it to be manipulated is not that it be ignorant but that it be *unsuspecting*.

There is in fact good reason to believe that Gorgias - the historical figure - was unlikely to agree, as Plato ventriloquizes him to, with the Socratic suggestion that the answer to the problem of manipulation is a sound moral education. His acquiescence is not even consistent with Plato's characterization of him in another dialogue, the *Meno*:

Socrates: And what about the Sophists, the only people who profess to teach it [virtue]? Do you think they do?

Meno: The thing I particularly admire about Gorgias, Socrates, is that you will never hear him make this claim; indeed, he laughs at the others when he hears them do so. In his view his job is to make clever speakers.⁶³

And it is this latter version which fits with the epistemological pessimism of Gorgias's treatise *On Non-Being or on Nature*, which makes the threefold claim

firstly, that nothing exists; secondly, that even if anything exists it is inapprehensible by man; thirdly, that even if anything is apprehensible, yet it is certainly inexpressible and incommunicable to one's neighbour.⁶⁴

It is hard to see how the author of such a doctrine could glibly agree to teach his pupils virtue, should they come to him in ignorance of it.

Untersteiner has argued that Gorgias's ontological-epistemological comments are only one part of an attitude to existence which also embraces rhetoric.⁶⁵ The key element in this - utterly alien

to the Platonic tradition - is the idea that there can be a positive value attached to deception (*apate*). For example, Gorgias suggests that tragedy

with its myths and emotions has created a deception such that its successful practitioner is nearer to reality than the unsuccessful, and the man who lets himself be deceived is wiser than he who does not...for anyone not lacking in sensibility allows himself to be won by the pleasure of words.⁶⁶

There is no promise that the audience is undeceived, because according to the ontology of Gorgias absolute truth resides only in the perfect opposition of all things. Thus the only truly rational activity would be total non-activity; indeed, not even that, since even doing nothing involves a choosing of one side of an opposition over another and is thus irrational. There is no option available of a "rational decision" - those who believe otherwise are seeing a Socratic mirage. Knowledge and action are irreconcilably opposed.⁶⁷

Thus the preparedness of the *rheto*rs to speak on either side of an argument - despised by Socrates as a sign both of ignorance and immorality - can be seen as a natural development from this pessimistic ontology, rather than an inherent opportunism. There is a need for the conscious deception of rhetoric, for without it the paralysis of knowledge inhibits action. Against the Socratic notion that rhetoric requires ignorance there runs the counter that the truly wise appreciate the value of rhetoric. Such an argument does not appear in Plato; but then his task is to make his opponents plausible, not convincing.

The other surprising absence in the *Gorgias* is the lack of any sense of the fallibility of the rhetor. There are, after all, two

obvious reasons why he cannot simply impose his will as a tyrant might, so that the dialogue's persistent analogies between the two are highly misleading. In the first place, no threat of violence emanates from the rhetor. If his speech is to work, it must win the voluntary assent of its addressee, and there is nothing to prevent this being withheld. Ellul has pointed out this feature with respect to modern propaganda: it is not possible for an individual simply to be directed from above through the medium of language. He is not a passive victim, since he must in some sense desire the message he is being given, or else it could not affect him.⁶⁸ Effective rhetoric cannot be the imposition of something totally alien; at the maximum, it can allow one drive to dominate (for a while at least) the others. It can alter the balance of forces; nothing more.

But the rhetor's ability to do as he wills is also inhibited by the likelihood that he will be pitted against an opponent. This is clearly the case in law-courts and the (democratic) political arena, the two most common rhetorical stages, and is perfectly compatible with Gorgias's pessimistic ontology. When one understands the universe as a scene of conflicting forces, there can be no grounds for denying the opposition the chance to present its case: in marked contrast, Plato insists that there is only one way, the task being to find it.

It would be a mistake to conclude from this discussion that Nietzsche's texts have somehow "solved" the problem of manipulation, and the idea that polemics might provide some kind of model for a "healthy", non-manipulative communication is quite untenable. Communication is a relational activity, and as such there can be no models to allocate

heroes and villains to their roles in advance.

It is not even a case of arguing that Nietzsche's texts are, contrary to all expectation, of educative, rather than manipulative nature, for nothing is "educative in itself". To speculate: it may be that education has two contrasting sides to it, each with attendant dangers. One side is the learning of the language, conventions, traditions, knowledge and wisdom that a civilization has developed over centuries, perhaps millenia; also the methods for progressing further. It teaches the individual how to become a responsible citizen. The other side is in conflict with this, for it is the development of an "internal opposition", the questioning, doubting and challenging of everything apparently certain and established; the insistence on the individual's right to travel in a different direction. It gives the individual a cutting edge, establishes it qua individual, rather than merely a "part of society". The potential dangers of the first type are: indoctrination and stultification of the individual; complacency and sterility of a society. The potential dangers of the second type are: isolation and recklessness on the part of the individual; chaos and conflict at the social level.

Nietzsche himself was not dogmatic concerning the balance between these two forms of education: the needs both of society and individual will change from epoch to epoch, and in any case each "educator" will view the terrain differently. Notwithstanding his general hatred of the Socratic tendency, he is prepared to accept that it answered a real need at the time:

Shrewdness, clarity, severity and logicity as weapons against the ferocity of the drives. These must be dangerous and threaten destruction: otherwise there would be no sense in developing shrewdness to the point of making it into a tyrant. To make a

tyrant of shrewdness:-but for that the drives must be tyrants. In those days it was a very timely problem. Reason became = virtue = happiness...To be reasonable or perish was the alternative before which they all stood. The moralism of the Greek philosophers indicates that they felt themselves to be in danger.⁶⁹

By way of contrast, he believed that in his own epoch the drives had become greatly weakened and attenuated. Instead of powerful instincts producing a threat both to individuals and society through rash activity, he diagnosed a pervasive fear of action, a dislike of anything not first sanctioned by one's peers. Under these circumstances, Nietzsche's rhetorical shock tactics might be the only way of shaking addressees out of a terrible caution, out of the expectation that their teacher will "talk sense" to them and tell them what to do, or at least how to decide. If the addressee is extremely passive, only an irresponsible teacher is likely to induce him to ask his own questions and thence perhaps find his own answers.

The complaint that Nietzsche's agitational rhetoric is irresponsible is therefore correct, but uninteresting. It amounts to no more than pointing out that Nietzsche does not fulfil a role to which he never aspired in the first place. What this chapter has been about, in short, is to agree that there are great dangers involved in the way Nietzsche writes, but to emphasize that the agitational rhetoric cannot somehow be detached from his "real thinking", and that there is no magic formula for the writing of philosophy which is correct from all perspectives. Texts that cannot be "used" in any way, and which do not confront the reader, are better for purposes of *instruction*; but this is not the only educational value.

The dark possibilities conjured up by Nietzsche disturb those they do not delight: the question then is the response to this

disturbance. His well-meaning defenders claim he did not really intend to disturb anyone; his equally well-meaning critics declare that he did, and censure him for it, because philosophers have a duty to think of the consequences of their writings. There is no point going further into this claim: at any rate, they have told us what kind of education they prefer, and consequently the sort of risks they find acceptable. It can hardly be putting words into their mouths to say that they would rather be right than be stimulating; one need only flick through the latest volume of any journal of philosophy to see how many subscribe to this order of values! Nobody should doubt the profound contempt with which Nietzsche regarded such a set of priorities:

it is of course clear why our academic thinkers are not dangerous; for their thoughts grow as peacefully out of tradition as any tree ever bore its apples: they cause no alarm, they remove nothing from its hinges; and of all their art and aims there could be said what Diogenes said when someone praised a philosopher in his presence: "How can he be considered great, since he has been a philosopher for so long and has never yet *disturbed* anybody?"⁷⁰

With rhetoric, the value of "disturbance" goes all the way down: it is not a matter of initiating controversy in order to reach a profounder consensus, but of valuing the struggle between rival perspectives in itself; to argue on both sides is an honourable, not a cynical undertaking. And so if rhetoric is, as I have suggested, a rival educational force, then that rivalry is about not only the means of educating but also and above all the goals of that education - the people and society it wants to help shape.

Chapter Three

Nietzsche's Pragmatism

To raise the question of pragmatism with respect to Nietzsche and rhetoric is, to say the least, something of a puzzle. In each of the other chapters we take suspicions that already exist and subject them to a critical re-examination: to the extent that there is a method guiding the project as a whole, that is it. Here, however, the connections are for once not obvious. In everyday use, rhetoric is a way of making one's ideas more appealing, whereas "pragmatism" denotes a particular way of looking at the world. It is therefore quite possible to contrast the two, for example in the political cliché: "we're hearing a lot of impressive rhetoric, but the Government isn't actually doing anything..." Moreover, the prospects look scarcely more promising for connecting Nietzsche with pragmatism. Although some commentators have attributed to him a pragmatist theory of truth,¹ it seems highly implausible that the prophet of Zarathustra could be a pragmatist in any more general sense. Can these initial impressions be overturned? Can it be shown that Nietzsche and rhetoric are pragmatic?

As we shall see, pragmatism is central to the historical struggle between philosophy and rhetoric, since it lies behind all the teaching methods and educational goals that differentiate rhetoric from philosophy; but because there is no obvious link between Nietzsche and pragmatism it will no doubt be suspected that the general theme of "Nietzsche and rhetoric" breaks down here. However, while it is certainly true that Nietzsche displays a fierce hostility to many aspects of pragmatism, I shall argue that on the crucial points he is a pragmatist, and for the first time presents pragmatism as a nobler

alternative to the philosophical ideal of contemplation. Of course, talk of divergent senses of pragmatism inevitably sounds like the old dialectician's trick: when in trouble, change the word's meaning. But the etymological root of the term - the Greek *pragmata* ("actions" or "deeds") - leaves great scope for interpretation, and it would be unhelpfully restrictive to pick one of the narrower meanings and implant that as the definition. When I use the term "pragmatism" I therefore take it to mean simply "belief in the overriding importance of action", which covers all the nuances considered here. To avoid confusion, the subordinate meanings gathered under this definition are then clearly distinguished as I proceed, and the differences between them, far from being covered up, are the prime concern in the concluding stages of the chapter.

It is worth emphasizing at the outset what this prospectus has perhaps in a small way already helped to indicate: that the main concern of this chapter will not be to establish that pragmatism = Nietzsche = rhetoric, which in itself is an insignificant matter, but to use this triad to ask new questions about the relationship between philosophical contemplation and practical life.

Whatever the final course of the discussion, the first task must be to re-establish the connection between rhetoric and pragmatism which has just been put in question; it is no more than a re-establishment. The two have been disconnected because of the modern tendency to reduce rhetoric to the expressive use of language,² and as soon as one begins to explore the role of rhetoric in the ancient world, the importance of pragmatism becomes transparent. The reason why this should concern us

is that it is fundamental to the dispute between philosophers and rhetors in one key area: their rivalry as educators. At the end of the previous chapter it was suggested that a difference in educational functions - rather than a contrast between "propaganda" and "truth" - could account for the more polemical tone of rhetorical discourse. But even in their acknowledged role as educators, the rhetors were harried and criticized by Socrates and Plato; it is appropriate at this point to consider why.

A dispute over education may sound like a fairly insignificant matter to modern ears, accustomed as they are to an educational debate that rarely questions beyond how to achieve more examination passes. But in the fifth and fourth centuries at least, the argument transcended technicalities (although it did not ignore them), because the rival programmes and methods of education were inextricably tied to more general ideas about the nature of society and the educated individual's relationship to it. Disputes concerning quantity and quality did not occur in an ideological vacuum, as is all too often the case today, but were governed by the fundamental question: *what is education for?*

An education in rhetoric was primarily for a new social and political situation that had arisen in Athens, as the historian Henri Marrou explains:

The problem that faced the Sophists, and which they succeeded in solving, was...how to produce capable Statesmen. In their time that had become a matter of the utmost urgency. After the collapse of tyranny in the sixth century most of the Greek cities, and democratic Athens in particular, developed an intensely active political life; and exercise of power, the management of affairs, became the essential concern...in the eyes of every Greek, the ultimate aim of his ambition.³

For all the differences in detail between the Sophists, they shared this common educational ideal or *paideia*:⁴ the purpose of education was to equip the individual for a leading role in politics and civic life. This thoroughly pragmatic concern is in marked contrast to Socrates and Plato, whose *paideia* can be described in general terms as the discovery of the true and good life for man.

While pragmatism was crucial to the educational disputes between Socrates and the Sophists in the fifth century, its importance is perhaps most clearly visible in three concrete distinctions between the rival schools established by Plato and Isocrates⁵ in the fourth century. The first is that Plato's education lasted longer. It took the teaching of abstruse subjects such as mathematics and astronomy far more seriously; although they were not excluded from Isocrates's syllabus, their importance for the practical man was naturally strictly limited. It is not simply that Plato was "more thorough" - he had a *different goal*. The programme described in the *Republic* could quite literally last a lifetime: acquiring knowledge was an end in itself, rather than simply the preparation for a "life outside". The second obvious divergence concerns Isocrates's heavy emphasis on practice *within* the educational framework, which had no equivalent in Plato. Students of rhetoric were taught only a few guiding principles before they were encouraged to start composing and practising speeches of their own. Such a flexible and undogmatic approach was not universal among the *rheto*rs - Gorgias, who was well-known for his immensely technical training in rhetoric, offers an obvious contrast.⁶ Nonetheless, it can be considered a natural element of an education designed to help students to deal with unpredictable events in public life; the philosophical quest for pure knowledge did not impose any equivalent requirement for a practical element in education. Plato

clearly regards this stress on practice and experience as a weakness, since he has Socrates define the rhetoric taught by Gorgias as 'a sort of knack gained by experience (*empeiria*)',⁷ which is contrasted with things done according to a *techne* - art or regular method. The complaint is more appropriately addressed to Isocrates than to Gorgias and his pupils; it seems likely that Plato sensed a defect in his contemporary's educational system and ventriloquized Socrates to make the charge against another Sophist.

The final distinction between the two schools is the most decisive. Each taught both rhetoric and dialectics, but in a different order and with different justifications. Plato placed rhetoric below dialectics, claiming that a true art of speech required more than the manipulative tricks beloved of the teachers of rhetoric; it needed knowledge of the truth, which only dialectics was capable of attaining.⁸ Isocrates, on the other hand, regarded dialectics as essentially trivial, and useful only as a training in argumentative dexterity. For him, the pinnacle of the educative process was to acquire the skills of eloquent speech and writing, thereby to influence one's peers. Here, yet again, the conflict between the idealistic philosophical and the pragmatic rhetorical *paideia* produced a concrete distinction between their representative institutions.

This is only the barest outline of the rival approaches, which serves as an introduction to the evaluative questions with which the remainder of the chapter is occupied. Perhaps, given the nature of the dispute, it should come as no surprise that those adjudicating between the rival *paideias* have tended to acknowledge a distinction between success in practice and success in theory. In terms of practical success, the rhetorical *paideia* appears to be the undisputed victor. Isocrates's school attracted far more pupils than the Academy;

but his triumph was far greater than that. Marrou puts it brutally:

On the level of history, Plato had been defeated: posterity had not accepted his educational ideals. The victor, generally speaking, was Isocrates, and Isocrates became the educator first of Greece and then of the whole ancient world. His success...became more and more marked as the generations wore on.⁹

These comments apply to the ancient world, but the struggle does not end there. In our "postmodern" society the syllabus may not include rhetoric, but there has never been an epoch in which "pure knowledge" has been so discredited, or in which the pragmatic ideal of equipping people for social roles has been more dominant.¹⁰

I shall postpone further consideration of this apparent historical triumph of the rhetorical *paideia* until the end of the chapter; it is, after all, relatively uncontroversial. What has always given defenders of the philosophical *paideia* some comfort is the conviction that, outside narrowly practical criteria, their ideal is demonstrably superior: if the *rheto*rs can be lured into debating the value rather than the success of their approach to education, they can be defeated. This shift from success to value arguably describes the basic trajectory of the *Gorgias*: Gorgias's extravagant claim that 'the art of rhetoric is the art of speech *par excellence*'¹¹ is "shown" under the pressure of Socrates's cross-examination to be quite hollow. Thus it has often been argued that, while the *rheto*rs may have best met the practical needs of their society, they only partially educated the individual, and their training lacked any organizing principle; that, in truth, the rhetorical *paideia* was no *paideia* at all.¹² In the era of State funded education it is perhaps of little consequence if no higher justification of the system can be found than its social

utility, but for the Sophists, who had to attract fee-paying private students, it was absolutely necessary to respond to the Socratic/Platonic suggestions that their educational programme was unworthy of an Athenian citizen. This is in fact the central question confronted in this chapter: whether the pragmatism of the rhetorical education can be defended on principle, as well as on purely pragmatic grounds; or whether, as the consensus sapientum supposes, its high-sounding claims can only satisfy those who have never seriously considered the philosophical alternative.

The essence of any serious defence of rhetoric as a *paideia* must be the attempt to show the superiority of the practical life, for which rhetoric presents itself as the ideal preparation. To the puzzlement of many commentators, the most eloquent expression of this viewpoint was written by Plato and given to Callicles as part of a long speech attacking Socrates. It challenges him to abandon philosophy in favour of nobler activities:

I like philosophy in a young lad; it is thoroughly suitable and the mark of a liberal nature...But when I see an older man still at philosophy and refusing to abandon it, that man seems to me, Socrates, to need a whipping...such a person, however great his gifts, will never be a real man...Take my advice then, my good sir; "abandon argument, learn the accomplishments of active life", which will give you the reputation of a man of sense. "Leave others to dispute the niceties" of what I don't know whether to call folly or nonsense; "their only outcome is a barren house". Take for your models not the men who spend their time on these petty quibbles, but those who have a good livelihood and reputation and many other blessings.¹³

For once, Plato cannot be accused of caricaturing his opponents, since there are passages in Isocrates which bear an uncanny resemblance to this one.¹⁴ Indeed, the vehemence with which Callicles is allowed to put the *rheto*rs' case has led some interpreters to suppose that the *Gorgias* was written at a stage in his career when Plato retained some sympathy for their cause. This is going too far: it is a genuine dialogue (a distinction shared with the *Protagoras* and the *Symposium*, the rest being no more than disguised - often thinly-disguised - lectures) but, as we shall see, Socrates ultimately trounces Callicles, through a mechanism far more powerful than nit-picking dialectics. Nevertheless, Callicles raises doubts that Plato could scarcely ignore. On the one hand, the maturity and virility of the philosopher is impugned: he remains a child, he is not "a real man", he wastes his time on "petty quibbles". Perhaps he is a bit of a coward, afraid of the adult world and the "accomplishments of active life"? Furthermore, Callicles emphasizes the importance of winning a reputation (mentioned twice in the passage cited). This would have impressed Plato's earliest readers far more than it does today, because virtue was then intimately tied with public reputation. In Homeric times, the highest value was arete, which means "virtue" but also had connotations of "valour" and "prowess", and was something to be earned through heroic deeds. The *rheto*rs claimed that they could teach arete, which by the fifth century had become *political* in the dual sense that it was virtue appropriate for the city-state, and that its model was the statesman rather than the warrior.¹⁵ Despite these changes, they could legitimately claim to belong to a centuries-old tradition that placed the highest value on public action; Socrates, lost in thought, could not.

The case which philosophy was called upon to answer can be summarized quite easily: the active life is best and the rhetorical education is the appropriate preparation for such a life. Responses to this claim have been many and varied, but to make discussion of them coherent, they can be sorted into three basic strategies. The first essentially accepts without qualification the superiority of active life, but argues that philosophy, too, is relevant to it. The second also acknowledges the superiority of action, but not without qualification: action is only good if it is guided by serious philosophical thinking; otherwise, it is stupid and self-defeating. The third strategy, the importance of which cannot be over-estimated, marks a more radical departure from rhetorical pragmatism. It accords a value - indeed, the highest value - to "thinking for its own sake", ungoverned by practical ends of any kind. Remarkably enough, it is this withdrawal from active life that has always constituted philosophy's most powerful appeal.

The uncomplicated defensive strategy - to accept the primacy of pragmatism - is relatively modern, and can be identified in two quite different forms. The first consists in the various efforts to show philosophy's "relevance" to practical life and social utility. At its most extreme, this means creating courses in business ethics and in other ways relating traditional philosophical debates to the "outside world". But quite apart from these developments, philosophy as an academic discipline has not escaped the general trend towards regulation and homogenization imposed by practical interests. A degree in philosophy is an indication that certain socially useful skills have been acquired, such as the ability to summarize and analyse data; increasingly, it is this aspect of a philosophical education that is prized by students and employers rather than the "content".¹⁶

But philosophers can also acknowledge the primacy of

practical life in doctrine, thereby producing a specifically philosophical pragmatism, which has been particularly influential in America. Philosophical pragmatists couch their answers to traditional philosophical debates about truth and meaning in terms of practical human interests: if two theories have identical practical consequences then they have the same meaning; if a belief is proved successful in practice and accords with the totality of experience then it can be pronounced true.¹⁷ This doctrine effectively abolishes any serious distinction between the rhetor's concern with active life and the philosopher's quest for truth. If truth is in active life, then the two are allies rather than opponents. I suspect that it is precisely for this reason that most philosophers have rejected philosophical pragmatism: they cannot accept action as the criterion that shall decide all things.

If philosophy is to reject rather than appease pragmatism, a critique of the Calliclean case needs to be developed; the remaining two strategies offer alternative ways of doing this. The first retains the idea of political arete but questions the interpretation of this concept offered by the rhetors and suggests that rhetoric is not the appropriate vehicle for arriving at such a goal. The basic case is that serious philosophical thinking is required to guide actions and political decision-making. Rhetoric may teach decisiveness and how to persuade others towards one's decision, but it does not provide any framework for deciding which decision is the right one. If anything, the need to win over popular assemblies will produce an inbuilt tendency to pick easy options and to avoid hard choices whenever possible. Socrates, who points out exactly this sort of problem, introduces a favourite analogy to strengthen his case:

Do you think that when men act they will their act itself or the object of their act? Take, for example, patients who drink medicine by doctor's orders. Do you think that they will the act of drinking the medicine with its attendant disagreeableness or the object of the act, that is, health?¹⁸

The moral is plain: actions which may seem unpleasant or undesirable when considered in isolation are often recognized as necessary in pursuance of a desired goal, just as intrinsically enjoyable actions may have disastrous consequences. Socrates is pleading for knowledge - or, to put it more modestly, foresight - as a vital component of prudent decision-making. This is a powerful argument: antlike activity, incessant and irrational, is as unappealing as the "petty quibbles" of philosophical discourse described by Callicles.

But philosophy's criticisms go beyond the relatively uncontentious call for prudence and foresight. For Socrates, it is insufficient to ask whether one's immediate activity is leading towards desired goals; the process of reflection must go on to test the *desirability of the goals themselves*. Political activity must be more than just prudent; it must be ethical, it must aim for the good. If the rhetorical *paideia* excludes such concerns and is in its teaching indifferent to those who wish to exploit the political system for their own cynical purposes, then can it seriously claim a value other than helping its adherents to line their pockets? This is one part of a wider failing of the rhetorical ideal, as seen from the perspective of philosophy: its version of political arete is restricted to an essentially practical guide to using the system, which structurally ignores possible abuse. But this implies silence not only about exploitation of the political system by unscrupulous parties, but also concerning the system itself. Is it just? Does it produce good results?

For all their emphasis on politics, the *rheto*rs do not offer a coherent political theory, or even acknowledge that such a theory has a value. This gap is filled by the production of *political philosophy*, a genre in which Plato's *Republic* and Aristotle's *Politics* are seminal texts. Their specific proposals concerning ideal states and the principles that should guide the reform of existing institutions are still widely discussed today; but the more remarkable sign of their influence is that the validity of this type of question and this sort of discourse is largely taken for granted. However reactionary some of Plato's political ideas may seem, the step taken by his radical critics is usually to seek better principles of political philosophy; to avoid such questions altogether appears either naive or deeply conservative. The *rheto*rs, by ignoring institutional questions, seem from this perspective to condemn the individual to serve whatever system is in place. In other words, the lustre has today faded from the rhetorical "ideal": it now looks complacent and cowardly.

Despite the effectiveness of these criticisms, they do not constitute the primary philosophical response to the rhetorical *paideia*. So far, we have seen ways in which philosophical thinking would reform and redirect political action; but the more radical approach is to assert that public action, *however it is guided*, is far less important than the inner qualities possessed by individuals. This order of priorities is attested by a famous passage in the *Republic*. Socrates is asked whether the intelligent man will engage in politics, and replies:

Oh yes he will, very much so, in the society where he really belongs; but not, I think, in the society where he's born, unless something very extraordinary happens...Perhaps...it is laid up as a pattern in heaven, where those who wish can see it and found it

in their own hearts. But it doesn't matter whether it exists or ever will exist; it's the only state in whose politics he can participate.¹⁹

The withdrawal from public life is justified on the grounds of the imperfection of existing society, which makes it impossible for the would-be statesman to act morally. Ultimately, personal righteousness must take precedence: "it doesn't matter" whether the ideal state is realized in practice.

It might be argued that Plato is at the extreme, utopian end of philosophical thinking, and that his priorities are atypical. But these value-judgements are pervasive in Western philosophy, even if they are not always expressed so directly. Thus they are shared, in particular, by Aristotle, the great political realist. Granted, Aristotle concentrates less on the structure of an ideal state than the qualities required by the good statesman, chief of which is *phronesis* or "practical wisdom" - the ability to apply theoretical knowledge to practical affairs.²⁰ It is also true that he is far more generous to existing statesmen than Plato: Pericles, who was disparaged in the *Gorgias* as a rhetorical panderer, is praised by Aristotle as a man of *phronesis*.²¹ But none of this implies that Aristotle accepts the priority accorded the active life by rhetoric. Even though he is perhaps the closest that philosophy comes to rhetoric, he remains distant, for two crucial reasons. First, the notion of *phronesis* is thoroughly ethical in its formulation. It is not just "capacity to act", but a "true and reasoned state" which aims at "human goods"; in other words, it is action informed by ethical knowledge: the latter value takes priority. But in any case, practical wisdom is not the ideal of Aristotle's philosophy, despite its desirability; it is trumped by *sophia* (wisdom) which contemplates the eternal, the object

of metaphysics. Aristotle states that 'sophia must plainly be the most finished of the forms of knowledge' and adds, by way of explanation, that 'it would be strange to think that the art of politics, or phronesis, is the best knowledge, since man is not the best thing in the world.'²²

Granted, then, that Plato and Aristotle both in their different ways suggest that the active life is only of secondary importance, it is all the more necessary to find out what they regard as of ultimate importance, and why they wanted to change a hierarchy of virtues that had, after all, stood at least since Homeric times and was imbedded in Greek culture.

The revolution undertaken by Plato and deepened by Aristotle is to accord pride of place to nous (mind), to make thinking the highest virtue. This does not just mean that thinking is recognized as an invaluable guide to action; if that were the case, action would still be primary. To the philosophers, thinking is rather an end in itself and does not need to be justified as a means to achieving practical goals; indeed, the highest form of thinking is precisely that which is free and outside pre-established objectives of any kind; to avoid confusion with other types of thinking, I shall refer to it as contemplation.²³

The most prominent arguments in support of the primacy of contemplation are overtly theological. Plato divides the human being into soul and body and declares that 'the soul is most like that which is divine...whereas body is most like that which is human';²⁴ hence for us to come closest to the gods will entail privileging the soul. The problem is that the body corrupts and misleads the soul: the senses distract us from perceiving the Real; the bodily desires distract us from wanting the Real. Philosophy's true mission is thus not to

criticize and adapt our common modes of activity, but to transcend bodily activity altogether:

Every seeker after wisdom knows that up to the time when philosophy takes it over his soul is a helpless prisoner, chained hand and foot in the body...²⁵

Aristotle also privileges contemplation through a connection with the divine, although he moves away from the Socratic "care of the soul" towards a subtle metaphysical idea of participation in the divine nature. There are two main arguments here. The first is that intellect is the divine element in man and therefore the essence of man, so that to exercise it is to be most fully human.²⁶ The second stems from some considerations about the nature of divine activity. If God's actions were directed towards external goals, this would imply that he had not yet achieved those goals, and was therefore *imperfect*; consequently, pure thinking, which aims at nothing beyond itself, is the only properly divine activity and, as such, it is the *most perfect form of action*. Contemplation is thus the most divine activity of which man is capable, which means that Aristotle squares the circle: thinking is action, and the complete action at that.²⁷

Of course, I have only very briefly outlined arguments which could be considerably expanded and deepened. Nevertheless, whatever the improvements, they could hardly be sufficient to support the claim I made earlier that the withdrawal into contemplation 'has always constituted philosophy's most powerful appeal':²⁸ arguments from the nature of God and the human soul are of little more than historical interest today. So how can the case be made more compelling?

The key here is in Plato. My earlier outline of Callicles's polemic against the philosophical life omitted one element which not

only is full of dramatic irony but also tilts the balance of the dialogue; without it, Callicles would be dangerously convincing. He warns Socrates:

As things are now, if anyone were to arrest you or one of your sort and drag you off to prison on a charge of which you were innocent, you would be quite helpless - you can be sure of that; you would be in a daze and a gape and have nothing to say, and when you got into court, however sorry a rascal the prosecutor might be, you would be condemned to death, if he chose to ask for the death penalty...what kind of wisdom can we call it, Socrates, that...a man...cannot defend himself or another from mortal danger...?²⁹

No direct response to this point is made until the end of the dialogue. But there is no "defence" anyway; everyone knows that. What Callicles offers as a warning, to cajole Socrates back to the practical life, is what actually happens, what Socrates allows to happen. For it is not just that Socrates's death reflects back on Callicles's warning: Callicles's warning equally reflects on to Socrates's death. Socrates was forewarned, he knew the consequences; yet he took no notice and moved inexorably towards his self-sacrifice. Why? What kind of wisdom can we call it? The answer is revealed in Socrates's extraordinary closing speech. One may lose one's reputation, and even one's life; but Socrates offers the magnificent counterweight of *freedom from guilt*:

the defence which consists in never having committed an offence against God or man either in word or deed...is the best of all kinds of self-defence...If I were to come to my end for lack of the pander's type of rhetoric, I am sure that you would see me facing my fate with serenity. The mere act of dying has no terror for anyone not utterly devoid of sense and manliness; it is wrongdoing that is terrible; for to enter the next world with

one's soul loaded with sins is the supreme misfortune.³⁰

Here is a powerful piece of psychology, to supplement the unconvincing metaphysics. The contemplative life can be a balm to those suffering from "the supreme misfortune" of a troubled conscience, for the less one does, the more confident one can be of "never having committed an offence...in word or deed". The inverse is also the case: the active life increases the likelihood of wrongdoing:

the majority of...exemplary sufferers are drawn from among dictators and kings and potentates and public men, whose power gives them the opportunity of committing the greatest and deadliest sins.³¹

The moral: better to remain a private citizen! Whatever external misfortunes arise, you will be guaranteed inner peace.³²

These lines of thinking (or, rather: these *instincts*) clearly have a much broader appeal than the metaphysical arguments outlined above. But how influential have they been and do they remain among philosophers? Throughout the Christian centuries, the value of the contemplative life went virtually unchallenged, and so it is only in our own times that its advocacy and defence has re-emerged - most notably in Heidegger. To what extent does this thinker "at the end of metaphysics" follow Plato? There can certainly be no doubt about Heidegger's commitment to contemplation, for he not only praises thinking, he privileges within that category what he terms "meditative" (*besinnliches*) thinking, which 'contemplates the meaning which reigns in everything that is.'³³ His metaphysical defence of meditative thinking is highly Aristotelian, so I will not add to my earlier discussion on that score.³⁴ The most novel and interesting

aspect of Heidegger's argument for contemplation is the use it makes of very modern neuroses. Atomic energy, computers and hydro-electric dams are among the developments regarded as manifestations of a pervasive "calculative" (rechnendes) thinking, which always seeks to exploit situations to gain an advantage. Heidegger's descriptions of technology play on two powerful emotions: fear and shame. Technology's relationship to the earth is one of domination, but far from being to mankind's advantage, Heidegger suggests it is doubly dangerous. In the first place, technology is presented as a sort of Frankenstein's monster, no longer under mens' control; increasingly it will dictate the tasks, and we will serve it.³⁵ But this relationship to the earth of master to slave is not just a mistake in Heidegger's eyes; it is a sin, as his lurid descriptions make plain:

The world now appears as an object open to the attacks of calculative thought, attacks that nothing is believed able any longer to resist. Nature becomes a gigantic gasoline station...³⁶

Mother earth, out of which humanity emerged, in which it dwells, has become something mankind uses rather than respects and reveres. The modern world is characterized by *rootlessness* and *homelessness*,³⁷ but that is because we have dug up the roots "for our advantage", and are busy "exploiting" the earth on which we live. The fear and the shame are linked, therefore: both together belong to the wilfulness that has characterized the western world. So it can come as no surprise that the objective of the return to contemplation is to find a more reverent relation to things: 'in answer to your question as to what I really wanted from our meditation on the nature of thinking, I replied: non-willing.'³⁸

With these considerations, Heidegger has effectively

radicalized and modernized the Platonic defence of contemplation.³⁹ By making the connection with technology, Heidegger transfers a problem of individual conscience to a world-historical crisis, and focusses on offences against the world rather than "against gods and men". But by retaining the fundamental structure of rash activity, guilt, and redemption through meditation, he demonstrates that the ultimate philosophical reaction to pragmatism is not dependent on theism or ingenious metaphysics, but rather on deep-rooted psychological affects that are as powerful today as they were in Plato's time.

An interim report on the rival *paideias* of rhetoric and philosophy would have to conclude, on the strength of the evidence reviewed so far, that the pragmatism of rhetoric makes its appeal very much to the "lowest common denominator": to individual vanity, greed, and narrow-mindedness. When the allegedly high ideals espoused by Callicles are interrogated more thoroughly, they appear superficial and fatally flawed. There is no more eloquent testimony to the weaknesses of rhetoric's ideal than the tactics employed by Isocrates in his critique of the philosophers: rather than engage in reasoned argument with their views, he appeals to the prejudices of the common man (*idiotos*) concerning the impracticality and hypocrisy of the philosophers, and on that basis alone advises that they and their education be avoided.⁴⁰ The philosophers' sense of moral-intellectual superiority is perfectly expressed by Jaeger's response to Isocrates:

His invective is entirely realistic. He never makes it a theoretical refutation of his opponents' position, for he knows that if he did he would lose his case. The terrain he chooses is that of ordinary common sense.⁴¹

The philosophical ideal may not have the support or even the

comprehension of the majority, but it stands convinced of its superiority, for all that: against democratic opinion it can hold out the *consensus sapientum*, the judgement of those fit to judge. Even while it loses out "in practice", it always has this solace.

As a candidate for defending pragmatism from the philosophical onslaught, Nietzsche does not appear to have very convincing credentials. It is not simply that he never describes himself as a pragmatist; there are many passages in which he attacks pragmatic trends quite savagely, and any account which ignored them would retain little credibility. Nevertheless, there is an equally prominent emphasis on action throughout his work, which also requires some explanation. To try to resolve this paradox, I will situate Nietzsche in relation to the three philosophical responses to pragmatism outlined above; my suggestion is that the highly qualified pragmatism that emerges under this analysis is not a compromise with philosophy but rather a necessary sharpening of the attack upon it.

The first category - the philosophical compromise with pragmatism - is where those who have hitherto considered Nietzsche a pragmatist have located him; due to certain comments on truth and meaning, he has been labelled by some commentators a traditional (philosophical) pragmatist. Danto, for example, asserts that 'Nietzsche advanced a pragmatic criterion of truth: *p* is true and *q* is false if *p* works and *q* does not.'⁴² What gives rise to this interpretation is Nietzsche's tendency to discuss truth in anthropological terms; perhaps the most striking example is his comment that 'Truth is the kind of error without which a certain species of life could not live. The value

for life is ultimately decisive.'⁴³ Danto suggests that "the kind of error" is a typically flamboyant but somewhat misleading phrase, which can safely be ignored; in which case one has the clearly pragmatist theory that truth is what serves human interests.

Notwithstanding the ingenuity with which it is executed, this interpretation of Nietzsche as a traditional philosophical pragmatist is a complete mistake, arising from two basic misunderstandings. First, it is seriously misleading to talk of Nietzsche as "advancing...a criterion of truth" of any kind. Rather than participating in the old philosophical debate about the nature of truth, Nietzsche casts doubt on the value of truth: his answers to the question "what is truth?" are quite tangential to his main concern - "what is truth worth?"⁴⁴ But even if this point is put to one side, Danto's interpretation does not stand up to scrutiny. Phrases like "the kind of error" (in the passage cited above) are not meaningless extravagances, for they point to a paradox that Nietzsche asserts with almost monotonous regularity: mankind's basic "truths" are what the species needs - but they may be mistakes, for all that. So, while things may tend to become established as true because of their utility, that does not mean that they are true; pragmatics are relevant to, but not the criterion of truth.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, although this pragmatist interpretation of Nietzsche is a failure, it does at least bring to light a concern with pragmatics that will need to find some explanatory framework; all too often, rejection of Nietzsche's "pragmatic truth theory" becomes the excuse for dropping discussion of pragmatism altogether.

There is certainly no question that Nietzsche indulges in that other philosophical compromise with pragmatism which consists in asserting philosophy's usefulness for a life in society. The essay "Schopenhauer as Educator", for example, is an impassioned demand for

the integrity and independence of philosophy from all practical interests:

of what concern to us is the existence of the state, the promotion of the universities, when what matters above all is the existence of philosophy on earth!⁴⁶

One of the essay's major themes is that the quest for truth is compromised by any involvement of the state in philosophy, let alone the highly organized modern institutional structure. The focus on examinations, the value accorded to scholarship, the increasing tendency to teach the *history* of philosophy, and indeed the very fact that philosophy is taught within a university system; all these are regarded by Nietzsche as signs of the degradation of philosophy.⁴⁷ In the sense that making philosophy pragmatic means making it useful to *society*, Nietzsche is an implacable opponent.

So far, Nietzsche's responses to pragmatism are in harmony with the majority of philosophers, and the same appears to be the case when we turn to the second basic response to the rhetors - to criticize the narrowness and conservatism of their "active life". No philosopher ever treated the stupidity of action with loftier disdain:

It is the misfortune of the active that their activity is always a little irrational. One ought not to ask the cash-amassing banker, for example, what the purpose of his restless activity is: it is irrational. The active roll as the stone rolls, in obedience to the stupidity of the laws of mechanics.⁴⁸

As we have seen, the "irrationality" of restless activity is used by other philosophers to justify the study of ethics and political philosophy: in such a way, action can be directed towards truly

rational ends. Nietzsche, however, does not develop the argument in this manner; indeed, his criticisms of the traditional "idealist" responses to pragmatism are just as thorough as his attack on the narrowness of practical life. It is worth highlighting these criticisms, to show that Nietzsche does not fit neatly into either of the categories considered hitherto.

Nietzsche's pragmatic instincts are most obvious when he insists that theories - especially "moral" theories - are only of any value if they can be tested in practice. There is more than a hint of the Calliclean disdain for "petty quibbles":

I favour any *skepsis* (inquiry, doubt) to which I may reply: "Let us try it!" But I no longer wish to hear anything of all those things and questions that do not permit any experiment. This is the limit of my "truthfulness"...⁴⁹

As well as insisting on the primacy of action (the fundamental tenet of any pragmatism), Nietzsche is also cautioning here against unrestricted flights of philosophical fancy. Nevertheless, this alone would not constitute a radical departure from philosophy's moral and political theorizing; philosophers are always concerned with how their ideas can be put into practice, and even if they would not state the point as bluntly as Nietzsche, many would agree that problems of implementation have been unjustifiably neglected. But Nietzsche's dissatisfaction with the versions of "rational action" peddled by philosophers goes deeper than this. The fundamental principle guiding philosophical reforms of action has been that knowledge of right action is possible and can be used to direct personal and public life; by the same token, one of the rhetorical *paideia*'s greatest failings was seen to be its unconcern about which actions should be undertaken and why.

Nietzsche's interventions suggest a justification for rhetoric's silence on this question by insisting that the sort of rational action dreamed of by philosophers is an impossibility, and that the results of ethical thinking hitherto have been thoroughly undesirable. It is impossible to talk of objectively rational action, Nietzsche argues, because none of the various ways of assessing an action's value pass any kind of scrutiny. The origins and consequences of an action are always obscure and, even if the situation were otherwise, the action still could not be "objectively assessed", as the utilitarians naively suppose, since

we must first know what is useful:...(the utilitarians) look only five steps ahead - They have no conception of the grand economy, which cannot do without evil...⁵⁰

Nor is the subjective pleasure or displeasure produced by actions any better guide - 'that would be like assessing the value of the music according to the pleasure or displeasure...it gives its composer'. Taken together, these criticisms lead Nietzsche to the conclusion that the whole project is hopeless: 'If therefore an action can be evaluated neither by its origins, nor by its consequences, nor by its epiphenomena, then its value is "x", unknown -'

On the strength of this assessment, the field of ethics and political philosophy has nothing to do with "rational action": that claim is merely the cover for a certain set of instincts and value-judgements to come to the fore. The philosophers' demand for abstract general justifications for actions and political institutions marks a preference for security and order: life will be made less arbitrary and capricious, regulated to as great an extent as possible. For Nietzsche at least, this way of determining action marks a serious decline in

strength and reason:

The great rationality of all education in morality has always been that one tried to attain to the certainty of an instinct: so that neither good intentions nor good means had to enter consciousness as such. As the soldier exercises, so should man learn to act...Positing proofs as the presupposition for personal excellence in virtue signified nothing less than the disintegration of Greek instincts. They are themselves types of disintegration, all these great "virtuous men" and word-spinners.⁵¹

All this amounts to a considerable revaluation of the aspects of the rhetorical *paideia* most thoroughly criticized by the philosophers. Action that is instinctive, unconscious, and ungoverned by ethical principles and political ideals is accorded the highest honour once more; Nietzsche aims to undo the work of the moralists, and this means an uncompromising affirmation of pragmatism, against the onslaught of philosophy. Ideals are seen not as a way of improving action, but as a decline from the heights reached by action, as a sign of weariness:

One cannot have too much respect for man when one sees how well he understands how to fight his way through, to endure, to turn circumstances to his own use, to overthrow his adversaries; but when one looks at his *desires* he appears the absurdest of animals__

It is as if he required a playground of cowardice, laziness, weakness, lusciousness, submissiveness for the recreation of his strong and manly virtues: observe human *desiderata*, his "ideals". *Desiring* man recovers from the eternally valuable in him, from his deeds...⁵²

This is an eloquent affirmation of pragmatism, but it seems to conflict with Nietzsche's insistence on the stupidity and

irrationality of the active type of human being. Given the problems Nietzsche identifies with the traditional ideas of "rational action", what justification can he retain for his own attack on irrational activity? The paradox disappears when it is recognized that the pragmatisms Nietzsche attacks and defends are not one and the same. The pragmatism he detests is the very British type, noted in the Oxford English Dictionary as 'matter-of-fact treatment of things':⁵³ "one limits oneself to "what can be done"; one does not entertain "unrealistic" possibilities. This commonsense pragmatism, as I shall call it, is a very particular way of interpreting the priority of action, for it assumes that action pertains to a fairly consistent pattern, so that precedent, rather than principle or desire, is the best guide. This type of pragmatist simply does what has always been done, and sees the alternative as doing nothing. For Nietzsche, the contrast is rather with another kind of activity, which is not pre-determined by a fatalistic view of the world and one's role within it. This contrast is nowhere more clearly expressed than in the same aphorism (A, # 283) from *Human, All Too Human* which was cited above as *prima facie* evidence of Nietzsche's anti-pragmatism:

Active men are generally wanting in the higher activity: I mean that of the individual. They are active as officials, businessmen, scholars, that is to say as generic creatures, but not as distinct individual and unique human beings; in this regard they are lazy.

That Nietzsche's pragmatism gives priority to a certain type of action - individual action - is not in itself a criticism, since a pragmatism which excluded no interpretation of "action" would be completely meaningless. But why is individual activity "higher"? This requires further explanation, if Nietzsche's complex position is to be

understood.

Whereas the defence of pragmatism usually takes place against an alternative of "idealism" of some kind, Nietzsche's affirmation of action is contrasted first and foremost with re-action. This explains how the most superficially "active" types - the busiest - can be disparaged despite all Nietzsche says in favour of action: the involuntary response to a stimulus is a sure sign of *being acted upon*, not of activity.

A strong nature manifests itself by waiting and postponing any reaction: it is as much characterized by a certain *adiaphoria* (indifference) as weakness is by an involuntary counter-movement and the suddenness and inevitability of "action".⁵⁴

The inverted commas signal quite clearly that Nietzsche does not consider reactive haste to be true activity. His pragmatism can thus be qualified as *individualistic*; he affirms action to the extent that it exhibits the individual's uniqueness and self-reliance. But it is equally necessary to insist that his individualism be qualified as *pragmatic*, because individuality is something that is achieved through action, not any kind of inalienable right: 'your true nature lies, not concealed deep within you, but immeasurably high above you'.⁵⁵ Nietzsche's pragmatism can thus be seen as the polar opposite of commonsense pragmatism, which suggests that people do "the done thing": on the contrary, the challenge is to do what has never been done before and to press autonomy into ever more spheres of activity.⁵⁶

Nietzsche, then, rejects ethics and political theory as ways of "guiding" action: it is up to the individual to determine the course his activity will take. But this does not touch the fundamental philosophical response to pragmatism, which is to reject activity

altogether in favour of contemplation. To make pragmatism individualistic will not deter this rejection; on the contrary, it is precisely the world of arrogant, self-assertive individuals that philosophers have most despised and sought to evade. Their action causes suffering and has no justification; where is the virtue in that? It remains to be seen whether Nietzsche has any response to this level of critique.

The most blunt response, one which seems to make this entire discussion look a little foolish, is to say that there never was a problem in the first place, because Nietzsche is as committed to the contemplative life as any other philosopher. What is more, there is no need for any elaborate argument to justify this claim, since he says so directly himself, in a number of places.⁵⁷ This is clearly a potential embarrassment for the claim that Nietzsche is a pragmatist, but it is not a refutation. For what these statements cannot conceal is the extent to which Nietzsche diverges from traditional interpretations and justifications of the contemplative life; what therefore remains to be seen is quite how Nietzsche differs from the philosophical defences of contemplation outlined earlier, and to what effect.

Nietzsche's affirmation of the *vita contemplativa* is certainly not dependent on the sort of metaphysical arguments we saw produced by traditional philosophers; indeed, he goes out of his way to reject all the usual techniques for exalting contemplation. The argument that thinking most nearly approximates the divine essence clearly cannot survive the death of god; but the more mundane justifications, that "man's essence is thought" and that "thinking is the highest form of action", are just as firmly contradicted.

The idea of a "thinking essence" to man is most visibly rebuffed in the course of Nietzsche's speculative forays into

anthropogeny. These thoroughly materialist accounts consider mankind as a gradually evolving animal species, to which conscious thought came very late and as a result of its weakness, not as the mark of its exaltation:

Where need and distress have forced men for a long time to communicate and to understand each other quickly and subtly, the ultimate result is an excess of this strength and art of communication...Consciousness is really only a net of communication between human beings; it is only as such that it had to develop; a solitary human being who lived like a beast of prey would not have needed it...As the most endangered animal, (man) needed help and protection, he needed his peers, he had to learn to express his distress and to make himself understood...⁵⁸

On this model, thinking cannot claim any primordial "essence". It could of course still be argued that conscious thought is essential in the sense that it *distinguishes* man from other animals. As a statement of fact this distinction is difficult to dispute, but as a statement of fact it can hardly be seen as an argument in favour of the contemplative life. It could only play such a role if "distinction" were to be understood in the other sense, as a mark of superiority - and it is precisely such an understanding that Nietzsche's account sets out to deflate. Moreover, Nietzsche's insistence that conscious thought above all served the *practical* function of communication completely detaches it from its *philosophical* function of leading mankind to knowledge of or attunement with Being. It might still be claimed that thinking is the *profoundest* element of man, even if it developed very late in the day; but Nietzsche suggests that it is, on the contrary, the *most superficial* - it is the "herd element" that lies on top of everything truly individual. As for the special type of thinking known

as contemplation, Nietzsche is if anything even more scathing concerning its origins:

In rude ages...the individual in the feeling of possessing all his powers is always intent upon...translating idea into action...But if his powers decline, if he feels weary or ill or melancholy or satiated...his pessimistic ideas discharge themselves only in words and thoughts...In this condition he becomes thinker and prophet...but whatever he may think about, all the products of his thinking are bound to reflect the condition he is in, which is one in which fear and weariness are on the increase and his valuation of action and active enjoyment on the decrease...⁵⁹

Far from being the essence of mankind meditative thinking is, in its origins at least, an indication of sickness - the pathological condition of a few individuals. Given the additional claim that conscious thought of any kind originated in the collective weakness of mankind, this hardly amounts to a prospectus for the contemplative life. Even so, it would be a mistake to jump to the opposite conclusion and assume that Nietzsche is hostile to contemplation. It is almost a matter of principle with him to "show" that the greatest things have foolish or unpleasant origins, but this only undermines the thing itself in the eyes of those who, unlike Nietzsche, demand a proper pedigree. What this exercise does indicate is that the contemplatives will have to do without supercilious references to "essences" when they come to justify themselves, which is in itself no minor reform for philosophers to have to accept.

As well as rejecting the innate superiority of the contemplative life, Nietzsche strongly resists the conflation of thought and action. Against the Aristotelian (and Heideggerian) idea that "thinking is the highest form of action" Nietzsche presents the

opposing view that *thinking is deeply antagonistic to action*. This, of course, has echoes in the Calliclean criticism of philosophy's "petty quibbles" distracting people from making decisions and engaging in active life. But Nietzsche quite explicitly goes beyond this idea: it is not simply that thinking occupies time which could otherwise be engaged in action; the fruit of any serious meditation is the inhibition of action:

Knowledge kills action; action requires the veils of illusion: that is the doctrine of Hamlet, not that cheap wisdom of Jack the Dreamer who reflects too much and, as it were, from an excess of possibilities does not get around to action. Not reflection, no - true knowledge, an insight into the horrible truth, outweighs any motive for action...⁶⁰

It could be said that the dispute between Nietzsche and the Aristotelians is merely a matter of semantics: the latter are inclined to redefine "action" to include thinking, whereas Nietzsche prefers to retain it as a contrast to thinking. But this objection misses the point, which is that to treat thinking as a species of action removes action as a *problem* for philosophers to face: "we do act; where is the conflict?" Nietzsche, uniquely among the adherents of the *vita contemplativa*, chooses to dramatize rather than defuse the principal objection of the active man to philosophers, that they do nothing. "Knowledge kills action": with this, he not only discards part of philosophy's armour, he even sharpens its opponent's sword. So how does he overcome this conflict?

In the first place, he refuses to display the usual philosophical hostility towards active types. One of Nietzsche's distinctions is his effort to find merits even in opponents and

enemies, so it is hardly surprising that he says much in favour of the *vita activa* despite identifying himself with the *vita contemplativa*, warning:

Let us, as men of the *vita contemplativa*, not forget...what counter-reckoning the *vita activa* has in store for us if we boast too proudly before it of our good deeds.⁶¹

The religious types, in particular, 'have at all times had the effect of making life hard for practical men and, where possible, intolerable for them.' This does not mean that Nietzsche "really" affirmed the practical life; rather, it is a case where the valuation of the same event is doubled, because there is much to be said in favour of both sides.⁶² The clearest mark of Nietzsche's respect for the active life is his admiration for certain very practical men, most notably Napoleon, whom he had occasion to describe as 'the noble ideal as such made flesh'.⁶³ This recalls one of the distinctions between Plato and Isocrates: while the former educated his pupils to become philosophers, believing philosophy to be the highest achievement possible for man, the latter had no equivalent determination to reproduce teachers of rhetoric. With his fulsome praise for non-philosophers - including those who are the antithesis of philosophers - Nietzsche approximates the broader educational ideal of rhetoric.

Nevertheless, despite his generosity towards the achievements of the active life, Nietzsche recognizes that he himself does not belong to that category,⁶⁴ which leads inevitably to the question of whether his own ideal therefore implies a rejection of action. My argument in what follows is that it does not: Nietzsche maintains a version of the contemplative life radically different from that espoused by other philosophers, because it retains the primacy of

action; the commitment to pragmatism is indeed central to the Nietzschean project.

The question of how to reconcile the desire for insight with the goal of a rich and active life (which can be termed the "problem of action") preoccupied Nietzsche throughout his career, but the most sustained and concentrated treatment of this problem is the second of the *Untimely Meditations*, "On the uses and disadvantages of history for life" (henceforth abbreviated to "UDHL"). The title is apt to mislead, so that the essay's full significance has often been missed; Nietzsche's concern is not the role of the academic discipline called "history", but of the relationship between life and learning. The term *Wissen* could be substituted for *Geschichte* without distorting Nietzsche's purpose; "history" in the more specific sense is at most a concrete example of the general theme.

The Goethean epigraph in fact makes the essay's primary - pragmatic - objective unmistakable: "In any case, I hate everything that merely instructs me without augmenting or directly invigorating my activity." To this, Nietzsche immediately adds his own assertion that 'knowledge not attended by action...must...be seriously hated by us.' Unfortunately, knowledge unattended by action is the norm in our modern "historical culture"; the world is out of joint. The essay then presents a two-fold solution to this problem. First, Nietzsche outlines three ways in which history/knowledge can be useful for life - the famous triad of monumental, antiquarian and critical history. However, he warns that it is quite possible for any of these modes of treating history to become unproductive and inimical to action; and that, in any case, modern societies have become obsessed with turning history into a scientific understanding of the past, and have lost sight even of the goal of turning history to use. Nietzsche therefore develops a second

requirement: beyond making history useful, there is a need to get away from all forms of historical awareness and to return to the "unhistorical", which he defines at one point as 'the art and power of forgetting and of enclosing oneself within a bounded horizon'.⁶⁵ Although the overall objective is a balance between these two forces, the virtual disappearance of the unhistorical sense in our own age means that, for a time at least, it is more important to develop this side of our nature than to make use of history.⁶⁶ The upshot of this bias in favour of the unhistorical is that knowledge will have to be to a certain extent restricted: 'science requires superintendence and supervision; a hygiene of life belongs close beside science'.⁶⁷ There will need to be a decline in the absolute amount known, until the drives are once more sufficiently strong to cope with knowledge and make use of it.

This essay constitutes one of the most remarkable attacks on the value of the contemplative life ever made by a philosopher. For Nietzsche goes beyond suggesting that the acquisition of knowledge must be directed towards action, and asserts that it must be (to some extent) *sacrificed* in favour of the needs of healthy life: we must learn to forget. Perhaps because of the sheer extremity of this demand, even commentators as distinguished as Heidegger have tended to ignore it and discuss only the three types of historical thinking, as if the question were how to do history properly.⁶⁸ In fact, the essay marks a pragmatic commitment to subordinate history and knowledge to action, and thus stands as Nietzsche's most clearcut affirmation of the rhetorical *paideia*. The "contemplative life" is not a genuine ideal at all: "life" demands that limits be set to contemplation.

But while "UDHL" marks an unequivocal commitment to pragmatism, the essay's positive programme is itself highly

problematic, as Nietzsche rapidly realized. The whole conception of antiquarian history which "reverently preserves" tradition and allows nationalistic self-satisfaction over past achievements is completely inconsonant with everything he wrote after that time, and even with much else in the essay; it is almost as if a couple of pages of Heidegger had found their way in from a later epoch of Being. More importantly, the central theme of a "superintendence of science" is the doctrine of reactionary Romanticism, which wants to turn back to a simpler, stronger age, "untimely" only in the sense of being behind its contemporaries, and not at all uncommon in late nineteenth century Europe. After this period, Nietzsche was never again to consider an anti-Enlightenment solution to his "problem of knowledge";⁶⁹ indeed, he was later to claim that even at the time of writing the essay he had already overcome its conclusions:

One should speak only when one may not stay silent; and then only of that which one has overcome...what I had to say against the "historical sickness" I said as one who had slowly and toilsomely learned to recover from it and was in no way prepared to give up "history" thereafter because he had once suffered from it.⁷⁰

Given Nietzsche's rejection of his own youthful proposals, it might be argued that his "pragmatism" was a passing phase and does not extend to the mature and more significant work. Certainly, the simple affirmation of action above knowledge and as substitute for knowledge disappears, but the problem of the conflict between knowledge/meditation and life/action remains. I think that the responses to it offered do still constitute a kind of pragmatism, which I shall term *Promethean* because the mythic figure of Prometheus best encapsulates Nietzsche's ideal. As will become clear, this type

presents a radical alternative to the traditional philosophical ideal of the contemplative life.

While Prometheus appears sporadically throughout Nietzsche's work, his meaning is thoroughly explored only in *The Birth of Tragedy*. Nietzsche takes the figure from the Aeschylus play, *Prometheus Bound*, in which the Titan Prometheus is chained to a rock for stealing fire from the gods to give to mankind, and then later punished further (with the infamous eagle) for daring to express his defiance of Zeus. How this mythical tale can be formed into a pragmatic ideal in opposition to philosophical contemplation is a matter I shall deal with presently. But the immediate question is how Prometheus can symbolize the mature Nietzsche's response to the problem of action when the ideal arises in *The Birth of Tragedy*, his first published work. The answer to this is that, while Nietzsche's exegesis of the Prometheus story in *The Birth of Tragedy* is entirely consistent with the pragmatism developed in the later works, the context of the description makes it clear that he had not at that stage alighted on the problem of action, let alone the Promethean response to it. For in *The Birth of Tragedy*, the variations in plot between the various Attic tragedies are not accorded particular significance: in each case, the hero is not an individual but rather a 'Dionysian mask' - one way among many in which the suffering god reveals himself.⁷¹ So the focus is on Dionysus, not Prometheus, and the 'active sin'⁷² which is the latter's 'characteristic virtue' is no more than one facet of the Dionysian: the 'glory of passivity' which Nietzsche finds in the Oedipus tragedies is just as important, for in 1872 the "Dionysian" stands above all for the Schopenhauerian insight into the "primal unity of being" and the illusory nature of individuality. The Dionysian hero-god suffers from individuality whatever he does or does not do: the purpose of tragedy is to give the

spectator an insight into the awfulness of this suffering from individuation that nonetheless is also redemptive through the awareness of the indestructability of life and its triumph in individuation's dissolution:

we are...to regard the state of individuation as the origin and primal cause of all suffering, as something objectionable in itself...But the hope of the epopts (the initiates) looked toward a rebirth of Dionysus, which we must now dimly conceive as the end of individuation...it is this hope alone that casts a gleam of joy upon the features of a world torn asunder and shattered into individuals...⁷³

In passivity we can still participate in the true world of the unified life-force. Indeed our situation, as particles of this holistic universe, is essentially passive. We can hope at best for a redemptive self-awareness, but not for action:

we are merely images and artistic projections for the true author, and...we have our highest dignity in our significance as works of art...while of course our consciousness of our own significance hardly differs from that which the soldiers painted on canvas have of the battle represented on it.⁷⁴

As these motifs of *The Birth of Tragedy* either disappear altogether or undergo a revaluation in Nietzsche's later work, so the Promethean and the pragmatic gain in importance. The single most significant change is the abandonment of the basic "message" of the Dionysian as it is conceived in *The Birth of Tragedy* - the notion of a primal unity of being and of individuation as a problem in itself, overcome in ecstatic moments in which the "truth" is glimpsed. For once, it is not a matter of refinement or development but of complete

abandonment: this framework is in direct opposition to Nietzsche's later thought. The degree of the break is perhaps obscured by Nietzsche's disingenuous claims in *Ecce Homo* that his first work manifests 'a profound hostile silence with respect to Christianity'.⁷⁵ On the contrary, the idea of the suffering individual who requires redemption and receives it in union with his "god" is thoroughly infected with Christianity; if Nietzsche had been more honest he would have recognized the nihilism at the heart of *The Birth of Tragedy*.⁷⁶

With the disappearance of this "Dionysian" framework, the myth of Prometheus inevitably becomes more than just another "Dionysian mask" and instead takes on significance for its own specific characteristic of "active sin". More importantly, the relationship of Prometheus to the spectators of his fate changes. Nietzsche had stressed in *The Birth of Tragedy* that Prometheus - and the other tragic heroes - are really only incarnations of the god Dionysus; this symbolism is, moreover, recognized by the spectators of the tragedy, so that the art form performs primarily a religious function - to bring the God to his worshippers, so that they can participate in his suffering and redemption. There is thus no such thing, strictly speaking, as a Dionysian man or even a Dionysian hero: there are only Dionysian states in which individuality is mysteriously experienced as overcome. The "Dionysian" therefore means primarily participation in a religious cult:

Yes, my friends, believe with me in Dionysian life and the rebirth of tragedy...Only dare to be tragic men; for you are to be redeemed. You shall accompany the Dionysian pageant from India to Greece. Prepare yourselves for hard strife, but believe in the miracles of your god.⁷⁷

In the later Nietzsche there is above all a change of voice, from passive to active: no longer the promise of redemption but the call to become redeemers; no longer the individual as "work of art" of his god, but rather the artist who *himself creates his gods*; no longer witnesses of the sufferings of Prometheus, but potential Prometheans.⁷⁸

But if Prometheus becomes an ideal attainable by men, what then is the content of that ideal? It is certainly very different from the relationship between knowledge and action suggested in "UDHL". In the first place, Prometheus's original act of defiance was to give knowledge to humans - "fire" is only the symbol for astronomy, mathematics, language and all the other types of reasoned activity of which mankind is capable.⁷⁹ This presents action in the service of knowledge as supremely noble, in contrast to the insistence on knowledge in the service of action. Secondly, Prometheus himself is given the epithet "farsighted": for him at least, it was not necessary to draw a veil of "unhistorical" forgetting in order to act, even though he foresaw his own nemesis as the consequence of that action. Moreover, this nemesis is the third distinction from "UDHL": whereas there Nietzsche foresees in action a "restoration of health" and a return to a secure and well-founded existence, the action of Prometheus leads into conflict with the gods. This is perhaps the most important difference of all: rather than the simple-minded optimism which supposes that modernity is in an 'evil' state which can be returned to a 'paradise of health'⁸⁰ by restoring life and action, Prometheus offers the warning - there is a price to pay:

The best and highest possession mankind can acquire is obtained by sacrilege and must be paid for with consequences that involve the whole flood of sufferings and sorrows with which the offended divinities have to afflict the nobly aspiring race of men.⁸¹

There is no greater issue than this conflict between men and gods over knowledge: Nietzsche describes it as 'the very first philosophical problem' which stands 'before the gate of every culture, like a huge boulder.'

We can see from this that there is a crucial difference in meaning between the Promethean and the Socratic sacrifice. Prometheus foresees his fate, just as Socrates foresaw his; but while Socrates met his fate by *doing nothing*, Prometheus meets his *through his deeds*; and while Socrates suffers at human hands in the sure and certain hope of divine salvation, Prometheus is punished by the gods themselves. As soon as one starts to make these comparisons, it becomes plain how important an advance this Promethean ideal is on the pragmatism of "UDHL". For the latter cannot meet the Socratic challenge head-on: it tacitly acknowledges the premise "if you knew all the motives and consequences of your action, you would not act!", and is thus forced to impose limits on the commandment "Know thyself!", in order to preserve scope for action. But Prometheus is not intimidated by the possibility that he will do wrong: on the contrary, he knows that he is doing "the wrong thing" and that he will suffer dreadfully for it; but he carries on regardless. He is prepared to do what Socrates finds unthinkable: *knowingly to sin*.

Prometheus is thus the true opponent of the Socratic outlook - that much is clear; but the nature of the opposition still remains mysterious, shrouded in riddles about gods and sin. This is unsatisfactory, especially for such an uncompromising materialist as Nietzsche; some effort must be made to translate the opposition into an irreligious language. In particular, it still remains to be seen in what sense this Promethean ideal is pragmatic, and how that pragmatism contrasts with the philosophical justification of the contemplative

life. The initial problem is how Nietzsche's own commitment to the contemplative life can be reconciled with any type of pragmatism; but, at least in his own terms, there is an answer to that. Earlier, we saw the individualistic nature of Nietzsche's pragmatism: those "acts" which are not individual but merely conform to roles established by others are, strictly speaking, mere reactions. To act means among other things "to exert energy or influence", and the relevance of contemplation and the insight gained through it is that it improves the individual's chance of acting as an *individual*. This is in contrast to an education that limits the understanding, which makes action easy and attended by a good conscience, but still essentially always what is sanctioned by the community:

The environment in which he is educated seeks to make every man unfree, inasmuch as it presents to him the smallest range of possibilities. The individual is treated by his educators as though, granted he is something new, what he ought to become is a repetition...by placing itself on the side of the fettered spirits the child first proclaims its awakening sense of community; it is on the basis of this sense of community, however, that it will later be useful to its state or its class.⁸²

Nevertheless, this only seems to suggest that "action" and the individual's interests are in conflict: it is still not obvious how the contemplative life can contribute to action. The latter problem is overcome in a crucial passage which suggests how the "contemplative" misunderstands himself, and has no cause to feel that he is merely an observer of life:

He fancies that he is a spectator and listener who has been placed before the great visual and acoustic spectacle that is life: he calls his own nature *contemplative* and overlooks that he himself

is really the poet who keeps creating this life. Of course, he is different from the actor of this drama, the so-called active type; but he is even less like a mere spectator and festive guest in front of the stage...he has...above all *vis creativa*, which the active human being lacks, whatever visual appearances and the faith of all the world may say...This poem that we have invented is continually studied by the so-called practical human beings (our actors) who learn their roles and translate everything into flesh and actuality, into the everyday. Whatever has value in our world...has been given value at some time, as a present - and it was we who gave and bestowed it. Only we have created the world that concerns man.⁸³

The "so-called" active, practical types are merely "actors": the real movers are the playwrights who possess the creative force to write values into the world. But how does the Prometheus myth fit this account? In the first place, he was prepared to defy the existing authorities in order to transform the future. According to Nietzsche, "the gods" are the products of the enormous debt felt by successful tribes towards their ancestors: to make one's ancestors into gods is a way of honouring them.⁸⁴ Prometheus's defiance of the gods is thus the defiance of the community, its ancestors, traditions, and values. Prometheus is not prepared to accept that he should "act" according to the rules set down by his "god"; he is not prepared simply to be an actor. But does he have *vis creativa*, the crucial element? After all, according to the Greeks Prometheus committed *sacrilege*: he "took possession of what was sacred". He thus appears as thief and criminal rather than creator and inventor. But "criminal" and "creator" are merely two different designations of the same type! It is the fate of the creator of new valuations to be seen as criminal by all those committed to the old deities, which is to say by the "community". Perhaps, under this weight, the individual even sees himself in this

light; for all that, he is a creator:

Did Prometheus have to fancy first that he had stolen the light and then pay for that - before he finally discovered that he had created the light by coveting the light and that not only man but also the god was the work of his own hands and had been mere clay in his hands? All mere images of the maker - no less than the fancy, the theft, the Caucasus, the vulture, and the whole tragic Prometheia of all seekers after knowledge?⁸⁵

To change values and shape the future are properties that belong to gods, yet at the same time they are the truly active functions to which an individual can attain; they are what raise him above the level of the "actor". To act means: to attack the community and its values, to usurp the functions of a god, to destroy gods - 'for what would there be to create if gods - existed?'⁸⁶

This should indicate the gulf that separates Nietzsche's conception of the "contemplative life" from those philosophical versions we considered earlier. Nietzsche does not view it as a means of avoiding the guilt involved in activity; on the contrary, he sees it as a means to take on a larger guilt than is possible for a "fettered spirit" involved in repetitive activity; it is the very antithesis of the Socratic demand to do the right thing. The hardest yet simultaneously most necessary part of the task is to overcome the sense that a "divine sanction" is required for all thought and action. This is absolutely not an outmoded task, rendered obsolete by the death of god. For the "divine sanction" is an integral part of the modern project of hermeneutics, which Heidegger states is

referable to the name of the god Hermes by a playful thinking that is more compelling than the rigour of science...hermeneutics means

not just the interpretation but, even before it, the bearing of message and tidings...⁸⁷

Heidegger's praise for this "messenger god" encapsulates the role accepted by philosophers from Socrates onwards, as interpreters of divine wishes, followers of the gods' commands: philosophy's long association with piety is not yet ended. It is thus of no small interest that Hermes plays an important role in *Prometheus Bound*: he brings the message to Prometheus to mend his ways, accept Zeus's rule, or else face an even worse fate. Prometheus, though, meets these entreaties with contempt: 'Lapdog of the gods!...I look at this. I look at you./ Torment or slavery? I wouldn't change.'⁸⁸ Prometheus versus Hermes: there is the real antithesis. Against the traditional justification for the contemplative life, that men have been too proud and rash in their activity and need to learn to obey, Nietzsche suggests the opposite justification: that men have never been proud enough, and need to take time for themselves if they are to gather sufficient pride for the highest tasks of revaluing values and usurping the gods. It is above all not a final escape from action, but a temporary absence, a departure that always promises a return; this is the only "contemplative life" Nietzsche can accept as an ideal:

he must yet come to us, the redeeming man of great love and contempt, the creative spirit whose compelling strength will not let him rest in any aloofness or any beyond, whose isolation is misunderstood by the people as if it were flight from reality - while it is only his absorption, immersion, penetration into reality, so that, when he one day emerges again into the light, he may bring home the redemption of this reality...⁸⁹

In this ideal of Promethean pragmatism Nietzsche provides a

match to the philosophical *vita contemplativa* at the level of the *paideia* or cultural ideal. The philosophers have always oversimplified the choice, to a straight contest between "worldly success" and "inner satisfaction". Their trump card was the assertion that the rhetorical *paideia* could only triumph among the ignorant: the rhetors offered a limiting education quite deliberately, to prohibit full, philosophical awareness of the practical life and the "true nature" of action. In the face of its defamation by philosophers, Nietzsche was, after *The Birth of Tragedy*, always committed to rehabilitating action: first, by arguing (in "UDHL") very much along the lines of the rhetors; but ultimately, by embracing the search for knowledge and the "contemplative life" that the philosophers had claimed as their privilege, and demonstrating that it, too, could serve a practical purpose.

It is clear, then, that Nietzsche offers a powerful alternative to the traditional philosophical defences of contemplation. Nevertheless, doubts must remain over the status of this alternative, since it seems far distant both from the pragmatism of the rhetors and from the "common sense" understanding of pragmatism as practical success. I will therefore conclude this chapter by considering Nietzsche's pragmatism in these contexts.

So far as the rhetors are concerned, it is certainly true that they were inclined to appeal to the common sense of the common man,⁹⁰ which is utterly alien to Nietzsche. But it would be a grave mistake to deduce from such moves that the rhetorical education reproduced uncritically all the banalities of "common sense" and saw in

them universal truths of existence. After dismissing the unworldliness of the philosophers, Isocrates immediately opens a second front against the narrow-minded "teachers of politics" who assume that everything of importance can be transmitted unproblematically straight from teacher to pupil.⁹¹ Against them, he insists on the importance of individual experience (*empeiria*) and practice, as the only way of attaining *kairos* - the ability to respond appropriately to a unique situation. By arguing that the meaning of *empeiria* cannot be taught, Isocrates diverges dramatically from all pragmatists and dogmatic empiricists who assume that they know what experience is and can determine in advance the "matter of fact" course of action. He therefore stands in close proximity to Nietzsche's individualistic pragmatism, which insists that once the uniqueness of the individual's situation is appreciated it can no longer be governed by rules and formulae.⁹²

Notwithstanding this affiliation it is, of course, hardly plausible to claim that the rhetors valued scientific inquiry in the manner of a Nietzsche, but it would be just as great a mistake to assume that they were social conformists of the type that Nietzsche despised, who evaluated according to calculations of usefulness to the state, of prudence, and of the "possible". The object of their education is rather to instil an independence and stern pride that asks how the world can be set to work for the individual's exaltation. In the *Gorgias*, Callicles remains completely immune to the argument that it is better to suffer than to commit wrong. Socrates supposes a case where a powerful man commits crimes and claims that, by way of compensation, 'he will be a villain and his victim an honourable man'; to which Callicles replies: 'Isn't that exactly what is so revolting?'⁹³ The virtuous man as "victim", as the passive sufferer of fate, is beyond Callicles's comprehension, and can be regarded only

with contempt and disgust; it offends against pride and dignity. The great contrast with Nietzsche is perhaps that Callicles's reaction is the instinctive rejection of a monstrous proposal: Socrates is ahead of his time. The task with which Nietzsche is faced is to regain the spirit that informed Callicles's judgements, and bring it into an altogether subtler age. Today, blinded by the transfigurations of "suffering wrong" effected by the martyrdoms of Socrates and the god on the cross for whom he was a prophet, it is difficult to see any virtue in Callicles, anything beyond a defence of Realpolitik. But Callicles's refusal to offer a "higher" defence was no aberration: suffering wrong was for him almost a vice; how could he know that it would one day be accounted a virtue worthy of a god? Nevertheless, given the great burden of Christian history it is inadequate now to give the same peremptory response that Callicles gave then. What is required is a way to overcome the great fear of *doing wrong* that pervades the modern world, by giving this "evil", too, its virtuous defenders, prophets - and gods:

If one is rich enough, it is even fortunate to be in the wrong. A god come to earth ought to do nothing whatever but wrong: to take upon oneself, not the punishment, but the guilt - only that would be godlike.⁹⁴

This suggests a continuity between the ideals of Nietzsche and the rhetors, but isn't there a fundamental paradox about any "ideal" of pragmatism? What if the moral-intellectual ideal of the philosophical life turns out to be less alluring on closer examination? The real pragmatists are only concerned about what happens "in practice"; and there, even the philosophers are agreed on the outcome.⁹⁵ But if the institutions of the world work by and large along

practical lines, and the philosophical *paideia* remains the preserve of a monkish minority, then what need does Nietzsche's pragmatism and its attack on the idealists serve? Is it, after all, a purely academic question?

The answer to this will depend, in large measure, on the extent to which pragmatism is reckoned to have won the ancient argument over cultural ideals; perhaps the situation is less clearcut than has so far been suggested. Nietzsche, after all, reserved his greatest disdain for the idealism of the modern "active men", which he regarded as their distinctive vice:

The place one is most certain to find idealist theories is with unreflective practical men; for their reputation requires an idealist lustre.⁹⁶

Following from this, it must be seriously doubted whether our practical men and society bear much similarity to the ancient *rhetois* and their ideals. Latterday pragmatism receives its justification in its social utility: things get done, wheels keep turning, and the productive economy advances. The individualistic ideal of political *arete* taught by the *rhetois* has utterly disappeared: so how can pragmatism have triumphed?

Set against this, of course, is the continuing sense of philosophers that they are surrounded by a wasteland of pragmatism, which today even penetrates into the once sacred space of the university, testing all institutions through "performance criteria" and demanding the usefulness of all skills: there has, it would seem, never been a time when worldly, practical forces have been more dominant. But it is interesting to see where these critics of "postmodern performativity" locate their enemy. Within the university, it has often

been observed that the contemporary syllabus places a heavy emphasis on direct contact with lecturers: so many courses are undertaken on such wide-ranging matters that the most conscientious student is only ever capable of surveying a small quantity of the available information, and has to rely on the lecturer to give a fuller picture. This has been depicted as the real fact-value distinction: the teacher has the facts, while all the student has is values. From a performative perspective, there is nothing inadequate in this education, since it prepares the student perfectly for the situations he will encounter as a "second-class citizen" in which the important decisions will be taken by those with power-knowledge, and he will be left only with ancillary functions.⁹⁷ Applying the same idea to society generally, Lyotard views the growth of computerization as the potential

"dream" instrument for controlling and regulating the market system, extended to include knowledge itself and governed exclusively by the performativity principle. In that case it would inevitably involve the use of terror.⁹⁸

But this scenario could be avoided by an alternative which at the same time seems to present the one potential weakness of an otherwise all-embracing pragmatic performativity:

it could also aid groups discussing metaprescriptives by supplying them with the information they usually lack for making knowledgeable decisions. The line to follow for computerization to take the second of these two paths is, in principle, quite simple: give the public free access to the memory and data banks. Language games would then be games of perfect information at any given moment.

This outburst of optimism has often been lampooned for its failure to

provide any account of why the "second path" might be taken. But it deserves to be treated seriously, if for no other reason than the relationship it and other radical critiques (re)identify between philosophy and pragmatism: not the former's oppression by the latter, but - their *mutual dependence*. For if the battleground is the access to knowledge and the restrictions on it imposed under the present system, then both sides believe that knowledge = the power to act and that absence of knowledge = impotence. But to emphasize the necessity of knowledge for decision-making is implicitly to repeat the basic Socratic critique of the rhetorical *paideia*: the individual dare not take responsibility for acting without the reassurance of knowledge.

Naturally, it will be said that our age allows individuals to do whatever they like; that never before was action so "individualistic". Yet at the same time "individual action" is increasingly governed by regulation and protocol; one acts when one finds a justification for that action and preferably with as little "exposure" as possible. The scope for truly individual action is found in the frivolous, the unaccountable, and the inconsequential. For anything that matters, what has value is *information* - not opinions. Expressing values and discussing opinions is what anyone can do, even the most impotent; thus little care is taken with them, and the most powerful men may have utterly puerile opinions. If the individual acts through knowledge, then he acts according to what is least individual about him, according to the universal, or at any rate to the socially testable; he does what anyone would do, given the available knowledge. The Socratic guilt-complex dominates, whether it drives one to the contemplative or to the practical life: action without knowledge, let alone Promethean action *in spite of* knowledge, is to be avoided whenever possible.

In sum, then, it is not pragmatism that has emerged victorious, but a framework of impersonal questioning - "what is to be done?" - to which today both the contemplative and practical lives in their different ways respond. Rhetorical pragmatism stands outside this framework; it "justifies" actions not according to norms of ethics or performativity, but through the pride taken in them, and it insists on asking the most personal questions, whatever the consequences:

"What am I really doing? And why am I doing it?" - that is the question of truth which is not taught in our present system of education and is consequently not asked; we have no time for it...But what, after all, are seventy years! - they run on and are soon over; it matters so little whether the wave knows how and whither it flows! indeed, it could be a piece of prudence not to know it. "Admitted: but not even to ask after it is not a sign of possessing much pride; our education does not make people proud". - So much the better. - "Really?"⁹⁹

Chapter Four

Nietzsche's Argumentation

Asserting that Nietzsche's texts are rhetorical is always liable to fuel the prejudice that they substitute eloquence for argumentative rigour and represent another triumph of style over substance. There are indeed those who see in Nietzsche - and not just in Nietzsche - a serious threat to rational inquiry which needs to be put in its place, namely "literature" or "entertainment", or in fact any category which reveals the essentially non-rational nature of his writings. At best, he has some interesting ideas which can be made into philosophical arguments; but he himself does not bother. To these guardians of logic and rationality, Nietzsche's biggest fault is that he lacks proper argumentation. This chapter consists of an analysis of this notion of "proper argumentation", and a two-pronged attack on the sort of position I have just outlined.

Firstly, it is no longer credible simply to assert that rhetoric "lacks argument" and consists merely of appeal to the emotions. A new wave of thinkers, most notably Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca,¹ have gone back to Aristotle and rediscovered the central place of argumentation in rhetorical theory. The general tendency of this revaluation is to minimize the differences between philosophy and rhetoric, and to describe those that remain in terms of context and assumed audience rather than the absolute polarities of rational/irrational and argument/style.

However, both the Aristotelian and neo-Aristotelian accounts leave philosophy as the highest and purest form of rational argumentation, even if no longer the only form, and so with respect to

Nietzsche the problem is modified and rephrased, but not dissipated. His quirky argumentation could be commended by the Aristotelians as an appropriate form of address to a less academic audience, but this "legitimacy" would be bought for it at the price of recognizing its inferior rationality - and Nietzsche makes no such bargain.

The bulk of this chapter is thus devoted to a second line of defence - or rather attack - which repudiates the "live and let live" approach of the first. My thesis is that Nietzsche's form of argumentation is, for now at least, the one most appropriate to rational, scientific inquiry and - to recall an old-fashioned phrase - to the search for wisdom. As we shall see, this cannot be the case according to the Aristotelian conceptions of science and wisdom, which must therefore themselves become the subject of dispute. This is as it should be: it is just as important to dispel the image of Aristotle as the "protector of rhetoric" as it is to counter the all-out Platonic attack which he is taken to ward off. Nietzsche, and rhetoric, neither desire nor require such patronage, for they want to be masters - over their "patrons", too!

Whatever the ultimate deficiencies of the neo-Aristotelians, they have unquestionably performed a valuable function by rescuing rhetoric from the ghetto of "style" and "eloquence" to which it has for many centuries been confined. Historically, the blame for this lies, according to Perelman, with sixteenth century figures such as Peter Ramus, who distorted the traditional tripartite Aristotelian scheme of logic, dialectic and rhetoric. Logic for Aristotle consisted of procedures of demonstration through valid reasoning; dialectic laid

down the rules and tactics for questioning and answering in a dialogue; and rhetoric dealt with the methods appropriate when addressing an audience. Crucially, all three employed structured arguments - a point which Ramus ignores. He reduces Aristotle's three categories to two, with the major category of dialectic becoming the "one method" for reasoning well which, in its all-encompassing scope, 'presides over mathematics, philosophy, opinions and human conduct.'² Rhetoric, conversely, gets squeezed out of the realm of rationality. As Perelman puts it:

The scope that was now given to dialectic, as embracing both the study of valid inferences and the art of finding and discovering arguments, deprived Aristotle's rhetoric of its...essential elements..., leaving only elocution, the study of ornate forms of language...this rhetoric of figures...led progressively from the degeneration to the death of rhetoric.³

An interesting and by no means purely academic question is why this relatively impoverished conception of rhetoric came so rapidly to dominate. Perelman offers the fascinating suggestion that since the end of the sixteenth century there has been a turn quite generally in European thought towards settling debates by providing evidence of various kinds (Cartesianism, Protestantism and empiricism being three prominent examples). Given that rhetorical argumentation comes into play precisely where evidence does not, for whatever reason, settle a dispute, it was perhaps inevitable in such circumstances that its importance would diminish and its role become redefined.⁴ One might add that, conversely, twentieth-century disillusionment over optimistic claims for the panacea of "evidence" provides fertile ground for the regeneration of rhetoric. However, another reason for the widespread

acceptance of Ramus's views was that the dismissive attitudes towards rhetoric which they embodied were not at all new. The criticism of rhetoric as no more than the presentation of pre-established opinions goes back at least to Plato's *Gorgias*: Perelman is exaggerating when he describes Ramus's trivialization of rhetoric as an 'innovation'.⁵

In the end, though, it matters more where rhetoric is going than where it has come from. For Perelman, it is more than a question of publicizing Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, despite his debts to that work. Perhaps surprisingly, he too merges certain of Aristotle's categories, just as Ramus had done before him. Instead of incorporating logic within dialectic and leaving rhetoric on the outside, Perelman incorporates dialectic within a widened category of rhetoric, leaving logic on the outside. The justification for this procedure is that dialectic and rhetoric both involve *argumentation*, whereas logic is simply concerned to *demonstrate*, independent of what anyone's opinions are on a given subject. Since demonstration occurs only in formal logic, mathematics and the sciences, all other areas of discourse must, according to Perelman, be considered the realm of rhetoric. This is not to say that the same standards of argumentation will apply across the board in undifferentiated fashion, but it broadens rhetoric from the traditional image of the orator in front of a crowd. As Perelman explains:

In contrast to ancient rhetoric, the new rhetoric is concerned with discourse addressed to *any sort of audience* - a crowd in a public square or a gathering of specialists, a single being or all humanity. It even examines arguments addressed to oneself in private deliberation...The theory of argumentation, conceived as a new rhetoric or dialectic, covers the whole range of discourse that aims at persuasion and conviction, whatever the audience addressed and whatever the subject matter. The general study of

argumentation can be augmented by specialized methodologies according to the type of audience and the nature of the discipline...In this manner we can work out a juridical or a philosophical logic that would be the specific application of the new rhetoric to law or philosophy.⁶

It does not require too much imagination to see what sort of defence of Nietzsche's argumentation could be mounted from this starting-point. If formal logical demonstrations are taken as the measure of proper philosophical reasoning, then clearly Nietzsche will fail the test. But what work of philosophy would pass such a test? The excuse for the failure is often the notorious difficulties of translating natural languages into formal languages, with the promise appended that in time a workable solution to these problems will be found. Perelman's case is that such an "answer" is in principle unavailable, and that the search for it stems from a misunderstanding of the nature of philosophical discourse. Lacking the possibility of secure foundations, philosophy has to abandon demonstration in favour of argument. In practice, according to Perelman, it has always done this and will continue so to do, whatever its aspirations to "scientific" status. On the other side of the coin, eloquent and ornate speeches and writings have always been accompanied by serious argumentation - otherwise they are simply bad (i.e. ineffective) rhetoric. Consequently, the antithesis melts away: philosophy is always less than logical proof and involves elements of persuasion; (good) rhetoric is always more than mere style and involves an appeal through argument to the rational faculties. Or, to put it another way, the difference is largely a matter of presentation, of *elocutio*. Philosophy likes to dress up in what Nietzsche described as 'the hocus-pocus of mathematical form',⁷ whereas rhetoric prefers to dress down in

emotional appeal and aesthetics; but, either way, the core of good argumentation is essential. The attack on Nietzsche thus collapses, since it was based on a false dichotomy.⁸

I have already argued that Perelman's central contention - that philosophy is a form of argumentation, not demonstration - is a good one,⁹ and I shall not discuss it further. But even if this is granted, I do not think that the suspicions of Nietzsche's "unphilosophical" argumentation can be dismissed as lightly as I have just now suggested. In particular, there are two key points at which Perelman's departure from the Aristotelian schema suppresses important doubts, most obviously against Nietzsche but ultimately, I shall be arguing, against the whole neat separation of logic/science from rhetoric which underlies all the hitherto-existing accounts.

The first point concerns the elision of Aristotle's distinct categories of "dialectic" and "rhetoric", which Perelman defends by claiming that, set beside the fundamental divide between an argument directed to an audience and a demonstration that is entire unto itself, all other divisions pale into insignificance. This is surely to assume what requires some sort of argument: is there not, for example, a profound difference between the framework of dialectical inquiry among those seeking truth and knowledge, and the framework of debate within courts and political assemblies, which manage practical affairs? Even accepting that philosophy does not "demonstrate", there remains a strong inclination to claim that its argumentative procedures indicate a seriousness about discovering the truth which Nietzsche's (for example) lack. The urge to insist on profound divisions *within* the sphere of argumentation therefore remains, and Aristotle's dialectic/rhetoric distinction could be a useful guide for remaking it.

However, the second point is in many ways even more

important. Perelman's concern to differentiate argumentation from demonstration seems to blind him to the affinities between dialectic and science. Indeed, according to Aristotle, the main difference is that the initial premise in a dialectical procedure does not have the status of "truth" accorded to the first premise in a scientific demonstration, but is rather the "probable opinion" adopted by the interlocutor and subjected to probing. The fundamental logical structure of the argument is still, according to Aristotle, the syllogism. Even in rhetoric, the syllogism remains the model, although it is altered in the guise of the "enthymeme". This in turn raises two big doubts against Nietzsche which Perelman's account would not allow. First, if the big distinction is between valid arguments and less-than-valid arguments, rather than between demonstration and argumentation, it becomes possible to resurrect the case against Nietzsche, since he clearly despised the pretensions of valid argumentation, which could be seen as "proper" to philosophy. Secondly, it returns the question of logic centre-stage. For if the syllogism is the model for the highest forms of reasoning, it would seem that the less strict one's reliance on the syllogism in argument, the less reliable one's conclusions become, and the less rational in the highest sense one's argument. In fact, I suspect that Perelman implicitly accepts something like this graduated view, but because its source in logic and science is kept out of the discussion, offstage, it is impossible for any alternative paradigm to argue its case; he presents just the tip of the Aristotelian iceberg and makes us think we see it whole. To sharpen up the debate, therefore, and to avoid confusion, it is the Aristotelian framework and not any modern derivative that will provide the basis for our discussion of argumentation.

A critique of the "inadequacy" of Nietzsche's argumentation could quite easily use the Aristotelian schema as its starting-point, and indeed, to do this might well give greater definition to the often rather nebulous distrust of his presentation. For it is hard to read the *Rhetoric* without being struck by the applicability to Nietzsche of many of the key elements of rhetorical argumentation as Aristotle sets them out. And since Nietzsche is supposed to be a philosopher, he ought, according to the Aristotelian division of intellectual labour, to be employing scientific or dialectical forms of argumentation, where stricter standards of rationality are required.¹⁰ I will concentrate here on four respects in which Nietzsche's argumentation seems to belong to Aristotle's rhetorical, rather than scientific or dialectical categories.

The first two issues relate to the *enthymeme*, which Aristotle asserts is the core of rhetorical argumentation. Despite this, its precise nature is never clearly defined. It is described as the 'rhetorical syllogism',¹¹ which suggests the fundamental deductive framework common to the whole of Aristotle's *Organon*, but of course leaves unanswered the question of what makes the rhetorical syllogism distinctively *rhetorical*. Some commentators have suggested that it is impossible to achieve the formal definition possible for the scientific demonstration simply because of the essentially pragmatic nature of rhetorical discourse. According to this position, Aristotle only defined the *enthymeme* *functionally*, as "argumentation appropriate for persuading an audience to accept a thesis" - precisely what is appropriate will depend on the circumstances.¹² Unhelpful as it may be for comprehending the nature of rhetorical argumentation, this

pragmatic element is an important and distinctive feature, which I shall be returning to later. However, even these commentators admit that Aristotle provides a formal description of enthymemes too, which is alleged to apply at least in the great majority of cases. It will not distort Aristotle's account greatly to concentrate on this aspect.

What distinguishes the enthymeme from its equivalent in dialectic is the truncated nature of the reasoning, best expressed in Aristotle's restatement towards the end of the *Rhetoric*:

It has already been pointed out that the enthymeme is a deduction...We have also noted the differences between it and the deduction of dialectic. Thus we must not carry its reasoning too far back, or the length of our argument will cause obscurity; nor must we put in all the steps that lead to our conclusion, or we shall waste words in saying what is manifest.¹³

There are actually two distinctions marked here. The first concerns the reduction of the syllogism, which normally consists of two premises and a conclusion. In rhetorical argumentation, the major premise is frequently omitted, leaving a leap from premise to conclusion which is justified by what is tacitly "understood" by the audience.¹⁴

But Aristotle also mentions that we 'must not carry our reasoning too far back', which is presented as a different point from that about particular syllogisms. A demonstration or argument is never just a single syllogism but rather consists of a whole series of them; moreover in science and dialectic they form a chain, in which each conclusion forms one of the premises for the next syllogism. Aristotle suggests that the rhetor will use a shorter chain, not wishing to overtax his audience by reasoning up to or down from basic general principles.

What is abundantly clear is that for Aristotle the attenuated nature of rhetorical argumentation has no rational justification, but stems from the requirement of persuading a non-specialist audience. From this pragmatic perspective, complete syllogisms are too boring, and long chains of argument are too difficult.

The striking thing about Nietzsche, of course, is that much of his work consists of "defective" deductions of exactly this type. So far as the truncated syllogism is concerned, an extreme example would be one of Nietzsche's maxims.¹⁵ Thus 'What does not kill me makes me stronger'¹⁶ could be rewritten along the following lines: "Reflection on every new experience makes me stronger; what does not kill me is a new experience I can reflect on; therefore what does not kill me makes me stronger." The last part alone is a maxim, the first and last together an enthymeme, and all three together form a syllogism.

But, even more plainly, the chain of reasons is never very long in Nietzsche. The aphoristic form dominates his work, so that his development of an idea rarely exceeds a couple of paragraphs, and is often just a few lines. No-one accuses this procedure of being boring, but it means that the thesis lacks the grounding in first principles associated with science, and the subjection to critical inquiry associated with dialectics.

Besides the enthymeme, Aristotle considers the example to be the other form of argumentation appropriate to rhetoric. It has a similar relation to induction as the enthymeme has to deduction - it is a truncated version. Whereas induction works up from particular cases to a general proposition, and then "deduces" from that proposition, example moves from particular case(s) to particular case(s). Aristotle gives as illustration the attempt to prove that war against the Thebans would be an evil for the Athenians. Since this is a case of "war

against one's neighbour", argumentation by example would operate by showing that, in another instance, a war against a neighbour turned out badly; the "proof"¹⁷ would reside in the comparison between the two cases. Argumentation by induction, on the other hand, would seek to establish the general proposition that "war against one's neighbours is an evil", and assert the Athenians' situation as a particular instance of the rule.¹⁸ Strictly speaking, induction has only been completed when all known instances of one type have been shown to have the relevant qualities.

As was the case with enthymemes and complete deductions, the justification for using examples rather than inductions is pragmatic rather than rational. Aristotle suggests that examples are often more popular than enthymemes, because men

like to learn and to learn quickly, and this end is achieved more easily by examples and stories, since these are familiar to them and are of the nature of particulars, whereas enthymemes are proofs based on generalities, with which we are less familiar than with the particular...¹⁹

Here once again the emphasis is on ease, speed, and familiarity, rather than accuracy and reliability. As a result, two concrete theoretical problems may arise for the example that are not difficulties for the completed induction: first, is the analogy between the two cases sufficiently accurate?; and, secondly, are there counter-examples which would suggest different conclusions? Both these questions show up apparent weaknesses of the example when considered from a purely scientific perspective.

While Nietzsche occasionally introduces examples of the strict Aristotelian description, in which "particular justifies

particular",²⁰ it is far more common for examples to be used in support of a general thesis. Even then, however, there is no attempt to construct an inductive proof and establish the general statement: it is quite foreign to Nietzsche's argumentation to justify a universal statement by a complete or even thorough enumeration of particular instances. Consequently, many of the aphorisms fit the broader Aristotelian description of "learn(ing) quickly...by examples and stories", with all the problems that entails from the perspective of science.²¹

As well as the length and thoroughness of rhetorical argumentation, its other prime distinguishing feature is the potentially vertiginous freedom at its disposal in the choice of material with which to construct an argument. And this relative freedom applies both with respect to the starting-point of an argument, and the development which that argument follows. The astringent starting-point is in fact shared with dialectics: whereas science has to start from universal, necessary truths, dialectic and rhetoric operate in an argumentative context, and so it is only an accident if the premise with which they begin happens to be a necessary proposition. In general, it will simply be a "commonplace", that is to say a reputable opinion.

Though rhetorical and dialectical discourses might start from the same proposition, they are unlikely to continue in the same manner. Dialectics probes the opinions presented by asking whether they assert essential or accidental predicates; whether they could be used as definitions and if so whether the definition would be appropriate; whether the opinions would be asserted in other cases from the same genus and species and, if not, whether that undermines them. Rhetoric does not "test" opinions in such a methodical manner, and employs the

material of history, political science, psychology, and even literature and fable in order to justify the opinions asserted.²²

This contrast between the logico-linguistic critical analysis of dialectic and the more diverse and unsystematic processes of rhetoric can be explained by reference to their differing interactions with the audience. The dialectician must bring a real or imagined respondent round to his point of view through posing a series of interconnected questions. It is the logico-linguistic implications of whatever attitude he adopts that are significant. And these will have significance not only for "winning an argument", but for establishing the truth of certain propositions, if they withstand the testing procedure. Aristotle asserts the two-fold importance of dialectics for the philosophical sciences:

it is useful, because the ability to puzzle on both sides of a subject will make us detect more easily the truth and error about the several points that arise. It has a further use in relation to the principles used in the several sciences...it is through reputable opinions about them that these have to be discussed, and this task belongs properly, or most appropriately, to dialectic; for dialectic is a process of criticism wherein lies the path to the principles of all inquiries.²³

Through its procedural rules, dialectic can hope to produce common ground from the initial diversity of opinions and perspectives. As one commentator has put it:

The faculties are engaged scientifically when these differences between individuals have been eliminated and the object is the same for all faculties which are directed towards it. Dialectic is the activity which effects the passage from the prescientific to the scientific use of the faculties.²⁴

Rhetoric has no such horizon. The rhetor is concerned only to win the audience over, so that any material which may tend to do this, however useless as a preparation for science, will be employed.

One of the most distinctive features of Nietzsche's philosophy is the variety of sources and resources he brings to his inquiries. He uses historical events, famous people, cultural stereotypes, fables, parables, and his own "psychological insights" to back up assertions. On the other hand, he studiously avoids the usual recourse to arguments about concepts and linguistic structures which dominate much of modern philosophy. The diversity of material is evident in all the works from *Human, All Too Human* onwards, but in *Ecce Homo* it has often been taken as a sign of Nietzsche's incipient madness, the process is taken to such an extreme: while the major themes of Western philosophy are dismissed with little more than slogans, infinite care is taken with trivial matters such as when and how to drink one's tea. Even if this does not indicate an unbalanced mind, it certainly bears no relation to the serious testing procedures of dialectics.²⁵

To summarize this section: I have tried to bring out the distinctive features of rhetorical argumentation as presented by Aristotle, and at the same time I have argued that Nietzsche's argumentation is primarily rhetorical rather than dialectical or scientific. Given that philosophy is scientific (according to Aristotle) or scientific-dialectical (to use the Aristotelian terminology to describe Plato's position), the suggestion may be made, and has often been, even if not in precisely these terms, that Nietzsche's argumentation is inappropriate for philosophy, and lacks the scientific and critical rigour required.

The usual ways of dealing with this paradox are unsatisfactory. The first is to claim that Nietzsche was interested in emotional effect and art only, so that the rhetorical nature of his argumentation is unsurprising: he does not aspire to the "higher rationality" of philosophy and science. Against this, I shall indicate Nietzsche's passion for science and enlightenment - which, of course, only brings the paradox of his argumentation back into sharp relief.²⁶ The second approach is to attempt to turn Nietzsche into a scientific-dialectical philosopher by filling in the gaps and employing the more traditional forms of argumentation to defend his "concepts". This accomplishes even less than the first defence, since it does nothing to challenge the notion that Nietzsche argues badly, and removes the excuse that the "artistic" interpretation had provided. The third approach - the one I adopt - is to challenge the "inappropriateness" of rhetorical argumentation for scientific and philosophical inquiry. I develop this approach in two ways: first, by attacking the presuppositions on which the Aristotelian schematism rests; second, by reinterpreting the allegedly "less rational" features of Nietzschean argumentation to illustrate the powerful reinforcement they in fact provide for his revalued ideals of science, reason, and wisdom.

In the first instance, then, it must be stressed that there is a problem about Nietzsche's argumentation, as there would not be if he were, as has sometimes been thought, a Romantic irrationalist and anti-scientific "poet-philosopher". If that interpretation were true, the rhetorical argumentation could be dismissed (or welcomed) as consistent with Nietzsche's disdain for reason. However convenient and reassuring such a reading might be, it conflicts with a great deal of

what Nietzsche actually wrote, and shuts out any wider debate about the relationship between reason and argument.

Improbable as it may seem, there is overwhelming evidence that Nietzsche was deeply committed to the Enlightenment, to rationalism (in the broad sense of trust in reason) and to science. The allegiance was advertised by the conspicuous choice of Preface for *Human, All Too Human* - a quotation from Descartes's *Discourse on Method*, including the famous comment: 'I thought I could do no better than...devote my whole life to cultivating my reason...'²⁷ Just how seriously Nietzsche takes this to heart can best be measured by considering two particularly striking passages which are worth quoting at length. The first extols the virtues of logical, rational thinking; the second explicitly aligns Nietzsche with the Enlightenment, against German Idealism, Romanticism, and Kant.

Reason in school. Schooling has no more important task than to teach rigorous thinking, careful judgement, logical conclusions; that is why it must refrain from every thing which is not suitable for these operations...schooling should force into being what is essential and distinguishing in man: "Reason and science, the supreme strength of man," in Goethe's judgement, at least. The great natural scientist von Baer finds all Europeans' superiority, compared to Asians, in their learned ability to give reasons for what they believe, which Asians are wholly incapable of doing. Europe has gone to the school of logical and critical thinking; Asia still does not know how to distinguish between truth and poetry, and does not perceive whether its convictions stem from its own observation and proper thinking, or from fantasies. Reason in the schools has made Europe into Europe...In the middle ages, (Europe) was on its way to becoming a part and appendage of Asia again, that is, to forfeiting the scientific sense that it owed to the Greeks.²⁸

The second passage is entitled: *German hostility to the Enlightenment*.

The whole great tendency of the Germans was against the Enlightenment...The cult of feeling was erected in place of the cult of reason and...there was no small danger involved when...the movement...- in the words Kant employed to designate his own task - "again paved the way for faith by showing knowledge its limitations." Let us breathe freely again: the hour of this danger has passed...This Enlightenment we must now carry further forward: let us not worry about the "great revolution" and the "great reaction" against it which have taken place - they are no more than the sporting of waves in comparison with the truly great flood which bears us along!²⁹

Given such unequivocal statements it becomes tempting to turn the tables and ask how Nietzsche's commitment to Enlightenment might be contested or explained away. One common response is to accept that for a while Nietzsche did indeed have some kind of faith in the possibilities of reason and science, but that he later became more sceptical. And, indeed, both the passages just quoted come from the so-called "positivist" period, reckoned by those who employ the phrase to comprise the works *Human, All Too Human*, *Daybreak*, and the first four books of *The Gay Science*: the period 1876-1882.

Even if such a neat division were clearly justified, the astonishing neglect of the middle-period by the modern Nietzsche industry would be worthy of redress. But in fact, while there is a change of emphasis and style, there is no obvious repudiation of the doctrines of the middle period by the later Nietzsche; at most, the earlier works are seen as transitional steps along the path taken - they are never simply "wrong". Besides, there are plenty of indications that Nietzsche retained a positive commitment to science and Enlightenment throughout his career, and not just for a brief phase of

it.³⁰

Despite this weight of evidence, it would be quite unsatisfactory to oppose the prevailing view of "Nietzsche as artist" with the stark alternative of "Nietzsche as scientist". It is not just that such an interpretation would immediately run up against the apparently anti-scientific comments in the early and late works, the praise of artists, and the central problem of Nietzsche's "unscientific" argumentation; the real disadvantage is that such a reading would preserve the validity of the science-art opposition and the traditional categories into which all works are shovelled. For my main thesis is that it is the traditional hierarchies and divisions - represented here by Aristotle's schematism - that need changing, not the place Nietzsche occupies within that system.

According to the Aristotelian framework a scientific programme and a rhetorical procedure are simply incompatible; they belong to different fields of human activity:

it is the mark of an educated man to look for precision in each class of things just so far as the nature of the subject admits; it is evidently equally foolish to accept probable reasoning from a mathematician and to demand from a rhetor scientific proof.³¹

Clearly, this judgement lends a paradoxical air to Nietzsche's scientific pretensions. Of course, it might be objected that "Aristotelian science" is not science as we now understand it, and that the "problem" I have set up here has vanished in the course of history. Certainly, it is worth considering the changes that Aristotle's framework has undergone; and I outline these very briefly below. But I think that none of them would amount to a reconciliation of science and rhetoric so that the "problem" not only remains but becomes more

pressing - it is not just Nietzsche contra Aristotle, but contra mundum.

The most intractable difficulty with Aristotle's system has concerned the strict notion of demonstration outlined in the *Posterior Analytics*, according to which genuinely scientific knowledge must consist of valid deductions from true, necessary, primary premises.³² While this has some plausibility for mathematics and geometry, it is supposed to apply to all the sciences - including ontology - and this aspect has always puzzled commentators. Not only does it bear no resemblance to the procedures of practical science, it is even contradicted by Aristotle's own treatises on the individual sciences, none of which adhere to his strict theoretical standards.³³

So far as the historical development of natural science and philosophy are concerned, Aristotle's dominance was almost total throughout the middle ages. Thereafter, a gradual process of revision has occurred - notably earlier and faster in the sciences than in philosophy. Not only the strict rules set out in the *Posterior Analytics*, but also the individual Aristotelian scientific investigations became discredited during the Renaissance. They were too classificatory, and too reliant on metaphysical notions such as the formal cause, which could furnish explanations without the need of any experiment. As early as 1560, Ramus was defending the thesis that "everything Aristotle taught was false". As one historian of science has succinctly put it:

Giordano Bruno had to be burnt and Galileo condemned before doctrines which were derived from Aristotle, rather than from the Bible, could be overthrown. The subsequent history of science is largely, in fact, the story of how Aristotle was overthrown in one field after another.³⁴

In philosophy the model of a complete system, derived more geometrico from unquestionable first principles, has had a far longer life, but even here the retreat from foundationalism has gathered pace in this century. The problem is that Nietzsche's argumentation is still incompatible with much philosophy and philosophy of science even after the demands for perfect deductive systems are dropped - the standards of rationality remain resolutely non-rhetorical. Ideals of proof and consistency are intimately linked to deductive logic, and many philosophers who reject foundationalism retain a faith in necessity in the logical sense: they try to "show" that one judgement follows necessarily from another, and regard this as a triumph of philosophical method.³⁵ Nor does the move to induction mark a break with deductive logic: the inductive generalization serves as the major premise in a syllogistic judgement; it is part of the rationality of proving and establishing, not an abandonment of it. In sum: even if the model of demonstration no longer holds, rationality is still strongly associated with deductive logic and "rigorous" critical method similar to that outlined in Aristotle's *Topics*.

Against this can be counterposed the stark Nietzschean thesis that science and logic are oppositional forces, and that science has no need of proof and refutation, necessity and consistency. I want to argue that Aristotelian principles have only been withdrawn on an *ad hoc* basis, which will never be good enough to meet the fundamental problem, that the faith in logic itself is a piece of unreason, and that until this is recognized and practice adapted accordingly, the progress of scientific knowledge will continue to be held back. Accordingly, I will consider what is "unscientific" about traditional forms of argumentation, and then look at the scientific qualities of Nietzsche's.

While Nietzsche's attacks on logic are well-known, they are nevertheless frequently misunderstood as Romantic bleating about the rigours of rational thinking. In fact, Nietzsche does not attack logic in the name of art and poetry, but *in the name of science*. Moreover, he does not attack the forms of logic themselves but the interpretation of them and the uses to which they have been put. Stated crudely, it is the suspicion that the justification for "logical method" is not scientific but metaphysical. Where science simply manifests the will to find out, logic manifests the will to find unity.

The critique of the irrationality of "faith in logic" proceeds along various paths. The first and best-known of Nietzsche's criticisms is that the laws of logic do not present any insight into the nature of reality but are a system for organizing that reality.

The "A" of logic is, like the atom, a reconstruction of the thing - if we do not grasp this, but make of logic a criterion of true being, we are on the way to positing as realities all those hypostases: substance, attribute, object, subject, action, etc; that is, to conceiving a metaphysical world, that is, a "real world"³⁶

Though they would not use Nietzsche's language, this is a judgement with which many modern logicians would concur. Thus for example the law of contradiction is no longer expressed in ontological terms - "nothing can both be and not be" - but as a rule governing *propositions* - "not (p and not- p)".

However, Nietzsche's criticisms extend beyond a caveat concerning the interpretation of logical terms. Granted that logical "laws" govern propositions and not reality, the question of their value and appropriateness for organizing and guiding science still remains.

Nietzsche's opposition to such a role can be gauged by taking three examples of the alleged virtues of logical method: drawing valid conclusions, refuting erroneous hypotheses, and checking the compatibility of various elements of a system of scientific belief. Without much difficulty, one can compile a list of Nietzschean criticisms of all these "virtues". In the first place, Nietzsche declares that 'conclusions are consolations',³⁷ and pillories the value of proof:

Honest things, like honest men, do not carry their reasons exposed...it is indecent to display all one's goods. What has first to have itself proved is of little value.³⁸

Likewise, he dismisses the value of refuting alternatives: 'what have I to do with refutation?'; 'I do not refute ideals, I merely draw on gloves in their presence'.³⁹ He also famously rejects the value of a systematic organization of knowledge - 'I mistrust all systematizers and avoid them. The will to a system is a lack of integrity'.⁴⁰

What is the rationale for these comments and the hostility to logical virtues that they express? There are basically two, closely related elements to the suspicion of logical form. The first is an anti-ontological perspective: given Nietzsche's assumption that the world is a world of becoming and development rather than an ordered totality, it is impossible for any systematic "body of knowledge" to express a descriptive truth about it. The ideal of scientific knowledge as pure and perfect description and explanation of phenomena - so obviously the paradigm envisaged by Aristotle - presupposes a world without historical and geographical variation. Of course, one can continue to defend logical method from a non-epistemic perspective by claiming that it has a practical value in organizing and structuring

otherwise useless and bewildering information - and, indeed, Nietzsche does in places explain and defend logic along precisely these lines.⁴¹ However, if this is the real value of deductive logic, it can be asked whether it is the best, or at any rate the only way of structuring and developing thinking about the world. As a matter of practice, "organizing the chaos" may not be our only need, and even if it is, there may be a multiplicity of ways of going about it.

But in any case, Nietzsche's anti-ontology cannot be separated from his revaluation of values: he does not want a world capable of pure description, *precisely because faith in such a world always threatens the death of science and fosters anti-scientific forces*. For Aristotle, by contrast, science and philosophy are once-and-for-all projects of finite duration; there is a teleological horizon in all ontology. He describes this basic trajectory of philosophy in a famous passage in the *Metaphysics*: 'all men begin...by wondering that the matter is so...But we must end in the contrary and, according to the proverb, the better state...'⁴² The disturbance of wonder is cured by the narcotic of philosophy.

Against this reassurance, then, Nietzsche offers a view of science that stresses above all else its restlessness and infinity. Science is not associated with "body of knowledge", "system", "rational understanding", or any other static term. *His conception is essentially science as a process*, comprising activities such as doubting, experimenting, questioning, observing and exploring. Nietzsche does not associate science with obtaining truth but with the refusal to accept the finality of any alleged "truth": inquiry must carry on, most of all where everything seems settled and determined. The contrast with more conventional conceptions of science is highlighted by an extraordinary passage in *The Will to Power*:

The development of science resolves the "familiar" more and more into the unfamiliar...*In summa*, science is preparing a sovereign ignorance, a feeling that there is no such thing as "knowing", that it was a kind of arrogance to dream of it, more, that we no longer have the least notion that warrants our considering "knowledge" even a possibility...⁴³

Nietzsche, of course, was well aware of the radicalism of these views; they underlie his rejection of more traditional and conservative philosophies of science. For example, he attacks

the faith with which so many materialistic natural scientists rest content nowadays, the faith in a world that is supposed to have its equivalent and its measure in human thought and human valuations - a "world of truth" that can be mastered completely and forever with the aid of our square little reason.⁴⁴

These arguments are as relevant today as they were in the 1880's. Indeed, Nietzsche may be regarded as "ahead of his time" in this matter, since the sort of fundamental rethinking of the nature of science which his work implies has strong links with radical ideas put forward by Kuhn and Feyerabend in the last thirty years and which are now at the centre of debate in the philosophy of science.⁴⁵ The educational implications of Nietzsche's philosophy of science are equally important. If science is an ongoing process of exploration, it must be taught and presented in such a way that encourages its students to forward that process, rather than in ways that suggest that science is or can become a stable body of doctrine. Nothing should be presented as certain, not even a method, not even a goal,⁴⁶ if dogmatism is to be avoided.

On the basis of this revaluation of science, it is possible to return to the question of Nietzsche's argumentation and reinterpret

the rational force of those rhetorical structures identified earlier. According to the Aristotelian conception of science, these structures are less rational than formal deductions; however, within the framework of Nietzschean science, they have distinct advantages, which logic lacks. This review entails in its turn a reappraisal and critique of the Aristotelian depiction of rhetoric (which until this point has been taken for granted), since the general approach, as well as many of the specific elements of the *Rhetoric*, is dictated by Aristotle's ontological convictions. So let us return and re-examine the four specific areas outlined above: the elided syllogism, the diminished chain of deduction, the use of examples, and the unrestricted choice of topics for argument. All these, I want to argue, perform functions outside or supplementary to those suggested by the Aristotelian account.

The elided syllogism omits one (or, in the case of maxims, both) premises. According to Aristotle, the motive is to avoid boredom on the part of the listener, the hidden premise(s) being tacitly understood by both rhetor and audience. In the case of Nietzsche, this interpretation can be challenged in two respects. Firstly, it is doubtful whether the sole explanation is entertainment, even if the "missing premises" are thoroughly obvious. An analogy can be drawn with educational methods, which have moved away from Gradgrindian "filling with facts" towards more active student participation in the acquisition of knowledge-skills. "Leaving gaps" turns the audience towards making connections for itself, rather than having a demonstration laid out before it.

But the more significant objection is that the whole description of "syllogism-with-gaps" misrepresents the character of maxims and enthymemes. Both Nietzsche's explicit remarks concerning his

argumentation and an analysis of his practice suggest the inadequacy of such an interpretation. There is no question of premises "waiting to be grasped" by the audience: the whole point of the exercise is to make reading and thinking as hard as it can be.

people find difficulty with the aphoristic form: this arises from the fact that today this form is not taken seriously enough. An aphorism, properly stamped and moulded, has not been "deciphered" when it has simply been read; rather, one has then to begin its *exegesis*, for which an art of *exegesis* is required.

A good aphorism is too hard for the tooth of time and is not consumed by all millenia, although it serves every time for nourishment...

Nowadays it is not only my habit, it is also to my taste - a malicious taste, perhaps? - no longer to write anything which does not reduce to despair every sort of man who is "in a hurry".⁴⁷

These thoughts are borne out when one studies Nietzsche's aphorisms and maxims: rarely is an obvious "reconstruction" available, and even when, as in the example cited earlier,⁴⁸ one could produce some sort of syllogism, it is completely irrelevant to the force of the idea. The reason for this is that, unlike Aristotle's examples, Nietzschean maxims do not rest on generally accepted notions or "commonplaces". This misrepresents the logic of such maxims, which do not make obvious implicit appeals to "grounding" propositions. If anything, the maxims contradict a commonplace, they draw attention to their lack of ground. It is surely no accident that Nietzsche entitles the section in *Twilight of the Idols* "Maxims and arrows" (my emphasis): they are shooting at targets, they are blows and assaults. According to the Aristotelian formula, the best maxims would be uncontroversial and

banal, whereas Nietzsche wants the opposite effect. In the book's foreword he asserts that 'eternal idols...are here touched with the hammer as with a tuning fork - there are no more ancient idols in existence...Also none more hollow...' ⁴⁹ Seeking justification for the hammer-blow in a syllogistic "proof" would be seeking to turn the hammer-blow into an idol; the "apparent" arbitrariness of the maxim is, after all, no illusion. This is what Aristotle could not understand: reasoning that does not seek something secure and reliable as its starting-point and basis. But such reasoning exists, and good maxims number among its highest achievements.

This point is developed if one considers the aphoristic form more generally and the idea that it demonstrates an "incomplete chain", because of the non-specialist audience which would find a complete deduction too difficult to follow. This assumes that the model for a rational argument can only be a decisive "proof"; but Nietzsche has arguments against the scientific and dialectical methods, as well as in favour of his own. A demonstration is supposed to start from universally true, highly abstract first principles, which "the people" may find too hard to grasp; against this, Nietzsche for once takes the side of the common people, rejecting the mysteries of "Reason" and with them the Aristotelian theory of science:

We possess scientific knowledge today to precisely the extent that we have decided to accept the evidence of the senses - to the extent that we have learned to sharpen and arm them and to think them through to their conclusions. The rest is abortion and not-yet-science: which is to say metaphysics, theology, psychology, epistemology...

The other idiosyncrasy of the philosophers is no less perilous: it consists in mistaking the last for the first. They put that which comes at the end - unfortunately! for it ought not to come at all!

- the "highest concepts", that is to say the most general, the emptiest concepts, the last fumes of evaporating reality, at the beginning as the beginning.⁵⁰

In dialectics, of course, the chain of reasoning does not go back to established first principles, but there is a clear trajectory of proof, from commonplaces accepted by the respondent. Through a process of question and answer, dialectics shows unforeseen consequences and presuppositions of such commonplace opinions, leading to a greater "understanding" of the overall scope of apparently restricted judgements. The most common use of dialectics is to get the respondent to modify his initial opinions because of the conflict with other commonplaces which they are seen to produce.

Nietzsche's comments on dialectics are full of disdain: it is seen as a logical game, rather than a scientific endeavour. It is a means to gaining power over one's opponent rather than to uncovering the truth:

As a dialectician one is in possession of a merciless instrument; with its aid one can play the tyrant; one compromises by conquering. The dialectician leaves it to his opponent to prove he is not an idiot: he enrages, he at the same time makes helpless. The dialectician devitalizes his opponent's intellect.⁵¹

The "logical chain" of the dialectician is a means of compulsion, rather than persuasion. The traditional assumption is that rhetoric persuades because it cannot compel; in its sphere, compulsion, the "higher form" of argument, is unavailable. But Nietzsche's comments suggest rather that the cause of the different forms of argumentation is the spirit in which they are conducted. Does one desire to overcome all opposition? To force the opponent to admit agreement? What, on the

other hand, if one does not wish to obliterate one's opponents but merely to convince them? Does this make one's reasoning weaker, or just less tyrannical? All these questions are given the fullest consideration in section 381 of *The Gay Science*, the key to which is the opening sentence: 'One does not only wish to be understood when one writes; one wishes just as surely not to be understood.' This dictates the brevity of Nietzsche's argumentation, which is clearly not a matter of "avoiding difficulty". And he goes on to insist on the reasonableness of this procedure:

I approach deep problems like cold baths: quickly into them and quickly out again. That one does not get to the depths that way, not deep enough down, is the superstition of those afraid of cold water...And to ask this incidentally: does a matter remain ununderstood and unfathomed merely because it has been touched only in flight, glanced at, in a flash? Is it absolutely imperative that one settles down on it? that one has brooded over it as over an egg?...At least there are truths that are singularly shy and ticklish and cannot be caught except suddenly - that must be surprised or left alone.

A fascinating feature of this passage is its metaphors of water ("cold baths") and air ("touched only in flight"), which are of tremendous importance not just here but throughout Nietzsche's work. One of the advantages of "speaking in metaphors" in this case is that it highlights the nature of the opposition provided by those critics who complain of the superficiality of Nietzsche's argumentation. This opposition is not rational, but *instinctive*; for they, too, have their guiding metaphor, of painstaking, step-by-step uncovering, which no reasons will persuade them to give up. Granted, it works for archaeologists: but Nietzsche's point is that not all problems are

inaccessible because they are fixed deep in the earth, as foundations are.

What we have here is a whole series of scientific reasons for the "incomplete chain" of Nietzschean argumentation. The truths may be obscured or lost or never even seen in the first place if they are brooded over; the alleged "first principles" of a founded demonstration are bogus; the concern with dialectics is a concern to overwhelm an opponent rather than to inquire honestly, and a concern to compel rather than to persuade; the brief argumentation leaves many lines of inquiry for the reader, who is not simply "fed information"; likewise its adoption as "method" allows researchers to concentrate more on new explorations rather than the laborious "testing and justifying" of any nuggets of wisdom they may have brought back; and, perhaps most importantly of all, science as an endless process, restless and mobile, is confirmed and forwarded by these tactics. All this is an attack on the Aristotelian depiction of the enthymeme as a diminished deduction; *for it is no kind of deduction at all*, but is reasoning according to a different logic, which I will consider further below, when the other characteristics of rhetoric's distinctive argumentation have been (re)considered.

Argument by example is, according to Aristotle, the alternative form of rhetorical argumentation to the enthymeme; and as the enthymeme is related to deduction, so example is related to induction. Though Nietzsche does not often employ example in the strict Aristotelian sense of "argument from particular to particular", he does employ examples in ways which are clearly very similar to the Aristotelian description, and certainly are *nothing like induction*, which is the important point.

The notion that an example is a sort of "poor man's

induction" is actually undermined by some of Aristotle's own comments on the forms. His examples of examples actually suggest a different kind of logic, while the official account insists on the link with induction. A perfect induction is perfectly enumerated, according to Aristotle, which makes it almost unattainable. A case of induction might be a statement like: "all mountains are less than ten miles high." But most inductions will be imperfectly enumerated, both because not all cases have been investigated, and/or because cases will occur in the future, which cannot now be investigated.

There are two primary respects in which Aristotle's depiction of "example" is unsatisfactory. In the first place, there is a difficulty over the relationship with induction. Induction seeks to establish a general principle through an accumulation of particular cases of the same type, whereas example bypasses the general rule. As we saw, Aristotle gives the impression that this is simply a weaker form of induction, in that only one or two cases are given rather than a complete or near-complete enumeration. However, this cannot account for cases in which the "example" is not in the same class or category as the other particular for which it is an argument. Aristotle himself states that a fable is one legitimate form of example, but in that case, the link with induction breaks down, since one cannot claim that the fable is another instance of the same class of events. Moreover, to multiply the number of fables would in no way strengthen the case, as it would if the example were simply a reduced induction. What occurs here is argument by analogy: reasoning which seeks to establish parallels between cases recognized as fundamentally different.⁵²

Nietzsche does not discuss the contrast in these terms, but from his perspective it would be more accurate to describe induction as a species of analogy, rather than analogy as a species of induction.

For if no two objects or events are the same, the "law" asserted by the inductive generalization will always be a fictitious construction placed upon events to give them some order. Argument by analogy is a far more fluid form of reasoning than induction: for while the latter seeks to establish a correct general description, from which the case under examination can be deduced as a particular instance, argument by analogy allows a case to be viewed from a potentially infinite variety of perspectives - as many as imagination will allow. To assume that this is a less rigorous form of thinking is to assume that the highest objective of reason is to assign a perfect description to each particular case; to give it a definite form. If, on the other hand, the same event can be described and explained adequately in many different ways, each adding a new and different insight into the event, then it is arguable that argument by analogy is the more scientific procedure.⁵³

The other aspect of Aristotle's description of argumentation by example which needs investigating is his insistence that the example must be more familiar⁵⁴ than the case under discussion to which it is applied. Once again, this has nothing to do with rational insight, everything to do with the effectiveness of an argument on an unsophisticated audience: a simple fable or a well-known historical example will make the case at hand seem much easier to grasp. Nietzsche's practice turns this rule on its head, since the cases he chooses to discuss are generally more familiar and uncontroversial than the "examples" through which he discusses them. Instead of resolving the unfamiliar through the familiar, he *dissolves the familiar through the unfamiliar*. He could hardly do otherwise, given his critique of the alternative:

What is it that the common people take for knowledge? What do they want when they want "knowledge"? Nothing more than this: something strange is to be reduced to something familiar...Error of errors! What is familiar is what we are used to; and what we are used to is most difficult to "know" - that is, to see as a problem; that is, to see as strange, as distant, as "outside us".⁵⁵

Here again, then, we have a case in which rhetorical structures of argumentation perform an entirely different function from that envisaged by Aristotle. Nietzsche argues "by example", but instead of being the crudest form of reasoning, suitable only for the mob, it takes on the sophisticated functions of multiplying descriptions and challenging familiar assumptions, neither of which can be achieved through the traditional organizational logics of deduction and induction.

The last question mark against Nietzsche's argumentation concerned the sheer variety of topics it discusses and deploys. Here, too, the Aristotelian categorization on which the criticism rests is suspect in two respects, which are by now familiar: the restriction of eclectic argumentation to the "practical sphere" of rhetoric is a prejudice; and, in any case, Aristotle's description of how topics are employed has serious flaws.

Through his flouting of the rules, Nietzsche poses in the starkest possible way the question of whether there are, should be, or must be any rules for building up and defending a thesis in science or philosophy; for him, it seems, *anything goes*. As we have seen, this has led to charges of frivolity, and even insanity; more than any other philosopher, Nietzsche invites the response - "but what has this to do with philosophy?"

It is worth considering the Aristotelian roots of such

accusations. In rhetoric's proper sphere, it is perfectly legitimate to talk about anything under the sun, because the only restriction on topics of argument is whether they will have the desired effects on the audience. The matters under discussion are practical, the requirement is to reach a decision, and so criteria of validity and truth need not apply. However, the dialectical and scientific situations are different. Science consists of pure demonstration from first principles, so there is no question of "topics of argument", merely of formal validity. A closer comparison is possible with dialectics, where the horizon of truth leads to the development of procedural rules. Dialectics is essentially about testing opinions against often hidden background assumptions. Will the opinion still be asserted once it has been taken to pieces and compared with other commonplaces?

It is not hard to see the attractiveness of this process: no-one likes to hold contradictory opinions. However, the procedural rules of dialectics have certain very important rational defects, which the "freer", unmethodical processes of rhetorical argumentation can overcome. There are two main difficulties. The first is that what Aristotle terms the 'dialectical problem' is not itself sufficiently open to criticism. The criteria for acceptance are minimal: the question must admit a "yes" or "no" answer, and it must be capable of serious disputation - matters of universal acceptance or rejection are not candidates for dialectics. Aristotle gives as examples, among others: "Is the life of virtue pleasanter than the life of self-indulgence?" and "is justice always a virtue?"⁵⁶ Once it is established that these questions have the correct form, they are tackled by analysing the nature of the concepts involved. Thus in the first case one would ask whether virtue and self-indulgence are never, sometimes or always pleasant, and then reflect on the nature of pleasure. In the

second case, one has to determine whether virtue belongs to the essence, and therefore to the definition of justice, or merely numbers among its occasional attributes.

Interesting as such procedures may be, they lack any suspicion concerning the problem itself. To proceed towards an answer to such questions is already to have assumed that justice, virtue, pleasure etc. can be furnished with definitions and fixed in relation to one another. One takes it for granted that such questions have a serious purpose, which means that one assumes a rational order of things, into which these abstract concepts can be fitted. There is no mechanism for questioning whether these terms have any referent, or can be given any general definition. We may laugh at the mediaeval Aristotelians' discussions of the nature of angels,⁵⁷ but the dialectical procedures which allowed such absurdities are still very much in play. In centuries to come, many of our concepts will be regarded as equally quaint. But, of course, this will be impossible for us to see while we are still asking questions which presume that such concepts have a role, and do not ask where they come from, who uses them and to what end.

The importance Nietzsche attaches to *asking the right questions* is stressed in *Ecce Homo*:

Why do I know a few more things? Why am I so clever altogether? I have never reflected on questions that are none - I have not squandered myself.⁵⁸

The point is that procedural method like that set out in the *Topics* is capable only (and this only does not minimize the value such procedures may at times have) of reaching resolutions of the problems already set by the existing system of concepts and values. In contrast to this, the

mixing of "inappropriate" subjects has the capacity to destabilize the traditional frameworks of concept-analysis. Thus Nietzsche's extended discussions of climate, nutrition and other "mundane" details are a way of mocking the dialectical problems associated with Being, soul and existence - for to discuss them along traditional lines would already concede too much to idealism. Nietzsche's alternative is not a sign of madness, but the only way of rejecting the concepts involved; it seems "inappropriate" only to the extent that we remain under the grip of idealism:

The concept "soul", "spirit", finally even "immortal soul", invented so as to despise the body, so as to make it sick - "holy" - so as to bring to all the things in life which deserve serious attention, the questions of nutriment, residence, cleanliness, weather, a horrifying frivolity!⁵⁹

The other "blind-spot" of dialectics is equally important for understanding Nietzsche's argumentation. As well as being restricted in the ways in which it can approach a given "problem", dialectics is also incapable of regarding certain things as problems at all; there are issues which simply cannot be discussed. This is actually inevitable once one insists on having a *method* - any method - for testing opinions. A method has to rely on certain things being fundamentally agreed; otherwise the method becomes what is tested, as well as what does the testing. In dialectics, the procedure is to weigh controversial opinions against the background of commonplace, reasonable opinions. For this to work, the dialectical problem must be something in the "middle range" of values; if it questions something which everybody either accepts or rejects, the method will be paralysed:

it is not every proposition nor yet every problem that is to be set down as dialectical; for no one in his senses would make a proposition of what no one holds, nor yet make a problem of what is obvious to everybody; for the latter admits of no doubt, while to the former no-one would assent.⁶⁰

This is an absolutely correct judgement on Aristotle's part: such problems cannot be given dialectical treatment. However, the reason is not that one would have to be mad to consider such a problem, but that the procedures of dialectics could not cope with it. One cannot have a dialectical discussion of a question such as "is virtue good?" because all the commonplaces upon which such a discussion would be based are *less certain* than the belief that virtue is good. Dialectics can only work where the disputants can hope to appeal to opinions that are not disputed. When it is clear that everything will be disputed, dialectics becomes inoperable.

This is of obvious relevance to Nietzsche, for whom the chief fascination lies precisely in those cases that fall outside the limits of dialectics as demarcated by Aristotle:

I attack only causes that are victorious - under certain circumstances I wait until they are victorious...I attack only causes against which I would find no allies...⁶¹

One might say that the distinction of Nietzsche's philosophy is to "make a problem of what is obvious to everybody", and therefore the procedural method of dialectics is unavailable to him. To bring into question "fundamental truths" simply requires a bombardment of all commonplace opinions, and this is only likely to be achieved by going outside the normal confines of discussion and introducing "foreign" material in order to stimulate a reappraisal.

The key idea here is that the deployment of multiple sources of argumentation is not simply to do with "crowd pleasing" as Aristotle would have it and, conversely, it is not necessarily "more scientific" to adopt a step-by-step approach in the examination of hypotheses. It is only scientific in the sense that it helps to define and clarify the existing conceptual and evaluative frameworks within which inquiry takes place. Any more radical application of rational thought is ruled out by this very insistence on strict method. Of course, to suggest the scientific value of such unmethodical and free-ranging thinking is effectively to break one of the great taboos of Western philosophy - that reason and imagination are essentially separate faculties. But in the end this means no more (though also no less) than to recognize, as many scientists have already done, the value of *possibility* and the corresponding disadvantages of seeking only what is necessary in things.⁶²

So far, I have been arguing that rhetorical argumentation has a role to play in science and philosophy. However, this role could not be fulfilled by retaining the structures outlined in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and simply broadening their scope. The main reason for this is that the *Rhetoric* is not just a handbook for rhetors but also an important part of Aristotle's general theory of discourse; one which cannot be separated from the rest. To take rhetoric as outlined by Aristotle as the master-discourse of politics, ethics, or science, would be an impossible exercise, precisely because Aristotle's understanding of rhetoric is fundamentally reliant on these other "disciplines": rhetoric employs the knowledge gleaned elsewhere. I think it is possible to strip away the basic ontological prejudices masquerading as a descriptive account, thus opening the way for a more distinctive role for rhetorical argumentation, which does not see it as

closely allied to logic and dialectics.

That rhetoric is nothing radically different from other modes of reasoning is made clear in the first book of the *Rhetoric*. The serious student of rhetoric is enjoined to make a close comparative study of logic,

For the true and the approximately true are apprehended by the same faculty; it may also be noted that men have a sufficient natural instinct for what is true, and usually do arrive at the truth. Hence the man who makes a good guess at truth is likely to make a good guess at what is reputable...Rhetoric is useful because things that are true and things that are just have a natural tendency to prevail over their opposites...⁶³

In seeking to defend rhetoric against Plato's charge of immorality, Aristotle emphasizes the extent to which it partakes of the moral order. If truth and right have a "natural tendency to prevail" then the rhetor will be well-equipped only when he knows what is right in whichever field he operates - deliberative, forensic, or epideictic.⁶⁴ And, indeed, Aristotle's detailed accounts of the various spheres of rhetoric concentrate almost exclusively on exactly these questions. The rhetor must know what makes for good government and what the means are for achieving it; he must know what motivates good and bad actions respectively; and he must be able to recognize the qualities that constitute upright and low characters. These must be known, in order that the rhetor can argue for the good in general:

we must be able to employ persuasion, just as deduction can be employed, on opposite sides of a question, not in order that we may in practice employ it in both ways (for we must not make people believe what is wrong), but in order that we may see clearly what the facts are, and that, if another man argues

unfairly, we on our part may be able to confute him...the underlying facts do not lend themselves equally well to contrary views. No; things that are true and things that are better are, by their nature, practically always easier to prove and more persuasive.⁶⁵

Given this privileging of the "underlying facts", it is hardly surprising to find that Aristotle's descriptions of the materials needed for rhetorical argument read like extracts from his works on politics and ethics. However, since rhetoric is addressed to a relatively uneducated audience, only "extracts" are required: the most basic points will suffice to convince the crowd. Thus, at the end of his discussion of the knowledge required for deliberative oratory, Aristotle comments:

We have now considered the objects, present or future, at which we are to aim when urging any proposal, and the grounds on which we are to base our persuasions in favour of its utility...only, however, to the extent demanded by the present occasion; a detailed account of the subject has been given in the *Politics*.⁶⁶

It would appear, then, that there is not much for the rhetor to do, so far as argumentation is concerned. He merely has to learn the relevant facts and apply them to the particular circumstances. His role is passive and subservient: Aristotle even defines rhetoric as 'the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion.'⁶⁷ Small wonder, therefore, that his treatise on rhetoric has remained of relatively minor interest to philosophers.

What is missing from Aristotle's account? In a word, it is the element of creativity in rhetorical argumentation. This is at least suggested by the term given in Latin to rhetorical argumentation,

namely *inventio* - the invention or discovery of suitable means of persuasion. According to Cicero, the key requirements for this "discovery of arguments" are acuteness or natural talent (*acumen*, *ingenium*), theory (*ratio*), and diligence (*diligentia*), of which the most important is the first.⁶⁸ Though Cicero was heavily influenced by Aristotle, his awareness of the importance of *acumen* is indicative of a different emphasis (as is his typically Roman belief in practice). Why require *acumen* if there are fixed and discoverable rules for good and bad government and for good and bad actions?

The problem is that Aristotle gives the impression that the *job is done*, and that after him there is no need to "invent" but simply to learn. That he was extremely effective in this regard is witnessed by the degeneration of much rhetorical teaching into the mere learning of a vast "stock" of facts and arguments. The cosy assumption is that the world is basically fixed and ultimately amenable to description, in which case *inventio* is not needed. But at its best, the *inventio* of rhetoric is capable of approaching subjects with a breadth of outlook which is unavailable to "scientific method". Because it arises out of the concern to persuade and is not dominated by logical or ontological rules and restrictions, *any material may be used*, and it is up to the rhetor to justify its inclusion. Cicero moves towards this idea of a more active use of material:

I hold that all things relating to the intercourse of fellow-citizens and the ways of mankind, or concerned with everyday life, the political system, our own corporate society, the common sentiments of humanity, natural inclinations and morals must be mastered by the orator; if not in the sense that he is to advise on these matters one by one, as the philosophers do, yet so far at least as to weave them skilfully into his discourse...⁶⁹

There is no need for Cicero to be so apologetic about this "weaving in", for it may be that insights which cannot be gleaned from a systematic "one by one" study can be produced by the mixture of subject-matter appropriate to rhetoric. Compare this with what Nietzsche says about his own use of Wagner and Schopenhauer:

What I did by and large was to take two famous and still altogether undetermined types by the forelock, as one takes an opportunity by the forelock, in order to say something, in order to have a couple more formulae, signs, means of expression in my hands.⁷⁰

Here is the essential difference: while the Aristotelian rhetor remains an observer of the means of persuasion, Nietzsche is concerned to forge an argument through the use of his knowledge about various subjects. Moreover, this willingness and ability to create is not reliant on the possession of genius: Aristotle's account systematically excludes creativity, because in an essentially ordered world, reason does not require it; but if the world is a chaos, then to understand it will always involve a creative element, which is present neither in the demonstrations of Aristotelian science nor the testing procedures of his dialectics. The *inventio* of rhetoric has great potential for playing the required role, but not when limited by the Aristotelian world-view.

I will conclude this chapter by summarizing the main implications, as I see them, of this long re-interpretation of the nature and possibilities of rhetorical argumentation. There are consequences both

for the role of rhetoric in general, and for the way in which Nietzsche is approached and used, which flow from the line of argument I have adopted here.

So far as rhetoric is concerned, some elements of my account merely echo the consensus of "rhetorical theory" in the past few decades. This applies particularly to the basic assumption of this chapter, which is that argumentation is an important part of rhetoric. Here, I am in complete concord with the overturning of the Platonic prejudice that rhetoric is about "mere style"; the return to Aristotle has helped to break down the centuries-old prejudice that rhetoric does not engage the rational faculty. However, the significance of this rediscovery will depend on the answers to two further questions, which today are far more controversial: first, given that rhetoric does use argumentation, to what extent does that argumentation work along patterns already understood and explored (i.e. demonstration and dialectic), and to what extent is it different? Second, what is the "proper sphere" of rhetorical argumentation? Does it apply only to the realm of "practical decisions", or can it invade the provinces of science and philosophy?

The question that is often posed by contemporary discussions of rhetorical arguments is whether they can be assessed in terms of *soundness*, or merely in terms of *effectiveness*. Since the goal of rhetoric is to persuade, an extreme version of the latter view might assess an argument by whether it actually succeeds in persuading an audience: one looks at the interaction between audience and text. At the opposite extreme the audience is excluded altogether, and the question becomes whether the arguments meet the "required standards".⁷¹ Aristotle tends to mix the two approaches together: the fundamental requirement of rhetoric is to persuade, but the best way of persuading

is to employ sound argumentation. Hence the stress on arguing correctly which pervades the *Rhetoric*.

The approach I have taken here has been to follow this notion of "rational soundness" of argumentation rather than to start researching the empirical effectiveness of rhetorical arguments. However, I have come to conclusions very different from Aristotle's. For he clearly takes the measures of rational soundness to be the logic of deduction and induction and the careful method of dialectics; rhetorical argumentation retains the outlines of these sound procedures, but is able to weaken them because of the rational deficiencies of its audience. Thus, to the extent that rhetorical argumentation is "reasonable" it is because of its affinities with other, more clearly rational forms; and to the extent that it is not, it is because it does not need to be. What I have hoped to suggest, through the explorations of Nietzsche's argumentation, is the possibility of argument that is rational in ways that Aristotle cannot consider, due to the ontological prejudices of his framework of rationality. Aristotle's procedures are all about the creation of a unitary and systematic description: they test hypotheses; they rule out and they establish. Against this, I argue that the resources of rhetoric are not weaker versions of these unifying procedures: they *tend in a different direction*. The "gaps" of the enthymeme, the imaginative connections of analogy, and the infinite multiplicity of material all go towards making many hypotheses reasonable, rather than making one canonical and discarding the rest. They offer the possibility, in other words, of "rationality" disconnected from "soundness".

A possible collective name for these forms of rhetorical argumentation is "productive logic". This contrasts with deductive and

inductive, and suggests the important principle of "leading forwards" (which would be a straight transliteration from the latin "pro" "ducere"). Deductive and inductive logics grip us with the presumption that rational criticism means simply to establish a theory. This, according to Nietzsche, implies a basic complacency: find something that "works", and stick with it, accept it as the truth. Thus it would be a mistake to conceive of a new organon for productive logic, because it is not a logic that tests and satisfies and ends thinking, but one that drives it forward, showing it new opportunities and reasons for dissatisfaction with explanations that may be "sound" according to traditional norms.

The second question I asked was whether this rhetorical logic applies only to the accepted "rhetorical sphere" of political decision-making and legal judgements. It is certainly understandable why more flexible forms of argument should arise in areas of practical decision-making, quite apart from the considerations of a non-specialist audience. Aristotle himself admits that the traditional application of rhetoric is to situations which allow many possible outcomes, and he contrasts this with science and its search for the necessary and eternal features of existence. A form of reasoning which allows many possible courses to emerge and enter serious consideration is therefore in no way superfluous and diversionary, but a natural outcome of the feature of choice which governs such situations.

Of course, if one adopts a positivist conception of philosophy and science, the productive logic of rhetoric will become "unsound" outside the practical sphere, because it encourages the multiplication of hypotheses and interpretations, when the task of science and philosophy is to find the true description of the world. However, if we assume either that there is no stable true world and/or

the weaker hypothesis that there is no unique accurate description or explanation of the world, then the relevance and soundness of rhetorical argumentation starts to emerge: it enforces the conception of science as a *process*, it counteracts all tendencies towards dogmatic world-interpretations (including the dogmatic faith in the power of traditional logics), and it produces material for the multiplication of perspectives and interpretations, which other forms of argumentation do not. To summarize, then: not only is rhetorical argumentation reasonable, it has its own distinctive standards of rationality, and they are standards which have a relevance far wider than the traditional practical concerns of rhetoric.⁷²

The remaining questions concern the consequences of this detailed study of Nietzsche's argumentation and its relationship to the rhetorical tradition might have for interpreting Nietzsche. The first, obvious implication of almost everything I have said here is the futility of producing "logical reconstructions" of Nietzsche's arguments, which unfortunately has been all too typical a manoeuvre, particularly in Anglo-American Nietzsche-interpretation. This mistake (it is really nothing less than that) stems from exactly the same prejudices which have led to the widespread underestimation or dismissal of rhetorical argumentation. Not only do these reconstructions ignore everything Nietzsche wrote about the weaknesses of logical and dialectical argument, they exclude the possibility of alternative structures of rationality and assume that Nietzsche was simply a bad or careless logician, not considering that he might be a different kind of logician.

However, there are ways of ignoring Nietzsche's argumentation other than simply rewriting his arguments. Under the influence of Heidegger, there has been a tendency to focus discussion

on Nietzsche's "great themes" of *Übermensch*, will to power, and eternal recurrence. There is a grave danger that the more seriously and earnestly these thought-experiments are taken, the more pervasive will become the notion that they are metaphysical descriptions; this, indeed, is exactly Heidegger's understanding of them. But according to Nietzsche's own understanding of the universe as a process, such "descriptions" would be an impossibility. The nature of the world, even as a world of becoming, simply cannot be fixed in thought. As a corrective measure it is preferable to go to the other extreme, ignore the "themes" altogether, and concentrate on the endless process of scientific inquiry.⁷³

What I have tried to glean from Nietzsche's comments on science and the model of his argumentation is in a sense a demand to restrict interpretation to what we can use for ourselves, and to disregard the rest. What matters is to be "doing science" in Nietzsche's sense - inquiring and advancing; whether or not Nietzsche can act as model for such a procedure is a subsidiary question. At any rate, perhaps one of the greatest of all links between Nietzschean science and rhetorical argument is the intellectual necessity of strife and opponents, which all master-descriptions, systems, and the assimilating forces of logic and dialectics, set out to overcome. Nietzsche's comments on the ageing philosopher indicate not just the dangers for the individual, but what Western philosophy has almost always been - or, at least, wanted to be:

It is all over now with the self-surpassing desire that filled him in earlier years for genuine pupils, that is to say genuine continuators of his thought, that is to say genuine opponents...now it torments him that he cannot be the last thinker; he ponders how, with the inheritance he will bestow upon

mankind, he can also impose upon them a limitation of independent thinking...after him none shall have full power over his own intellect, he wants to stand as the bulwark against which the surges of thought in general shall ever afterwards break...⁷⁴

Despite the countless warnings and exhortations, this aspect of Nietzsche's thinking has not yet been taken seriously, or lightly enough; and that in spite of the prominence of the phrase that encapsulates it: *gay science*. Even in this presentation, though, there has been much about science, but little gaiety. This scientific spirit is eager and earnest and thirsts for knowledge, but its joyfulness and frivolity as yet remains a mystery. There is an air of paradox about the thesis so far: can Nietzsche after all be a sober scientist, and his rhetoric the very embodiment of rationality? I do not wish to repudiate these conclusions just as I have reached them, for this element of seriousness and earnest science exists in Nietzsche, even if it is the side of his work which calls forth mockery: "No! Not such tones! Let us strike up more agreeable, more joyous tones!"⁷⁵ But this is the point: without the mockery and the laughter, the impression would be as lop-sided as it would be without the science. Or, to put it soberly: how can reason, truth, and science be amusing, stylish, and entertaining? It is, after all, often hard to believe even in an accidental relation between these elements, let alone the sort of intrinsic connection suggested by the phrase "*gay science*". And so we are brought to the threshold of the most-discussed element both of Nietzsche and of rhetoric: *elocutio*, style; with the task before us which he set out:

The lovely human beast always seems to lose its good spirits when it thinks well; it becomes "serious." And "where laughter and gaiety are found, thinking does not amount to anything": that is

the prejudice of this serious beast against all "gay science." -
Well then, let us prove that this is a prejudice.⁷⁶

The Value of Eloquence

Throughout this thesis, I have resisted the modern tendency to reduce "rhetoric" to "figures of speech" or "style", and have sought to consider Nietzsche's contribution to a wider, more classical conception of the term. Necessary as such a revision is, however, it would be equally partial to ignore altogether the question of style which, as the element of *elocutio* (= delivery, presentation; from *e-loquor*, "to speak out"), was after all an integral part of classical rhetoric. This does not mean that the modern treatments have, after all, been partially correct, and should be acknowledged as such. On the contrary, their deformed understanding of rhetoric in general inevitably infects their approaches to Nietzsche's eloquence¹ in particular; a fact which makes it all the more necessary that the question of style should be broached once again, from a fresh perspective.

The general outline of the approach taken here can be viewed by means of a comparison with one of the most common methods of treating Nietzsche's style, which I have described as "literary-critical".² Such studies probe Nietzsche's eloquence in detail, and often yield valuable insights; but they fundamentally take for granted the literary nature of Nietzsche's texts, and seek to appreciate the impact made by particular cases of writerly skill. In contrast to this, I want to ask why Nietzsche insists, in theory and practice, on the overall importance of style - why he displays a fierce will to eloquence in the face of a tradition which has always warned philosophers of the irrelevance and the dangers of such artistic impulses. These questions are outside - before and after - the domain

of traditional aesthetic theory, because aesthetics asks about the nature of beauty and what is beautiful after the decision has been made to raise truth above beauty or beauty above truth. In the struggle between philosophy and rhetoric, what matters is not the nature and meaning of art but rather its value. And what remains to be appreciated - what I hope to indicate here - is how and why Nietzsche's eloquence stands against the answer given by philosophy and for that of rhetoric.

For such a discussion to make any sense, a preliminary requirement must be to understand the nature of philosophy's objections to eloquence. Here, as in previous chapters, the Platonic dialogues are the key source, since they argue for evaluations which after Plato became accepted as axioms and thus disappeared from philosophical debate. The main discussions of art and beauty occur in the *Republic*, the *Symposium*, and the *Phaedrus*.³ they are worth separate treatment, for although all provide reasons for philosophical suspicion of the aesthetic, the debates have quite different emphases, so that it is possible to identify two fundamental objections to eloquence, which will be used as the basis for the general discussion that follows.⁴

The critique of art in the *Republic* concentrates on the *illusory* nature of artistic representation. Socrates asserts that 'the artist's representation (*mimesis*) stands at third remove from reality',⁵ because the artist always represents particular objects which are themselves, according to the Platonic scheme, mere "representations" of their respective ideal Forms. Thus there is a hierarchy from (e.g.) the Form of the bed, which is perfect, through the (necessarily imperfect) craftsman's "representation" of a bed, down

to the even less perfect artistic representation of the bed. The *Republic's* fundamental objection to art is that it seeks to convince its audience that this poor imitation of an imitation is the real thing, and that the poet or painter thus has genuine knowledge of Being. Not only does the artist not know the Forms of things - a knowledge available only to the highest wisdom - he does not even know about the "apparent" world, since he does not make or use everyday objects, but merely observes them. Far from having privileged insight, the artist is thus particularly ignorant. He persuades and influences people due to the power of illusion and the susceptibility of the human mind to error:

a stick will look bent if you put it in the water, straight when you take it out, and differences of shading can make the same surface seem to the eye concave or convex; and it's all a matter of our mind being confused. It is on this natural weakness of ours that the scene-painter and conjuror and their fellows rely when they deceive us with their tricks.⁶

Both the *Symposium* and *Phaedrus* deal with the nature of love rather than art; nevertheless, they suggest an important criticism which is relatively marginal in the *Republic's* account, namely the seductive nature of the aesthetic - its appeal to the lower elements of the human being. In both the *Phaedrus* and the *Symposium*, the philosopher is presented as a lover of beauty, but of a very special type of beauty, the Form of Beauty, which does not reside in any earthly object. Plato describes a gradual advance, in which the true disciple will move from love of the particular physical object to love of the general metaphysical idea: he will recognize that 'the beauty of each and every body is the same', and after that will make the even

more important discovery that 'the beauties of the body are as nothing to the beauties of the soul'; through this comparison, 'he will conclude that the beauty of the body is not, after all, of so great moment.'⁷ While in the *Symposium* this is presented as a smooth progression, the *Phaedrus* stresses the potentially disruptive character of lust for the physical, through the myth of the charioteer; but common to both accounts is the notion that complete self-control and overcoming of physical desire is the philosopher's objective.

This hierarchy is given further reinforcement in Alcibiades's drunken speech in praise of Socrates, which indicates that despite his outer/physical/apparent ugliness, Socrates is in fact beautiful. The greater force of spiritual beauty is thus dramatized by the irony that the physically beautiful Alcibiades is the lover of the physically decrepid Socrates, which turns the normal state of affairs upside-down. Socrates, unsurprisingly, is keen to highlight this aesthetic revaluation:

"you must find me so extraordinarily beautiful that your own attractions must be quite eclipsed. And if you're trying to barter your own beauty for the beauty you have found in me, you're driving a very hard bargain, let me tell you. You're trying to exchange the semblance of beauty for the thing itself - like Diomedes and Glaucus swapping bronze for gold."⁸

This "true", inner beauty also surfaces (crucially, for our purposes) in Alcibiades's description of Socrates's manner of speech, and its absence of charm. At this point, the contrast with rhetoric is almost palpable:

he always seems to be saying the same old thing in just the same old way, so that anyone who wasn't used to his style and wasn't

very quick on the uptake would naturally take it for the most utter nonsense. But if you open up his arguments, and really get under the skin of them, you'll find that they're the only arguments in the world that have any sense at all, and that nobody else's are so godlike, so rich in images of virtue...⁹

The plea is to avoid deception by appearances and "fine words" and to penetrate to the essence of things, to the underlying truth.

So, to summarize: art should be excluded from philosophy because it has no connection with the essence of reality but pretends it does; also because, like all material things, it has the potential to distract attention from the truly important - it appeals to a lower part of the human being. This dual inappropriateness is briefly recognized in the *Republic*:

we can fairly take the poet and set him beside the painter. He resembles him both because his works have a low degree of truth and because he appeals to a low element in the mind. We are therefore quite right to refuse to admit him to a properly run state, because he stirs up and encourages and strengthens the lower elements in the mind at the expense of reason...¹⁰

It is remarkable, given the lapse of time involved, how closely many modern commentators on Nietzsche manage to retrace these Platonic criticisms. Pasley, for example, while insisting on the importance of Nietzsche's artistic language, invokes the old problem of the illusion that gets itself taken seriously:

Not least among the questions raised in these pages is how far [Nietzsche] allowed his imagery to dictate his argument even when he supposed that his argument was in control of his imagery; how far his theories and doctrines were formed or swayed - more decisively than he knew and to more damaging effect than he could

foresee - by the picture-patterns and the mythical models on which he drew.¹¹

Even more pervasive than this suspicion, however, is the assumption of a dichotomy between the beautiful and artistic "expression" and the underlying ideas of Nietzsche, examples of which have already been documented in earlier chapters.¹²

As with all the criticisms of rhetoric discussed in this thesis, a variety of anti-Platonic strategies present themselves. The first is to dispute the applicability of the Platonic criticisms to Nietzsche's case: this would mean to insist in various ways that Nietzsche's eloquence is non-illusory, and actually reveals some kind of important truth or meaning. The second strategy - not necessarily incompatible with the first - is to attempt to undermine the validity of Plato's critique, by indicating philosophy's complicity with what it attempts to exclude. The most sophisticated of these efforts is to deconstruct the critique of style. The third approach, more consistent with the overall strategy adopted in this thesis, is to accept the Platonic descriptions, but seek to transform the evaluation. In other words: what if Nietzsche's eloquence is both "illusory" and "seductive"? What then...? I will return to these questions later; but first, there is a need to explain why the alternative strategies - which have, after all, dominated recent discussions of Nietzsche's style(s) - are inadequate.

The most common response to the philosophical criticism of eloquence has been to claim that literary language is not at "third remove from reality", as Plato believed, and may actually be capable of

expressing truths that are inaccessible to more prosaic thinking. The debate has raged with particular ferocity about the trope of *metaphor*, and the way it functions. In the Romantic tradition, metaphors are not regarded as "ornamental" versions of literal truths, but rather as presenting natural, sensuous and direct relations to the world, beyond the scope of conceptual language. Much attention is given to "dead metaphor", or initially physical, material terms which have lost their immediate contact with the world through constant use, and have become abstract and immaterial.¹³

The suspicion that Nietzsche held such a view of language and metaphor is based primarily on his unpublished 1873 essay "On truth and lie in an extra-moral sense" (henceforth abbreviated to "OTL"), which emphasizes the metaphorical essence of language. In a much-quoted passage, Nietzsche asserts that

Truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions; they are metaphors that have become worn out and have been drained of sensuous force...¹⁴

This sense that conceptual truth - the normal "coinage" of philosophy - has lost or forgotten an original metaphoricity is indicated by Nietzsche's comments on the origins of language in the same essay:

To begin with, a nerve stimulus is transferred into an image: first metaphor. The image, in turn, is imitated in a sound: second metaphor. And each time there is a complete overleaping of one sphere, right into the middle of an entirely new and different one...we believe that we know something about the things themselves when we speak of trees, colours, snow, and flowers; and yet we possess nothing but metaphors for things - metaphors which correspond in no way to the original entities.¹⁵

The language in this essay is necessarily paradoxical, since Nietzsche is describing many senses of "truth"; but he certainly implies that what we normally think of as the language of truth - literal expressions, conceptual definitions - emerged and prospered due to a will to power, not a will to truth. The advantage of concepts lies in their greater power:

something is possible in the realm of these schemata which could never be achieved with the vivid first impressions: the construction of a pyramidal order according to castes and degrees, the creation of a new world of laws, privileges, subordinations and clearly marked boundaries - a new world, one which now confronts that other vivid world of first impressions as more solid, more universal, better known, and more human than the immediately perceived world, and thus as the regulative and imperative world.¹⁶

Lying in this praise for the conceptual, there lurks a justification for the return to metaphorical language: if that language better captures our "vivid first impressions" and "immediately perceived world", it can be considered more truly descriptive. And thus, against Plato, it can be seen as the appropriate vehicle for philosophical thinking in its efforts to approach a description of reality.

There are a number of reasons why such a "defence" of Nietzsche's eloquence would be quite inadequate. In the first place, it is a justification of metaphor, whereas style and eloquence often arise from other uses of language to which this framework would clearly be inapplicable: "metaphor" cannot stand as a synecdoche for the totality of Nietzsche's eloquence.

But even when the theory is restricted to metaphor it is highly problematic. Derrida describes it as a "symbolist" theory,¹⁷

because the metaphorical terms are regarded as holding a strong connection with material objects, which is lost or effaced when metaphors become concepts. Something like this seems to be implied by Nietzsche's metaphorical description of truths as

metaphors that have become worn out and have been drained of sensuous force, coins which have lost their embossing and are now considered as metal and no longer as coins.¹⁸

But as Derrida points out, a symbolist conception of metaphor retains the dubious metaphysical ideal of a proper link between language and the "things themselves", the shift being only in the linguistic vehicle through which this link is to be established. To look on metaphor nostalgically as a way to return to the immediacy of human relations with Being, before they were corrupted by the imposition of concepts, is to rewrite the Platonic doctrine of *anamnesis*. Moreover, Derrida shows that the attempts that some "symbolists" have made to reduce abstract philosophical concepts to "original metaphors" is no escape from philosophy, since it repeats the central motif of a return to immediately present truth. Such theories are thus, for Derrida, ways of reinforcing the system they ostensibly confront: 'metaphor remains, in all its essential characteristics, a classical philosopheme, a metaphysical concept.'¹⁹

Has Nietzsche fallen into this trap? Many commentators, concerned by passages from "OTL" such as those cited above, have sought to distance this essay from Nietzsche's mature position, pointing out that it was an early work (1873) which despite its polished nature Nietzsche considered unsuitable for publication, and that its "symbolist" ideas are clearly abandoned and rejected in Nietzsche's later comments on language.²⁰ While I would agree that the mature works

offer no justification for a "symbolist" interpretation, this judgement applies equally to the 1873 essay. While the latter is imperfect and in places confused, there are pointers within it to a very different theory of truth and metaphor, which is worth briefly outlining here, since it has hitherto received so little attention; it might be described as a political theory of metaphor.

The key elements of a symbolist theory of metaphor are simply absent from "OTL". The essay rules out the possibility of a "true correspondence" to things through any means of expression. The cause of misunderstanding on this point lies in sentences such as the following:

Whereas each perceptual metaphor is individual and without equals and is therefore able to elude all classification, the great edifice of concepts displays the rigid regularity of a Roman columbarium...²¹

If one forgets the qualifying adjective "perceptual", it is possible to make out for this a story that the greater "truth" (in the sense of correspondence) lies in metaphors, since Nietzsche always insists that a central element of the falsity of concepts resides in their making equal unequal things. If metaphors could express the individuality of things, they would be "closer to the truth". But this is not the case. "Perceptual metaphors" are not a type of *linguistic* metaphor at all, but rather a shorthand description for Nietzsche's Schopenhauerian account of perception, given earlier in the essay, which asserts that perception is indirect and must always take the form of translations and transfers from one realm to another. Describing perception as "metaphorical" is thus quite the opposite of accounting it "true".²²

"OTL" does unquestionably give a positive evaluation of the use of metaphor, but this is not on account of its truthfulness, as a

careful reading of the key passage makes clear:

There exists no word for these intuitions; when man sees them he grows dumb, or else he speaks only in forbidden metaphors and in unheard-of combinations of concepts. He does this so that by shattering and mocking the old conceptual barriers he may at least correspond creatively to the impression of the powerful present intuition.²³

Though Nietzsche talks of "correspondence" here, it is not to the truth of things but to "the powerful present intuition". What is meant by that phrase remains somewhat obscure, and Nietzsche soon abandons the Kantian terminology of "intuition" in opposition to "concept". But the impression is very much of a conflict between the "authorized descriptions" of ordinary language-use and the "unauthorized descriptions" of metaphorical and poetic language. This conflict is not about truth: both types of description are "false" to the "things themselves". The struggle is rather over evaluations and aspirations: acceptance of the conceptually structured order of things and men versus the recalcitrance of the artist, who wanders in dreams and visions, and insists on the priority of his own particular experience, even though it may require unheard of combinations of words to convey it. This tension between conventional and unconventional language use is certainly developed and deepened in the later Nietzsche,²⁴ but the early essay certainly does not promote the Romantic alternative to the later texts that is often supposed. Indeed, as we shall see later in the chapter, the idea of art as a "political" force, presenting alternatives to established "realities", has echoes throughout Nietzsche's work.

What does all this imply for a defence of Nietzsche's

eloquence against the Platonic attack? Fundamentally, it means that the attempt to justify artistic means of expression by reference to their allegedly privileged access to reality is a failure. Not only would such a thesis imply an unacceptable reversion to a Platonic project of mirroring Being; it is also a position that cannot be attributed to Nietzsche even for the one text widely touted as a symbolist theory of metaphor.

Many of the strongest critics of such a theory have sought by way of an alternative to justify Nietzsche's eloquence in what I would term a performative manner.²⁵ One can lump together in this respect Derrida and Nehamas, who both agree, despite their differences concerning what Nietzsche's "styles" perform, that these styles constitute a performance of some kind. Indeed, they even agree that style functions as a limitation on the textual "content". For Nehamas, what is crucial is the multiplicity of Nietzsche's styles, which conveys that Nietzsche's views are idiosyncratic and do not aspire to canonical status; for Derrida, whose interpretation is easily the more subtle, Nietzsche's styles enact above all the rich, indecipherable ambiguity of life and language.²⁶ Neither of these readings is particularly convincing, as I indicate below; but the decisive objection is to the performative framework itself, whatever the detailed account might look like.

The effort to interpret Nietzsche's styles as encoding some kind of limitation on the truth-value of his texts has one obvious advantage: it provides a plausible answer to the objection that Nietzsche could simply have stated whatever it is that his styles are supposed to "exhibit", rather than encoding it in so complicated a fashion. For if it is a question of denying or undermining or rendering questionable and ambiguous the whole of what is stated, then merely to

state this as an extra fact or appendix would fail to do the job: what is required is another level or mode of discourse, which calls into question what the first level of "conceptual content" asserts.

Other than this logical point, however, there is little justification for any of the interpretations of Nietzsche's styles as "limits". Nehamas produces much textual evidence to illustrate that Nietzsche was a perspectivist, but nothing at all to suggest that this accounts for his multiplicity of styles. That claim rests on the supposition that Nietzsche's primary concern is to have his views accepted as nothing other than "his own" views, an ambition which a more direct approach could not hope to fulfil:

Constantly to repeat the phrase "this is only my interpretation" as one's sole concession to this anti-dogmatic orientation would soon rob it of all credibility.²⁷

So Nehamas would have us believe that the multiplicity of styles is Nietzsche's way of constantly saying (without saying) "this is only my interpretation"; or, as Nehamas puts it, 'He depends on many styles in order to suggest that there is no single, neutral language in which his views, or any others, can ever be presented.'²⁸ Unfortunately this ignores the rather obvious point that the one passage where Nietzsche talks explicitly about multiplicity of styles mentions nothing of these "perspectivist" concerns.

To communicate a state, an inner tension of pathos through signs, including the tempo of these signs - that is the meaning of every style; and considering that the multiplicity of inner states is in my case extraordinary, there exists in my case the possibility of many styles - altogether the most manifold art of style any man has ever had at his disposal.²⁹

In other words, the variety of styles is not about saying the same thing in many different ways, but about communicating a multiplicity of states. A different style for each "inner tension of pathos" - that seems to be the point.³⁰

Despite the greater subtlety of his argument, Derrida's interpretation of Nietzsche's styles is even more loosely connected to the text. The method of his reading is put forward jestingly at the very start of *Spurs*:

The title of this lecture was to have been the question of style. But - woman will be my subject. It remains to be asked whether this comes down to the same thing - or to the other.³¹

In fact, the text's detailed discussions concern Nietzsche's comments on the relationship between woman and truth; the link to the question of style is made only through Derrida's own games of word-association. Derrida insists on the attribute of distance applied both to womanly truth and the truth of woman: both "are" only in their absence; one cannot come too close. And, for Derrida, Nietzsche's styles are, in the end, little more than a way of reinforcing this impossibility of grasping truth/woman:

Nietzsche had no illusions...that he might know anything of those effects called woman, truth, castration, or of those ontological effects of presence or absence. He carefully guarded against the hasty denial which the erection of a simple discourse against castration and its system would constitute. Without a discrete parody, a strategy of writing, a difference or variation of pens, without style - grand style - the reversal returns to the same in the loud declaration of the antithesis.³²

As in the case of Nehamas, the only real justification for this

interpretation of the function of Nietzsche's styles is a consideration of what the case would be without them: for Nehamas, un-perspectivist interpretations of Nietzsche; for Derrida, mere negation of the metaphysical system, hence the failure to evade it. Derrida's only illustration of the "discrete parody" enacted by Nietzsche's styles is his analysis of the fragmentary note 'I have forgotten my umbrella', which in its banal everydayness illustrates the gulf separating Derrida's understanding of "style" from anything remotely approaching the "communication of a state" asserted by Nietzsche. Naturally this scrap, which floats without context, is the perfect Derridean "stylate spur", puncturing all attempts to assign it meaning, evading the determinations of metaphysics and anti-metaphysics, forever distant: 'it can always remain at the same time open, offered and undecipherable; one cannot even know it as "undecipherable."' ³³ But this proves only that Derrida's understanding of "style" has nothing in common with Nietzsche's; that there is no agreement even on what would count as "stylish", let alone on how style functions.

So far, however, my criticisms have only suggested that these performative interpretations are wrong in important particulars about the function of Nietzsche's styles, whereas my main suspicion concerns the whole performative framework, which must itself be brought into question. For, in spite of everything, there is no justification of eloquence in these works. Quite apart from the typical philosophical spiritlessness with which these accounts are produced, there is no attempt to revalue art as a distinct force: rather, the effort is to reassure the understanding that art was a *theoretical* exigency in the case of Nietzsche, required in order to ward off error, in the form of dogmatism or metaphysics. To formulate it as a response to Plato: illusion may be necessary, in order to ward off a greater threat of

illusion (dogmatism, error of anti-metaphysics that remains metaphysics). The allegedly hostile force of eloquence is justified as a novel way of aiding the vigilance of the understanding. As Nehamas puts it:

When I claim that we must pay attention to Nietzsche's style, I am claiming only that his changing styles convey significant information to his readers.³⁴

It is hard to resist the idea that these performative interpretations of Nietzsche's eloquence may after all and despite everything be doing Plato's work. For it is often forgotten that, when Socrates cast out the poets, he did not exclude the possibility of readmittance - if poetry can be shown to have a "higher" purpose:

we should give her defenders, men who aren't poets themselves but who love poetry, a chance of defending her in prose and proving that she doesn't only give pleasure but brings lasting benefit to human life and human society. And we will listen favourably, as we shall gain much if we find her a source of profit as well as pleasure.³⁵

If, as this suggests, many of the attempts to defend eloquence continue to play the Platonic game, an alternative strategy could be to turn the tables on the philosophers' critique of art, and question their capacity to stand outside it in judgement. In other words, it is possible to counter-attack against the critics of eloquence, rather than mount a defence to their accusations.

Plato himself has always appeared particularly vulnerable to such tactics, since his skills as a stylist make his criticisms of art look hypocritical. I do not propose to discuss this here, however. The

debate seems destined to lead only to psychological questions concerning the "inner turmoil" of Plato's conflicting drives; besides, even if Plato proved unable to follow his own advice,³⁶ this counts for little against the influence which that advice has had on philosophy's subsequent development.

A far more interesting form of this counter-attack, one which has been highly influential and deserves some attention here, is the suggestion that philosophy is inescapably reliant on figures of speech, so that if there is an hypocrisy, it is organized and structural. The most sophisticated of these strategies is contained in Derrida's essay "White mythology",³⁷ other elements of which have already been explored in this chapter. Derrida notes an ambivalence in the philosophical tradition's response to metaphor: on the one hand, it is treated as inferior to and always dependent on "proper"; literal usage; on the other hand, it is recognized as a valuable additional epistemic resource, capable of bringing to language ideas which have hitherto failed to receive expression. For Derrida, this official account of metaphor as a marginal concept covers up the important work it does on behalf of philosophy: at key points in the great texts of Western metaphysics, metaphors of sun, light, vision, etc. intervene; and they recur so persistently precisely because there is no "proper" term which could take their place - they are the fig leaf half-covering philosophy's failure to bring Being firmly within its grasp. While this suggests a far greater complicity of metaphor in the workings of metaphysics than has traditionally been recognized - and Derrida is at pains to reject those who see in metaphor an "escape" from metaphysics - there is nevertheless a firm conviction in "White mythology" that metaphor is also the Achilles' heel of metaphysics. For, as well as the detour which will lead back to literal, proper truth (the function

assigned to it by metaphysics), metaphor is also susceptible to an 'other self-destruction'³⁸ which, unlike the first, philosophical one, 'is no longer a question of extending and confirming a philosopheme, but rather, of unfolding it without limit, and wresting its borders of propriety from it.' As ever, Derrida leaves the operator of this "self-destruction" ambiguous: it is partly a task to be carried out by deconstructive readings, and partly what metaphor itself properly generates, outside the restrictive connection with "proper meaning" imposed throughout the history of metaphysics.

As a project for liberating eloquence, in the form of metaphor, from the tutelage of metaphysics, Derrida's essay has two major flaws. In the first place, his account of metaphor's relationship to philosophy is dependent at many points on unjustifiable generalizations. Many of his assertions clearly apply to particular instances but equally clearly do not apply to "metaphor" or "philosophy" as a whole; without the grandeur of these universalizations, Derrida's essay loses much of its persuasiveness.

Three key examples of this shift of scope are worth analyzing more closely. First, Derrida asserts that

the philosophical evaluation of metaphor has always been ambiguous: metaphor is dangerous and foreign as concerns *intuition...*, *concept...*, and *consciousness...*; but it is in complicity with what it endangers, is necessary to it in the extent to which the de-tour is always a re-turn guided by the function of resemblance (*mimesis* or *homoiosis*), under the law of the same.³⁹

Certainly, both these contrasting evaluations have been adopted by philosophers; but, since they have only rarely been adopted by the same philosopher, "the philosophical evaluation" (assuming that such a

phrase makes sense at all) might more plausibly be described as "disputed" rather than "ambiguous". At the very least, one would have to talk about two evaluations: one, exemplified by Plato and Locke, which regards metaphor as no more than ornament and surface, "dangerous and foreign" to philosophical discourse; the other, exemplified by Aristotle, which accords metaphor a potentially constructive epistemic role through its ability to recognize resemblances between things. Derrida's assimilation of the two traditions produces an unmistakably Hegelian motif - the "negative" aspects of metaphor are *aufgehoben* when metaphor is itself negated - which cannot with any plausibility be applied to philosophy as a whole. Quite why Derrida should want to present the philosophical evaluation of metaphor as always already Hegelian is a question I will consider presently.

Derrida is also somewhat dogmatic with respect to the symbolist concept of metaphor discussed earlier in the chapter. He asserts that:

Metaphor has always been defined as the trope of resemblance...to take an interest in metaphor...is...therefore to take a symbolist stand. It is above all to take an interest in...semantic "depth", in the magnetic attraction of the similar...⁴⁰

Once again, the "always" is untenable. Certainly, as Derrida's detailed study shows, this is an accurate depiction of the Aristotelian conception of metaphor, which has indeed been highly influential; but there are clear alternatives to it. In the Romantic tradition, for example,

Metaphor...does not record pre-existing similarities in things; rather, it is the linguistic means by which we bring together and thus fuse into a unity diverse thoughts and thereby reform our

perceptions of the world.⁴¹

Derrida's silence concerning alternative conceptions of metaphor can hardly be accidental, since his own positive thesis is dependent on this notion of naming similarities. Derrida's whole argument turns around Aristotle's example of a metaphor naming what did not yet have a name: in such a situation, the assumption that the metaphor is simply describing a pre-existing similarity lacks the usual support of the "proper" name of the object or activity. Thus, to Aristotle's example that the sun's casting forth of flame can be described as "sowing", Derrida puts the question: 'Where has it ever been seen that there is the same relation between the sun and its rays as between sowing and seeds?'⁴² The straightforward, circular exchange of names and meanings becomes an "enigma", an "ellipse". Derrida concludes:

No reference properly being named in such a metaphor, the figure is carried off into the adventure of a long, implicit sentence, a secret narrative which nothing assures us will lead us back to the proper name.⁴³

This is quite clearly intended as the statement of a kind of paradox: if metaphor loses the fixity of its referent, then it can no longer claim to state a resemblance, since it cannot state what reference it was supposed to name without resort to further metaphors. A stark opposition is presented between metaphors "anchored" by their ties to "proper referents" and metaphors "infinitely floating" without these ties. But that this infinite floating is the clear alternative depends on Derrida excluding the possibility of any other theories of metaphor entering the frame.⁴⁴

The third instance of Derrida's dogmatism comes with his

assertion, cited above,⁴⁵ that 'metaphor remains, in all its essential characteristics, a classical philosopheme, a metaphysical concept.' Why treat metaphor as "essentially" any kind of concept, let alone a metaphysical one? The entire structure of "White Mythology" does indeed suggest that, for Derrida, metaphor is more or less what philosophy has made and will in future make of it. For the essay concentrates exclusively on a variety of philosophical definitions and analyses of metaphor, and Derrida's constant use of the term "metaphor" as a grammatical subject suggests that he really takes this process to provide an analysis of the nature of metaphors and how they operate. Under these circumstances the complete absence not only of empirical examples but even of a gesture towards the possibility of empiricism is a critical omission. The likely explanation for this silence is that any serious investigation of the usage of the term "metaphor" would be just as embarrassing for Derrida's ideal of "infinitely floating movement" as for the ideals of philosophers past. Indeed, isn't the problem here that Derrida is employing traditional idealist tactics to establish a new "concept of metaphor"? There is no pithier response to such methods than Wittgenstein's dictum: 'Let the use teach you the meaning.'⁴⁶

But quite apart from all criticism of Derrida's methods, there is an over-riding question-mark concerning the value of his conclusions concerning metaphor - assuming, for the sake of argument, that he has a right to these conclusions. As we have seen, Derrida himself contrasts his 'other self-destruction' of metaphor to 'the philosophical one':⁴⁷ he clearly believes that by "exploding" the reassuring opposition of the metaphoric and the proper he has overcome the philosophical determination of metaphor. But what if philosophy's approach to metaphor is recognizable less as a specific determination

than as an horizon of questioning? Recall Plato's discussion of art in the Republic: in the end what matters is not so much whether art remains inside or outside the republic, but that it justifies itself on grounds of its contribution to morality and truth, not on grounds of aesthetic merit.

Derrida in no way departs from the horizon of truth in his questioning of metaphor: on the contrary, it is his sole concern. He states that:

In order not to wind up at an empiricist reduction of knowledge and a *fantastic ideology of truth*, one should surely substitute another articulation for the (maintained or erased) classical opposition of metaphor and concept.⁴⁸

This sentence illustrates that Derrida's interest in art and metaphor is restricted to its potential for revealing truth. His "break" with the tradition goes no further than the subordinate questions of what will be revealed and how. That is why Derrida has to make the efforts, discussed above, to fit all theories of metaphor into an Hegelian model. If "the philosophical" approach to metaphor were always characterized by the assertion of metaphor as *mimesis* and as "detour" on the inevitable path to "proper meaning", then Derrida's moves clearly would be un- or anti-philosophical as he claims. But if philosophy is determined more broadly as an horizon of questioning which seeks and values only the essential truth of its objects, then Derrida fits perfectly into the tradition. He provides a new truth-value of metaphor, which might be described as *kata-mimeseos* - the escape from and disruption of the representation of Being.

In relation to Nietzsche, what matters about all this is that the value of truth reigns unquestionably over art and aesthetics in

Derrida's approach. Indeed, it seems likely that it actually implies the advocacy of bad metaphors, since when a metaphor is obscure or incomprehensible, any recourse to "proper meaning" is most unequivocally excluded. The fact that Derrida elsewhere gives priority to Heideggerian "quasi-metaphors" such as "language is the house of Being"⁴⁹ indicates that what is of value for him in "metaphoricity" is certainly nothing to do with aesthetics. All in all, Derrida's approaches consistently sidestep Plato's anti-aesthetic criticisms and thus do nothing to alter the traditional philosophical assumption that eloquence can only have value if it serves truth.

All the strategies we have reviewed thus far retain the common characteristic that they seek the value of eloquence through its contribution to truth; this is the case even when its alleged contribution is to change our whole "ideology of truth". But what if eloquence does not need to justify itself before the court of the understanding and its test of truth? What if this whole effort is a *misunderstanding*? What if... 'art is worth more than truth'?⁵⁰

That this phrase marks the greatest of all Nietzsche's revaluations is the conviction and the argument of the remainder of this chapter. I will outline the various aspects of this revaluation presently, but nothing provides a better preliminary indication of its importance than philosophy's astonishing refusal to confront it; and no figure illustrates this tendency more perfectly than the one philosopher who most palpably claims to take the revaluation "seriously": Martin Heidegger.

The most thorough analysis of Nietzsche's attitude to art is

the first volume of Heidegger's *Nietzsche*, "The will to power as art",⁵¹ which discusses the notes collected under the same heading by the editors of *The Will to Power*. At first glance, this appears to take full cognizance of Nietzsche's revaluation of art, since not only do several chapters comment on the conflict in Nietzsche between truth and art; the last of Heidegger's "Five statements on art", which claim to present the basic Nietzschean position, is the assertion: 'Art is worth more than "the truth."⁵² However, Heidegger's subtle amendments to Nietzsche's statement that "art is worth more than truth" are neither accidental nor insignificant. As Heidegger's exegesis makes clear, they are intended to show what Nietzsche's comment "really meant", which is that 'the sensuous stands in a higher place and is more genuinely than the supersensuous'.⁵³ Heidegger insists that when Nietzsche talks about truth, he is always talking about the Platonic/Christian "true world", i.e. the supersensuous world, i.e. the world which does not exist. When he further insists that by "art", Nietzsche always means an affirmation of the sensuous, it is possible to reach the extraordinary interpretation of 'art is worth more than truth' that Heidegger proposes. And it is extraordinary: for it would mean that Nietzsche's affirmation of art is the affirmation of reality ("the sensuous") over illusion ("the supersensuous"), once again; which is to say: the reaffirmation of the very Platonic opposition on the basis of which the artists were dispatched from the Republic.

Heidegger is, of course, quite right to claim that Nietzsche regards the supersensuous world as illusory and this sensuous world as the only real world; but it is a complete blunder to suppose that when Nietzsche says "art" he always implies the sensuous, and that when he says "truth" he always implies the supersensuous. Indeed, in the very same #853 of *The Will to Power* from which the statement that 'art is

worth more than truth' is taken, there is a passage which utterly contradicts the Heideggerian interpretation. Nietzsche comments on *The Birth of Tragedy*:

The antithesis of a real and an apparent world is lacking here: there is only one world, and this is false, cruel, contradictory, seductive, without meaning__ A world thus constituted is the real world. We have need of lies in order to conquer this reality, this "truth", that is, in order to live__ That lies are necessary in order to live is itself part of the terrifying and questionable character of existence..."Life ought to inspire confidence": the task thus imposed is tremendous. To solve it, man must be a liar by nature, he must be above all an artist. And he is one: metaphysics, religion, morality, science - all of them only products of his will to art, to lie, to flight from "truth", to negation of "truth".

Here, neither "truth" nor "art" means what, according to Heidegger, it ought to mean. The 'truth' or 'real world' is 'false' and 'contradictory', so it quite obviously is not the Platonic supersensuous realm, but rather this, sensuous world. Substituting this term would transform Heidegger's interpretation into the absurd: "the sensuous is more genuinely than the sensuous." But in any case, since Nietzsche mentions metaphysics and religion as species of "the will to art", it is plain that Heidegger's identification of art with the sensuous is equally misguided: on the contrary, the invention of the supersensuous world is a piece of extraordinary artistry - a confirmation, one might add, that art is worth more than truth.

How is it that Heidegger's interpretation can go so badly wrong on this point? A clue lies in his response to another passage cited from Nietzsche, which states that "*The Birth of Tragedy* believes in art on the background of another belief - that it is not possible to

live with truth, that "the will to truth" is already a symptom of degeneration."⁵⁴ Heidegger's comment is that 'The statement sounds perverse. But it loses its foreignness, though not its importance, as soon as we read it in the right way.' He then proceeds to interpret the passage along the lines outlined above - very definitely the wrong way! But why is the statement "perverse" and "foreign"? Is it not perhaps that the search for truth is what Heidegger, along with the whole philosophical tradition behind him, regards as the task, so that to label it "a symptom of degeneration" would be nothing less than an act of apostasy? That Heidegger's response was to rescue Nietzsche from this "perversity" rather than accept him as a heretic can be explained in either or both of two ways. First: Nietzsche is a nodal point in Heidegger's story of metaphysics - the last metaphysician of the West. To recognize an attitude to truth so alien to the tradition would make it virtually impossible for Heidegger to cast Nietzsche in the desired role, and would throw doubt on the whole story. Second: Heidegger's labyrinthine account and critique of Nietzsche turns around the claim that Nietzsche has failed to question properly concerning the essence of truth. Heidegger presents his own philosophy as marking the epochal shift to this ultimate question of truth's essence. But if Nietzsche, rather than overlooking this question, regarded this sort of obsessive quest as a "symptom of degeneration", then not only would Heidegger's interpretation of Nietzsche be threatened - so too would his own philosophy's essential values.

Overall, Heidegger's determination to ignore Nietzsche's revaluation of art is further evidence of that deep-seated resistance by philosophers to any attempts to question the value of truth, which Nietzsche was himself so well aware of:

Suppose we want truth: why not rather untruth? and uncertainty? even ignorance? The problem of the value of truth came before us...And though it scarcely seems credible, it finally almost seems to us as if the problem had never even been put so far__as if we were the first to see it, fix it with our eyes, and risk it.⁵⁵

Despite all that has been written on Nietzsche, this problem has still scarcely been recognized. There are endless debates on "Nietzsche's theory of truth", but scarcely any attention has been given to the grand question mark concerning the value of truth. It is almost impossible for philosophers to take the question "why not rather untruth?" seriously. If it is noticed at all, it is treated as a piece of "rhetoric", or as a joke, or at most as a sign that hitherto existing theories of truth have led to the dreadful possibility that the value of truth can be questioned, so that the challenge here is to rescue truth from these nihilistic doubts. Against all this I will suppose for once, "for the sake of argument", that Nietzsche is deadly serious when he questions the value of truth, and that he does really value art higher. And so the remainder of this chapter will not ask whether Nietzsche values art higher than truth, but assume that he does, and seek to explain why, and what influence this has on his work.

The best way to begin exploring the statement that 'art is worth more than truth' is to consider it in the light of the Platonic critique of art outlined above, in which the twin concerns were the illusory and sensual nature of art. Nietzsche's revaluation takes in both these aspects, thus meeting head-on the key philosophical objections to eloquence. A new role for eloquence can then be developed on the basis of the positive values attached to "illusion" and "sensuality" of art.

The first element of Nietzsche's revaluation is highlighted by the passage, used against the Heideggerian interpretation, which asserts: 'metaphysics, religion, morality, science - all of them only products of his will to art, to lie, to flight from "truth", to negation of "truth".'⁵⁶ This clearly extends the sphere of the artistic well beyond any ordinary conception of "art"; what justifies this extension? Two Nietzschean theses are of relevance here. The first goes back to "OTL": the most basic elements of a language are already highly selective, "artistic" representations of things; superstructures such as metaphysics and morality constructed from this base will therefore be artistic fabrications to an even greater degree. But quite apart from these considerations of man's inability to avoid artistry, there is the even stronger insistence that metaphysics, religion, etc., have always in any case had artistic intentions, in that they are driven above all by the feeling that, as Nietzsche puts it, "life ought to inspire confidence". The artistic desire for "beautiful illusions" has thus at all times predominated over the will to truth.

Even supposing these claims are granted, however, they still do not explain why 'art is worth more than truth'; at best, they indicate that art has been and will continue to be a more powerful force than has commonly been accepted. They leave open the possibility that Nietzsche has highlighted the historic force of illusion in order to make a new appeal on behalf of "truth"; in order to say, "I, Nietzsche, am the truth." Were this the case, then Nietzsche would be bludgeoning Plato with a Platonic implement (the truth/illusion opposition). What is required, therefore, is an indication of what distinguishes Nietzsche's understanding of art from Plato's; otherwise, when he talks of religion and metaphysics as artistic, this will always continue to sound like an accusation.

The distinctively Nietzschean approach to aesthetics is normally taken to be his insistence on the artist rather than the work of art; but while this is of vital importance, and is considered later in the chapter, Nietzsche also makes more direct, "theoretical" responses to the Platonic conception of *mimesis*, and these form a convenient starting-point for an exploration of his revaluation of art.

In the first place, Nietzsche rejects the distinction on which Plato's criticism of the artists as superficial rested. Plato suggests that artists cannot provide satisfactory representations because they have not penetrated to the ultimate truth of things.⁵⁷ But Nietzsche does not seek to turn this criticism back against Plato by criticising the superficiality of his "art". He would have no right to do so, since he explicitly renounces the Platonic associations between art, superficiality and shallowness:

Oh, those Greeks! They knew how to live. What is required for that is to stop courageously at the surface, the fold, the skin, to adore appearance, to believe in forms, tones, words, in the whole Olympus of appearance. Those Greeks were superficial - out of profundity...Are we not, precisely in this respect, Greeks? Adorers of forms, of tones, of words? And therefore - artists?⁵⁸

Why is it profound 'to adore appearance'? Isn't the very starting-point of philosophy the fact that sticks bend in water, and "things are not what they seem"? Mustn't this awareness always temper a love of surfaces? Such suspicions live on because of the Platonic interpretation of art as a representation of the appearances of things which suspends all questions concerning those appearances. But at this point Nietzsche's distance from the Platonic model is at its greatest: the old worries about deceptive appearances have to be stood against

the Nietzschean revaluation of the seeming-being divide. Plato's critique of art is based upon the possibility of a clear separation between appearance and reality: art operates at a level which leaves the underlying reality untouched. But when Nietzsche talks about the "profundity" of "adoring appearance", he does not imply that it is good to abandon reality. For, according to Nietzsche, reality is not abandoned in such an affirmation. Rather, what is abandoned is a clearcut division between reality and appearance. Artistic appearances can become real, and reality can in turn become illusion.

One passage exemplifies the transformation of the Platonic structure, and is worth considering in some detail:

This has given me the greatest trouble and still does: to realize that what things are called is incomparably more important than what they are. The reputation, name, and appearance, the usual measure and weight of a thing, what it counts for...all this grows from generation to generation, merely because people believe in it, until it gradually grows to be part of the thing and turns into its very body. What at first was appearance becomes in the end, almost invariably, the essence and is effective as such. How foolish it would be to suppose that one only needs to point out this origin and this misty shroud of delusion in order to destroy the world that counts for real, so-called "reality". We can destroy only as creators. - But let us not forget this either: it is enough to create new names and estimations and probabilities in order to create in the long run new "things".⁵⁹

Plato dismissed art because it copied appearances and did not understand essences; but this statement renders such a distinction untenable. To represent appearances is at the same time (at least in the long run) to participate in forging a reality. Quite consistently, moreover, Nietzsche draws the conclusion that former "realities" are

not dismissed when their human origins are recognized, but only when alternative names and valuations provide a substitute.⁶⁰

All this suggests that Plato has made a double blunder concerning the artists. In the first place, he has completely misunderstood what artists aim at when he criticizes their "tricks" for making things appear to be in a certain way rather than inquiring into their "objective" qualities of size, weight, etc.⁶¹ This is not the token of an error, because artists have only ever asked how best to represent things as they *seem*, how to represent the appearance. But this first mistake in turn arises from Plato's insistence that how things seem and how things are desired are "mere illusions" which are powerless to influence the enlightened man, and therefore cannot be what the artists aim at. If, on the other hand, appearance and desire are major constituents of any "reality", then the representation of appearance possesses an ineradicable power; indeed, Plato's "reality", supposedly uninfluenced by appearance and desire, is the real piece of naivety here. So, to sum up the contrast between Nietzsche and Plato: art is not the "copying of reality", which would make it dependent on a pre-existing grasp of reality (and thus, as Plato shows, always incompetent), but the presentation of appearances and desires, which is to say (at least in the long run) the presentation of *what things are*.⁶²

Naturally, that all this testifies in favour of the proposition that "art is worth more than truth" depends on the valuation of the role of art indicated here. Could one not continue to prefer truth, even if one accepted the ubiquity of art? Why should truth be displaced as an ideal? I will simply mention two points which tell against this. In the first place, if art is more than ornamental and is, as has been suggested here, a central and inescapable part of

human life, then to attack it in the name of the "higher ideal" of truth is to manifest a distaste for life, which Nietzsche analyzes under the heading "nihilism".⁶³ But Nietzsche also suggests that art is more powerful than truth, since the critique of old illusions can only work when an alternative illusion is ready to displace them; which is to say that "critique" is either useless or is already *beyond critique*, in the service of some artistic force - "we can destroy only as creators". To prefer truth because of its critical success is to misunderstand "critique": even here, creating counts for more than revealing.⁶⁴

Although these considerations greatly enhance the role of art, it could be argued that this is achieved primarily through diluting the concept to include virtually everything. Why be artistic in the narrow sense of the term if metaphysicians and scientists are already "artists"? Why bother with form and eloquence? These objections are not unanswerable; the full importance of the attack on Platonic *mimesis* will become clear later in the chapter. But it would be wrong to give the impression that Nietzsche only defends art and artists by changing the signification of the terms. On the contrary, he frequently champions art *against* religion, morality and science; and, concerning Plato's critique of artistic sensuality, what Nietzsche has to say is quite clearly supportive of art in a narrower, more literal sense.

As we have seen,⁶⁵ Plato's other objection to art is that it *seduces* from the true path of philosophy by appealing to the senses and thereby encouraging passion, rather than reason, to take control. Applying this rule to Nietzsche would suggest that his texts are suspect to the extent that they produce aesthetic pleasure rather than intellectual insight. Nietzsche's own comments counsel to the contrary: art's stimulus of the senses indicates its soundness; Plato's suspicion

of it indicates his morbidity.

There is, even so, a point of agreement between Plato and Nietzsche: that art is pleasurable, stimulates the senses, and 'inflames desire'.⁶⁶ Nietzsche indeed contrasts this Platonic understanding of how art operates quite explicitly with the Schopenhauerian belief that art serves to pacify the will: on this point at least, Plato is credited with a far deeper insight than rival aestheticians.⁶⁷

Concerning the evaluation of this effect, however, there is complete disagreement. For while Plato regards the pleasures of art with suspicion and hostility, Nietzsche enthuses about them:

when we encounter things that display...transfiguration and fullness [e.g. works of art], the animal responds with an excitation of those spheres in which all those pleasurable states are situated - and a blending of these very delicate nuances of animal well-being and desires constitutes the aesthetic state..."Perfection": in these states...there is naively revealed what the deepest instinct recognizes as higher, more desirable, more valuable in general, the upward movement of its type...⁶⁸

Nietzsche is not a hedonist; he does not admire the "aesthetic state" because it produces pleasure. Rather, the feelings of pleasure are themselves traceable to a sense of the "upward movement" of a type, and this is what makes the stimulus provided by art so important. The assumption that the satisfaction of the passions is purely a matter of producing "pleasurable feelings" is part of the Platonic denigration of the body.⁶⁹

The reasons why Nietzsche and Plato reach such different evaluations of the pleasurable effects of art are not hard to discover. For Plato, poetry 'has a terrible power to corrupt even the best

characters', by encouraging the expression of feelings which shame and morality would normally keep under check:

Poetry has the same effect on us when it represents sex and anger, and the other desires and feelings of pleasure and pain which normally accompany our actions. It feeds them when they ought to be starved, and makes them control us when we ought, in the interests of our own welfare and happiness, to control them.⁷⁰

Nietzsche disputes the assumption that the stimulus of the desires provided by art leads to a loss of control, and an abandonment to the passions. There is nothing inevitable about such a reaction; a strong and harmonious type has the capacity to benefit from such stimuli rather than be overwhelmed by them:

Fear of the senses, of the desires, of the passions, when it goes so far as to counsel us against them, is already a symptom of weakness: extreme measures always indicate abnormal conditions...A "stimulation of the senses" is a seduction only for those whose system is too easily moved and influenced...⁷¹

None of this implies that Nietzsche counterposes a crude "liberation of the passions" to Plato's suppression of them. His point is rather that the simple dichotomy - "crush them or be crushed" - arises only for an already debilitated organism. Nietzsche does not share the romantic belief that passion liberated will solve the world's ills. On the contrary, as a disorganizing, potentially overwhelming force, passion makes ugly. Nietzsche admires great passion, but only when it co-exists with a greater, dominating will.⁷² The great contrast he offers is between art, which sublimates and rides the passions, and morality, which seeks to crush them.⁷³ To let the passions run wild is simply

degenerate.

This revaluation of art's stimulus of the senses remains only a first step. It is necessary to follow through the implications of this line of thinking, to show that it does more than make a case for art's right to co-exist with philosophy. For there is a danger that philosophers could grant the arguments presented so far, and allow the importance of style - so long as it does not interfere with their right to "substance". Why not retain a division of labour along these lines?

This separation between "style" and "substance" is a commonplace today, but for precisely that reason it demands far closer scrutiny than the overt rejection of art which is Plato's more obvious legacy. For while it stands, any rehabilitation or revaluation of art will remain something external to the main concerns of philosophy. And this means that Nietzsche's eloquence will continue to be regarded as superfluous, even by those who admire it. The simple fact that Nietzsche unequivocally rejected the content-form hierarchy⁷⁴ can only be a starting-point. What matters is why the distinction should be abolished, and how and why it got set up in the first place: only when these questions are answered will the rejection start to gain some effective force.

Under what conditions do style and substance become divided? Answer: when a contrast between them has become a real possibility, when a case arises where (outer) form is seen to conflict with (inner) content. Such a case receives its theoretical justification in Plato; but, more importantly, *it is embodied in Socrates*. Socrates is physically repulsive and his speech graceless, and yet he exerts a fascination on his noblest contemporaries, who see in him a beautiful soul concealed by an ugly exterior. While this contrast strikes us as something commonplace, conditioned as we are by two thousand years of

Christianity, it must have startled the Greeks, who had a quite different perspective on things. Nietzsche expresses it neatly:

Socrates was rabble. One knows, one sees for oneself, how ugly he was. But ugliness, an objection in itself, is among Greeks almost a refutation. Was Socrates a Greek at all?⁷⁵

This recognizes the fatality of Socrates. After him, something is changed: ugliness is no longer a "refutation", and scarcely even an objection. Indeed, the burden of proof starts to move in the opposite direction, thanks to Plato's propaganda. Those who speak beautifully are regarded with suspicion: if they have nothing to hide - ignorance, depravity, etc. - then why make the effort to please us? Henceforth, it is up to the eloquent to prove their worth. The revolution is encapsulated in the words of Socrates at his trial:

disregard the manner of my speech - it may be better or it may be worse - and...consider and concentrate your attention on this one question, whether my claims are fair or not.⁷⁶

Nietzsche's response to this separation is his *physiognomy*: outward form is the best way of judging character. This is applied directly to Socrates:

Anthropologists among criminologists tell us the typical criminal type is ugly: *monstrum in fronte, monstrum in animo*. But the criminal is a *décadent*. Was Socrates a typical criminal? At least that famous physiognomist's opinion which Socrates's friends found so objectionable would not contradict this idea. A foreigner passing through Athens who knew how to read faces told Socrates to his face that he was a *monstrum* - that he contained within him every kind of foul vice and lust. And Socrates answered merely: "You know me, sir!"⁷⁷

While the tone here is flippant, the suggestion that physiognomy should be taken seriously is quite in keeping with Nietzsche's "physiological" approach to aesthetics.⁷⁸ Moreover, Nietzsche sees an instinctive wisdom in aesthetic judgements: the ugly, which is to say the decayed and debilitated, has a depressive effect and saps energy, just as the beautiful, which is a token of strength, in turn invigorates.⁷⁹ All this means that, for Nietzsche, questions of taste and aesthetic judgement are once more of the highest worth. There is nothing "trivial" about finding a book or a person dull and depressing; no *conscious* judgements have been tested so thoroughly by the history of mankind. When a person hates something ugly,

He then hates from out of the profoundest instinct of his species; there is horror, foresight, profundity, far-seeing vision in this hatred - it is the profoundest hatred there is. It is for its sake that art is *profound*...

How does this approach deal with the Platonic suggestion that beauty may be invisible on the surface, and that the apotheosis of beauty is an abstract and immaterial essence? The response must be that Plato's "true beauty" is actually no kind of beauty at all. Two considerations serve to enforce this judgement. The first is that, according to Plato's own statements, the proper effect of pure Beauty is to sober and calm the passions rather than to excite them, as art does.⁸⁰ From the perspective of physiognomy, however, narcotic effects point decisively to an origin very different from the one Plato would have us believe in and suggest that he is not describing beauty at all, let alone its most perfect form. But as well as producing suspect effects, Platonic "Beauty" is a thoroughly de-naturalized entity, and that alone would suffice to make it unacceptable to Nietzsche:

If one severs an ideal from reality one debases the real, one impoverishes it, one defames it. "The beautiful for the sake of the beautiful"...[is a form of] evil eye for the real. - Art, knowledge, morality are means: instead of recognizing in them the aim of enhancing life, one has associated them with the antithesis of life, with "God" - also as the revelation of a higher world which here and there looks down upon us through them.⁸¹

This rich passage serves notice once again how mistaken it is to interpret Nietzsche as a traditional aesthete; for all his praise of art and beauty, there is never a suggestion of a life spent in "contemplation" of the beautiful: the latter is a purely Platonic conception. For Nietzsche, such contemplation is merely a substitute form of religion, and with the same disastrous effect, namely the castigation of the things of this world for failing to match up to one's ideal.⁸² Of course, as well as dangerous, Nietzsche regards this effort to distil abstract ideals from our real experiences of things as nonsensical. Beauty cannot be abstracted from beautiful objects because ultimately it only signifies a relationship we have with them; removed from this, it is a mere phantasm:

Nothing is so conditional...as our feeling for the beautiful. Anyone who tried to divorce it from man's pleasure in man would at once find the ground give way beneath him. The "beautiful in itself" is not even a concept, merely a phrase.⁸³

To summarize, then: beauty conceived as a pure, ideal essence is a contradiction in terms, and a sign of a decadent form of life. The Platonic conception⁸⁴ inaugurates the tyranny of "content" over "form", by suggesting that "true beauty" exists outside appearances; moreover, it protects the ugly, degenerate form of life which sponsors it from the force of aesthetic judgement by suggesting that ugliness may after

all hide beauty. Against this, Nietzsche argues that, rather than the surface which needs to be penetrated, the beauty and style of a thing is the best possible indicator of the degree of spirit it possesses. It is by "essences" that we are liable to be fooled, not appearances.

Inevitably, doubts remain about how seriously physiognomy can be treated as a means for divining character; its general reputation is that of a mediaeval superstition. But this is to treat physiognomy as one means among others of apprehending the essence of things; the desire for objective knowledge is what motivates the suspicions. By contrast, physiognomy has been seen here as a way of illustrating the indissociability of inside and outside, not as a path to a higher truth. Nevertheless, the possibility of such a criticism indicates that physiognomy can only be part of a revaluation of aesthetics; it leaves many questions unanswered.

The basic reason for such misunderstandings is that so far the shift which Nietzsche considered the most important in aesthetics, and his own unique contribution, has not been made - the shift from the perspective of the observer to that of the artist.⁸⁵ Without this shift, the revaluation remains passive: one recognizes in eloquence an expression of health, yet it is like a mark of grace, external and mysterious.

To present Nietzsche only as a contributor to aesthetic theory, however important, is to misrepresent him - because of what it omits. It makes the question of eloquence look like a mere branch line in philosophy, and even in Nietzsche's own work; as if it were a matter of contributing to the philosophical grasp of art, without questioning philosophy's right to its cold, observer eye. Moreover, to stage Nietzsche as part of an intra-philosophical debate would be inconsistent with everything I have said in previous chapters about the

clash between philosophy and the rival force of rhetoric. It is not a question of philosophy accepting eloquence or even becoming eloquent, but rather of philosophy versus eloquence, of a basic clash of values. The remainder of this chapter is devoted to rectifying these omissions.

Nietzsche marks a decision in favour of art and artists and against the ontological preoccupations of philosophy; there is no possibility of compromise here. One passage indicates this fundamental choice perfectly. Having just emphasized that artists - and psychologists - are really uninterested in "nature", and that their observations are always directed towards an outcome, Nietzsche concludes with the contrast: 'Seeing what is - that pertains to a different species of spirit, the anti-artistic, the prosaic. One has to know who one is...'⁸⁶ But the first question of philosophy has always been precisely the ontological "What is...?" So the philosopher cannot become an artist without renouncing virtually everything that has hitherto counted as philosophy.

This fundamental divergence of objectives deserves further exploration: what makes these "artists and psychologists" different? Primarily, it is a question of valuing creativity. As we saw earlier in the chapter, Nietzsche regards metaphysics as a form of creative activity, but with an extraordinarily bad conscience, so that it is creative against its will. The philosopher does not see himself as using language to make a world; thus he will never be much good as a creator, because he does not see the need for all those exercises and disciplines which are required to construct that type. Most fundamentally, Nietzsche's injunction to 'become hard!', because 'creators are hard',⁸⁷ goes against the philosopher's grain. For if the prime directive is to find out what is, then it will be an advantage to be as receptive and as soft as possible, and "becoming hard" will seem

not just unnecessary but positively damaging. Given the vehemence with which Nietzsche presents the contrast between creative and merely receptive types,⁸⁸ it is perhaps surprising that even his interpreters have, by and large, either regarded creativity as a marginal addition to philosophical investigation and critique, or ignored the motif altogether. Alternatively, it could be seen as further confirmation that philosophers are too concerned with "finding out" to take the ideal of the creator seriously.⁸⁹ But whatever its explanation, no misunderstanding could be more significant. For this shift to the perspective of the artist not only provides the best justification of eloquence - part of the process of becoming-artistic, above and beyond any "signification" it may have for observers - it also marks once again the extent of Nietzsche's departure from the traditional objectives of philosophy. "Art is worth more than truth".

With the shift to the perspective of the artist, Nietzsche's aesthetics comes into its own; but at the same time, it seems to entail a slide into contradiction, for him and for the thesis I have been presenting. The whole of chapter four, which insisted that Nietzsche was a fanatically *scientific* spirit, seems to have been forgotten in the new enthusiasm for the creative, artistic Nietzsche. If the only thing necessary is to make oneself and the world beautiful, then where is the need for *science*, even as Nietzsche conceives of the term? Is there not an irreconcilable conflict between these two demands?

The confusion is exacerbated by the fact that Nietzsche himself has some criticisms of the artists, as well as all the compliments I have chosen to report. His praise often seems to come

from Olympéan heights - as if he saw artists beneath him - and sometimes this sense of distance becomes explicit, for example in the suggestion that 'we should learn from artists while being wiser than they are in other matters'.⁹⁰ Occasionally, Nietzsche expresses outright suspicion or irritation towards artists,⁹¹ and then an undercurrent of thought comes to the surface, as he laments the artists' infinite capacity to deceive themselves and become actors in everything they do. Ultimately, the artist is just not very good as a thinker, because he is too warm-blooded for its rigorous demands:

once the aesthetic drive is at work...it is not possible to remain objective, or to suspend the interpretive, additive, interpolating, poetizing power...the judgement of beauty is shortsighted, it sees only the immediate consequences; it lavishes upon the object that inspires it a magic conditioned by the association of various beauty judgements - that are quite alien to the nature of that object. To experience a thing as beautiful means: to experience it necessarily wrongly...⁹²

To put it bluntly (Nietzsche never explicitly states this link), the artist lacks the *intellectual conscience* and its passion for endless experimentation. But if Nietzsche was aware of this limitation of artists, how can he have been so determined to make life artistic? Either Nietzsche himself is confused or the interpretation offered in the last two chapters is mistaken somewhere...or is there a way of resolving the paradox?

Already in this chapter we have considered a conception of art which incorporates metaphysics and morality, and a narrower version of art and artists, closer to common usage. But Nietzsche also identifies different sub-types of artist *within* the latter grouping, one of which is important enough to be treated here as a separate

category: the tragic artist. Nietzsche says of him:

The profundity of the tragic artist lies in this, that his aesthetic instinct surveys the more remote consequences, that he does not halt shortsightedly at what is closest at hand, that he affirms the large-scale economy which justifies the terrifying, the evil, the questionable - and more than merely justifies them.⁹³

There is here a striking contrast with the previous quotation: this artist 'does not halt shortsightedly', whereas the other was 'shortsighted'; and he 'surveys the more remote consequences', while the other 'sees only the immediate consequences'. Unless Nietzsche is talking nonsense, we must assume that the tragic artist is different: he has not lost his deeper insight into things and his will to that insight; he has not lost his scientific eye. This figure is fundamentally the fusion of two drives, the scientific and artistic; here, he is presented as an artist with an extra, scientific quality, but he can just as well be presented as a man of knowledge with an artistic dimension, without altering the description:

Art as the redemption of the man of knowledge - of those who see the terrifying and questionable character of existence, who want to see it, the men of tragic knowledge.⁹⁴

This figure is more than just another of the many "types" described by Nietzsche. It is the highest ideal, to aim for which could be considered his "categorical imperative" - assuming it is recognized how very far from all ethical imperatives it lies.⁹⁵ The best Nietzschean formula for this scientific-artistic imperative is *amor fati* ("love of fate"), since both principles emerge in Nietzsche's

exegeses of the term. The artistic element is stressed in the aphorism which first introduces the term:

I want to learn more and more to see as beautiful what is necessary in things; then I shall be one of those who make things beautiful. *Amor fati*: let that be my love henceforth! I do not want to wage war against what is ugly.⁹⁶

This connection is hardly surprising, since Nietzsche says elsewhere that love is the precondition of art and that "making beautiful" is precisely what love always does.⁹⁷ But *amor fati* seeks to generalize the artistic instinct by making it apply not only to objects easily recognizable as "beautiful" but to everything that is necessary in things. At the same time, *amor fati* liberates the scientific impulse. To assume that science is motivated by utilitarian and humanitarian considerations is a complete misunderstanding: on the contrary, ethics is fundamentally hostile to science - 'it considers it a squandering of one not rich enough to squander when man concerns himself seriously with plants and stars.'⁹⁸ By contrast, the love of fate insists that things are worth knowing for their own sake, which means that science, far from being intrinsically hostile to art, arose out of the stimulus to life given by art. Art delights, and consequently inspires a desire for life of which science is a manifestation. This is brilliantly expressed in a passage which long predates the *amor fati* doctrine but is already imbued with its spirit:

art...has taught us for thousands of years to look upon life in any of its forms with interest and pleasure, and to educate our sensibilities so far that we at last cry: "life, however it may be, is good!" This teaching by art to take pleasure in life...has been absorbed into us, and it now reemerges as an almighty

requirement of knowledge...if art disappeared the intensity and multifariousness of the joy in life it has implanted would still continue to demand satisfaction. The scientific man is the further evolution of the artistic.⁹⁹

The high value Nietzsche places on science is not in contradiction to the priority accorded art, but in harmony with it. Indeed, some passages point to an even stronger conclusion: that the will to knowledge is actually strengthened and perfected by art. For will one not also see better if one approaches things with means of honouring the ugly and disgusting as well as the "good"? Nietzsche dreams of artists for whom only the ugly and disgusting will present a sufficient challenge; and they will be scientists too, even if it is the demands of art - the search for subjects and "means of expression" - that make them scientific.

Having suggested that *amor fati* plays the key role of harmonizing the artistic and scientific drives - and is thus perhaps the most important Nietzschean "concept"¹⁰⁰ - it might be considered problematic that many of Nietzsche's friends have been so critical of it. Its apparent reconciliation with the status quo is what disturbs the critics of *amor fati*, such as A. P. Fell: 'it could be the idiosyncrasy of a failure, or one who needs an illusion to accept his lot because he has not managed to turn all to advantage.' Worse, it could even be 'an unnecessarily contrived and distorting vision of the world, one which involves approval of avoidable as well as unavoidable suffering.'¹⁰¹

This sort of comment is quite justified in response to the "Californian" interpretations of Nietzsche, which regard his "Great Yes" as a call to overcome psychic blocks and achieve an ecstatic sense of personal well-being. It also counters the Panglossian efforts to

show that "all is for the best" in this best of all possible worlds. But *amor fati* is neither of these things. Such misinterpretations arise from a failure to recognize the implications of loving fate. For Nietzsche, love is not a passive affect; it is not related to acquiescence or acceptance. Love is described rather as 'the most astonishing proof of how far the transfiguring power of intoxication can go';¹⁰² *amor fati* means the transfiguration of fate.

The literal meaning of "transfigure", however, is "to change form or appearance": does this not imply a wallowing in 'visions' and 'illusions', as Fell suggests; in short, escapism? But with this we have returned full circle to Plato's critique of art - to the belief that "dealing in appearances" makes no difference to reality. Here, the earlier discussions of *mimesis* and the relationship between seeming and being should be recalled.¹⁰³ But it may also be said that the fatalism Fell condemns and the rebellion against Fate with which he condemns it are both aspects of the same, Christian evaluation of existence. Both find evil and suffering unbearable, a curse on life: they are the two great Christian antidotes to this condition. On the one hand, a theodicy - the world's awfulness justified by believing that good triumphs in the higher scheme of things; and, on the other hand, "improving" mankind through struggle against the world's evils. Both are species of *odium fati*; the debate about fatalism and avoiding the future is an internal affair for theologians.

Beyond this, Fell wonders how Nietzsche can 'hope for redemption'¹⁰⁴ through *amor fati*, since this seems to contradict all the other great themes of his philosophy. Indeed it would, if this were the role of *amor fati*. But it is not a question of redemption from existence; of being "saved" in some way. This is to mistake subject and object! *Amor fati* means neither to be redeemed, nor to seek redemption,

but to become a redeemer.

This is not a digression from the themes of art and science that led *amor fati* to be introduced; for art and science, as Nietzsche conceives them, are the ways in which this transfiguring force is manifested. An occasion for drawing these threads together is provided by a brief, almost playful note in *The Will to Power*:

One is an artist at the cost of regarding that which all non-artists call "form" as content, as "the matter itself." To be sure, then one belongs in a topsy-turvy world: for henceforth content becomes something merely formal - our life included.¹⁰⁵

The last phrase - "our life included" - stands out. The complete artist makes everything, including his own life, material for his art. But this mirrors exactly what Nietzsche says of the scientist, as we saw in the last chapter: he makes his life an experiment; life stands in the service of science. This art and science has nothing to do with the requirements of salvation, which can only impose restrictions upon it. Far from leading to a resolution in fatalism or self-satisfaction, *amor fati* demands the greatest scientific curiosity and the greatest artistic creativity; it imposes a task, and perhaps there is none greater.

Whatever the merits of this framework as a justification for eloquence in Nietzsche, it is bound to appear hopelessly grandiose for the ancient rhetors, who used fine words to make their speeches more pleasing and inspiring to their audience. Can there really be any connection between their evaluation of eloquence and Nietzsche's,

besides the "accident" of an admiration for it held in common; or does the link between Nietzsche and ancient rhetoric break down here?

At first glance, nothing seems further removed from Nietzsche than the rhetors' educational commitment to eloquence as an art to be acquired through the careful learning of technique. This emphasis inevitably lends force to the Platonic suspicion of "verbal trickery": if they are honest, why calculatingly acquire these formal arts? This premeditated exploitation of linguistic resources does not even have the artist's excuse of "inspiration". Yet it is precisely here that Nietzsche's affinity with the rhetors is most obvious. From *Human, All Too Human* onward, he goes out of his way to reject the Romantic idea of the "inspired genius", and praises all the mechanical tricks and techniques which made the rhetors so detested. Thus, for example, he writes enthusiastically about the necessity of 'preparation for art', an important element of which should be to practise

the production of manifold versions of a given content and not...the invention of this content itself. The mere presentation of a given content was the task of Latin style, for which the teachers of antiquity possessed a subtlety of hearing which has long since been lost.¹⁰⁶

This commitment to formal training is not a marginal element in Nietzsche's work. It follows from his insistence that creativity is something acquired through discipline, and certainly not an "innate" gift:

Every artist knows how far from any feeling of letting himself go his "most natural" state is - the free ordering, placing, disposing, giving form in the moment of "inspiration" - and how strictly and subtly he obeys thousandfold laws precisely then,

laws that precisely on account of their hardness and determination defy all formulation through concepts...¹⁰⁷

What this suggests is that eloquence is not simply an ornamental topping, but something requiring an immense effort and schooling, almost a way of life in itself. Its value lies in the great contribution it makes to the task of becoming a creator.

But Nietzsche shares something more with the rhetors than this mutual concern for the nitty-gritty of technique; an evaluation that is quite basic, but no less important for all that. For him, as for them, eloquence is not something to be decoded and interpreted, in the speeches and writings of others, but something to be employed. That good writing and speaking act as a stimulus is justification enough, because it is a sign of the priority of art; more than anything else, it is this instinct which unites Nietzsche and the rhetors against the philosophers.

And yet, in spite of all this, there is a certain general question-mark concerning this Nietzsche-rhetoric alliance which is perhaps particularly pointed with respect to eloquence. This is not to say that there can be any doubt concerning Nietzsche's commitment to the value of eloquence and the aesthetic generally: rather, it is because Nietzsche's avowal of art is so complete that it stands at a great distance from the ancient rhetors. When Socrates confronted his opponents with the "immorality" of their methods of teaching and public-speaking, and the evils of "fine words", they found no effective response; at best they managed, like Callicles, a magnificent display of contempt for Socrates and everything he stood for. By contrast, Nietzsche's defence of eloquence operates, as we have seen, in a wide variety of ways, at a level of profundity matching that of

Plato himself. The affirmation of the aesthetic marked by *amor fati* does more than state a case that Socrates's opponents might have thought of had they been cleverer or not been censored by Plato's pen; for with it, Nietzsche presents a type of aesthetic-scientific ideal to rival all the ascetic ideals of history. As Nietzsche says: 'Apart from the ascetic ideal... "why man at all?" was a question without an answer...' ¹⁰⁸ But one could add: it was a question that the Sophists did not ask; they belonged to an earlier period, whose state of health was such that one did not dive to such depths.

To recognize this gap between Nietzsche and the rhetors is simply to acknowledge the inescapable effects of two thousand years of Platonic-Christian "civilization". While the Sophists taught and practised eloquence instinctively, delighting in its effects, unconcerned about wider consequences - and for precisely that reason vulnerable to the Socratic critique once they took him seriously - Nietzsche looks back with the whole progress of the moralistic assault on the instincts in view (and, indeed, in him) and, seeing it as a mistake, fights a principled defence of the instincts. This paradox is at times palpable:

The Greek culture of the Sophists had developed out of all the instincts... And - it has ultimately shown itself to be right: every advance in epistemological and moral knowledge has reinstated the Sophists... ¹⁰⁹

It is no longer enough to assert the value of eloquence by saying, "it gives pleasure, it inspires, it makes people well-disposed towards us", as the rhetors once did. This is too easily overwhelmed now by philosophical scepticism and asceticism. But, unlike the rhetors, Nietzsche is a master of these black arts, who delights in

showing the disreputable origins of the opposition to pleasure and inspiration - very far from "truth" or "mankind's greater benefit". At the end, Nietzsche emerges with the same positive judgement of eloquence as the rhetors before him; but, because of the march of time and his own thorough survey of the alternatives, the value placed on eloquence in speech and writing, and on art in life generally, is even higher. Thus precisely in this element of rhetoric (the *elocutio*), where Nietzsche is most unquestionably aligned with the rhetors, his distance from them is also most marked. He affirms their evaluation, but is only using it to respond to a much broader, universal framework of questioning than they admitted. Art becomes a vocation; eloquence part of the answer to the question, "why man at all?" Here, at least, Nietzsche is not simply a "modern rhetor"; he is rhetoric's defender only because of the contrast its judgements present to those of Platonism-Christianity, and the signpost it can be to something new - an aesthetic ideal that comes after the ascetic flood:

As an aesthetic phenomenon existence is still bearable for us, and art furnishes us with eyes and above all the good conscience to be able to turn ourselves into such a phenomenon...Precisely because we are at bottom grave and serious human beings - really, more weights than human beings - nothing does us as much good as a fool's cap...¹¹⁰

Conclusion

Rhetoric and Wisdom

An exhortation to "turn ourselves into an aesthetic phenomenon" is a strange way for a work of philosophy to conclude, for it is not in any obvious sense either philosophical or conclusive. On the other hand, it fits in with the prevailing mood of the work, which has put in question the nature and value of canonical philosophical procedures and moved towards what has hitherto been labelled as inimical to or at least outside philosophy. But it is perhaps time to be a little less enigmatic, and to state what I see as the main implications of my argument for the three specific areas of concern in this thesis, namely: Nietzsche; the Sophists; and the more general question of the relationship between philosophy and rhetoric.

So far as Nietzsche is concerned, I do not claim to establish the fact of an important link with rhetoric, since this is already widely recognized and is indeed something of a commonplace among modern commentators. Nor have I conducted so comprehensive an analysis of the details of Nietzsche's rhetoric and attitude to rhetoric as has been undertaken elsewhere.¹ had that been my intention, there would have been no call for the detailed comparisons with Plato, Aristotle and the Sophists. My aim has rather been to indicate the extent to which questions at the heart of the debate between ancient Greek philosophers and rhetors are revived through Nietzsche after a long period in which they lay dormant, apparently decisively settled in philosophy's favour. There are two principal advantages gained by opening up this historical dimension. In the first place, it exposes the inadequacies of the modern tendency to reduce rhetoric to *elocutio* and shows that

Nietzsche's connection with rhetoric also incorporates not only his love of polemics (chapter two) and "inadequate" argumentation (chapter four) but even the relationship between knowledge and action (chapter three). On top of this, the ancient conflict between philosophers and rhetors makes possible a new way of considering Nietzsche's relationship to rhetoric. Instead of treating Nietzsche as a philosopher whose texts are rhetorical, it is possible to regard him as a rhetor, a member of a different tradition which has always taken an entirely different approach to "philosophical" questions. This has important implications for how Nietzsche will be interpreted, and I have suggested that at various points even such inventive readers as Heidegger, Derrida and Deleuze underestimate the extent to which Nietzsche breaks mores that have bound and continue to bind philosophers since Plato. The hypothesis that Nietzsche belongs to the rhetorical tradition is a way of exploring the manner in which he remains outside and antagonistic to the basic instincts of philosophy.

While my primary concern here has been to indicate the possibilities offered by the Sophists for reappraising Nietzsche, this is not the only direction in which the comparison is fruitful. For while Nietzsche repeats the "errors" of the Sophists that had drawn Plato's fire, he also provides a more sophisticated framework for defending rhetoric than any that was developed by the ancient rhetors. This is particularly true for the questions of pragmatism (chapter three) and art (chapter five): as I make clear, both the ideal of the Promethean and *amor fati* are only possible after Plato. This does not contradict the claim that Nietzsche belongs to the rhetorical tradition, for to belong to a tradition does not mean to ape one's predecessors but to build on their achievements. In any case, there is another sense in which Nietzsche is far closer to the Sophists than he

is to other parts of the rhetorical tradition, which justifies the attention I have paid to them at the expense of the later exponents of rhetoric. Since Aristotle, rhetoric has by and large been seen as appropriate to specific regions of discourse, especially politics and law, but has ceded pride of place to philosophy: the Sophists, on the other hand, fought for nothing less than cultural and educational hegemony. By reviving the possibility of rhetoric as a substitute for philosophy, as opposed to a co-existing discipline, Nietzsche helps to challenge the conventional view that the Sophists made wildly over-ambitious claims for the status of their art.

This is in fact the axis around which the entire thesis revolves: the central objective is to consider rhetoric an alternative *paideia* or cultural ideal, as it was for the Sophists.² The way in which I have sought to achieve this objective is to take four key differentiae, which philosophy has used to establish the superiority of its ideal,³ and subject them to a critical reappraisal. The point is not to prove philosophy wrong, but to indicate the partial nature of its judgement, and to argue that rhetoric too has a claim to "wisdom", though not as the word is understood by philosophers. The clash between philosophy and rhetoric is not, therefore, between good and evil, as has so often been supposed, but between rival wisdoms.

The substance of this rivalry has emerged chapter by chapter. In chapter two it was seen that the more polemical tone of the rhetor does not make him a manipulator; that claim is more applicable to the Socratic conversation, which provides philosophy's model. The real problem is that through its overt partisanship, rhetoric does not aspire to or even acknowledge the universal; the question devolves to whether or not disagreement can be a virtue. The third chapter tries to separate the acknowledged pragmatism of rhetoric from the associations

of myopia and pettiness with which philosophy has stigmatized it. I argue that the most important distinction is rhetoric's refusal to accept the necessity - or possibility - of finding firm grounds and justification for actions; it is a question of whether or not knowledge and action are fundamentally separate matters. Chapter four considers whether the looser argumentation of rhetoric makes it less than fully rational or even irrational. My claim is that it is dogmatic to idealize rationality as "capturing the truth" and that if it is conceived instead as an ongoing process, without end, rhetoric is actually more reasonable than philosophy. Finally, chapter five considers whether the artistic commitment of rhetoric confuses its practitioners and its audience, and argues that this negative judgement is dependent on philosophy's unfulfilled rival promise to provide ontological insight. That one side can give primacy to truth while the other side gives primacy to art is a clear sign of the deep cultural division between philosophy and rhetoric.

As I suggested above, all these specific disputes can be gathered together under a more general implicit rivalry concerning the nature of wisdom. The wisdom towards which the philosopher strives is *knowledge of the truth*, and all the aspects of rhetoric's differentiation from philosophy stem from a fundamental suspicion of this objective. If there is no unitary truth, then it is dishonourable to be dialectically "working towards" what does not exist - better open conflict of values; if knowledge can never be complete, then wisdom involves what is done without and against knowledge; if knowledge of truth never comes, then reason should develop in ways that enforce and stimulate continuing inquiry; if truth cannot be found, then art is needed to fill the narrative void that would otherwise be left. It is important to emphasize that these "ifs" do not arise due to some sort

of super-ontological insight into the absence of true being. To make such a claim would not only be obviously paradoxical, it would also distort the nature of rhetoric's alternative; for it is not a question of an intellectual response to a perceived failure of philosophy's efforts, but of a rejection of philosophy's values: the rhetor does not want knowledge of the truth. What he does want is far harder to determine than for the philosopher, but a provisional approximation of the wisdom for which he strives might be *mastering fate and fortune*; this would, at any rate, be consistent with the distinguishing features of rhetoric that are considered here. It also draws attention to two essential contrasts with philosophy's ideal. First, even at the end, there is no end: the rest and resolution of pure knowledge has no equivalent; a plurality of forces and consequent struggle always remains. Second, it is an active process that is involved, rather than the individual's attunement to the guiding force of truth; wisdom is not found, but invented. These differences, and the many others that could doubtless be generated, testify by their intractable and irresolvable nature that this rivalry of wisdoms is above all about a difference in spirit, associated with different forms of life. Every "lover of wisdom" must therefore choose one side or the other, since it is not possible to have both: which is it to be?

Before giving my answer to this question, I want to consider two reasons for supposing that such a choice never arises, on the ground that the whole idea of rhetoric and philosophy as having conflicting ideals of wisdom is misguided. These are, in effect, question marks against the thesis as a whole and as such could hardly be avoided; but

they also provide a useful opportunity to clarify the connection between rhetoric and wisdom.

The first objection is that it is essentially paradoxical to talk of rhetoric having an ideal of wisdom, since "love of wisdom" defines philosophy, and so rhetoric with a "love of wisdom" ceases to be rhetoric and becomes philosophy. The confusion is compounded by the suggestion made in chapter two that methods normally associated with philosophy are more effective than any others at *persuading* people in modern times, which implies that philosophy has become (or at least can become) rhetoric. It would, of course, be quite possible to accept that there is no real difference between the two, but to do so would be incompatible with the position I have adopted throughout this thesis. The reason for eschewing this course is that to dissolve rhetoric into "anything that persuades" would be the height of idealist abstraction: as is blindingly obvious from even a cursory glance at the conflict between Plato/Socrates and the *rhetors*, there is a fundamental rivalry of cultures, orientations, and material forces in operation; both sides are committed to particular procedures from something akin to instinct. As a consequence, it is quite conceivable that procedures associated with rhetoric can have results that are functionally philosophical, and vice versa. I have simply chosen to follow the concrete historical phenomenon rather than the abstraction, and in each case it is to this that the label "rhetoric" or "philosophy" applies.⁴ A corollary of my main thesis is therefore that rhetoric and philosophy are both more specific than an abstract application of the phrases "art of persuasion" and "love of wisdom" would imply; as the confusion of names among the Greeks itself suggests, both descriptions can with a little imagination be stretched to cover almost anything.⁵

But even if claims made about rhetoric as a "love of wisdom"

are not paradoxical, the objection remains that the *privilege* I have given to "rhetorical wisdom" makes for a thoroughly implausible and confusing evaluation of rhetoric. To suggest that a Callicles - to take a suitably extreme example - can be a seeker of wisdom is to invite criticism from both sides. Philosophers will find it monstrous that any self-confessed manipulator can be accorded honourable status while, from the other side, it will be suspected that I have fallen into the trap mentioned in my introduction of honouring the *rhetors* morally, and thus betraying them. Perhaps inevitably, it is Nietzsche who most clearly articulates the latter problem:

we ourselves are probably least inclined to put on the garish finery of such moral word tinsels...honesty, love of truth, love of wisdom, sacrifice for knowledge, heroism of the truthful - they have something that swells one's pride. But we hermits and marmots have long persuaded ourselves...that this worthy verbal pomp...belongs to the old mendacious pomp, junk, and gold dust of unconscious human vanity...⁶

I readily accept that I have not provided a description of rhetoric that could apply to all its practitioners, but such a description was never my intention. As I have already made clear, the Sophists have been the focus of attention not because they are "representative" of the rhetorical tradition, but because they stood as direct rivals to the philosophers; it was this aspect of rhetoric that interested me. Given this restriction, the insistence on an alternative rhetorical ideal is justified, however much it may outrage philosophers. Indeed, the outrage provoked by figures such as Callicles may be explained by the very fact that they do have alternative ideals that remain impervious to dialectical entreaty.⁷

But what of the suspicion that all this talk of ideals means

that there is no escape from philosophy, and that the philosophy-rhetoric dichotomy I have posited throughout turns out to be an illusion? Certainly, there is a danger in talking of "rhetorical wisdom", and the path taken by Callicles, who preferred to be labelled a catamite⁸ than to claim for himself any of the "moral word tinsels", is a viable alternative. Nevertheless, the term "wisdom" is not inappropriate here, so long as it is always remembered how very different this is from philosophical wisdom: it is not a question of two paths leading to the same goal, but of a divergence at every step, without any hope of reconciliation. Use of a "philosophical word" such as wisdom primarily serves the purpose of challenging self-styled philosophers to think again, on the grounds that as "lovers of wisdom" they can scarcely ignore the suggestion that wisdom may be utterly different from how they conceive it. In all probability they will continue to operate as they have done hitherto, as "lovers of Platonic wisdom", in which case, all honour to them! - at least they will have made the choice.

There can hardly have been any doubt over the answer given here to the question that was left hanging earlier - "which ideal should one follow?". Equally, though, it can hardly be said that the path of rhetoric is pursued here, however strongly it is at times advocated. This is inherent in the nature of this project, which has been in essence to return philosophy to the crossroads where the decision to reject rhetoric was made, in order to review the discussion that took place there - and perhaps change the outcome. At some point the discussion must end, as it did once before, when the philosophical path

was taken and rhetoric was condemned and forgotten; whatever the outcome, this crossroads, like all others, can only be a point of transit.

As for Nietzsche - he, ultimately, has been no more than a means to arrive at this location and an example of what can be achieved by following the rhetorical alternative. For those who admire these achievements, the challenge is not to "be Nietzschean" but to mark out a new path within the terrain of rhetoric. Or, to put it another way, to mark out such a path is to be Nietzschean; for his legacy is not a store of insights to be carefully treasured and preserved, but rather the discovery - or rediscovery - of a world in which who or what things are matters infinitely less than what we make of them. To explore this world is the challenge he lays down; not to speak of rhetorical wisdom - but to show it in action.

NOTES

Introduction

1. A.C. Danto, *Nietzsche as Philosopher* (New York, 1965): 'In recent years, philosophers have been preoccupied with logical and linguistic researches, pure and applied, and I have not hesitated to reconstruct Nietzsche's arguments in these terms...because we know a good deal more philosophy today, I believe it is exceedingly useful to see his analyses in terms of logical features which he was unable to make explicit, but toward which he was unmistakably groping.' (p13)

2. Heidegger's main assertion of the pre-eminence of *The Will to Power* comes in his *Nietzsche* (tr. D.F. Krell, London, 1981) Vol. 1, Chapter 2. The descriptions he gives here of the late Nietzsche's published and unpublished works provide a fascinating insight into Heidegger's whole approach. In 1888, 'A peculiar restlessness now possessed Nietzsche. He could no longer wait for the gestation of a broadly conceived work which would be able to speak for itself, on its own, as a work. Nietzsche himself had to speak, he himself had to come forth [sich selbst herausstellen] and announce his basic position vis-à-vis the world...But Nietzsche's philosophy proper [die eigentliche Philosophie Nietzsches], the fundamental position [Grundstellung] on the basis of which he speaks in these and in all the writings he himself published, did not assume a final form and was not itself published in any book...What Nietzsche himself published during his creative life was always foreground...His philosophy proper was left behind as posthumous, unpublished work.' (pp8-9) In Nietzsche's case (and probably in all cases), the distinction Heidegger seeks to draw

between a work 'which would be able to speak for itself, on its own, as a work', and works through which the author speaks, is an entirely mythical one. This whole passage gives the thoroughly misleading impression that there existed a pure metaphysical thinker whose meditations were distilled in *The Will to Power* and then employed for polemical purposes in the "foreground" works. In fact, *The Will to Power* is just as full of provocative and polemical statements as is, for example, *Twilight of the Idols*; there is no indication that had it been developed into a publication it would have been fundamentally different in style from Nietzsche's others - that it would have "spoken for itself". Heidegger's comments really say far more about his own prejudices than they do about Nietzsche's work: unable to accept that such a great philosopher could have done without a *Hauptwerk* which would detail his "fundamental position" and "philosophy proper", Heidegger had to invent such a work for him. Just like Danto, he simply cannot believe, in the face of all the evidence, that Nietzsche and rhetoric are inseparable.

3. I am thinking in particular here of C.G. Jung, in his vast *Nietzsche's Zarathustra* (ed. J.L. Jarrett, 2 vols, Princeton, 1988).

4. Like the effort to ignore Nietzsche's rhetoric, this approach transcends the usual division between "analytic" and "continental" philosophy. Thus, despite major differences, both the "analytic" *Nietzsche: Imagery and Thought* (ed. M. Pasley, London, 1978) and the "continental" *Nietzsche et la métaphore* (S. Kofman, Paris, 1972) share the project of interpreting Nietzsche's metaphors.

5. For example, Nehamas states that 'Nietzsche exemplifies through his own writings one way in which one individual may have succeeded in fashioning itself...this individual is none other than Nietzsche himself, who is a creature of his own texts.' (A. Nehamas,

Nietzsche: *Life as Literature*, Cambridge, Mass., 1985, p8.)

6. See his *Allegories of Reading* (New Haven, 1979), which includes three chapters on Nietzsche [4-6] that essentially apply in practice the theory of rhetoric developed by de Man in the book's opening chapter. De Man's distinctive theoretical position is most clearly seen in his analysis of the rhetorical question, "what's the difference?", which concludes: "The grammatical model of the question becomes rhetorical not when we have, on the one hand, a literal meaning and on the other hand a figural meaning, but when it is impossible to decide by grammatical or other linguistic devices which of the two meanings (that can be entirely incompatible) prevails. Rhetoric radically suspends logic and opens up vertiginous possibilities of referential aberration." (p10).

7. This is best illustrated by the section entitled "I have forgotten my umbrella", in *Spurs/Eperons* (tr. B. Harlow, Chicago, 1979), pp123-139.

8. The idea of reconstructing Nietzsche's philosophy without reference to rhetoric is discussed in chapter 4, while literary-critical and performative readings are both treated in chapter 5. The one approach which receives no further comment is the psychologistic: whether or not it is possible to "read" the author's unconscious in his texts may be of concern to those who wish to add to the already voluminous biographical literature; to those who have no such wish, projections of the authorial unconscious, like projections of authorial intentions, can only be a distraction.

9. De Man quite explicitly recognizes the different nature which his shift towards tropes means for rhetoric: "Considered as persuasion, rhetoric is performative, but when considered as a system of tropes, it deconstructs its own performance. Rhetoric is a text in that it allows

for two incompatible mutually self-destructive points of view, and therefore puts an insurmountable obstacle in the way of any reading or understanding.' (op. cit., p131.)

10. The traditional division of rhetoric had four elements in addition to the *elocutio*, as follows: *inventio*, or the discovery of arguments useful for the winning of a case; *dispositio*, or the arrangement and ordering of a speech; *memoria*, or the committal to memory of a speech; finally, *actio* and *pronuntiata*, or the use of gesture and tone of voice (respectively) for effect. Clearly only the *elocutio*, *inventio*, and *dispositio* are directly relevant to written texts, although it can be argued that tone and gesture are also present, in a metaphorical sense. While I do not divide the thesis strictly according to these elements, chapter 5 clearly relates to *elocutio*, while chapters 2 and 4 are generally concerned with different sub-elements of *inventio*: chapter 2 relates, broadly speaking, to *ethos* and *pathos* - the character of the speaker and the emotions aroused in the audience; and chapter 4 to the *argumentatio* - arguments and proofs adduced. Finally, chapter 3 deals with more general differences in educational and cultural outlook between rhetoric and philosophy.

11. The use of the Greek term serves as a reminder that there is no equivalent role in the modern world; it also contains a useful ambiguity, which is difficult to translate: *rhetor* means both "teacher" and "practitioner" of rhetoric.

12. This term has no canonical definition, but it is usually taken to mean the paid teachers of rhetoric who flourished in 5th and 4th century Athens, and I shall interpret it thus here. It has sometimes been argued that Plato and/or Socrates were Sophists; suffice it to say that this thesis is utterly opposed to any such notion, and provides plenty of reasons for supposing that to yoke these heterogeneous

figures together under one term can cause nothing but confusion.

13. This has recently been translated in full for the first time in *Friedrich Nietzsche on Rhetoric and Language* (ed. and tr. S.L. Gilman, C. Blair and D.J. Parent, Oxford, 1989) - another sign of the growing interest in Nietzsche and rhetoric.

14. Most of this material is translated in *Philosophy and Truth* (ed. and tr. D. Breazeale, New Jersey, 1979). For the relation of the translated material to the *Philosophenbuch* and its position in Nietzsche's corpus, see Breazeale's introduction, pp xviii-xxiii, and his "Note on the texts", pp li-lviii.

15. See especially #'s 427-429, 442-3, and 578. Note that, while there are comments on rhetoric in Nietzsche's published works, they are only occasional and often throw-away remarks, which certainly add nothing significant to this unpublished material.

16. 'Nietzsche moves the study of rhetoric away from techniques of eloquence and persuasion by making them dependent on a previous theory of figures of speech or tropes.' (De Man, *op. cit.*, p105.)

17. For those who are inclined to take de Man's interpretation seriously, I would recommend the brief but devastating attack on it contained in B. Vickers' *In Defence of Rhetoric* (Oxford, 1988), pp 459-464, which is about as close to the last word on a matter as it is possible to get in philosophy.

18. Nietzsche, *Philosophy and Truth*, "The struggle between science and wisdom", #193. All italics in quotations, unless otherwise stated, are the original author's.

19. F. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power* (tr. W. Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale, New York, 1968), #427.

20. The development towards rhetoric is particularly emphasized in chapter 3, below; more generally, it can be said that this thesis

focusses attention on the works from *Human, All Too Human* onwards, which incorporate most of Nietzsche's significant contributions to the rhetorical tradition.

21. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #429. The reference is to George Grote (1794-1871), who led a varied career as parliamentarian, utilitarian philosopher and historian. His *magnum opus*, *A History of Greece* (London, 1846-56, 12 vols.), contains an attempt to exonerate the Sophists from Plato's criticism (Vol. 8, Chapter 67). It is not difficult to see what would have irritated Nietzsche in Grote's account: he suggests that Plato and the Sophists represent respectively the theoretical and practical sides of ethics, which not only can but should co-exist in a well-run society; the mutual antipathy is explained away as little more than personal rancour. Grote compares the Sophists with modern professors and schoolteachers, whose concern is only to give their students a sound education and prepare them for responsible citizenship. Consequently, Callicles is simply dismissed as a degenerate, and certainly no representative or even distant relation of the Sophists; the whole point of Grote's argument is to make the Sophists acceptable to high Victorian morality and to justify them without ever questioning the norms upon which such justifications are based.

Chapter 1

1. The more famous statement of method is in section two of the *Discourse on Method*, and until relatively recently the *Regulae* were virtually ignored. But although they were neither completed, polished, nor published by Descartes, they nevertheless contain at the very least

an important supplement to the *Discourse* account. For an extremely balanced discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of the *Regulae* see L.J. Beck, *The Method of Descartes* (Oxford, 1952), Chapter 1.

2. R. Descartes, "Regulae ad directionem ingenii" (in: *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, tr. J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff and D. Murdoch, Cambridge, 1985, Vol. 1), #2, pp12-13.

3. *ibid.*, #3, p14.

4. *ibid.*, #7, p25.

5. *ibid.*, #8, p32.

6. Letter to Regius, May 24th, 1640, quoted in S. Ijsseling, *Rhetoric and Philosophy in Conflict* (tr. P. Dunphy, The Hague, 1976), p62.

7. Preface to the second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* (tr. N. Kemp Smith, London, 1929), Bxxii-xxiii.

8. This ambition is well expressed in Wittgenstein's summary of correct method at the close of the *Tractatus*: 'The correct method in philosophy would really be to say nothing except what can be said, i.e. propositions of natural science...and then, whenever someone else wanted to say something metaphysical, to demonstrate to him that he had failed to give a meaning to certain signs in his propositions.' (*Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, tr. D.F. Pears and B.F. McGuinness, London, 1961, #6.53.)

9. Kant, *op. cit.*, Bxiv.

10. The most penetrating critique of the Cartesian model of knowledge as an edifice constructed upon simple, absolutely certain propositions is Wittgenstein's brilliant *On Certainty* (tr. D. Paul and G.E.M. Anscombe, Oxford, 1979). The work needs to be read as a whole, but even isolated aphorisms show how far from Cartesianism the former disciple has travelled: 'It is not single axioms that strike one as

obvious, it is a system in which consequences and premises give one another mutual support.' (#142.)

11. A recent statement of analytic philosophy's self-understanding is contained in the first chapter of W. Charlton's *The Analytic Ambition* (Oxford, 1991) which, despite the brash title, is in many ways remarkable for its modesty. It is not just that logical atomism is explicitly rejected; Charlton also claims that conceptual analysis is something all philosophers from Aristotle onwards have performed, and even admits that 'philosophical problems are not like problems in a maths exam...They are more like problems in the arts, which admit of good and bad solutions but nevertheless present themselves over and over again to successive ages.' (p11) Carnap would no doubt turn in his grave; but Charlton is doing no more than accept that analytic philosophy has to discard even its long-standing scientific pretensions if it is to retain any future credibility. As he admits, analytic philosophers are now often thought of as 'like the fabled Japanese soldiers in the Melanesian jungle who believe that the Second World War is still going on.' (p9.)

12. Martin Warner makes the point that conceptual analysis is confronted with a paradox 'according to which all analysis is either trivial or false; if the *analysandum* and the *analysans* are synonymous no information is conveyed, but if not the information conveyed is incorrect.' (*Philosophical Finesse*, Oxford, 1989, p17.) The first chapter of his book gives an excellent general account of the geometric model, its influence, and its shortcomings; the presentation of the case made here is heavily reliant on that discussion.

13. A good example of this deconstructive strategy is Paul de Man's attempt to show that Locke, Condillac and Kant all end up using tropes despite their best efforts to rule them out of philosophy. As a

result, confusion reigns: 'in each case it turns out to be impossible to maintain a clear line of distinction between rhetoric, abstraction, symbol, and all other forms of language.' (P. de Man, "The epistemology of metaphor", *On Metaphor*, ed. S. Shacks, Chicago, 1979, p26.) The essay concludes by stressing 'the futility of trying to repress the rhetorical structure of texts in the name of uncritically preconceived text models...' (p27). See below, chapter 5, pp189-95, for further discussion of this and similar deconstructive moves.

14. Plato, *Protagoras* (tr. W.K.C. Guthrie, in the *Collected Dialogues*, ed. E. Hamilton and H. Cairns, Princeton, 1961; all translations of Plato are taken from this volume, except those for the *Gorgias* and for the *Republic*), 336c-d.

15. *Dialectic* comes from the same root as *dialogos*, viz. *dialogomai*, meaning to converse or talk with one another.

16. See R. Robinson, *Plato's Earlier Dialectic* (Oxford, 1953) for a clear and thorough account of the first two phases, and an outline of the third.

17. The most important statement in support of the elenchus is Socrates's famous comment that he is wiser than other men not because of his positive knowledge but because he alone "knows that he does not know." (Plato, *Apology*, tr. H. Tredennick, 23a-b). See Robinson, *op. cit.*, Chapter 2 for a full discussion of the elenchus.

18. Robinson, *op. cit.*, p95.

19. 'let us proceed on the assumption that we are right, it being understood that if we see reason to change our minds all the consequences of our hypothesis will fall to the ground.' (Plato, *Republic* [tr. H.D.P. Lee, Harmondsworth, 1955], Book 4, 437a.)

20. According to the *Phaedrus* account, it is a species of the genus "divinely inspired madness" (Plato, *Phaedrus*, tr. R. Hackforth,

265a-b.)

21. On this point see especially Plato, *Philebus* 16d-17a.
22. The problem is described in the *Republic* at Book 7, 516e-518d.
23. Descartes, *op. cit.*, *Regulae*, #2, p10.
24. Plato, *Phaedrus*, 265e.
25. Plato, "Seventh Letter (tr. L.A. Post), 343d-344a.
26. *ibid.*, 344b.
27. H.-G. Gadamer, *Dialogue and Dialectic* (tr. P.C. Smith, New York, 1980), p122.
28. 'Rhetoric and philosophy are the continually recurring themes in his work and one can even say that Platonic philosophy arose within the polemic against the orator and the sophist.' (S. Ijsseling, *op. cit.*, p14.)
29. This is in many ways an artificial division, and no doubt it could be argued that some of the categories I have chosen could be merged and others added. My hope is that this structure allows the force of Plato's attack to be appreciated without significant omissions or repetitions.
30. This chapter, unlike the other three, concentrates on Aristotle rather than Plato. The reason for this is not that Plato made no attack on rhetoric's standards of argumentation; it is rather that Plato's attack was so intemperate as to be relatively easy to rebut: he suggested that rhetoric did not really employ reasoned argument at all. By contrast, Aristotle's subtle gradations of rationality between philosophy and rhetoric have convinced and satisfied even many defenders of rhetoric, and present the most sophisticated case for philosophy as the model of scientific thinking.

Chapter 2

1. I have deliberately chosen the very general terms "source", "addressee", and "messages" for this definition, in order to emphasize its broad scope. Thus it applies equally to television broadcasts, philosophical texts, and the speeches of the ancient rhetors.

2. The charge of pandering, or flattery, is first introduced at 463b, and is debated at length from 515a-522b. The idea that rhetoric corrupts because it aims only to please is considered in Chapter 5. The *Gorgias* is also an important point of reference for the discussion of rhetoric's pragmatism contained in Chapter 3.

3. 'Polus: Do they not, like tyrants, put to death any man they will, and deprive of their fortunes whomsoever it seems best?' (Plato, *Gorgias* [tr. W. Hamilton, London, 1960], 466b-c.)

4. 'Polus: To listen to you, Socrates, one might think that you wouldn't be glad to have the opportunity of doing what you please in the state rather than not, and that you don't envy a man who can kill or confiscate or at will.'

Socrates: Justly or unjustly, do you mean?

Polus: It makes no difference; he's enviable in either case, isn't he?' (*ibid.*, 468e-469a.)

5. This is not to presume that they are insignificant per se. On the contrary, they are of crucial importance to the questions raised in the following chapter, and are dealt with in detail there. See below, chapter 3, especially pp87-9.

6. Plato, *Gorgias*, 456c.

7. 'Socrates: Let us consider how [the rhetor] stands with regard to right and wrong...It is not your business, as a professor of rhetoric, to teach your pupil about these things. Will you, then, if he

comes to you ignorant of them, enable him to acquire a popular reputation for knowledge and goodness when in fact he possesses neither, or will you be quite unable to teach him rhetoric at all unless he knows the truth about these things beforehand?...

Gorgias: I suppose, Socrates, that I shall have to teach a pupil those things as well, if he happens not to know them.' (*ibid.*, 459c-d,e, 460a.)

8. See Plato, *Phaedrus*, especially 272b-274b. Of course, in the *Phaedrus* account, Plato is prepared to term this foundation of discourse "true rhetoric", a fact which has provoked much discussion among Plato scholars, since it appears to mark a softening of the uncompromising hostility to rhetoric portrayed in the *Gorgias*. (See, for example, R.W. Quimby, "The growth of Plato's perception of rhetoric" [in *Plato: True and Sophistic Rhetoric*, ed. K.V. Erickson, Amsterdam, 1979, pp21-30] for one view of the subtle variations in Plato's approach to rhetoric and a discussion of some of the others.) I have ignored such questions in my exegesis of Plato's approach to rhetoric, and have presented it as a monolithic "position", because I do not consider these variations to be of major significance. What Socrates terms "true rhetoric" in the *Phaedrus* is *dialectics*; the essential opposition remains. The change of terminology is due more to the change of interlocutor (impressionable youth, as opposed to committed Sophist) than to any change in Platonic doctrine.

9. Though the point at issue is different, the dramatic logic parallels that of the debate with Polus; i.e. Socrates cannot in any meaningful sense lose the argument.

10. See above, pp35-6.

11. E. R. Dodds, Appendix to Plato's *Gorgias* (Oxford, 1959), p387.

12. The case against the Nazi "interpretation" of Nietzsche is well

put in W. Kaufmann, *Nietzsche* (Princeton, 1968), Chapter 10, which is also a good bibliographical source for those wishing to explore this well-trodden path. It could of course be argued that the very fact that Nietzsche discusses racial characteristics (and, a *fortiori*, "breeding") at all is highly problematic, even if the general tenor of those comments is un- or even anti-Nazi; any racial stereotyping, however "benign", seems highly dangerous and open to abuse. This is an important objection, but to consider it here would be to anticipate the general discussion of the "abuse" of Nietzsche's texts that occupies the later stages of this chapter. (See below, p47 ff.)

13. Of course, this was not done by Nietzsche himself. As is well-known, the ordering, editing and most of the section titles were the work of the original editors (primarily Peter Gast and Nietzsche's sister, Elizabeth). The material in this "work" must always, therefore, be treated with some circumspection.

14. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #890. This is not in any sense an isolated comment. For example, #954 muses in similar fashion: 'And would it not be a kind of goal, redemption, and justification for the democratic movement itself if someone arrived who could make use of it - by finally producing beside its new and sublime development of slavery (that is what European democracy must become ultimately) a higher kind of dominating and Caesarian spirits who would stand upon it, maintain themselves by it, and elevate themselves through it?'

15. This is explicit in the brief note #902 of *The Will to Power*: 'On the sovereign types. __ The "shepherd" as opposed to the "master" (__the former a means of preserving the herd; the latter the end for which the herd exists).' Nietzsche even sets out what amounts to a programme of indoctrination for the masses, to equip them for the machinelike existence which the new society will require of them. (*The*

Will to Power, #888.)

16. For example, #868 of *The Will to Power*: 'Problem: where are the barbarians of the twentieth century?' Nietzsche need not have doubted: our century has had no problems on this score!

17. F. Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals* (tr. W. Kaufmann, New York, 1969), Essay I, #11, pp40-1. See below, p65 for a different perspective on this passage.

18. Kaufmann, *op. cit.*, p225.

19. Plato, *Gorgias*, 483e-484a. The link with Nietzsche is made in E. R. Dodds, *op. cit.*, p389.

20. In particular, Nietzsche is too sophisticated to accept Callicles's justificatory idea of a return to the natural state of society. Thus, for example, *The Will to Power*, #120: 'Not "return to nature" - for there has never yet been a natural humanity. The scholasticism of un- and anti-natural values is the rule, is the beginning; man reaches nature only after a long struggle - he never "returns".'

21. W. Kaufmann, *op. cit.*, p224.

22. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #871, p466.

23. Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo* (München, 1978), p127. My emphasis.

24. Two principal "qualifications" might be made to the power doctrine as outlined above. (1) Nietzsche frequently emphasizes the value of the self-discipline and moderation of strong natures - not to be confused with the timidity of the weak. See, for example, *The Will to Power*, #870. (2) Occasionally, Nietzsche stresses the "virtues" of the weak and mediocre - without ever leaving any doubt where his true sympathies lie; #864 of *The Will to Power* is fascinating in this regard. Nietzsche never advocates the elimination of the weak, merely that the strong distance themselves from them.

25. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #749.

26. The term "propaganda" is closely connected with "manipulation", but the two are not synonyms. In particular, propaganda implies a potential mass appeal and a direction towards a cause or organization, neither of which are essential to the notion of manipulation. However, as I see it, neither of these conditions excludes the possibility of a printed philosophical text being, or being used as, propaganda.

27. Nietzsche was extensively used by non-German fascists and was well-liked by Mussolini. Furthermore, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* first sold in large numbers during World War I, when German recruits were encouraged to take it with them to the front.

28. J. Derrida, "Otobiographies", tr. A. Ronell, (in *The Ear of the Other*, ed. C. McDonald, Lincoln, Nebraska, 1988), pp30-1.

29. T.B. Strong, *Nietzsche and the Politics of Transfiguration* (Berkeley, 1988), p2.

30. M. Heidegger, *What is Called Thinking?* (tr. J. Glenn Gray, New York, 1968), p73. Previous quotation: *ibid.*, p13.

31. F. Nietzsche, *The Antichrist* (tr. R.J. Hollingdale, Harmondsworth, 1968; *Twilight of the Idols* is translated in the same volume), #43.

32. F. Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (tr. R.J. Hollingdale, Harmondsworth, 1968), Zarathustra's Prologue, #3, p42.

33. F. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, (tr. W. Kaufmann, New York, 1974), #283.

34. *ibid.*, #377.

35. F. Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, (tr. R.J. Hollingdale, Harmondsworth, 1979), "Why I am a destiny", #1.

36. M. Déat, *Pensée Allemande et Pensée Française* (Paris, 1944), pp97-8. My translation.

37. The two plausible methods are both deeply flawed. On the one hand, to attempt a canonical reading of the rhetorical effects is to lapse back into the game of authorial interpretation in all but name. On the other hand, an empirical survey, as well as being long-winded, diffuse, and a move towards sociology, has the opposite weakness that it is entirely indiscriminate (at least in principle) between readers, and indeed implies the suspension of all judgement. "Conclusions" could only be derived from such a survey through the reintroduction of an implicit criterion of judgement, which merely repeats the problem at another level.

38. The move away from authorial intention does not require the term "manipulation" to be qualified or replaced. Indeed, the possibilities for applying the term are in some ways considerably extended, because the evidence for the charge is to be sought not in Nietzsche's intentions but in the effects of his writings, and in their potential propaganda uses. Texts can be made to play a propagandist function, whether or not they were originally intended so to do: what matters is how the words on the page work. In the case of Nietzsche, this means that the propaganda uses that have as a matter of fact been made of his work cannot be judged simply according to whether or not they fit in with the author's intentions.

39. J. Ellul, *Propagandes* (Paris, 1962), p86. My translation.

40. For further discussion of philosophy's relation to action, see below, chapter 3, especially pp81-92.

41. This, of course, is to restate the cynical notion of the rhetor presented by Polus and Callicles. See above, pp36-8.

42. See above, pp46-7.

43. J. Goebbels, quoted in M. Balfour, *Propaganda in War, 1939-45* (London, 1979), p431.

44. Plato, *Euthyphro* (tr. L. Cooper), 14e. (Translation amended.)

45. Ellul, *op. cit.*, pp89-90. My translation. For more detail on the distinction between agitation and integration propaganda, see pp84-93.

46. *ibid.*, p100.

47. The most trenchant assertion of this faith in argument is in Plato, *Phaedo* (tr. H. Tredennick), 90b-e. The development of Plato's dialectic from a purely critical to a constructive force is considered above, chapter 1, pp21-2.

48. While a detailed study of this idea would be a digression, it is worth stressing that it is not restricted to Plato. Indeed, the importance of this motif to the history of philosophy (and beyond) would be hard to overestimate. Marxist *Ideologiekritik* and all forms of "demystification", for example, retain the loaded opposition between bogus and authentic truth-telling, and as such are implicit co-defendants in the case presented here.

49. See Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, II, #1, and Cicero, *De Oratore*, II, #'s 182-184 for further detail on the nature of *ethos*. Aristotle said of it: 'we believe good men more fully and more readily than others'; and he claimed that a speaker's character may almost be called 'the most effective means of persuasion he possesses.' (*Rhetoric* [tr. W. Rhys Roberts] 1356a 3-13. All translations of Aristotle are taken from the *Complete Works*, ed. J. Barnes, Princeton, 1984, 2 vols.)

50. Cf. chapter 4 below, especially pp145-7, where Nietzsche's alternative to the faith in truth is considered.

51. There is a very strong case for excluding certain works from this description, especially those of the middle "scientific" period - *Human, All Too Human*, *Daybreak*, and the first four books of *The Gay Science*. However, I will leave this case to be made by those who can

find no positive responses to Nietzsche's later work.

52. Cf. Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Book 3, #11, "Of the spirit of gravity", p212: 'to chew and digest everything - that is to have a really swinish nature! Always to say Ye-a <I-A> - only the ass and those like him have learned that.'

53. *ibid.*, Book 1, #10, "Of war and warriors", p75: 'You may have enemies whom you hate, but not enemies whom you despise. You must be proud of your enemy...'

54. *ibid.*, Book 1, #14, "Of the friend", p83: 'In your friends you should possess your best enemy. Your heart should feel closest to him when you oppose him.'

55. This is of course to echo Zarathustra's scathing remarks about the "inverse cripples": '"That is an ear! An ear as big as a man!"...And in truth, the monstrous ear sat upon a little, thin stalk - the stalk, however, was a man! By the use of a magnifying glass one could even discern a little, envious face as well; and one could discern, too, that a turgid little soul was dangling from the stalk.' *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Book 2, #20, "Of redemption", p160.

56. Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*, I, #11, p42.

57. The contrast between Nietzsche and Plato concerning the "dangerous" effects of art is another aspect of this crucial difference. See below, chapter 5, pp204-7.

58. Ellul, *op. cit.*, p42.

59. 'I attack only causes that are victorious - under certain circumstances I wait until they are victorious.' *Ecce Homo*, "Why I am so wise", #7, p47.

60. Discussed above, p43.

61. Plato, *Gorgias*, 455a.

62. *ibid.*, 459a.

63. Plato, *Meno* (tr. W.K.C. Guthrie), 95b-c.
64. Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Logicians* (tr. R.G. Bury, London, 1961), Book 1, #65, p35.
65. See M. Untersteiner, *The Sophists*, (tr. K. Freeman, Oxford, 1954), chapters 4-9 on Gorgias.
66. Plutarch, *De Gloria Atheniensium*, DK 82b23. Quoted in Untersteiner, *op. cit.*, pp113-4.
67. This theme is echoed by Nietzsche in "On the uses and disadvantages of history for life", #1: 'As he who acts is...always without a conscience, so he is also always without knowledge; he forgets most things so as to do one thing, he is unjust towards what lies behind him, and he recognizes the rights only of that which is now to come into being and no other rights whatsoever.' *Untimely Meditations* (tr. R.J. Hollingdale, Cambridge, 1983), p64. See chapter 3 for a full discussion of the implications of this view.
68. See Ellul, *op cit.*, especially the section: "La nécessité de la propagande pour l'individu," pp156-178.
69. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #435.
70. Nietzsche, "Schopenhauer as educator", #8, *Untimely Meditations*, p194.

Chapter 3

1. See below, pp92-3 for discussion of this interpretation.
2. A more detailed exploration of the degeneration of the concept of rhetoric is given at the beginning of chapter 4, pp125-7.
3. H. Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity* (tr. G. Lamb, London, 1956), p47.

4. In Greek, the term initially meant simply "child-rearing", but gradually took on loftier connotations. Its significance is comprehensively examined in W. Jaeger's seminal work *Paideia* (tr. G. Highet, Oxford, 1939-45, 3 vols); see particularly the introduction to Vol. 1 for an overview of its educational and cultural meaning.

5. Isocrates (436-338 B.C.) set up his school in 393 B.C., six years before Plato founded the Academy. They were the first institutions of higher learning in Europe.

6. Cf. Marrou, *op. cit.*, p84.

7. Plato, *Gorgias* 462c and *passim*.

8. See Plato, *Phaedrus* 266c-274a.

9. Marrou, *op. cit.*, p194.

10. Cf. J-F. Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition* (tr. G. Bennington and B. Massumi, Manchester, 1986) which argues that the dominance of "performativity" in all aspects of life is the determinant element of postmodernism. Specifically of education, he asserts: 'The desired goal becomes the optimal contribution of higher education to the best performativity of the social system. Accordingly, it will have to create the skills that are indispensable to that system.' (p48)

11. Plato, *Gorgias*, 450c.

12. Jaeger says of the fifth century Sophists: 'Their weakness was in the intellectual and moral foundations of their teaching...it was inevitable...that that generation should come to see that, more than any other, it lacked the greatest of all educational forces: rich as it was in talents, it had not the most precious and most necessary gift, an ideal towards which to direct them.' (Vol. 1, p328.)

13. Plato, *Gorgias*, 485c, 486d.

14. See in particular Isocrates, "Antidosis" (in *Works*, tr. G. Norlin, London, 1929, Vol. 2), #'s 266-269: 'I would...advise young men

to spend some time on these disciplines, but not to allow their minds to be dried up by these barren subtleties...such curiosities of thought are on a par with jugglers' tricks, and I hold that men who want to do some good in the world must banish utterly from their interests all vain speculations and all activities which have no bearing on our lives.'

15. See Jaeger, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, Book 1, Chapter 1 for a detailed account of the Homeric concept of arete, and Vol. 1, Book 2, Chapter 3 for a discussion of how the rhetors amended it to suit their times.

16. In the British tradition, which stresses conceptual analysis and concentrates discussion on epistemological points of order, many of the teachers may also suppose that the main purpose of philosophy is to disseminate socially useful intellectual techniques.

17. Cf. William James, "What Pragmatism Means" (in *Pragmatism and American Culture*, ed. G. Kennedy, Boston, 1950) for the most accessible account of philosophical pragmatism. There are important differences of emphasis between the leading trio of James, Dewey and Pierce, but they are not particularly relevant to the issues raised here and can be ignored for our purposes.

18. Plato, *Gorgias*, 467c.

19. Plato, *Republic*, Book 9, 592a-b.

20. Aristotle defines *phronesis* at one point as 'a true and reasoned state of capacity to act with regard to human goods.'
(*Nicomachean Ethics*, tr. W.D. Ross, VI, 5, 1140b20-1.)

21. *ibid.*, 1140b8.

22. *ibid.*, VI, 7, 1141a16, 20-1. Aristotle's main discussion of the relative merits of political and intellectual virtue takes place at *Nicomachean Ethics* X, 6-8, and is the subject of major controversy

among commentators. My own reading, that he holds the contemplative life superior to the political life, is not lacking in supporters (for example W. F. Hardie, *Aristotle's Ethical Theory* (Oxford, 1980), Ch's 15 and 16; and R. Kraut's *Aristotle on the Human Good* (Princeton, 1989), which is probably the most detailed of all the studies on this aspect of Aristotle's work). However, some readers have argued that Aristotle's ideal incorporates the contemplative and political, and that contemplation is not privileged in the way I suggest (see for example D. Keyt, "Intellectualism in Aristotle", in G. C. Simmons (ed.), *Paideia*, Special Aristotle Issue, Brockport, 1978, pp138-158; also N. Sherman, *The Fabric of Character*, Oxford, 1989, Ch 3, #6.) I will say here only that, by its adherents' own admission, this second interpretation has to explain away the crucial section (X, 6-8) of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, which appears to point quite clearly towards the priority of the contemplative life. Sherman suggests that 'These remarks...are antithetical to the whole thrust of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, in which the ethical life is defended as the best life...' (*op. cit.*, p97), but this is to fundamentally misunderstand the project of the *Nicomachean Ethics* which, like many of Aristotle's works, questions concerning the excellences appropriate to a particular area of human existence without thereby deciding on the overall significance of those excellences for human life as a whole. Moreover, one might just as well say that the advocacy of contemplation is "consistent" with the *Metaphysics*, *De Anima*, etc., as that it is "inconsistent" with other sections of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Further problems with this interpretation are considered in note 26.

23. The Greek term is *theoria*, which strict Heideggerians might object to translating with a Latinate term. However, Heidegger's objections come from his ultra-theoretical perspective, which is

considered below (pp89-91): there is no disputing that this is a special category of thinking, however it is to be labelled and approached. A serious consideration of Heidegger's overall attitude to translating Greek would be an intriguing undertaking (it is conceivable as a critique that would go to the heart of Heidegger's project), but it would be too great a digression to be included here.

24. Plato, *Phaedo*, 80b.

25. *ibid.*, 82e.

26. The key passage is *Nicomachean Ethics*, X, 7, 1177b27-1178a8. There, Aristotle states that 'If intellect is divine, then, in comparison with man, the life according to it is divine in comparison with human life. But we must not follow those who advise us, being men, to think of human things, and, being mortal, of mortal things, but must, so far as we can, make ourselves immortal, and strain every nerve to live in accordance with the best thing in us.' This divine element is also the essence of man, because it is the authoritative part, better than and in control of the rest: 'This would seem, too, to be each man himself, since it is the authoritative and better part of him. It would be strange, then, if he were to choose the life not of himself but that of something else.' The desperation of those commentators who have refused to accept Aristotle's commendation of the contemplative life is illustrated by the preposterous interpretations of this passage they are forced to offer. Thus Sherman quotes approvingly Keyt's sophistry that "to be most of all (*malista*) man is to be less than, and nonidentical with man", and adds: 'The force of *malista* is thus to suggest that the identification of the self with theoretical reason is at best qualified.' (*op cit.*, p101.)

27. The main discussion of this theory is at *Nicomachean Ethics* X, 8, 1178b8-23. Aristotle ridicules the idea of God making contracts

and returning debts, and then asks: 'if you take from a living being action, and still more production, what is left but contemplation? Therefore the activity of God, which surpasses all others in blessedness, must be contemplative; and of human activities, therefore, that which is most akin to this must be most of the nature of happiness.' The superiority of action that contains its end within itself is also asserted in the *Metaphysics*, IX, 6-8.

28. See above, p81.

29. Plato, *Gorgias*, 486a-b.

30. *ibid.*, 522c-d.

31. *ibid.*, 525d. My emphasis.

32. Some of the parallels with the New Testament are so direct as to be uncanny: Socrates even invents "turning the other cheek" ('Let people despise you for a fool and insult you if they will; nay, even if they inflict the last indignity of a blow, take it cheerfully; if you are really a good man devoted to the practice of virtue they can do you no harm.' - *ibid.*, 527c-d). It would be tedious to point out all the analogies, but one puzzle is too intriguing to ignore: if Socrates is the equivalent of Christ, then which figure parallels Plato? Generally speaking, efforts to separate Socrates/Plato into distinct "personalities" are futile; we do not have enough evidence from independent sources to make even informed guesses. The one respect in which a Platonic hand can be clearly discerned is in the dramatizing of Socrates's death, which, while occurring offstage, dominates the *Gorgias* even more than the *Phaedo* and the *Apology*. These three indeed stand apart, since they tell, in its various aspects, the meaning of Socrates's sacrifice: they are not so much dialogues as gospels. Nietzsche might have made of this relationship something similar (NB: "similar"; not "the same") to his ingenious analysis of Christ/Paul in

the *Antichrist*, #'s 40-43. That he remained silent on this point attests, as does so much else, to his unconscionable bias in Plato's favour; he could never really resist the seduction of Plato's aristocratic birth.

33. "Memorial Address" (in *Discourse on Thinking*, tr. J. M. Anderson and E. H. Freund, New York, 1969), p46. This text contains the most explicit commitment to contemplation, although it pervades the whole of his later work.

34. See above, p87. Heidegger's "Aristotelian" metaphysics is particularly evident in two assertions: a. Man's 'own special nature' is 'that he is a meditative being.' That is his 'essential nature'. (*ibid.*, p56.) b. 'the nature of thinking we are seeking (i.e. meditative thinking) is fixed in releasement (*Gelassenheit*).' 'Perhaps a higher acting is concealed in releasement than is found in all the actions within the world and in all the machinations of mankind.' ("Conversation on a country path", *ibid.*, pp62, 61.)

35. Once again, the "Memorial Address" contains the most forthright expressions of Heidegger's anxiety: 'technological advance will move faster and faster and can never be stopped. In all areas of existence, man will be encircled ever more tightly by the forces of technology. These forces, which everywhere and every minute claim, enchain, drag along, press and impose upon man...have moved long since beyond his will and have outgrown his capacity for decision.' (*ibid.*, p51.)

36. *ibid.*, p50.

37. *ibid.*, pp47-9.

38. *ibid.*, p59.

39. This statement will no doubt prove objectionable to orthodox Heideggerians, since Heidegger situates himself as a "new commencement"

at the end of a history of metaphysics inaugurated by Plato. But however seriously one is inclined to take Heidegger's history of philosophy, the fact is that both he and Plato/Socrates unquestionably stand out against more pragmatic rivals. Moreover, Heidegger's critique of Plato - that with the idea thinking is already beginning to objectify - is very much *plus royaliste que le roi*. The two are indissolubly connected by their common call for a turn (or return) to contemplation.

40. Cf. Isocrates, *op. cit.*, "Against the sophists", #'s 7-8.

41. Jaeger, *op. cit.*, Vol. 3, p58.

42. Danto, *op. cit.*, p72.

43. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #493.

44. Nietzsche's revaluation of truth is examined more thoroughly in Chapter 5.

45. A rarity in Nietzsche - one passage directly refutes the pragmatist interpretation: 'a belief, however necessary it may be for the preservation of a species, has nothing to do with the truth.' (*The Will to Power*, #487) No "traditional" anti-pragmatist could put the basic objection more succinctly.

46. Nietzsche, *Untimely Meditations*, "Schopenhauer as educator", #8, p193.

47. *ibid.*, pp184-7.

48. F. Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human* (tr. R.J. Hollingdale, Cambridge, 1986), A, #283.

49. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, #51.

50. This and the following two quotations: *The Will to Power*, #291.

51. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #430. The best statement of Nietzsche's suspicion of "ideal states" can be found in *Human, All Too Human*, A, #235. As ever, his main concern is that they conflict with

the goal of "perfecting" the individual.

52. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #335.

53. J.B. Sykes (Ed.), *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* 7th ed. (Oxford, 1982).

54. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #45.

55. Nietzsche, *Untimely Meditations*, "Schopenhauer as educator", #1, p129.

56. I have resisted the adjective "existential" (or even "existentialist") to describe Nietzsche's pragmatism, because despite the obvious parallels with thinkers such as Sartre there are also important differences which it would be unfortunate to blur. In particular, existentialists tend to regard individual freedom as a basic ontological fact, which can be evaded in "bad faith" but which never disappears, whereas Nietzsche regards individual autonomy as a relatively rare event that is achieved through struggle and represents nothing more, ontologically speaking, than a particular (and highly unstable) balance of forces. Or (what amounts to the same thing): the active individual is for Nietzsche the goal, where for existentialists it is the starting point. All this notwithstanding, it is very much more plausible to postulate a continuity between Nietzsche and Sartre, who at least share an *individualistic passion*, than the currently fashionable link between Nietzsche and Heidegger/Derrida; which perhaps only goes to show how frivolous are all efforts to assimilate disparate philosophies.

57. For example:

i. 'Let us, as men of the *vita contemplativa*...' (*Daybreak* [tr. R.J. Hollingdale, Cambridge, 1982] #41)

ii. 'we fail to recognize our best power and underestimate ourselves, the contemplatives, just a little.' (*The Gay Science*, #301)

58. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, #354.

59. Nietzsche, *Daybreak*, #42, entitled: "Origin of the *vita contemplativa*".

60. F. Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy* (tr. W. Kaufmann, New York, 1967), #7.

61. This and the next quotation: Nietzsche, *Daybreak*, #41.

62. The method of a "double description" is ascribed to Hesiod in *Daybreak*, #189 and again in *The Genealogy of Morals*, I, #11. Nietzsche's own dual response to the active/contemplative conflict is plainest in *The Genealogy of Morals*, I, #'s 6-7, which describe the rivalry between priestly and knightly-aristocratic values. While the priest is 'unhealthy', it is only with his emergence that 'man first became an *interesting animal*' and the soul first became 'evil' (the latter is, of course, a compliment). Cf. also *The Gay Science*, #350.

63. Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*, I, #16.

64. This point has already been made in the context of Nietzsche's politics. See above, chapter 2, p46.

65. Nietzsche, *Untimely Meditations*, "UDHL", #10, p120.

66. Thus despite his suggestion that 'the unhistorical and the historical are necessary in equal measure for the health of an individual, of a people and of a culture', Nietzsche immediately goes on to state that 'we shall...have to account the capacity to feel to a certain degree unhistorically as being more vital and more fundamental, inasmuch as it constitutes the foundation upon which anything sound, healthy and great, anything truly human, can grow.' (Both quotations: *ibid.*, #1, p63.)

67. *ibid.*, #10, p121.

68. Heidegger's brief discussion of "UDHL" in *Being and Time* (tr. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson, Oxford, 1962), pp448-9, focusses solely

on the uses of history, which in fact occupies only one sixth of the essay (#'s 2-3). Of course, this would not be objectionable had Heidegger made it clear that he was focussing on a sub-section of the text; but, as his introductory remarks make clear, he has completely misunderstood the attitude towards history taken up by Nietzsche's essay: 'The possibility that historiology in general can either be "used" for one's life or "abused" in it, is grounded on the fact that one's life is historical in the roots of its Being, and that therefore, as factically existing, one has in each case made one's decision for authentic or inauthentic historicity. Nietzsche recognized what was essential as to the "use and abuse of historiology for life" in the second of his untimely meditations (1874) and said it unequivocally and penetratingly.' (p448) As we have seen, the "fact" that "life is historical in the roots of its Being" is precisely what the essay challenges: it is rather the *unhistorical* that is primary and essential. *A fortiori* the question cannot be of "authentic" and "inauthentic" historicity, since that implies that there is some sort of true relationship possible to history - exactly what Nietzsche denies; the only appropriate adjectives are "useful" and "disadvantageous". Given this misunderstanding of the essay's overall structure, it is perhaps not so surprising that Heidegger's exegesis of those parts of the essay he does choose to discuss is also highly misleading. Thus he suggests that monumental, antiquarian and critical "historiology" are organically linked and correspond respectively to the future, past and present modes of Dasein's temporalizing. Nietzsche, by contrast, suggests that they are thoroughly different modes of approaching history, and implies that they are likely to be undertaken by different individuals, rather than constituting necessary elements in any Dasein's "authentic historicity". This obsession with

weaving the types together causes critical history virtually to drop out of the picture altogether, since Heidegger implies that its function is taken up by the other two modes: 'As authentic, the historiology which is both monumental and antiquarian is necessarily a critique of the "Present".' (p449) Nietzsche, on the contrary, states that 'antiquarian history...knows only how to preserve life, not how to engender it...it hinders any firm resolve to attempt something new, thus it paralyses the man of action' (*ibid.*, #3, p75). Critical history is not a "critique of the Present", but a critique of the past in order to make room for creative activity. It is precisely what the *unhistorical* force of "life" most requires of history; and so it is the element that Heidegger effectively ignores. For his whole comprehension of historicity is that "Dasein" must acquire a proper/authentic relation to its past and understand itself truly: criticizing the past simply does not fit into this pre-ordained structure. Heidegger does discuss Nietzsche's essay again many years afterwards but, far from correcting the imbalance of the earlier account, his later comments belong to the realm of fantasy: 'Nietzsche's thinking gives the false impression that he is fighting against "science" in favour of so-called life, whereas in truth he is fighting for knowledge in honour of an originally conceived "life" and reflection on "life". This indicates that we sufficiently understand the necessity of knowledge for life, and of truth as a necessary value, only if we keep to the one path that simultaneously leads to a more original grasp of knowing in its essential unity with life.' (Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Vol 3, p94) Concerning Heidegger's general misunderstanding of Nietzsche's attitude to truth, see below, chapter 5, pp195-8. Concerning the "necessity of knowledge for life", it might charitably be said that Heidegger's own faith in the value of reflection makes it impossible for him to

understand the conflict between knowledge and life felt by Nietzsche. The uncharitable will simply reach for the big red pen.

69. Nietzsche's commitment to - and radicalization of - the Enlightenment is thoroughly expounded in chapter 4 below, especially pp139-47.

70. Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, B, 1886 Preface, #1. The most striking sign of the revaluation that occurs after the *Untimely Meditations* is the altered value of some of the key images Nietzsche uses to insist on science's necessary subordination. According to "UDHL", science 'seeks to abolish all limitations of horizon and launch mankind upon an infinite and unbounded sea of light whose light is knowledge of all becoming. If only man could live in it! As cities collapse and grow desolate when there is an earthquake and man erects his house on volcanic land only in fear and trembling and only briefly, so life itself caves in and grows weak and fearful when the concept-quake caused by science robs man of the foundation of all his rest and security, his belief in the enduring and eternal.' (#10, pp120-1.) By contrast to this, the "infinite sea" is a staple image of the new and coming tasks, particularly in the works of the middle period. #124 of *The Gay Science*, for example, entitled "In the horizon of the infinite", ends: '...and there is no longer any "land".' Moreover, the "concept-quakes" and their disastrous consequences no longer hold any fear for the Nietzsche who commands: 'Build your cities on the slopes of Vesuvius!' (*The Gay Science*, #283) What was once to be avoided comes to be embraced.

71. Cf. Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, #10.

72. This and the next two quotations: *ibid.*, #9.

73. *ibid.*, #10.

74. *ibid.*, #5.

75. Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, "The birth of tragedy", #1.

76. Perhaps he did, albeit obliquely. One of the few explicit connections with the Christian epoch made in *The Birth of Tragedy* is when Nietzsche describes the Dionysian orgiasts as achieving a state of 'complete self-forgetfulness', and adds that 'In the German Middle Ages, too, singing and dancing crowds, ever increasing in number, whirled themselves from place to place under this same Dionysian impulse. In these dancers of St. John and St. Vitus, we rediscover the Bacchic choruses of the Greeks...' (#1) But when these dancers reappear in one of Nietzsche's later works, it is not in so complimentary a light: 'In the wake of repentance and redemption training we find tremendous epileptic epidemics, the greatest known to history, such as the St. Vitus' and St. John's dances of the Middle Ages...' (*Genealogy of Morals*, III, #21) Such "orgies of feeling" are not in any sense curative and healthy, as suggested in *The Birth of Tragedy*, but rather aim at 'combating the depression by relieving and deadening its displeasure.' (*ibid.*, #20)

77. Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, #20.

78. That this change constitutes one more step away from Christianity is attested by a passage from the later Nietzsche which castigates Christianity for precisely those effects that in *The Birth of Tragedy* are the ideal spectator's response to the Dionysian. The contrast - unnamed by Nietzsche - is implicitly with the Promethean alternative to this follower of Christ (or "epopt of Dionysus"?) who "is free from sin" - not through his own deed, not through a stern struggle on his part, but ransomed for freedom through the act of redemption...The true life is only a faith (i.e., a self-deception, a madness). The whole of struggling, battling, actual existence, full of splendour and darkness, only a bad, false existence: the task is to be

redeemed from it.' (Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #224).

79. Cf. Aeschylus, "Prometheus Bound", (in *Plays: One*, tr. F. Raphael and K. McLeish, London, 1991) 441-470, where Prometheus recites an impressive list of his gifts of insight to mankind.

80. Nietzsche, *Untimely Meditations*, "UDHL", #10, p120.

81. This and the following quotation: Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, #9.

82. Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, A, #228.

83. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, #301.

84. Cf. Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*, II, #24.

85. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, #300.

86. Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Book 2, #1, "On the blissful islands", p111.

87. M. Heidegger, "Dialogue on language", (in *On The Way to Language*, tr. P. D. Hertz, New York, 1971), p29.

88. Aeschylus, *op. cit.*, 953, 965-7.

89. Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*, II, #24.

90. See above, p91.

91. Isocrates, *op. cit.*, "Against the sophists", #'s 9-13.

92. Isocrates's response to the Socratic criticism that his is a mere knack gained by experience rather than a true art (see above, pp76-7 and note 7) is therefore that an art would be inappropriate, as the "teachers of politics" demonstrate: 'I marvel when I observe these men setting themselves up as instructors of youth who cannot see that they are applying the analogy of an art (*techne*) with hard and fast rules to a creative process (*poietikou pragmatos*).' (*ibid.*, #12.) Note that the narrow-minded, matter-of-fact pragmatists who teach rhetoric as a *techne* are closer to the Socratic ideal than is Isocrates. This is the first hint of the secret alliance between common-sense pragmatism

and idealism that is further explored at the end of the chapter.

93. Plato, *Gorgias*, 511b.

94. Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, "Why I am so wise", #5. Cf. *The Genealogy of Morals*, II, #23.

95. Viz., that pragmatism has been successful. See above, pp77-8.

96. Nietzsche, *Daybreak*, #328.

97. This is a very brief synopsis of the ideas in J. Davies's provocative essay, "Not in front of the students" (*Radical Philosophy* 7, 1974).

98. This and the next quotation: J.-F. Lyotard, *op. cit.*, p67.

99. Nietzsche, *Daybreak*, #196. The aphorism is entitled: "The most personal questions of truth."

Chapter 4

1. Their seminal work is *The New Rhetoric* (tr. J. Wilkinson and P. Weaver, Notre Dame, 1969). Its main themes are summarized in Perelman's *The Realm of Rhetoric* (tr. W. Kluback, Notre Dame, 1982).

2. Perelman, *The Realm of Rhetoric*, p3, citing Ramus. Style and eloquence of course remain important elements of rhetoric (I will deal with the role they play in Nietzsche in the following chapter), but Perelman insists that they cannot be the only elements.

3. *ibid.*, pp3-4.

4. *ibid.*, p7.

5. *ibid.*, p3. In places, Perelman does indeed seem to accept the Platonic overtones of the modern approach to rhetoric, e.g. p152, where the emphasis on making a discourse pleasing is described as 'a tendency...the premises of which were already to be found in the

Platonic conception of rhetoric.'

6. *ibid.*, p5.

7. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil* (tr. W. Kaufmann, New York, 1966), #5.

8. I should make it clear at this point that Perelman himself does not argue along exactly these lines in support either of Nietzsche or for that matter of anyone else. Nonetheless, his defence of rhetoric suggests this sort of response, even if it is presented here in a stark and perhaps oversimplified form. "Complications" are introduced in the course of the chapter and, in any case, it remains my suspicion that Perelman's self-confessed modifications of the Aristotelian schema do have a simplifying effect: there is nothing intrinsically "unfair" about this projection.

9. See above, chapter 1, pp18-20.

10. According to Aristotle, philosophy counts as the "special science" of ontology, although dialectics are at least useful in preparing the ground for this science, and hence may be considered part of the overall project of philosophy. In the modern division of labour, philosophy tends to be aligned far more with the dialectical "testing the truth of opinions" rather than a positive science of ontology. The reasons for this change are beyond the scope of this thesis; for my purposes, what counts is that neither in ancient nor modern times has philosophy been held to come within the Aristotelian sense of "rhetoric".

11. Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, I, 2, 1356b4.

12. For an example of this interpretation, see W. Thompson, *Aristotle's Deduction and Induction* (Amsterdam, 1975), pp72-4.

13. Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, II, 22, 1395b23-27.

14. This is made clear by the examples Aristotle gives of

enthymemes, none of which are completed syllogisms, and at one point he states the case quite unambiguously: 'if any of these propositions is a familiar fact, there is no need even to mention it; the hearer adds it himself. Thus, to show that Dorieus has been victor in a contest for which the prize is a crown, it is enough to say "For he has been victor in the Olympic games", without adding "And in the Olympic games the prize is a crown", a fact which everybody knows.' (Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, I,2, 1357a17-22)

15. Aristotle in fact devotes a chapter of the *Rhetoric* to the use of maxims (II, 21), in which they are recognized as reduced enthymemes, so that, of the normal syllogism, only the conclusion remains - both premises are missing.

16. Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, "Maxims and arrows", #8.

17. The Greek here is *pistis*, which is often translated unproblematically as "proof". However, whereas in modern english "proof" has come to be associated with apodictic certainty, the Greek term is much weaker, meaning something more like "that which inspires trust". Since a major part of my discussion concerns whether or not rhetorical forms of argumentation provide satisfactory proofs, it would be misleading to use the term from the outset. I have therefore placed the word "proof" inside inverted commas where its application would be controversial.

18. Aristotle, *Prior Analytics* (tr. A.J. Jenkinson), II, 24.

19. Aristotle, *Problems* (tr. E.S. Forster), XVIII, 3, 916b25-30.

20. A good illustration of this is #136 of *The Gay Science*, in which the Jews' relation to their God is compared with the French nobility's relation to Louis XIV.

21. A good example of this is *Human, All Too Human*, A, #240. It opens with the general claim that 'The higher a man's culture ascends,

the less space there is for humour and mockery', which is defended only through the example of how Voltaire's humour has dated. There are many such cases in Nietzsche, where the "evidence" for an assertion is no more than an historical example or illustrative parallel.

22. This is a difficult assertion to justify, as there is no overt statement of such a distinction; the evidence for it lies in the detailed discussions of material for dialectical and rhetorical argumentation in the *Topics* and *Rhetoric* respectively (*Topics*, Bks II-VII; *Rhetoric*, Bk I, Ch's 4-15.) The huge proportion of the discussion which concerns what Aristotle calls the "commonplace rules" (Bk I, Ch 18) for conducting a dialectical discussion in itself shows the importance placed on method in the *Topics*. There is no equivalent in the *Rhetoric*. A similar view to mine is found in S. Raphael, "Rhetoric, dialectic, and syllogistic argument: Aristotle's position in *Rhetoric*, I-II", *Phronesis*, 1974: 'in the *Rhetoric* [Aristotle] uses the term *topoi* in a rather wider sense than in the *Topics*. The topics in the *Rhetoric* are based, not on the doctrine of the predicables, but on a division of rhetorical speeches into deliberative, legal, and epideictic. Furthermore, Aristotle is ready to call *topoi* not only grounds for arguments proper but any information which an orator will find useful for persuasion, such as the analysis of emotions and types of character.' (pp161-2)

23. Aristotle, *Topics* (tr. W.A. Pickard-Cambridge), I, 2, 101a34-101b4.

24. J.D.G. Evans, *Aristotle's Concept of Dialectic* (Cambridge, 1977), p6.

25. It could be argued, of course, that a written philosophy cannot on principle be dialectical, since dialectics involves an exchange of questions and answers. But Plato shows that the process can be captured

by a single writer; and a discourse can be dialectical in its use of material without using the question-and-answer format at all. Thus it is perfectly meaningful to characterize Nietzsche's use of "topics" as rhetorical rather than dialectical. It is more problematic for a written text to be *dialogical* - but this is a separate issue (cf. chapter 1, pp24-5).

26. This is not to say that Nietzsche's objectives are simply to find another route to the same goal. As has been shown in the previous chapter, the conception of wisdom towards which Nietzsche works is far more practical than it has ever been in the post-Platonic western tradition.

27. Descartes, *op. cit.*, "Discourse on method", #3, p124.

28. Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, A, #265.

29. Nietzsche, *Daybreak*, #197.

30. For example:

i. 'I believe that I am a few centuries ahead in Enlightenment not only of Voltaire, but also of Galiani, who was far profounder...' *The Will to Power*, #91 (1885).

ii. 'The view that truth is found and that ignorance and error are at an end is one of the most potent seductions there is. Supposing it is believed, then the will to examination, investigation, caution, experiment is paralysed...' *ibid.*, #452 (1888).

31. Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, I, 2, 1094b26.

32. Aristotle's detailed requirements for scientific premises are given at *Posterior Analytics* (tr. J. Barnes) II, 11, 94a20-b26.

33. See for example J. Barnes, "Aristotle's theory of demonstration" (in *Phronesis* 14, 1969, pp123-152), for a modern examination of the problem.

34. J.D. Bernal, *Science in History*, Vol. 1 (London, 1965), pp200-

201.

35. For example Derrida, who is often mistakenly thought to abandon all traditional logical norms, maintains a heavy reliance on structuralist linguistics to prove his assertions. Ironically, this is nowhere more blatant than in the closing stages of his analysis of Nietzsche, when he states that 'the hypothesis that the totality of Nietzsche's text...might well be of the type "I have forgotten my umbrella" cannot be denied. (Derrida, *Spurs*, p133.) What fascinates about this passage is the logician's delight expressed in the phrase "the hypothesis...cannot be denied"; even this avant-garde thinker prefers the old philosophical benchmark of necessity to the uncertainties of rhetorical argumentation.

36. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #516.

37. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, Preface, #1.

38. Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, "The problem of Socrates", #5.

39. Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, Foreword, #3. Previous quotation: *The Genealogy of Morals*, Preface, #4.

40. Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, "Maxims and Arrows", #26.

41. Cf. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #584: 'Instead of employing the forms as a tool for making the world manageable and calculable, the madness of philosophers divined that in these categories is presented the concept of that world to which the one in^{which} man lives does not correspond...The intention was to deceive oneself in a useful way; the means, the invention of formulas and signs by means of which one could reduce the confusing multiplicity to a purposive and manageable schema.'

42. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* (tr. W.D. Ross), I, 2, 983a14-19.

43. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #608.

44. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, #373.

45. Paul Feyerabend's brilliant *Against Method* (London, 1975), is particularly rich in parallels with the "rhetorical science" outlined in this chapter. It would be beyond the scope of the thesis to explore them properly, but the following comment can at least serve to illustrate the fascinating possibilities that exist here: 'The task of the scientist...is no longer "to search for the truth", or "to praise god", or "to systematize observations", or "to improve predictions". These are but side effects of an activity to which his attention is now mainly directed and which is "to make the weaker case the stronger" as the sophists said, and thereby to sustain the motion of the whole.' (p30.)

46. Even innovative methods which mark an advance for enlightenment in their own time can later retard science if they are seen as "solutions". In this context, the case of Bacon is fascinating: he was a key figure in the first Enlightenment, who helped to develop inductive logic and thereby to free science from the prison of Scholasticism by making observation and experiment rationally respectable. And yet, for all that, the seeds of a new dogmatism are contained even in the liberating onslaught on the old tradition. Bacon condemns the Scholastics because 'they have forbidden the happy match between the mind of man and the nature of things; and in place thereof have married it to vain notions and blind experiments.' (F. Bacon, "In praise of human knowledge", *Works*, ed. B. Montagu, London, 1825, Vol. 1, p254.) While this indicates his distaste for dogmatism, it nevertheless retains, through its belief in "the happy match between...mind..and nature", the old Aristotelian ideal of science as the discovery of truth; the dispute concerns means and method, not goal. By contrast, Nietzsche can talk of himself as a radicalization of

enlightenment because he disputes even the goal of science; he takes Bacon's step further.

47. Nietzsche, *Daybreak*, Preface, #5. Previous quotations: a) *The Genealogy of Morals*, Preface, #8; b) *Human, All Too Human*, B, #168.

48. See above, p133.

49. Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, Foreword, p22.

50. *ibid.*, "'Reason' in Philosophy", #'s 3,4. Note the inverted commas around the word "Reason". The prospect is held out of a better rationality.

51. *ibid.*, "The problem of Socrates", #7.

52. The Greek word used by Aristotle is *paradeigma*, meaning "from a sample", which originated in the practice of merchants offering samples of their cloth in the market-place at Piraeus. The image is of a token of the same type, which is precisely what is in dispute here; "analogy" (*analogia* or "according to proportion" in Greek) is a less restrictive term and is therefore to be preferred as a description for this type of argumentation. The obvious objection to my employment of the term "analogy" here is that it carries a weight of philosophical associations which are, by and large, unhelpful to the meaning I intend. The concept has been of especial importance in the Thomist tradition, where it is often interpreted as strict mathematical proportionality, i.e. $a:b::c:d$. More troublesome still, there are hints of this sort of usage in Aristotle himself, who uses the term "analogia" in the context of more "serious" reasoning than that employed by the rhetors. Against this, I can only insist that "paradeigma" is an inadequate description for the mode of argument even as Aristotle depicts it, and that the everyday "loose" usage of "analogy" is just as important a guide as the supposedly stricter mathematical interpretation of the term. For analogy - in the everyday

sense - describes where "reason" and "imagination" meet and merge, and there is no better way of depicting this type of rhetorical argumentation.

53. Some of Nietzsche's comments on "objectivity" strongly suggest the value of different descriptions. For example: 'precisely because we seek knowledge, let us not be ungrateful to...resolute reversals of accustomed perspectives and valuations...to see differently in this way for once, to want to see differently, is no small discipline and preparation of the intellect for its future "objectivity" - the latter understood not as "contemplation without interest", but as the ability to control one's Pro and Con and to dispose of them, so that one knows how to employ a variety of perspectives and affective interpretations in the service of knowledge.' (*The Genealogy of Morals*, III, #12.)

54. Aristotle, *Prior Analytics*, II, 24, 68b37-39 and 69a14-16; *Problems*, XVIII, 3, 916b25-34; *Rhetoric*, I, 2, 1357b29-30.

55. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, #355.

56. Aristotle, *Topics*, I, 5, 102b17-18; II, 2, 109b1.

57. An excellent example of such a "non-issue" receiving serious treatment in Aristotle's own text is *Topics*, II, 4, 111b4-12, when the problem of whether the soul moves is discussed with an earnestness that today appears somewhat comical.

58. Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, "Why I am so clever", #1, p51.

59. Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, "Why I am a destiny", #8, p133.

60. Aristotle, *Topics*, I, 10, 104a5-8.

61. Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, "Why I am so wise", #7, p47.

62. No-one expresses the value of free-ranging discussion better than Galileo: "I am unwilling to compress philosophical doctrines into the most narrow kind of space and to adopt that stiff, concise and graceless manner bare of any adornment which pure geometers call

their own, not uttering a single word that has not been given to them by necessity...I do not regard it as a fault to talk about many and diverse things, even in those treatises which have only a single topic...for I believe that what gives grandeur, nobility, and excellence to our deeds and inventions does not lie in what is necessary...but in what is not..."(letter to Leopold of Toscana, 1640, cited in Feyerabend, *op. cit.*, p69).

63. Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, I, 1, 1355a14-23.

64. The three types are described in outline in Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, I, 3, and in more detail thereafter (I, 4-14). *Deliberative* oratory urges us to do or not to do something, is linked to the future, and is appropriate to politics; *forensic* either attacks or defends somebody, is linked to the past, and is appropriate to the law; and *epideictic* praises or blames somebody, is linked to the present, and is appropriate to public speaking.

65. Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1355a29-39. My emphasis.

66. *ibid.*, 1366a18-22.

67. *ibid.*, 1355b27-8. My emphasis.

68. Cicero, *De Oratore*, II, xxxv, #147.

69. *ibid.*, II, xvi, #68.

70. Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, p87.

71. A useful summary of the debate and a strong case for the "soundness" criterion is provided by W. D. Harpine, "Can rhetoric and dialectic serve the purposes of logic?" (in *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 18, 1985). However, while his criticisms of the "effectiveness" criterion are generally apposite, Harpine's insistence that rhetorical arguments must be "evaluated" for their "logical soundness" marks a rather more conservative approach than the one I have adopted in this chapter.

72. Naturally, it will be objected that these conclusions have only been reached on the basis of Nietzsche's argumentation, which is to say the least a very special case, and hardly one that can be applied to rhetoric in general. Certainly, this is not supposed to be an historical account of how rhetoric has been considered and used, but a suggestion concerning its potential. My main idea is that Nietzsche does employ recognizably rhetorical forms of argumentation, and thereby shows to what extent they can be used to inquire effectively into foreign domains, once the ontological prejudices which govern the most influential depictions of rhetoric (Plato and Aristotle) have been set aside.

73. Admittedly, Nietzsche does at times descend from these heights. He occasionally appealed to more traditional notions, in particular when he talked about eternal recurrence as the *most scientific hypothesis*, for which a "proof" might be possible. Such comments represent a retreat from his own best insights, according to which no such proof would be available, and the will to such a proof would be a sign of weariness - a sign that the will to go on experimenting had vanished. Perhaps eternal recurrence can be the low as well as the high point of the meditation: it occasions, at any rate, Nietzsche's one lapse into moralizing, when he states: 'To me...everything seems far too valuable to be so fleeting: I seek an eternity for everything: ought one to pour the most precious...wines into the sea? - My consolation is that everything that has been is eternal: the sea will cast it up again.' (*The Will to Power*, #1065.)

74. Nietzsche, *Daybreak*, #542.

75. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, #383.

76. *ibid.*, #327.

Chapter 5

1. I have used the term "eloquence" in the title and throughout the chapter, rather than the more common "style" or "styles", largely in order to stress the link with the *elocutio* of classical rhetoric. However, it is also the case that "eloquence" implies an apt or forceful use of language, whereas "style" normally refers purely to the "manner" rather than the "matter" of a discourse, and can be effective or ineffective. Part of my purpose in this chapter is to argue why "stylistic eloquence" is important, rather than just the "question of style", which has often been highly valued irrespective of the force or persuasiveness (or lack of them) a style may attain.

2. Cf. Introduction, p3.

3. The important discussions are located as follows:- in the *Republic*, Books 2-3 (377a-398b), Book 5 (475d-483e), Book 10 (595a-608b); in the *Symposium*, the reported tale of Diotima (201d-212b) and Alcibiades's eulogy of Socrates (215a-222b); in the *Phaedrus*, the myth of the charioteer (246a-256e).

4. It may be objected that in all these dialogues Plato is concerned with art and beauty rather than with rhetoric; but it can hardly be denied that the whole point of *elocutio* is to make the rhetor's speech beautiful, so that what Plato says of poetry and beauty in general can be directly applied to rhetoric in particular. Indeed, Socrates himself establishes the link, at *Gorgias* 501-2, when he condemns both rhetors and poets alike for their concern to please rather than edify their audience.

5. Plato, *Republic*, Book 10, 597e.

6. *ibid.*, Book 10, 602c-d.

7. Plato, *Symposium* (tr. M. Joyce), 210b-c.

8. *ibid.*, 218e.

9. *ibid.*, 221e-222a. This same plea to disregard the form is also made (more urgently) by Socrates in the *Apology*, 17b-c: 'My accusers...have said little or nothing that is true, but from me you shall hear the whole truth; not, I can assure you, gentlemen, in flowery language like theirs, decked out with fine words and phrases; no, what you will hear will be a straightforward speech in the first words that occur to me, confident as I am in the justice of my cause...'

10. Plato, *Republic*, Book 10, 605a-b.

11. Pasley, *op. cit.*, pviii.

12. See in particular the Introduction, p2, and the accompanying notes, which identify Heidegger and Danto as two interpreters who adopt this Platonic framework when reading Nietzsche.

13. An excellent exegesis of this theory of metaphor is given in the "Exergue" of Derrida's essay "White mythology", in *Margins of Philosophy* (tr. A. Bass, Brighton, 1982), pp209-219. Derrida describes how one of its leading proponents wants 'to save the natural wealth and original virtue of the sensory image, which is deflowered and deteriorated by the history of the concept. Thereby he supposes - and this is a classical motif, a commonplace of the eighteenth century - that a purity of sensory language could have been in circulation at the origin of language, and that the etymon of a primitive sense always remains determinable, however hidden it may be.' (pp210-11.)

14. Nietzsche, *Philosophy and Truth*, p84.

15. *ibid.*, pp82-3.

16. *ibid.*, p84.

17. See "White mythology", p215, for Derrida's exegesis of this term. His over-emphasis on the symbolist conception of metaphor is

criticized later in the chapter - see below, pp190-4.

18. Nietzsche, *Philosophy and Truth*, p84. It is worth noting that Derrida at least insinuates Nietzsche's complicity in the symbolist theory in a parenthesis to his discussion of the arch-symbolist Anatole France: 'the words "God", "soul", "absolute", etc., are *symbols* and not *signs*; what is symbolized maintaining a tie of natural affinity with the symbol; and thus authorizing the etymological reactivation, (arbitrariness thus, as Nietzsche also suggests, being only a degree of the 'usure of the symbolic)' (Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, p212.)

19. *ibid.*, p219.

20. For a recent example of this approach, see M. Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1990), Chapter 3, in which she defends the thesis that 'Far from a precocious statement of Nietzsche's lifelong views, "On truth and lie..." belongs, according to my interpretation, to Nietzsche's juvenilia.' (p65.)

21. Nietzsche, *Philosophy and Truth*, p85.

22. The distinction between linguistic and perceptual metaphors is also important when considering the structuralist criticism of a thesis which talks of metaphors being "cooled down" into concepts, implying that metaphors precede concepts. The obvious objection to such an idea is that metaphors operate through an "abnormal" employment of terms outside their customary context, which means that without "normal", conventional designations there can be no metaphors, either. However, if Nietzsche is talking about "perceptual metaphors" (as I think it can be shown he always does, in these contexts), this logical criticism does not apply: at best, one can accuse Nietzsche of confusing the matter by using the term "metaphor" to apply to too many different things.

23. *ibid.*, p90.

24. The play of forces becomes much more subtle and complicated in the later Nietzsche. The presumption of the artist's innate superiority disappears, as does the idea that there is anything primordial or original about the artist-type. (The later Nietzsche in any case rejects the idea that chronological priority implies any kind of superiority; the early essay is unclear on this point.) But perhaps most important is the disappearance of the simplistic contrast between "scientist" and "artist" that is drawn and overdrawn in the last section of the 1873 essay. By the late 1870's, there is a clear recognition that scientists also incorporate artistic drives, and that artists are not just gloriously irrational fools. The work of synthesis is under way.

25. By "performative" I mean in this context that Nietzsche's eloquence or aspects of it is taken to act out or perform certain key insights on his part.

26. 'If Nietzsche had indeed meant to say something, might it not be just that limit to the will to mean...?' (Derrida, *Spurs*, p133.)

27. Nehamas, *op. cit.*, p35.

28. *ibid.*, p37.

29. Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, p74.

30. Considering that the title of Nehamas's chapter on Nietzsche's styles ("The most multifarious art of style") is taken from this passage, it is all the more remarkable that he totally ignores the suggestions contained within it.

31. Derrida, *Spurs*, pp35-7, amended translation.

32. *ibid.*, p95, amended translation.

33. *ibid.*, p137, amended translation.

34. Nehamas, *op. cit.*, p37.

35. Plato, *Republic*, Book 10, 607d-e.

36. The general opinion that Plato's strictures against art are flouted by the stylistic excellence of his work is by no means unchallenged. Thus Nietzsche writes: 'In respect to Plato I am a thorough sceptic and have always been unable to join in the admiration of Plato the artist which is traditional among scholars...For the Platonic dialogue, that frightfully self-satisfied and childish kind of dialectics, to operate as a stimulus one must never have read any good French writers...Plato is boring.' (*Twilight of the Idols*, "What I owe to the ancients", #2)

37. For a simple demolition of the hypocrisy involved in the philosophical rejection of "ornate language", there is nothing better than de Man's deconstruction of Locke in his essay "The epistemology of metaphor" (collected in S. Shacks, *op. cit.*). However, Derrida is more ambitious in that he seeks to explain why philosophy uses metaphor, and must go on using it, despite its condemnations.

38. This quotation and the next: *Margins of Philosophy*, p270.

39. *ibid.*

40. *ibid.*, p215.

41. E.F. Kittay, *Metaphor* (New York, 1987), p6.

42. Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, p243.

43. *id.*

44. It is worth noting that Derrida's other major treatment of metaphor, "The retrait of metaphor", (*Enclitic*, Fall 1978) also operates against a carefully determined "ordinary conception" of metaphor, except that in the later essay the characterization of "the tradition" has degenerated from an over-simplification to an outright fabrication. Thus Derrida asserts that 'Habitually, usually, a metaphor claims to procure access to the unknown and to the indeterminate by the detour of something recognizably familiar.' He does not say who

'claims' this, but the famous example in the next sentence points the finger at Aristotle: "'The evening", a common experience, helps us to think "old age", something more difficult to think or to live, as "the evening of life," etc.' This conveniently omits to mention that the passage alluded to in the *Poetics* also gives the example "evening is the old age of the day"; Derrida even forgets his own discussion of this example in "White Mythology", which makes no suggestion that the metaphor only works in one direction (*Margins of Philosophy*, pp241-2). In whatever way this oversight is to be explained, its significance for Derrida's argument can hardly be disputed, since he goes on to praise metaphors and readings of metaphor where the terms act on one another to undermine all presumptions of familiarity. It would appear that the "normal conception" of metaphor is manipulated to suit the essay's overall trajectory.

45. See above, p181, note 19.

46. L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (tr. G.E.M. Anscombe, Oxford, 1953) II, xi, p36.

47. See above, p190, note 39.

48. Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, pp262-3. My emphasis.

49. See "The retrait of metaphor", especially pp23-5.

50. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #853, iv.

51. This applies to the English translation, published in four volumes. In the original two-volume German edition, "The will to power as art" is the first part of the first volume.

52. Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Vol. I, p75.

53. *ibid.*, p74.

54. Cited *ibid.*, p74.

55. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, #1

56. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #853, i. Cf. p197 above.

57. Cf. Plato, *Republic*, 598-9.

58. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, Preface, #4.

59. *Ibid.*, #58.

60. This emphasis on making rather than discovering alternatives clearly has its origins in the "On truth and lie..." essay and its "political" theory of metaphor, as discussed earlier in the chapter, pp181-3.

61. Cf. Plato, *Republic*, 602d-e.

62. It should be emphasized that this clear repudiation of Plato's aesthetics cannot be straightforwardly aligned with the Romantic alternative of art as "creative expression". The latter invites the sort of ghettoization of art produced by the logical positivists' division of language into "statements of fact" and "expressions of emotion" - art naturally being placed in the second category. Since Nietzsche regards metaphysics and science as artistic, it must be assumed that mimetic "representation of reality" is at least part of what he understands by art. Moreover, it has long been recognized by classical scholars that Plato's use of the term *mimesis* is, to say the least, idiosyncratic. Aristotle's understanding of the concept is significantly broader: 'The poet being an imitator...he must necessarily in all instances represent things in one or other of three aspects, either as they were or are, or as they are said or thought to be or to have been, or as they ought to be.' (*Poetics*, tr. I. Bywater, 25, 1460b8-11.) If one further qualified this statement to read "all" rather than "one or other" of these aspects, one would not be far from Nietzsche's broad conception of art, in which things are represented as they are/seem/are willed, these three being incapable of proper isolation from each other. Perhaps it would be too confusing to call this, too, "*mimesis*"; but it would at any rate be no stranger an

employment of the term than Plato's.

63. The *locus classicus* for Nietzsche's conception of nihilism is the first part of the "first book" of *The Will to Power*. On the specific aspect of "ideals" becoming increasingly destructive, see for example #37: 'The development of pessimism into nihilism - Denaturalization of values. Scholasticism of values. Detached and idealistic values, instead of dominating and guiding action, turn against action and condemn it...At this point nihilism is reached: all one has left are the values that pass judgement - nothing else.'

64. Deleuze's interpretation of Nietzsche as a radicalization of Kantian critique must therefore be rejected, despite the prominence it accords to Nietzsche's revaluation of truth. For to prioritize critique serves notice that one is fundamentally "against illusion", that one expects and respects only liberation from it. And indeed, Deleuze asks rhetorically: 'Is there any discipline apart from philosophy that sets out to criticize all mystifications, whatever their source and aim, to expose all the fictions without which reactive forces would not prevail?' (G. Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, tr. H. Tomlinson, London, 1983, p106.) The enemy - reactive forces - "prevails" through its use of "fictions" which it is the task of philosophy to "expose". What other conclusion can be drawn from this language than that philosophy, in its highest form, is free from fictions and mystifications? Reactive forces require fictions to prevail: what possible sense can this assertion have, unless it carries as its secret obverse that active forces do not? And since "active forces" are Deleuze's heroes, it follows that, for him, truth is still worth more than art. The great paradox of Deleuze's account is that, while allegedly speaking for active forces, its mode of operation is always responsive: (negative) freedom from reactive forces; (self)destruction

of reactive forces effected by eternal recurrence. Given these objectives, Deleuze has to retain the valuation of truth over art; otherwise, he would lack the metaphors with which to explain the dominance hitherto of "weaker" reactive forces, and the corresponding salvation from them which is supposedly in prospect.

65. See above, pp175-7.

66. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #809.

67. See *Twilight of the Idols*, "Expeditions of an untimely man", #'s 21-3.

68. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #801.

69. Cf. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power* #387: 'Passion is degraded...in as much as it has for its object something of no great value, amusement__'

70. Plato, *Republic*, Book 10, 606d. Previous quotation: *ibid.*, 605c.

71. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #778.

72. Cf. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #933: 'The greater the dominating power of a will, the more freedom may the passions be allowed. The "great man" is great owing to the free play and scope of his desires and to the yet greater power that knows how to press these magnificent monsters into service.'

73. Nowhere is this contrast better drawn than in the first section of "Morality as anti-nature" in *Twilight of the Idols*.

74. Nietzsche insists that forms are not epiphenomena, since they influence the "content" of which they are normally considered expressions. e.g. *Daybreak*, #257: 'We always express our thoughts with the words that lie to hand. Or, to express my whole suspicion: we have at any moment only the thought for which we have to hand the words.'

75. Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, "The problem of Socrates",

#3. *Plato, Symposium, 201d-202a*

76. Plato, *Apology*, 18a.

77. Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, "The problem of Socrates";

#3. *Plato, Symposium, 201d-202a*

78. The physiognomic theory is often expressed in serious, almost medical terms, for example when Nietzsche comments that 'ugliness signifies the decadence of a type, contradiction and lack of co-ordination among the inner desires...' (*The Will to Power*, #800)

79. Nietzsche asserts that: 'The effect of the ugly can be measured with a dynamometer.' This and the next quotation: *Twilight of the Idols*, "Expeditions of an untimely man", #20.

80. Thus in the *Phaedrus*, when the soul's chariot approaches close to Beauty, 'the driver's memory goes back to the form of Beauty, and he sees her once again enthroned by the side of Temperance on her holy seat; then in awe and reverence he falls upon his back...' (254b) And Alcibiades's speech in the *Symposium*, while praising the inner beauty of Socrates as of higher value than any outward beauty, says of its effect: 'there's one thing I've never felt with anybody else - not the kind of thing you'd expect to find in me, either - and that is a sense of shame. Socrates is the only man in the world that can make me feel ashamed.' (216a).

81. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #298.

82. One could scarcely invent a more perfect example of the "evil eye" for reality than Plato's rhetorical question: 'if it were given to man to gaze on beauty's very self - unsullied, unalloyed, and freed from the mortal taint that haunts the frailer loveliness of flesh and blood - if, I say, it were given to man to see the heavenly beauty face to face, would you call *this*...an unenviable life...?' (*Symposium*, 211e - amended translation.)

83. Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, "Expeditions of an untimely man", #19.

84. One difficulty for the "Nietzsche versus Plato" account just outlined is that Nietzsche explicitly praises Plato's theory of beauty in relation to Schopenhauer (in *Twilight of the Idols*, "Expeditions of an untimely man", #'s 22 and 23). Against Schopenhauer, who sees sexuality repressed by beauty, 'Plato...maintains...that all beauty incites to procreation - that precisely this is the *proprium* of its effect'. Nietzsche goes so far as to claim that 'Nothing is less Greek than the conceptual cobweb-spinning of a hermit, *amor intellectualis dei*. Philosophy in the manner of Plato should rather be defined as an erotic contest...' Now, while Plato does indeed state that beauty is always loved for a procreative purpose (*Symposium* 206-7), the account later goes on to stress the joy of simply contemplating 'absolute beauty' (211e), and the "child" is nothing more tangible than 'true virtue', for bearing which the aesthete 'shall be called the friend of god, and if ever it is given to man to put on immortality, it shall be given to him.' (212a) In other words, Nietzsche is quite mistaken to seize on the word "procreation" as an indication of a materialist undercurrent in Plato: the context robs the term of all sensuous connotations; it becomes a bad metaphor for an infusion of divine grace. Furthermore, it should be recalled that in the *Phaedrus* account of love, it is the recollection of pure beauty that allows the virtuous elements of the soul to resist those that would commit 'a monstrous and forbidden act' (254b). I would suggest that the talk of "procreation" is used to add plausibility to the notion of an "absolute beauty" by connecting it with an important feature of earthly beauty, and is certainly no indication that Plato indulges sexual desire. In this, I am scarcely even opposing Nietzsche; for his claim that Plato

marks a continuation of the typically Greek honouring of sexuality is inconsistent with his many comments suggesting that Plato/Socrates is a crossroads of world history and a bridge to the asceticism of the Christian era, opposed to the older Greek spirit. To take the most glaring example: 'Art...is much more fundamentally opposed to the ascetic ideal than is science: this was instinctively sensed by Plato, the greatest enemy of art Europe has yet produced. Plato versus Homer: this is the complete, the genuine antagonism - there the sincerest advocate of the "beyond", the great slanderer of life; here the instinctive deifier, the golden nature.' (*The Genealogy of Morals*, III, #25) In sum, Nietzsche's attempts in *Twilight of the Idols* to set up Plato in opposition to Schopenhauerian asceticism not only constitute a dubious interpretation of Plato on beauty; they also mark an aberration from Nietzsche's profound understanding of Plato as the origin of the ascetic ideal.

85. Cf. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #811: 'Our aesthetics hitherto has been a woman's aesthetics to the extent that only the receivers of art have formulated their experience of "what is beautiful?" In all philosophy hitherto the artist is lacking.'

86. Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, "Expeditions of an untimely man", #7.

87. Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Book 3, #12, "Of old and new law-tables", #29.

88. Exploration of the nature of creativity and its contrast with contemplation runs as a *leitmotif* through *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. It would require too great a digression to detail its many appearances in that work, but the chapter "Of immaculate perception" (Book 2, #15), with its contrast between the leering 'moon-love' of philosophers and the 'sun-love' of 'creative desire' would certainly figure prominently

in any such account.

89. A fascinating study in miniature of this philosophical blindness is provided by Heidegger's interpretation of the hammer metaphor in Nietzsche's work. Heidegger asserts: 'Above all it means to tap all things with the hammer to hear whether or not they yield that familiar hollow sound, to ask whether there is still solidity and weight in things or whether every possible centre of gravity has vanished from them.' (Heidegger, *op. cit.*, p66) The justification for this interpretation is provided by the Foreword of *Twilight of the Idols*, which speaks of the hammer as a tuning-fork. But Heidegger completely fails to mention the other hammer in Nietzsche - namely, the sculptor's hammer which 'my ardent, creative will...drives...to the stone. Ah, you men, I see an image sleeping in the stone, the image of my visions! Ah, that it must sleep in the hardest, ugliest stone! Now my hammer rages fiercely against its prison. Fragments fly from the stone: what is that to me?' ("On the blissful islands") The importance that this conception has for Nietzsche is indicated by the re-iteration of the passage in *Ecce Homo*, with the appended comment that 'Among the decisive preconditions for a dionysian task is the hardness of the hammer, joy even in destruction. The imperative "become hard", the deepest certainty that all creators are hard, is the actual mark of a dionysian nature.' ("Thus Spoke Zarathustra", #8) If this is not "above all" what Nietzsche's hammer means, surely it is at least worth a mention? The best - and worst - one can say is that its omission is consistent with Heidegger's more general silence concerning Nietzsche's "creative will".

90. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, #299. Also worth noting in this context is *The Will to Power*, #943: 'We protect artists and poets and those who are masters in anything; but as natures that are of a higher

kind than these...we do not confound ourselves with them.'

91. For example: i. 'the dangerous concept of the "artist" - a concept that has so far been treated with unpardonable generosity' (*The Gay Science*, #361) ii. 'I have grown weary of the poets, the old and the new: they all seem to me superficial and shallow seas.' (*Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Book 2, #17, "Of Poets", p151.)

92. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #804.

93. *ibid.*, #852.

94. *ibid.*, #853, ii.

95. The idea of a Nietzschean categorical imperative of course comes from Deleuze (*op. cit.*, p68), but while his version differs significantly from the Kantian formulation it nevertheless remains an 'ethical thought', because it seeks to change the world for the better. Deleuze believes that the thought of eternal recurrence will weed out not only bad (reactive) actions, but bad men; he calls this 'Zarathustra's cure' (p71). This is an ingenious piece of crypto-Kantianism, but it completely reverses the progression of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, which starts with hopes of eradicating the reactive man, but ends in the affirmation that 'All eternal joy longs for the ill-constituted!!' (*Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Book 4, #19, "The intoxicated song", #11.) This is the only consistent conclusion that Nietzsche could come to; for, as he states elsewhere: 'It is self-deception on the part of philosophers and moralists to imagine that by making war on *décadence* they therewith elude *décadence* themselves.' (*Twilight of the Idols*, "The problem of Socrates", #11.)

96. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, #276.

97. Cf. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power* #805.

98. *ibid.*, #443.

99. Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, A, #222. The clearest explicit

statement of *amor fati*'s scientific directive is in *The Will to Power* #1041, when Nietzsche comments that 'It is part of this state to perceive not merely the necessity of those sides of existence hitherto denied, but their desirability...' (my emphasis). This perfectly captures the duality of seeing more and affirming more than all previous philosophies.

100. It can hardly be doubted that *amor fati* is of major importance, since Nietzsche describes it as 'my formula for greatness in a human being' (*Ecce Homo*, "Why I am so clever", #10); nevertheless, it has tended to be subordinated to the doctrine of eternal recurrence, a judgement which I do not share. The two are, of course, closely related, as the unfolding story of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* makes particularly clear. *Amor fati* presents the problem that the "creative will" cannot change what is and has been, and as a result inclines to revenge; eternal recurrence compounds the agony by suggesting that even the future is already made, that what we and the world will be is only what we have been. But the eternal recurrence also has a tendency to deflect, rather than sharpen the challenge of *amor fati*. This is partly because its conceptual complexity facilitates bizarre interpretations, such as the metaphysics of the cosmic wheel, or the extermination of reactive forces. But there is also a sense that through eternal recurrence one can solve the problem of fate at a stroke, as if it were a riddle: one cannot will backwards - unless the future is also one's past! To cut the knot of life's problems through a great "Yes!" to an implausible doctrine - does this not have an all-too-familiar ring? Eternal recurrence was one way Nietzsche tried to meet the challenge of *amor fati*; that he thought it the best does not mean that we must, too.

101. This and the previous quotation: A. P. Fell, "The excess of Nietzsche's *amor fati*" (in *The Great Year of Zarathustra*, ed. D.

Golcochea, New York, 1983), p93.

102. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #808.
103. See above, pp201-3.
104. Fell, *op. cit.*, p88.
105. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #818.
106. Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, A, #203.
107. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, #188.
108. Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*, III, #28.
109. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, #428. My emphasis.
110. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, #107.

Conclusion

1. The most thorough descriptive account of Nietzsche's rhetoric is J. Goth's *Nietzsche und die Rhetorik* (Tübingen, 1970), although this, too, shares the modern tendency to reduce rhetoric to questions of style, and contains very little about its other elements.

2. See above, chapter three, for a detailed discussion of the concept of *paideia*.

3. I am not sufficiently Kantian to assert that these are the only four differentiae that philosophy can use, or indeed has used, to claim superiority over rhetoric. It therefore remains at least theoretically possible to accept the case that I have made against these particular distinguishing features while nevertheless maintaining that philosophy can establish its superiority over rhetoric, in ways that I have perhaps been too biased to consider. I think it unlikely, however, that any persuasive criticisms of rhetoric exist that are not at least closely related to those I have considered here.

4. It might be thought that by treating rhetoric in this way I am undertaking exactly the "reification" for which Paul de Man was criticized earlier (cf. Introduction, pp4-5). The difference is that de Man ignores the function of rhetoric altogether, while my point is merely that if everything that has the effect of persuading is termed "rhetoric" then complete confusion will arise. Indeed, an abstract functionalism would be just as effective as de Man's reification at obliterating rhetoric as a concrete historical phenomenon.

5. At least three points testify to this ambiguity:

i. The teachers of rhetoric of the fifth and fourth century B.C. have become collectively known as "Sophists" or "wise men"; as a further complication, it is quite likely that the name was initially applied ironically, by their opponents.

ii. Socrates was often "accused" of being a Sophist.

iii. Isocrates called himself a philosopher, and withheld the term from many of his "philosophical" opponents.

These facts indicate that the abstract meaning of the various terms was not sufficient to distinguish between the figures involved, which implies that the clear distinction that does now exist between "rhetoric" and "philosophy" is primarily a conventional imposition, and results from concrete differences between separate groups of forces. An insistence on the purely abstract "conceptual meaning" of the terms thus inevitably leads back to the overlap and confusion in which the Greeks found themselves; I fail to see how this can be considered desirable.

6. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, #230.

7. A perfect example of this conflict of fundamental values arises when Socrates and Callicles debate temperance. Socrates compares the intemperate to a man with a leaky pitcher, which must constantly be

filled and refilled. To his astonishment, Callicles accepts this model:

'Callicles: The man who has filled his casks no longer has any pleasure left...once his casks are filled his existence is the existence of a stone, exempt alike from enjoyment and pain. But the pleasure of life consists precisely in this, that there should be as much running in as possible.

Socrates: But if much is to run in much must necessarily run out, and there must be large holes for it to escape by.

Callicles: Certainly.' (Plato, *Gorgias*, 494a-b.)

8. *ibid.*, 494d-e.

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