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DESCENT AND DISSENT:  
NIETZSCHE'S READING OF TWO FRENCH MORALISTS

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August 1994

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of PhD.

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation reads Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) as a reader of two French moralists - François de la Rochefoucauld (1613-80) and Sébastien Roch Nicolas Chamfort (1741-94). The works of Nietzsche's middle period are studied - Human, All too Human (1879), Daybreak (1881) and The Gay Science (1882). The study argues that reading Nietzsche as a descendant of and dissenter from the moralist tradition sheds new light on his thought and brings certain concepts into focus. The key concepts and questions explored are: morality, egoism, vanity and self-love, pity and its cognate emotions, friendship, aristocracy, honour, women, marriage and gender relations. Throughout the dissertation the impact that reading the moralists had on Nietzsche's style is also examined. It is argued that a concern with justice is the 'basso continuo' of the middle period, continuously present and working itself out in the background of these texts. Furthermore, one of the innovative ways Nietzsche expresses this concern is via spatial metaphors.

## RÉSUMÉ

Cette dissertation regarde Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) comme lecteur de deux moralistes français - François de la Rochefoucauld (1613-80) et Sébastien Roch Nicolas Chamfort (1741-94). Les trois livres de 'la période positiviste' de Nietzsche sont étudiés: Humain Trop Humain (1879), L'Aube (1881) et Le Gai Savoir (1882). Il est suggéré que quand on lit Nietzsche dans la tradition moraliste on voit comment certaines idées et thèmes sont importants. Les concepts majeurs de cette dissertation sont: la vie morale, l'égoïsme, la vanité et l'amour-propre, la pitié, l'amitié, l'aristocratie, l'honneur, les femmes et le mariage et la famille. Parce que Nietzsche a aussi été frappé par l'aphorisme, la dissertation examine les questions du style. Il est suggéré d'ailleurs que le problème de la justice est la 'basso continuo' de cette période et il est montré que quand Nietzsche discute la justice, il emploie les métaphores spatiales.



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## Introduction.

[S]ome of the greatest achievements in philosophy could only be compared with taking up some books which seemed to belong together, and putting them on different shelves; nothing more being final about their positions than that they no longer lie side by side. The onlooker who doesn't know the difficulty of the task might well think in such a case that nothing at all had been achieved - the difficulty in philosophy is to say no more than we know. Eg. to see that when we have put two books together in their right order we have not thereby put them in their final places. (Wittgenstein 1972:44/5)

While not comparable to a great achievement in philosophy, this dissertation reshelves some of the works of Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) by placing them along side the works of two French moralists, François de la Rochefoucauld (1613-80) and Sébastien Roch Nicolas Chamfort (1741-94). It aims to show that reading Nietzsche in this way, as taking up some of the moralists' concerns about and approaches to moral life, brings certain themes, ideas and concepts from his work into sharper focus and reveals a Nietzsche little known to the secondary literature.

Because the scope of even a doctoral dissertation is too limited to consider what impact reading these thinkers might have had on Nietzsche's oeuvre, at least with the detail such a study warrants, only the works of Nietzsche's 'middle' or 'positivist' period will be considered. Close readings of Human, All Too Human (1879), (which includes "Assorted Opinions and Maxims" and "The Wanderer and His Shadow"), Daybreak (1881) and The Gay Science (1882) will be offered<sup>1</sup> and it will be argued that although the works of the middle period tend to be neglected in commentary on Nietzsche, they are rich and fruitful books, deserving closer attention.

As will be illustrated throughout this dissertation, the middle period is not the mere intermezzo between The Birth of Tragedy and Thus Spoke Zarathustra that some critics suggest (Del Caro 1989:158-9,161-2. Dannhauser 1974:158). Nor is it simply a prelude to Nietzsche's 'mature' works. Rather

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<sup>1</sup> Only the first four books of Science will be included as Book Five, "We Fearless Ones", was written in 1887, after Beyond Good and Evil. This puts it beyond the purview of the middle period.

this period has an integrity and value that should be acknowledged if the wealth of Nietzsche's oeuvre is to be appreciated as fully as possible. Moreover on some axes the writings of the middle period are superior to what follows, especially in their preference for careful, variegated moral analyses over cruder, more black and white moral arguments, caricatures and essentialising gestures.<sup>2</sup> As such, the works of the middle period realise more fully some of the intellectual virtues Nietzsche prizes and with which he is associated, such as the free play of reason, self-reflexive criticism (1986:371#249.1982:169#370), anti-dogmatism, "schooling in suspicion" (1986:5#1), attention to the mystery and complexity of psychology and the unmasking of becoming in being, the made in the given, and contingency in necessity. This last point about sensitivity to contingency is especially apparent in some of Nietzsche's historicist arguments about gender (Chapters Nine and Ten) and in the new view of aristocracy he adduces, allowing for the 'accident' of superior spirits being born into inferior social classes (Chapter Seven).

La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort are obviously not the only thinkers engaging Nietzsche in his middle period. Nor is it claimed here that they are the most important among the writers he cites. Rather the argument is that understanding the evolution of Nietzsche's thinking during this period is heightened by reading it through the prism of these moralists and considering the ways in which his thinking both descends and dissents from theirs. Reading Nietzsche in this way, as taking up some of the moralists' concerns about and approaches to moral life, brings certain themes, ideas and concepts from his work into sharper focus and illuminates their importance. It also shows that

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<sup>2</sup> Compare Peter Heller's observation of the "more restrained and more complex statements which characterize the scepticism of Human" (in O'Flaherty 1976:133). I am accepting the orthodox view that avoiding caricatures is an intellectual virtue, whereas the later Nietzsche seems to transvalue this value, making a virtue of caricatures (as he does of ad hominem attacks). In The Will to Power he writes that:

Within the aristocratic Roman order of values, the Jew was reduced to a caricature ... Among immoralists it is the moralist: Plato, for example, becomes a caricature in my hands (1968:202#374).

reading is a resource for becoming who one is. The process of making oneself as a thinker draws not only on internal resources but occurs in contest and cooperation with other thinkers via reading.

The case for reading Nietzsche as continuing elements of the tradition of French moralism is made in Chapter One "Dialogues with the Dead". However a question that needs to be addressed now is why, among the French moralists, La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort are singled out for study. Part of the answer is that Nietzsche's relationship with them is an area under-worked by the secondary literature. As Chapter One also indicates, these moralists' relative obscurity was important for Nietzsche's appreciation of them. As Chapter Three shows, the writing styles employed by La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort also made a powerful impression on Nietzsche in his middle period.

A further reason for choosing La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort as foci of French moralism is that while La Rochefoucauld represents the apex of this tradition, Chamfort sings its swansong. Intimately connected with the movement of French moralism is the decline of the French aristocracy. Writing after the aristocracy's defeat at La Fronde, La Rochefoucauld represents the beginning of the end for this elite and Chamfort, who witnessed and supported the French Revolution but was a victim of the Terror, represents the end of its end. The writings of La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort thus enframe French moralism and the political decline of the French aristocracy. It will be argued throughout this dissertation that the whole issue of aristocracy - what it is, what threatens it and what the conditions propitious for the creation of a new aristocracy might be - is of vital concern to Nietzsche. Given this and Nietzsche's admiration for the French aristocracy, the different stages of its fortunes represented by La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort acquire added interest.

Chapter One, "Dialogues with the Dead" begins with a discussion of the distinctive features of Nietzsche's middle period. It then surveys the references and allusions to La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort in these works and reviews the literature on Nietzsche's relationship with them. It is argued that the books of this period can be read as Nietzsche's dialogues with these dead

two and the scope and shortcomings of this approach are examined. A reflection on the interplay between tradition and originality, inheritance and innovation in the middle period concludes this chapter.

One of the most obvious things Nietzsche shares with La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort is a preoccupation with morality, with what moral action is, with what really motivates it, with the gulf between appearance and reality and whether moral action is possible and/or desirable. The middle period marks Nietzsche's transition from philologist to genealogist of morals and it would seem that one of the reasons the moralists are so important for his thinking at this time is that he casts them as proto-genealogists of morality.<sup>3</sup> The extent to which he emulates the French writers' general approach to moral questions is considered in Chapter Two "From Salon to Civilisation".

Chapter Three "If brevity be the soul" considers the relationship between style and substance in the middle period. The moralists' use of the aphorism is an obvious way in which their impact on Nietzsche's development can be felt (Williams 1952:47-8,53,61,180-81,Donnellan 1982:x-xi,9).<sup>4</sup> Prior to Human, Nietzsche adopted conventional academic forms, dividing his work into chapters (The Birth of Tragedy) or essays (Untimely Meditations). One feature of his new phase is the use of aphorisms, which is evident in all the books of the middle period - and many beyond.

However the aphorism is only one of several styles Nietzsche practises in this phase and he often, indeed more frequently, uses paragraphs of varying lengths which resemble La Rochefoucauld's Réflexions Diverses in form and, to some extent, function. Nietzsche also writes caractères, anecdotes and 'petits dialogues philosophiques', styles employed by Chamfort. Thus the maxim or

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<sup>3</sup> This could help to explain why Paul Rée, whose example Nietzsche is also seeking to emulate in the middle period, was so enamoured of the moralists' work.

<sup>4</sup> However as Chapter Three shows, the moralists were not the sole influence on Nietzsche employing the aphoristic form nor is the aphorism the only way in which their style affected his.

aphorism is not the only element of style Nietzsche adopts from the moralists under study. In considering such elements, it is necessary to ask why he chooses one form over another to express a given idea (cf. Williams 1952:181) and what the relationship between the various forms of expression in a given work is. These questions will also be considered with regard to the moralists' choice of style.

It seems that at this time Nietzsche is discovering the attractions and the limitations of the aphorism (Williams 1952:48-9. Donnellan 1982:131-3). As Alexander Nehamas points out, in Nietzsche's work style is never a secondary consideration (1985:13,20,35. cf. del Caro 1989:188, Kaufmann 1950:viii) so examining some of the writers he is imitating as he experiments and seeks a suitable form or forms of expression, proves illuminating. However "Brevity" argues that the aphorism is essentially inappropriate for Nietzsche's major purposes. A literary form born in the salon, the aphorism is eminently suited to the concerns of this milieu but when moral analysis expands beyond its boundaries, as Nietzsche's often does, its constraints become apparent. Therefore to the usual list of reasons for Nietzsche's experiments with style must be added the fact that the aphorism is unsuitable for many of his aims, making other modes of expression necessary.<sup>5</sup> Closely related to the concern Nietzsche shares with the moralists about what morality is, is their interest in the prevalence of egoism and self-love in action and social relations. As the frequent occurrence of the term 'vanity' in the texts of the middle period, especially Human, indicates, this is another matter of prime importance for Nietzsche (Williams 1952:24,79. Donnellan 1980:65-79). Possible connections between his thought and the moralists' on these issues are considered in the fourth chapter: "All is not vanity".

Emotions like pity, empathy and benevolence are usually seen as antithetical to egoism and because they pose such a challenge to thinkers convinced of the force of egoism, such as La Rochefoucauld and Nietzsche,

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<sup>5</sup> With the exception of Walter Kaufmann (1950:71) and W.D. Williams (1952:48/9.53,180), the limitations of the aphorism are rarely considered in the literature on Nietzsche's style.

they receive some attention from each. La Rochefoucauld is often portrayed as a staunch critic of pity (Andler 1920:192. Donnellan 1982:87) and Nietzsche identifies this moralist as a source of his own attack on pity as an emotion and social bond. The impact that La Rochefoucauld's views might have had on the development of Nietzsche's thought is explored in Chapter Five on pity - "The greatest danger". This chapter argues that Nietzsche has to distort La Rochefoucauld to some extent to cast him as a precursor of his own attack on pity. But Chapter Five also shows that, contrary to the standard reading of Nietzsche as an implacable critic of pity and benevolence, this period sometimes praises the latter and acknowledges positive elements of the former.

Friendship is another social tie examined by the moralists and concern with it is another of their important legacies for Nietzsche (Donnellan 1982: 84). For him friendship can unite individuals in a way that retains some of pity's positive features while overcoming its degenerate ones. The idea of Nietzsche as a theorist of friendship is initially counter-intuitive given that he is so often portrayed as a misanthropist revelling in solitude. However an interest in friendship and its authentic form is a real and powerful feature of the middle period albeit one that is overlooked in much of the secondary literature. Investigating the work of the moralists helps to uncover this important but neglected dimension of Nietzschean thought. Friendship as a relationship between individuals is examined in the first of two chapters devoted to it: "Equal among Firsts".

Chapter Seven "Born Aristocrats of the Spirit" reveals friendship to be Nietzsche's model not just for private relations but also for the social elite of the future. This chapter argues that two notions of aristocracy jostle for position in the middle period. Struggling against the traditional 'aristocracy of birth' model is a new, more inchoate 'aristocracy of spirit'. This chapter advances Nietzsche's arguments for this new notion of aristocracy and goes on to demonstrate that his 'ethic of care of the self' which can be retrieved from the middle period allows this new notion of aristocracy to accommodate Nietzsche's insistence on the importance of embodiment.

Chapter Eight "Applause" examines another interest uniting Nietzsche's



agenda with the moralists' and one which is closely connected with his thinking about a new aristocracy, for it examines his reflections on the importance of glory, honour and recognition in social life. Having just emerged from years of intensive study of the Greeks, this is of pressing interest for Nietzsche,<sup>6</sup> especially given his growing fear that in the modern age greatness is a rare and endangered thing (Andler 1920:94. Williams 1952: xvi,145-6, Donnellan 1982:90).<sup>7</sup> As Chapter Eight indicates, La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort play ambiguous roles in this debate, both conceding and condemning the honour ethic.

An interest in women and gender relations is another dimension of the moralists' thought that Nietzsche makes his own (Donnellan 1982:84, Kaufmann in Nietzsche 1974:24). Like La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort, Nietzsche is also the target of frequent accusations of misogyny but in all cases I argue that this is too simplistic a reading of their depictions of women

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<sup>6</sup> (Andler 1920:1,298-305,344). This interest is most clearly expressed in Nietzsche's essay "Homer's Contest" which remained unpublished in his lifetime. This essay explores the positive social function of competition and the quest to excel one's peers. It argues that institutionalising the agonistic impulse through social competitions gave the Greeks a productive outlet for their potentially destructive will to annihilation (*Vernichtungslust*). Such contests sublimate this desire, preserve community life and foster a higher culture. For a fuller discussion see Tracy Strong's "Nietzsche and Politics" in Solomon (1980) and Hunt (1990:54-67).

It is possible that reading the Greeks in this way is part of, and made possible by, the tradition that gave rise to Adam Smith's notion of the invisible hand. Discussing this tradition, Albert Hirschmann notes that:

the idea of an "Invisible Hand" - of a force that makes men pursuing their private passions conspire unknowingly toward the public good - was formulated in connection with the search for glory, rather than with the desire for money, by Montesquieu (1977:10).

The Kantian notion of unsocial sociability can also be seen as part of this lineage, although it is not identified as such by Hirschmann. As will emerge, images of unsocial sociability resonate throughout Nietzsche's work.

<sup>7</sup> The work of Luc de Clapiers Vauvenargues (1715-1747) is also important here, for he is one of the few modern defenders of the ethic of 'gloire', insisting upon its primacy as a goal and motive of action. Nietzsche knew Vauvenargues' work and names him once in the middle period (1986:362 #214).

and gender relations. Insofar as Nietzsche is misogynist, this not a permanent feature of his thought but reaches its peak in the last of his three periods. In the middle period, by contrast, many positive references to women are made. This period's depiction of women is analysed in Chapter Nine "One cannot be too kind" where female eligibility for free spirithood is also considered.

Love, marriage and reproduction are explored in Chapter Ten "The soul-friendship of two people of differing sex" and the connection between these ideas and those of friendship, care of the self and aristocracy raised. Chapter Ten also reveals how innovative some of Nietzsche's ideas on marriage, reproduction and gender relations are, at least when considered against the backdrop of his usual sources - the Greeks and the French.

One of Nietzsche's preoccupations in the middle period is equality - or its absence - between humans at many levels - the political, the social, the physical and the psychic. The three works of this period offer a sustained and serious, if not systematic, reflection on the relationship between justice and equality at the macro and micro levels. For Nietzsche equality, or assertions of it, since these are more common than real equality (1974:91#18), are usually anathema to justice. One of the findings of this study is the way Nietzsche's discussion of these key concepts - egoism, pity, friendship, aristocracy, gender and gender relations - is interwoven with reflections on justice. This implication of justice in the exploration of these concepts is one of the major things distinguishing his approach to them from the moralists'. This is not to suggest that the moralists are utterly indifferent to questions of justice - La Rochefoucauld raises the matter explicitly a few times (1977:52#78,94#14,#15,#16,126#XIII)<sup>8</sup> as does Chamfort (1968:72#99,78#137,

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<sup>8</sup> Maxims #14-16 were edited out of the first edition by La Rochefoucauld, signalling that justice was not one of his paramount concerns. His longest reflection on justice (1977:94#14) describes it as a fear that what belongs to us will be taken away, which gives rise to respect for the interests of others. Only such fear contains people - without it they would continually infringe upon others. None of his other reflections on justice add much to this. As such, La Rochefoucauld's account of justice is an application of the principle of self-interest, a principle applied to many other manifestations of seemingly altruistic forces like pity (Chapter Five), friendship (Chapter Six) and love

82#160,119#292,123#321,306#1166). However a distinctive thing about Nietzsche's work is the ubiquity of his concern with justice and the originality of his conceptualisations of it.

A concern with justice is thus the 'basso continuo' of the middle period,<sup>9</sup> continuously present and working itself out in the background of these texts. One of the innovative ways Nietzsche explores such questions is via metaphors of distance, space and proximity.<sup>10</sup> For obvious reasons such metaphors are usually associated with his perspectivism (1986:195#616,387#307,1982:199-200#485) but they also play a part in his thinking about justice. Indeed in the middle period Nietzsche's views about perspectivism are often couched in the language of justice and justice is often thought about in perspectival terms, so that justice requires seeing things fairly, with disinterest and dispassion and giving all things what is theirs. As Human states:

There is, to be sure, a quite different species of genius, that of justice ... it wants to give to each his own, whether the thing be dead or living, real or imaginary - and to that end it must have a clear knowledge of it; it therefore sets everything in the best light and observes it carefully

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(Chapter Ten). This approach to justice is present in Nietzsche's thought but, as will be demonstrated, his views are more complex than La Rochefoucauld's.

<sup>9</sup> Pointing out, correctly in my opinion, that for Nietzsche interaction with others can be seen as a spur to excellence (Chapter Six) Lester Hunt suggests that justice should therefore be a Nietzschean virtue, "one of the second-order traits which are virtues because they help us to become more virtuous" (1990: 179). For Hunt, justice observes "the principles which form the indispensable framework for peaceful interaction between people" and respects "the rights of others" (1990:179). However several leaps are taken in arriving at these conclusions. The first is to conflate interaction with others with involvement in the wider community. As my discussion of friendship shows, only interaction with equals develops the higher self. Moreover to assume that justice entails the recognition of equality and the rights of others forecloses the very questions Nietzsche wants to raise.

<sup>10</sup> Some of the inspiration, but none of the blame, for thinking about Nietzsche's notion of justice in spatial terms comes from R.B.J. Walker's analysis of the role of space in conceptualizations of the state in international relations discourse. See Inside / Outside: International Relations as Political Theory. (1992)

from all sides (1986:202#636.cf.1982:9#4,1974:173-4#114).<sup>11</sup>

A little later we read that "the ultimate distinction between philosophical heads and others would be that the former desire **to be just** and the others **to be a judge** (1986:223#33.FN's emphasis). So as each of the themes of vanity, pity, friendship, aristocracy, honour, women and gender relations is presented (Chapters Four to Ten), the way Nietzsche's spatial conception of justice is involved in each will be discussed.

Chapters Four to Ten are therefore devoted to close readings of what it will be argued are major concepts of the middle period. Each chapter attempts to reconstruct Nietzsche's views on the concept, although much effort is made to recognise complexity and tension in his analyses and not to impose artificial uniformity on them. My reconstructions aim "to stand in the midst of this **rerum concordia discors** and of this whole marvellous uncertainty and rich ambiguity" (1974:76#2. FN's emphasis) while also taking heart from Human's point that fragmentary form does not a fragmented work make (1986:243#128). The similarities and differences between Nietzsche's approach to these concepts and those of the moralists are considered and in reconstructing each of the moralist's positions, a similar cohesion which does not iron out their tensions and contradictions is striven for.<sup>12</sup> Differences between the

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<sup>11</sup> Of the later works, Peter Berkowitz notes that "Justice, in the sense of seeing the world unfalsified, without prejudice, is for Nietzsche a moral and intellectual virtue" (1993:105).

<sup>12</sup> As Jacques Truchet says about La Rochefoucauld:

A vouloir trop systématiser les Maximes, à en éliminer la part de la fantaisie, les excursions, les hésitations, les contradictions même, on en fausse, à leur détriment, le caractère (in La Rochefoucauld 1977:19)

Compare Philip Lewis's view that:

By virtue of its discontinuous form and its cognitive force, the work of La Rochefoucauld puts up strong resistance to a reductive reading, to a reordering of its components; it challenges us to read it as an ensemble of statements, all of which are valid simultaneously. What these statements, in their plurality, leave to be worked out is not a single synthetic or conclusive statement, but the context of their validity (1977:142).

With regard to Chamfort, M.S. Merwin notes that his literary remains are "fragmented, uneven, haphazard and finally inconclusive" (1992:12). This

moralists are also kept in view for the participation of La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort in a common tradition obviously does not make them intellectual siamese twins.

Each of the chapters Four to Ten concludes with a coda revealing how the concepts it has examined connect with the wider reflections on justice and equality that permeate Nietzsche's works and showing how justice is depicted through spatial metaphors. Comparing Nietzsche's treatment of these major concepts with those of the moralists discloses both what he took over from them and what he contributed of his own. Overall this illustrates that a fuller understanding of the middle period can only be achieved by reading Nietzsche as descendant and dissenter from the French moralist tradition as represented by La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort.

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is partly due to the fact that he did not prepare his writings for publication. As Joseph Epstein explains:

No one would have known about Chamfort's aphorisms but for their having been discovered and saved by faithful friend, Ginguené, who eventually brought them to the public under Chamfort's own ironically intended title of Products of the Perfected Civilization (in Arnaud 1992:xviii.cf. Merwin in Chamfort 1984:14).

Chapter One.  
Dialogues with the Dead:  
Nietzsche and the French Moralists.<sup>1</sup>

Writing was in its origin the voice of an absent person (Freud 1961:38)

This chapter begins with a brief discussion of the distinctive features of Nietzsche's middle period and indicates the difficulty of using the term 'Nietzsche' as a collective noun for there are salient differences within his oeuvre. It then considers the explicit attention the works of the middle period pay to the French moralists La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort. The literature on Nietzsche's relationship with them is then reviewed. Next an argument is made that the works of this period be read as Nietzsche's dialogues with these dead moralists. Some of the pitfalls of this interpretation are considered and two levels of such a reading adduced. The chapter concludes by reflecting on the relationship between tradition and originality, inheritance and innovation, in Nietzsche's thought.

The classification of Nietzsche's work into three periods was coined by Lou Andreas Salomé in her 1894 work Friedrich Nietzsche in Seinen Werke (1988:8-9), although this schema has become such a commonplace in

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<sup>1</sup> This echoes Dialogues of the Dead by Bernard le Boivier Fontenelle (1657-1757), another French thinker of the moralist school that Nietzsche admired and cited in his middle period (1986:362#214, 1974:146-8#94, 157#101). An anecdote Charles Andler recounts about Jacob Burckhardt's response to Human suggests that the trope of dialogues among the dead had some resonance for Nietzsche at this time. Burckhardt praises Nietzsche by telling him that, after reading Human he was:

imaginait un dialogue des morts entre moralistes anciens, ou La Rochefoucauld, devant La Bruyère et Vauvenargues ravis, se déclarerait jaloux de plus d'un aphorisme de Nietzsche (1920:vi1, 190).

Hayman mentions a similar remark from Burckhardt (letter from Burckhardt 3/4/1879 in Hayman 1980:212).

Nietzsche scholarship that she is rarely credited with it.<sup>2</sup> The middle phase is contrasted with the early writings which evince enthusiasm for Wagner and Schopenhauer and so begins after Untimely Meditations (1873-76)<sup>3</sup>. With Thus Spoke Zarathustra (1884) Nietzsche's later phase begins.

By contrast with Nietzsche's early admiration for Wagner and German cultural renaissance, something that marks the advent of the middle period and which Nietzsche retains, is the broadening of his interest in cultural renewal from Germany to Europe. This expansion of political and cultural frontiers

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<sup>2</sup> For just one of the many examples of the failure to mention Salomé in connection with this tripartite division, see Tsanoff (1953:559-60). Salomé's periodization is offered as a heuristic device only; she is too subtle and perceptive a reader of Nietzsche to suggest that each period represents a clean and complete 'epistemological break' with the earlier one. Hence it is possible to employ this schema while acknowledging that the boundaries between Nietzsche's phases are not rigid, that some of the thoughts elaborated in one period were adumbrated in the previous one, that there are differences within any single phase and that some concerns pervade his oeuvre (cf. Williams 1952:xi,6-7,92-3; Donnellan 1982:xii,3, 29). Salomé also points out that in his last phase Nietzsche returns to some of the concerns of his first, but approaches them in a different way (cf. Detwiler 1990:147; Berkowitz 1993:77). His discussion of the Dionysian is one example of such return. These nuances notwithstanding, certain major changes of temper across Nietzsche's works can be identified, and here the schema is useful. Such a change is undeniable between the early and middle periods and again between Science and Zarathustra.

One problem with Salomé's classification though is that Nietzsche's 'last period' seems a residual category, simply embracing everything written after Science's Book IV. Cataloguing Zarathustra with works like Genealogy and Twilight of the Idols seems insensitive to the peculiarities of the former. At one point Salomé acknowledges the distinct nature of Zarathustra (1988:123) and it would seem more accurate to place it in a class of its own. And while Genealogy, Twilight, The Antichrist and Beyond Good and Evil can be clustered together, Ecce Homo is, like Zarathustra, sui generis.

<sup>3</sup> Hayman calls the first of his chapters to deal with this period of Nietzsche's life 'Volte Face' (1980:190-220). Carl Pletsch notes that in Human:

Nietzsche suddenly wrote as a rationalist loyal to the European Enlightenment of the eighteenth century. It is difficult to recognize the author of The Birth of Tragedy or the Untimely Meditations in this new work. The new Nietzsche was cosmopolitan, pro-French and vehemently opposed to anti-Semitism (1991:202).

plays an important part in his vision of the social elite of the future and is one of the things distinguishing the new model of aristocracy he is groping toward from the older one (Chapter Seven).

As the adjective 'positivist' suggests, a second distinctive feature of this period is Nietzsche's faith in the scientific approach to knowledge (cf. Williams 1952:40. Dannhauser 1974:160,165), although this characteristic proves a little less durable than the former.<sup>4</sup> The middle period contains abundant praise of science, its methods, values and the heroism of its practitioners.<sup>5</sup> Appeals to "the man of knowledge" (1986:57#107.cf.1982:221-2#550), "of science" (1986:221#31) and to "we children of the Enlightenment" (1986:41#55.cf.367#221,169#463.1982:118#197) recur. Scientific inquiry is contrasted with metaphysics, religion and art because it is disinterested and offers the possibility of seeing the world as it is, without wishful thinking or need imputing false meanings (1986:61-2#110,73#135,#136,80#146,80-81#147,81#148,83-4#157,84#159,102#220,117#245,125#264,128#272,221#29,#30,222#32,262#206,308-9#16). Because scientific thinking can liberate from false and oppressive dogma, its potential as a source of progress is huge (1986:25#25,105#222,117#245,#247,117-18#248,131-2#282,134-5#292). Thus in his middle period Nietzsche usually looks to the citizens of the republic of knowledge rather than artists as the saviours of modern society (1986:24-5#24,

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<sup>4</sup> The middle period's praise of science illustrates that readers like Ted Sadler overgeneralise when they claim that science is a value that ranks low for Nietzsche (in Patton 1993:232). This illustrates the trend in Nietzsche criticism of using the term 'Nietzsche' as a collective noun, implying that Nietzsche held one position all his life and that all his works say the same thing.

<sup>5</sup> This is illustrated in Nietzsche's lament about his education:

If only we had been taught to **revere** these sciences, if only our souls had **even once** been made to tremble at the way in which the great men of the past had struggled and been defeated and struggled anew, at the martyrdom which constitutes the history of **rigorous** science! (1982:115#195. FN's emphasis)



Related to this faith in the scientific approach to knowledge is the middle period's praise for the pursuit of truth and its attendant virtue, intellectual courage. In the works after Zarathustra Nietzsche pushes this faith as far as it will go, until it folds back upon itself and questions the value of pursuing truth (1974:280-3#344,283-5#345.1977:15#1,47#34). Thus scepticism about the primacy and worth of pursuing truth characterises the later works, although the middle period's belief in the value of truth is not altogether effaced. As a consequence two attitudes towards truth are discernible in the later works. The first diagnoses the will to truth as an ethos that began with Socrates, was furthered by Christianity and took a quantum leap with the advent of modern science. When taking this stance Nietzsche depicts the will to truth as a value judgement, as a faith in the idea that with persistence reason can reach the ultimate truth about the world, that this is necessarily a good thing and that all other considerations must be sacrificed to it. He portrays this faith as naive and based on prejudice and emotion, despite its rhetoric about pure, untrammelled reason and freedom from bias, emotion, faith and superstition.<sup>7</sup> Against the a priori belief in the value of truth that the middle

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<sup>6</sup> According to Hayman, in the middle period the term 'the artist' often stands for Wagner (1980:202). As Human's "The poet as signpost to the future" (1986: 235-6#99) indicates, artists can have some role in reforming society. Such poets will:

scent out those cases in which, in the midst of our modern world and reality and without any artificial withdrawal from or warding off of this world, the great and beautiful soul is still possible ... Many a path to this poetry of the future starts out from Goethe: but it requires good path-finders and above all a much greater power than present-day poets ... (1986:236#99).

<sup>7</sup> Some of these claims come in sections that Nietzsche later appends to the works of the middle period, such as the 1886 Preface to Human (1986:6#1) and Book V of Science (1974:281-3#344,285#345). This might go some of the way to answering the question of why the later Nietzsche added Book V to Science. While this book continues some of Science's themes, such as its critique of nationalism (1974:288#347), its attitude to truth is quite different. It may be that as Nietzsche moved away from and possibly grew embarrassed by the middle period's positivism, he added Book V to mitigate it.

period promotes, the later period sometimes contends that more important is the sort of life a doctrine sustains or promotes so that truth is valuable and worth pursuing only if it serves a noble form of life. Conversely error is not automatically to be devalued, for illusions and falsehoods might preserve desirable forms of life.<sup>8</sup> However as mentioned, the later works also sometimes reiterate the middle period's praise of the pursuit of truth and the courage it requires (1974:293#351.1977a:50#39,137#227.1977b:23#2,167#50).<sup>9</sup>

So one of the features that marks Nietzsche's positivist phase is its more unambiguous accent on the vigorous pursuit of truth. Here the will to truth is not something he takes a critical distance from and tries to analyse but an ethos Nietzsche espouses and proudly sees his work embodying (1986:201#633,218#20.1982:184#429,185#432,190#450,191#456,192#459,227#567.1974:255#324,263-6#335).<sup>9</sup> The middle period presents its inquiries into psychology and the history of morality as participating in the scientific tradition for they attempt to analyse human behaviour and moral codes in an honest, dispassionate way (1986:32-3#37,34#38).

Close observation of psychological minutiae is a related development of this period (cf. Williams 1952:49. Heller in Nietzsche 1986:xiii) and is wedded to Nietzsche's standing interest in collective psychology and wider moral frameworks or worldviews. Indeed one of the things the middle period attests is just what a careful, sensitive analyst of moral life Nietzsche could be,

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<sup>8</sup> As Brandes writes:

Nietzsche loved life so greatly that even truth appeared to him of worth only in the case of its acting for the preservation and enhancement of life. Falsehood is to him an injurious and destructive power only in so far as it is life-constricting. It is not objectionable where it is necessary to life (1909:107 cf. Pletsch 1991:133-4).

<sup>9</sup> Compare Redding's point about Nietzsche's ambivalent relationship to the enlightenment (in Patton 1993:205,207,216).

<sup>9</sup> However, this period is not devoid of doubts about the will to truth and so is not unambiguously positivist. The spectre of error being necessary and, consequently, the pursuit of truth destructive sometimes appears (for example Nietzsche 1986:28#33), offering a further reminder about the fluid nature of Salomé's tri-partite classification.

which, as argued throughout this dissertation, can be associated with the example set by the moralists. Unlike his later more swashbuckling, caricaturing approaches to morality, this period offers an impressive range of nuanced and delicate moral analyses, especially those dealing with individual 'virtues' and drives and their myriad manifestations <sup>10</sup>

Overall the Nietzsche of the middle period is a kinder, gentler figure than the more infamous author of the later works. Although distinctions are made between the many and the few or fettered and free spirits, especially during Science, the master/slave morality grid and the hyperbole and vitriol accompanying it are the product of the angrier, older man,<sup>11</sup> leaving more room for the awareness and practice of benevolence in the middle period. Concomitant with his philanthropic moods and faith in science, the Nietzsche of the middle period is not as virulent a critic of cultural and social decay as he becomes, even though he observes keenly and critically some of the features of mass, commercial society and the modern, bureaucratic state (Chapter Seven).

In confining itself to the middle period, the current study goes some way toward redressing the fact that, despite its strengths, this period has not received as much critical attention as the later works. According to Michael Tanner, for example, Daybreak is the most neglected of Nietzsche's works (in Nietzsche 1982:xi). However as his remark signals, the middle period is not

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<sup>10</sup> Thus Berkowitz's criticism that Nietzsche's genealogies "reduce the whole complex and multifarious moral past of mankind to two completing moralities" and that he paints "in black and white" (1993:81.cf.99) and Redding's claim that "Nietzsche is nothing if not extreme" (in Patton 1993:220) have much less purchase in the middle period. Nor is the "characteristic overstatement" that Genevieve Lloyd attributes to Nietzsche (1984:1) so pronounced in the middle period.

<sup>11</sup> Compare Tanner (in Nietzsche 1982:x-xi). A section in Human depicts "fettered spirits" and implicitly contrasts them with free ones (1986:109 #227). The many/few distinction grows stronger and fiercer throughout this period though, with the 'herd' epithet emerging in Science (1974:174-5#116,195-6 #149,202#174,206#195,258#328). However even there the distinction is sometimes expressed as minority versus majority (1974:76#2) or common versus noble (1974:77-8#3,107#40).

monolithic in this respect for Science has enjoyed considerable critical interest and Human has had more attention than Daybreak. Nor is there complete homogeneity across the three books in topics addressed nor treatment of them. Therefore, though frequently referring to the works of the middle period as though a single entity, this study tries to remain sensitive to any significant differences among the three.

Such general neglect of the middle period could help to explain why discussions of Nietzsche often proceed as if his oeuvre too were a monolith. Although there are continuities in his thought, many commentators seem impervious to the fact that he did not say quite the same thing all his life and blithely attribute what are actually the views of a specific period or text to 'Nietzsche' unqualified. However as even the above cursory survey of some of the defining features of the middle period evinces, this is problematic. One of the general themes to emerge from the present study is that this period was not a mere intermezzo between Tragedy and Zarathustra as del Caro (1989:158-9,161-2) and Dannhauser (1974:158) suggest. Nor is it simply a prelude to his later works as Donnellan claims (1982:xii). The middle period has an integrity and value that should be acknowledged if the force and fascination of Nietzsche's oeuvre are to be felt as fully as possible.

The shifting intellectual orientation marking the middle period coincided with, and seems to have been partly caused by, changes in Nietzsche's social life. Along with the 'push' factor of his deteriorating relationship with Richard Wagner and Cosima Wagner came the 'pull' of new friendships.<sup>12</sup> While teaching philology at Basel, Nietzsche got to know a young professor of theology, Franz Overbeck and Ida Overbeck, his wife. He

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<sup>12</sup> Thus Bruce Detwiler's claim that:

The most obvious explanation for the middle period would seem to be Nietzsche's break with his friend and mentor Richard Wagner ... (1990:182)

is overstated.

attended their soirées where the French moralists were read and discussed.<sup>13</sup> Another major stimulant of Nietzsche's interest in the moralists was Paul Rée, an independent scholar he became friends with during a sabbatical year in Italy.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> As Ida Overbeck recalls:

Nietzsche started speaking of his French authors ... La Rochefoucauld, whom he loved for his strict principles and as a man of passion and elegance who lived a full and rich life ... He loved the age of Louis XIV, and hated the Revolution. He resented that fact that Chamfort had associated with the men of the Revolution, and did not want his own name to be mentioned together with Chamfort's (Gilman 1987:112.cf. Andler 1920:1,155-6. Williams 1952:8. Donnellan 1982:1)

<sup>14</sup> According to Malwida von Meysenbug:

Rée preferred the French moralists and communicated this to Nietzsche too, who had perhaps already read them earlier but whose closer acquaintanceship with them certainly did not remain without influence on his later development and led him to express his thoughts in aphorisms ... (in Gilman 1987:84.cf.Kaufmann 1950:43. Williams 1952:31,38,43-4. Hayman 1980:197. Donnellan 1982:8-9.Bergmann 1987:110-11.Salomé 1988:62).

Attention to the role of Nietzsche's friends in stimulating his thought provides a useful complement to Pletsch's emphasis on mentor or father figures. For Pletsch figures like Schopenhauer, Wagner and Ritschl are central to the development of Nietzsche's thinking. However with people like Rée, Salomé and the Overbecks Nietzsche enjoyed a relationship that fostered his intellectual formation but was more equal and co-operative than most of the relationships Pletsch explores (1991:passim.cf.del Caro 1989:170). Pletsch does refer though to Nietzsche's friendship with Erwin Rohde and the stimulus it provided his thinking (1991:78-9).

The intellectual companionship provided by such friends and colleagues also makes Nietzsche's claims about the solitary nature of his intellectual endeavours seem melodramatic. This passage from the preface to Daybreak is characteristic:

he who proceeds on his own path in this fashion encounters no one; that is inherent in 'proceeding on one's own path.' No one comes along to help him; all the perils, accidents, malice and bad weather which assail him he has to tackle by himself. For his path is **his alone** - as is, of course, the bitterness and occasional ill-humour he feels at this 'his alone' ... (1982: 1#2 FN's emphasis.cf.1#1)

This was written after the middle period and is consistent with the argument below about 'the invention of invention' in the later works. While his life did become increasingly solitary, in this middle period Nietzsche enjoyed the company of several who were neither his teachers nor students but who could

The works of the middle period are explicit about Nietzsche's interest in and admiration for the moralists under examination. La Rochefoucauld is named several times (1986:31#35,31-2#36,38#50,71#133.1982:60#103.1974:178#122) and Chamfort twice (1986:362#214.1974:148-9#95). There are also references to the moralist tradition, to "La Rochefoucauld and others who think like him" (1982:60#103). Early in the second book of Human Nietzsche writes that:

Larochefoucauld and the other French masters of psychical examination ... are like skilful marksmen who again and again hit the bullseye - but it is the bullseye of human nature. Their skill evokes amazement ... (1986:32#37).

The relevance of the moralists to the innovations in Nietzsche's style is evident in Human's discussion of "Larochefoucauld or those related to him in style and spirit" which moves quickly into a (non-aphoristic) reflection on the effort required to perfect maxims (1986:31#35.cf.Williams 1952:61).

The most comprehensive statement of Nietzsche's admiration for our two French moralists comes in a remarkable passage in "The Wanderer and His Shadow". Because it is such a powerful vindication of the current study, it is worth citing at length. In "European Books" we read that:

When reading Montaigne, Larochefoucauld, La Bruyère, Fontenelle (especially the Dialogues des Morts), Vauvenargues and Chamfort we are closer to antiquity than in the case of any other group of six authors of any other nation. Through these six the **spirit of the final/centuries** of the **old** era has risen again - together they constitute

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provide intellectual challenges and support. He acknowledges this in a moving letter to Rée, providing a counterpoint to the passage just cited:

in my entire life I have not had as much pleasure as through our friendship during this year, not to speak of what I have learned from you. When I hear of your studies, my mouth waters with anticipation of your company; we have been created for an understanding of one another ... (19/11/1877 in Salomé 1988:61.cf.ibid.110)

Perhaps Pletsch's discussion of the myth of genius helps to explain the later Nietzsche's dramatization of the solitude of scholarship for it points out that part of the social construction of the genius as it emerged in eighteenth century Europe was of the lonely, outcast quester after truth (1991:86). Pletsch also notes, but only in passing, that this ethos did not permit co-operation with others in the growth of genius (1991:248.fn3). However such a role is accommodated in Nietzsche's reflections on friendship (Chapter Six).

an important link in the great, still continuing chain of the Renaissance. Their books are above all changes of national taste and philosophical colouring which as a rule every book nowadays radiates and has to radiate if it is to become famous: they contain more **real ideas** than all the books of the German philosophers put together: ideas of the kind that produce ideas and which - I am at a loss to finish the definition; it is enough that they seem to me authors who have written neither for children nor for dreamers, neither for young ladies nor for Christians, neither for Germans nor for - I am again at a loss to complete my list. - But to state a clear commendation: if they had been written in Greek the Greeks would have understood them ... what clarity and delicate precision those Frenchmen possess! Even the most acute-eared of the Greeks must have approved of this art, and one thing they would even have admired and adored, the French **wittiness** of expression: they **loved** such things very much without themselves being especially gifted in them. (1986:362/3#214.FN's emphasis)

The moralists have so won Nietzsche's admiration that not only are they compared to his beloved Greeks but as the final section indicates, surpass them in wit and style (cf.1974:136#82). The French moralists also represent a rebirth of the Renaissance, another era that Nietzsche held in high esteem, both because it revived antique values and introduced new ones that he applauded (cf.Detwiler 1990:41). Nietzsche also sees the moralists as transcending national boundaries which, as mentioned, is a feature much valued in the middle period.

Although he often complains about the limitations of language (1982:71 #115,76-77#120,84#133,145#257,150#277.1974:121-22#58,215#244)Nietzsche is rarely at a loss for words, yet cannot find terms adequate to convey his regard for these moralists. His inarticulacy would seem to be stronger testimony to his respect for their work than all his expressed praise. Nor can this speechlessness be dismissed as a function of insufficient time or thought, something scribbled in a notebook to be returned to and reworked, for Nietzsche published Human with these crucial admissions of where words fail.

While not all references to the moralist tradition name our moralists in this way, they can still be associated with such allusions. In "Assorted Opinion and Maxims" Nietzsche discusses Schopenhauer's (mis)use of pieces of the moralists' wisdom as grist to his own Will (1986:215#5). As Schopenhauer was a student of the French moralists, it could be that this is the tradition

invoked. Indeed some passages later Nietzsche refers to Schopenhauer's "real moralist genius" even though it did not always hit the target and he sometimes sided with "moral men" against the moralists (1986:222#33).<sup>15</sup>

Given Nietzsche's admiration and emulation of their writing style, the French moralists are probably among those alluded to when "A vanished preparation for art" asserts that to learn to "write well in a modern language ... one is compelled to send oneself to school with the older French writers" (1986:96#203.cf.239#113,333-4#94). It can be assumed that the moralists are in mind when "German virtue" describes "the reawakened spirit of Rome", especially given its proximity and similarity to the "European Books" passage cited above. One of the things the former discusses is:

that resurrection of the Stoicism of the greatest days of Rome through which the French have continued on in the worthiest way the task of the Renaissance. From a gloriously successful imitation of the forms of antiquity they went on to an imitation of its character: so that they will always have a right to the highest honours as the nation which has up to now given modern mankind its finest books and its finest men. (1986:365 #216.cf.1974:137#83)

It goes on to refer to "that French stimulus to greatness and consciousness of moral will" and "the French revivers of antiquity" (1986:365#216).<sup>16</sup>

Yet more broadly, at other times Nietzsche refers positively to the moralists' era, to France of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (1986:118 #250.1982:112-13#191,113-4#192,120#201.1974:137#83,204-5#188).<sup>17</sup> Even

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<sup>15</sup> However as Human's "Lamentation" makes clear, not all references to moralists invoke the moralists under study. This section nominates Pascal, Epictetus, Seneca and Plutarch as "great moralists" of the sort sadly lacking in the current era (1986:131-2#282).

<sup>16</sup> Kurt Weinberg refers to:

Nietzsche's frequent analogies between ancient Greece and the age of Louis XIV, his constant reiterations of the superiority of French seventeenth century civilisation over the barbarian dissolution of formal restraints in German art and literature since Lessing (in O'Flaherty 1976: 96.cf. Williams 1952:xiv).

<sup>17</sup> Nietzsche's acquaintances confirm this admiration. Resa von Schirnhöfer reports that:

He characterized the French culture of the seventeenth and eighteenth



a general reference to French culture can be read as invoking the moralist tradition when praising its writing style (1986:126#267) or analyses of morality (1982:114#193).

From Nietzsche's general and specific references to the French moralists we can discern not only that he admires this tradition but sees himself as perpetuating and improving it. Reference is made to "we moralists" (1986:325#60) and the implication is that the "moralists of today" who are "upbraided as immoralists" include him (1986:310#19). Sometimes he criticises earlier moralists (1986:310#19); at others he specifies the skills contemporary moralists need (1982:184#428).<sup>18</sup> That he also sees Rée's work in this light is clear in the passages of Human that name him or cite his Psychological Observations (1986:31#35,32#36) or On the Origin of the Moral Sensations (1986:33#37,712#133).<sup>19</sup>

Despite the works of the middle period being so amenable to association with the moralist tradition, little attention has been paid by the scholarly literature to this. Several writers refer to the importance of Nietzsche's affiliation with the moralists but only in passing (Brandes

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centuries to me as perfection in form, stylistic attitude, and distinction of manners, which radiated from courtly circles and found expression in social life (in Gilman 1987:154)

Meta von Salis-Marshlins recalls that:

for him, the first place was held by the French, both of the classical period and of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, especially the moralists, psychologists and novella-writers (in Gilman 1987:202)

More recently, Weinberg has observed that Nietzsche:

upholds the classical French civilisation of the seventeenth century as an exemplary combination of self-restraint, moderation, good taste and elegance - in language, thought, manners and art - which alone 'qualifies as "civilisation" (in O'Flaherty 1976:90).

However not all Nietzsche's references to this era are positive (1974:112#47).

<sup>18</sup> According to Ida Overbeck "Nietzsche at the time counted himself among those aristocratic moralists" (in Gilman 1987:112).

<sup>19</sup> Note how close Rée's title is to that of the second book of Human - "On the History of the Moral Sensations".

1909:55.Salomé 1988:62. Kaufmann in Nietzsche 1974:148,fn38,<sup>20</sup>178,fn15. Kunnas 1980:63.Hayman 1980:197.Nehamas 1985:14. del Caro 1989:163/4). Weinberg discusses their legacy for Nietzsche in a little more detail (in O'Flaherty 1976:89-108) as does Redding (in Patton 1993:209,210,212,221-22). The major work on the topic is Brendan Donnellan's Nietzsche and the French Moralists (1982). An earlier book, W.D. Williams' Nietzsche and the French (1952) deals with the moralists but only as part of a wider survey of the influence of modern French thought on Nietzsche's work and thus includes writers like Rousseau and Taine who are not part of the moralist tradition. Williams' work is also broader than Donnellan's because it considers the impact of this range of thinkers on Nietzsche's oeuvre. By contrast I follow Donnellan in examining a narrower band of Nietzsche's thought.

Of course French moralism is not exhausted by the two writers in focus here. Michel de Montaigne and Blaise Pascal are obviously important figures and as such receive considerable attention from Williams and Donnellan.<sup>21</sup> The present study, by contrast, devotes itself to Nietzsche's relationship with lesser known writers. Our moralists were not well known in Nietzsche's time and remain in relative obscurity although La Rochefoucauld is better known than Chamfort. Because this analysis is confined to Nietzsche's relationship with these two, it is more limited in scope than both Williams' and

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<sup>20</sup> Kaufmann gives incorrect information about Chamfort's death. It did not occur "a few days" (1974: 148fn38) after his attempted suicide. The moralist's latest biographer, Claude Arnaud, reports that he lived five months after failing to suicide (1992:256). Arnaud's account corroborates Jean Dagen's chronology which dates Chamfort's fear of a return to les Madelonnettes and consequent suicide attempt at 10.9. 1793 and his death at 13.4.1794 (in Chamfort 1968:14-15.cf.Katz 1968:39). Dousset explains that like many convents, les Madelonnettes became a prison during the Reign of Terror. It had been a convent for "femmes de mauvaise vie" (1943:199). Those for whom Chamfort is misogynist (Chapter Ten) might see some poetic justice in this.

<sup>21</sup> Donnellan devotes one of his three largest chapters to Montaigne and one to Pascal. Williams' book is divided chronologically and thematically rather than by thinker, but detailed discussions of Montaigne and Pascal recur. Andler also devotes a chapter of his discussion of Nietzsche's precursors to each of these French thinkers.

Donnellan's, for while the latter casts his net more narrowly than Williams, he devotes considerable space to Stendhal and some to figures like La Bruyère and Merrimée.

Moreover among those addressing Nietzsche's affiliation with the French moralists there is contention about the importance of the figures examined here. While Williams and Donnellan attribute considerable significance to La Rochefoucauld and maintain that he remains a powerful influence on Nietzsche,<sup>22</sup> Charles Andler (1920) a French commentator surveying Nietzsche's precursors, lends Chamfort as much weight as La Rochefoucauld. For Williams and Donnellan by contrast, Chamfort is of little relevance.<sup>23</sup>

Despite the work of Williams and Donnellan there is room for another exploration of Nietzsche's relationship to La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort. What Williams' work offers in breadth it lacks in depth, so while it provides the outlines for inquiry into the impact that reading these writers had on

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<sup>22</sup> Donnellan points out that La Rochefoucauld is cited in the Nachlass (1982:68) and Williams (1952:Part III) has a fuller discussion of the French thinker's role in Nietzsche's thought from Zarathustra onwards.

<sup>23</sup> For Williams "Andler somewhat exaggerates in placing Chamfort among the 'precursors' of Nietzsche's thought" (1952:88fn1). He contends that Chamfort's impact on the content of Nietzsche's thought was negligible, asserting (not demonstrating) that in reading Chamfort he encountered only the reflection of his own thoughts. He does, however, concede that Chamfort influenced Nietzsche's style (1952:86-7).

While Donnellan expends little energy discussing Chamfort's influence, his remarks suggest quite an important relationship. He points out that although Chamfort had an interest in exposing falsehood ~~he~~ was alive to the dangers of nihilism attending this, for the unrelenting pursuit of truth could expose a void (1982:108). Chamfort is also the first thinker discussed by Donnellan to address the question that becomes so central for Nietzsche - the philosopher's distinction. Chamfort portrays the philosopher as a proud, solitary figure who pursues truth fearlessly and unflinchingly yet is generally undervalued by society (1982:109-10). This image might have had made a considerable impact on Nietzsche (Chapter Eight) and also on Schopenhauer who read the moralists. Yet when Pletsch looks at the role such a portrait of genius played in Nietzsche's personal and intellectual development, although gesturing toward "other sources" (1991:88-9) he identifies the major source as Schopenhauer rather than Chamfort.

Nietzsche, no detailed study is made. The same may be said of Donnellan's book which, though restricting itself to the middle period, really only offers a preliminary survey of the topic - close textual analysis is not its brief: "It is not within the scope of this study to give a detailed analysis of Human, All Too Human" (1982:9). But my analysis of Nietzsche's relationship with the moralists does not just differ from these two in scope and detail. As it unfolds it challenges their readings of this relationship in several ways, questioning their claims about what Nietzsche derived substantively from these moralists, their discussions of the link between form and content in all three writers and their general depiction of the dynamics of Nietzsche's relationship with the moralists.

As mentioned, perusal of the works of the middle period shows that La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort are not the only thinkers named and spoken highly of.<sup>24</sup> In fact another distinguishing characteristic of this period is the relative frequency with which Nietzsche cites and praises other authors.<sup>25</sup> Zarathustra introduces a lasting rupture with this pattern. In its case the reasons are clear - it is not an overtly scholarly work and its poetic, lyrical quality would be threatened by direct discussions of other philosophers. For the works that follow however, with perhaps the exception of Ecce Homo, this explanation does not hold. Thus another feature of the middle period is Nietzsche's willingness to present himself as engaged with the wider European philosophical-cum-literary tradition and as having much to learn from some of its protagonists, even if these lessons are sometimes negative. In his later works, by contrast, Nietzsche presents his ideas as being much less dependent

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<sup>24</sup> As well as the gaggle of Greek and Roman thinkers and artists referred to, some of those praised, or cited in support or illustration of Nietzsche's arguments are:

Byron, Comte, Corneille, de Musset, Diderot, Fichte, Hegel, Kant, La Bruyère, Machiavelli, Pascal, Racine, Rousseau, Shakespeare, Schiller, Spinoza, Sterne, Swift and Voltaire.

<sup>25</sup> I claim this notwithstanding Tanner's observation that "names are conspicuously absent in Daybreak" (in Nietzsche 1982:xi). Moreover my concern is not just with the frequency of Nietzsche's references to post-Antiquity thinkers, but also the way he refers to them.

on philosophical forebears and more the product of his autonomous thought.

One way of considering the books of the middle period therefore is to read them as Nietzsche's dialogues with the dead - writings in which he develops his thoughts through imagined exchanges with these French thinkers. As indicated, I am not asserting that La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort are the only, nor even the most important of Nietzsche's deceased interlocutors.<sup>26</sup> They are, for one thing, ignored in the most explicit 'dialogues with the dead' passage at the conclusion of "Assorted Opinions and Maxims". "Descent into Hades" nominates four pairs of thinkers important to Nietzsche - "Epicurus and Montaigne, Goethe and Spinoza, Plato and Rousseau, Pascal and Schopenhauer" (1986:299#408). But *dramatis personae* aside, this passage indicates that Nietzsche thinks of himself as enjoying 'dialogues with the dead'; a conception further illustrated in Daybreak's "Living cheaply":

as a substitute for the living he [the thinker] has the dead, and even for friends he has a substitute: namely the best who have ever lived. (1982: 227#566)

This trope of communion with the dead features in Chamfort's work too. One of his 'Petits Dialogues Philosophiques' runs:

A.- Il faut vivre avec les vivants.

B.- Cela n'est pas vrai; il faut vivre avec les morts. (1968:351#XXIV)<sup>27</sup>

On a more personal note, Chamfort explains that:

Lorsque mon coeur a besoin d'attendrissement, je me rappelle la perte des amis que je n'ai plus, des femmes que la mort m'a ravies; j'habite leur cercueil, j'envoie mon âme errer autour de leurs. Hélas! je possède trois tombeaux. (1968:125#330)

However when it comes to considering Nietzsche's reading of La

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<sup>26</sup> If, as Harold Bloom suggests, Goethe is Nietzsche's grandfather, and Schopenhauer his father (1973:51), the French moralists might be thought of as uncles.

<sup>27</sup> As editor of this edition, Dagen has attached a note to "les morts" 'explaining' that "C'est-à-dire avec ses livres" (1968:351). While this interpretation suits my purposes, my next quotation from Chamfort's work suggests that 'les morts' could refer to dead friends rather than or as well as dead writers.

Roche foucauld and Chamfort as dialogues with the dead, there are difficulties in taking this phrase too literally, for these are not really dialogues. The French moralists' obvious inability to reply to Nietzsche's claims about them or to his views on the interests he shares with them means that the process lacks the reciprocity normally associated with dialogue. Moreover by the very fact of being such lively forces in Nietzsche's texts, these thinkers are not really dead - at least not from a philosophical standpoint. Nonetheless the phrase 'dialogues with the dead' captures the idea that these French thinkers appear in Nietzsche's texts as touchstones for his own ideas and arguments. And seeing him present himself as for or against the ideas of the moralists, we witness an important part of the process through which he becomes who he is (1986:125#263.1974:219#270,266#335) - or at least the he is for the middle period.

Fruitful as I hope it will prove, problems attend my 'dialogues with the dead' approach. Some are empirical. Although Nietzsche names La Roche foucauld and Chamfort in the middle period and sometimes specifies which of their works he knows,<sup>28</sup> this is not always the case. In the absence of full knowledge about which of the moralists' works he knew - and which editions - precise arguments about what he derived from them remain somewhat tenuous.

Other problems are broader, such as extrapolating from part to whole. The 'dialogues' argument assumes that these writers' impact on Nietzsche can be traced not only in the passages that mention or allude to them but that their

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<sup>28</sup> The first edition of La Roche foucauld's Sentences et maximes morales is quoted from in Human (1986:32#36) and another maxim cited but not referenced (1986:71#133). La Roche foucauld's Self-Portrait is also mentioned (1986:38#50).

I also sometimes cite letters by La Roche foucauld or Chamfort to illustrate points. As I have no evidence that Nietzsche read any of their correspondence my references to letters only illustrate claims already supported by each author's primary texts - no argument relies only on material from the correspondence. The same applies to Nietzsche. Despite Nehamas's claim that Nietzsche's letters "belong to his writing as surely as every one of his aphorisms" (1985:19) I confine discussion of his correspondence to the footnotes.

presence is more pervasive, that even when they are not invoked they exercise some hold on his thought. In matters of style this is not a problem as Nietzsche's use of maxims, anecdotes, caractères, petits dialogues and réflexions testifies to the moralists' presence. However when the aim is also to establish that Nietzsche's ideas on substantive matters were influenced by his acquaintance with the moralists, certain interpretive leaps are necessary and in some instances the basis for such inferences is stronger than others. But problems like this are endemic to interpretation and are only amplified by attempting to reconstruct how a writer interpreted other thinkers and how this affected their thought.<sup>29</sup>

One way of protecting the argument about the importance of Nietzsche's relationship with the moralists from such vulnerabilities is to shift the level of analysis. Hence this study operates at two levels. The first takes the direct, reconstructive, 'dialogues with the dead' approach. The second level of analysis is a form of 'reshelving' that differs from the 'dialogues' approach in not depending on a demonstration of Nietzsche's knowledge of the writers with whom he is now classified. Instead it is possible to slot a writer into a tradition on the basis of shared concerns identified from the outside and this requires no awareness on their part that ~~they are~~ <sup>they are</sup> sharing them and continuing a debate. This second level of analysis identifies a tradition 'in itself' while the first does so 'for itself'. As per Marx, the relevant distinction is whether members of a tradition are aware of their membership of a certain class of thinkers. However as the very idea of identifying a tradition 'in itself', from the outside intimates, in this enterprise, the force of the term 'tradition' changes somewhat. A tradition is more robust when all, most or some of its constituents share a sense of belonging to and developing it, even if in some

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<sup>29</sup> As Judith Shklar puts it:

Interpretation is an act of representation, of bringing an absent speaker into a discussion which occurs too late for him to join, but to which he has implicitly much to contribute (1984:228).

instances this is felt only vaguely or marginally.<sup>30</sup>

The French moralists do have some sense of being part of a wider debate. In the pair studied here, for example, La Rochefoucauld is cited by Chamfort (1968:54#14.206#685)<sup>31</sup> and Chamfort compares his age unfavourably with that of Louis XIV's France (1968:89#178), making a gesture that Nietzsche repeats. Nietzsche also follows Chamfort in presenting himself as part, but also critic of, the moralist tradition (1968:119#293). And as per Nietzsche, use of the aphorism associates Chamfort with La Rochefoucauld (cf. Kronenberger in Chamfort 1984:11).<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Although Bloom is, as far as I can understand, talking about a tradition 'for itself', reading is not central to his notion of tradition. Expounding his theory of influence, which claims Nietzsche (1973:8) as one of its sources, Bloom explains that for antithetical criticism:

the meaning of a poem can only be a poem, but another poem - a poem not itself. And not a poem chosen with total arbitrariness, but any central poem by an indubitable precursor, even if the ephebe never read that poem. Source study is wholly irrelevant here; we are dealing with primal words, but antithetical meanings, and an ephebe's best misinterpretations may well be of poems he has never read (1973:70).

<sup>31</sup> Chamfort's belief that La Rochefoucauld belongs to that group of moralists that only sees human nature from its odious and ridiculous side, that knows only the latrines and is ignorant of the palace (1968:54#14) is, as will be shown, too one-sided a representation of the older moralist's thought.

<sup>32</sup> Like the Nietzsche of the middle period, Chamfort also situates himself within western philosophy by frequently mentioning other thinkers. Among those cited in Chamfort (1968) are:

Aristotle (147#427), Arnaud (127#343), Augustine (187#597), Bacon (61#45, 168 #522), Bayle (83#167), Boileau (155#469,254 #905), Boyle (61#45), Cicero (56#23), D'Alembert (145#416,193#620,220#749,224#773,232#808, 233#813,245#864,260#935,266#965,304#1153,357#XLVII), Diderot (185#587, 233#816,244#860,248#879,#883,258#928,259#931,279#1043,302#1141,304 #1153,332#1280), Diogenes (77#123,112#277), Duclos (192-3#616,193#619, 243#857,265#956), Fontenelle (138#393,195#633,197#639,223#768,229#795, 256#917,258#925,269#937), Helevitius (224-25#774), Heraclitus (100#229), Horace (114#283), Jonson (279#1043), La Fontaine (154#466,155#469,226 #780,254#905), Locke (61#45,83#167), Lucretius (149#438) Milton (64#65, 278#1037), Moliere (155#469,225#777), Montaigne (98-9#222), Montesquieu (83#167,242#844), Pascal (127#343), Plato (151#447), Plutarch (79#140,183 #574), Pope (145#416,178#558), Racine (155#469,254#905,311#1196), Rousseau (79#140,114#284,145#416,214#725,223#765,222#759,258-9#928,312



The dominant interest of this dissertation is to locate Nietzsche in the moralist tradition in the first, strong, 'dialogues with the dead' way. A second level of analysis is introduced to buttress any weaknesses attending the primary argument, showing that even if there are instances when Nietzsche was not deliberately reproducing and expanding the moralist tradition, it is still illuminating to read him as one of its descendants.

Not only is Nietzsche not usually closely associated with the moralist tradition - either 'an' or 'für sich' - he is rarely located in any tradition of western thought beyond Antiquity.<sup>33</sup> As mentioned, he is often depicted as a sui generis thinker whose thoughts evolve out of his peculiar genius. If Nietzsche is seen to be debating earlier philosophers, it is usually to debunk them. The general impression seems to be that, in moving into the middle period and sloughing off Schopenhauer, Nietzsche freed himself of all debts to philosophical ancestors, with the obvious exception of Goethe.<sup>34</sup> Indeed this is an impression the later Nietzsche is anxious to create, referring in the 1886 Preface to "Assorted Opinions and Maxims" and "Wanderer" to "my first and only educator, the **great** Arthur Schopenhauer" (1986:209.FN's emphasis. RA's underlining). However even if Schopenhauer were no longer Nietzsche's

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#1199,338#1315), Seneca (61#43,106#260), Swift (145#416), Tacitus (119#293) and Voltaire (145#416,169#525,200-1#659,211#712,220#749,223-#766,234#818,245#868,259#929,308#1175,314#1214,316#1222). Some of his work is also amusingly self-referential, referring to a figure called Chamfort (1968:320#1248,#1249,#1250).

As this list indicates, La Rochefoucauld is not the only, nor the most important source for Chamfort either.

<sup>33</sup> Andler's pioneering work is a stark exception. While valuable in showing the breadth of Nietzsche's sources, in devoting whole chapters to writers like Fichte and Kleist it goes a little too far in the opposite direction, obscuring the discussion of Nietzsche's sources by overburdening it.

<sup>34</sup> For example, Pletsch 1991:13,94,209. An exception to this is Heller, who writes of Human that:

It is as if Nietzsche wanted to exchange at one point his earlier paternal model, Schopenhauer, by honouring Voltaire - an author frequently quoted by Schopenhauer - as his father's true father, and thus as his own grandfather (in O'Flaherty 1976:113).

educator, he remained an imagined interlocutor which is, after all, a non-tutulary form of education.

This impression of autogenesis is one that the later Nietzsche seems intent on creating by emphasizing his originality, his heroic overcoming of traditional notions, his exploration of new seas (1974:280#343). A stark illustration of this comes in Book Five of Science where "Morality as a problem" complains that:

up to now morality was no problem at all but, on the contrary, precisely that on which after all mistrust, discord, and contradiction one could agree ... I see nobody who ventured a **critique** of moral valuations; I miss even the slightest attempts of scientific curiosity, of the refined, experimental imagination of psychologists and historians that readily anticipates a problem ... (1974:284#354.FN's emphasis).<sup>35</sup>

This myth of the lonely pioneer is also evident in the 1886 Preface to Daybreak:

I tunnelled into the foundations, I commenced an investigation and digging out of an ancient **faith**, one upon which we philosophers have for a couple of millennia been accustomed to build as if upon the firmest of foundations ... I commenced to undermine our **faith** in morality (1982:2#1. FN's emphasis)

When the later Nietzsche does name names it is more often to denounce than to celebrate, or even differ politely from, them<sup>36</sup> and the dialogues of the middle period become monologues. In this shift we catch Nietzsche in the act

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<sup>35</sup> The paragraph ends with a fairly dismissive allusion to what appears to be Rée's work, which again puts this passage in dramatic contrast to the middle period's praise for Rée. Rée's importance for Nietzsche's thought in anything but a negative way is again denied in Genealogy (1956:152-3#IV,156#VII).

<sup>36</sup> Although Pletsch confines his study of Nietzsche's 'becoming a genius' to his early period, his analysis highlights the fact that this idea of wholly spontaneous creation, independent of external influences, is an important feature of the social construction of genius (1991:5,213). Thus Nietzsche's last period sees him still in the process of becoming a genius by creating this impression of relative autonomy. Such a long becoming becomes one so suspicious of being.

In Nietzsche Bloom finds one who "like Emerson, did not feel the chill of being darkened by a precursor's shadow" (1973:50). While I accept this as a description of the middle period, I think that Nietzsche's later works betray the 'anxiety of influence'.

of denying that earlier writers have contributed to his development in a way that contrasts markedly with the middle period's attestations of indebtedness to forebears. This process of covering his intellectual tracks can be thought of as 'the invention of invention', for Nietzsche is making himself over as an autarchic thinker. His success in generating this image of self-subsistence is evident in claims like del Caro's that:

What Nietzsche did more energetically and consistently than all thinkers before him ... was to reject the past. The alternative to the past is not a utopic future but a condition in the present in which constant polemic and ongoing rejection of the past is its own reward ... (1989: 181. cf. Haar in Allison 1985:6).<sup>37</sup>

While it could be that the later Nietzsche is quite the independent and individual thinker, I would suggest this is largely because we are held captive by the picture he draws of himself, his invention of himself as inventor rather than legatee. Yet this self-portrait of intellectual independence is missing in the middle period. This period's three works can be set within streams of western thought and as such readings are invited by Nietzsche's writings, this entails no distortion or convolution of their purpose. As will be demonstrated throughout this dissertation, one response to Nietzsche's invitation is to read his works in the light cast by the French moralists. As such the present study complements Berkowitz's general attempt to bring out the dialectic between innovation and tradition in Nietzsche's thought. As he sees it:

Nietzsche's radical intentions and ambitions are critically shaped and continuously nurtured by traditional ideas and hopes. Although it extends to the depths, one does not have to probe deeply to discover the traditional dimension of Nietzsche's thought; one need merely turn from the dominant opinions about Nietzsche to the richly textured

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<sup>37</sup> Berkowitz contends that this view of Nietzsche as innovator par excellence has hardened into "a dubious consensus" in current commentary:

An enormous body of scholarly writing has emerged that identifies Nietzsche as a revolutionary modern thinker, an authoritative critic of the basic assumptions and underlying ideas of Western thought, a prophet of human liberation, an intrepid explorer of uncharted new seas, a triumphant inventor of ineffable modes of thought and practice. These opinions ... have unfortunately rigidified into a new orthodoxy that has stifled appreciation of Nietzsche's aim and achievement. (1993:6)

surface of his writing (1993:8.cf.iii,10).<sup>38</sup>

On this question of tradition and innovation, examining Nietzsche's relationship with La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort is useful not just because it is an area generally under-worked by the secondary literature but because, as mentioned, these moralists' relative obscurity was a factor in Nietzsche's appreciation of them. Taking cues from important, insightful thinkers who had been largely overlooked enabled Nietzsche to present the works of his middle period as both traditional and innovative - the innovation that comes from discovering and developing a neglected tradition. This is evident in Human's question:

in all Europe, poverty in psychological observation is apparent through a hundred signs ... why is the richest and most inoffensive material for conversation neglected in this way? Why does one not even read the great masters of the psychological maxim any more? - for it ... is hard to find any educated person in Europe who has read Laroche foucauld or those related to him in style and spirit, and very much harder to find one who has read them and does not revile them (1986:31#35).<sup>39</sup>

(Compare 1986:362-3#214 which, as shown, claims that the moralists' works do not meet the requirements for contemporary recognition).<sup>40</sup> Here again we witness the Nietzsche of the middle period situating himself within a tradition, albeit a subordinate one, rather than disavowing or debunking tradition altogether.

Despite what could be inferred from the burden of this chapter, the

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<sup>38</sup> Berkowitz offers no close study of the works of the middle period however nor explains their exclusion. This provides further illustration of their general neglect in Nietzsche scholarship, as alluded to above.

<sup>39</sup> Merwin's claim that "In Nietzsche's time ... it is doubtful many people read Chamfort" (1992:12) supports this.

<sup>40</sup> The moralists' relative obscurity could have also consoled Nietzsche about the deafening silence which met the works of the middle period, especially after the attention paid to Tragedy. Ida Overbeck recalled that "he suffered very much ... because he was so little known and read" (in Gilman 1987:112).

dissertation's concern is not only to establish Nietzsche's descent from La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort but also to examine when and how he dissents from their views. To see how a thinker appropriates other thinkers we must look not just at the things adopted but also those left behind and speculate why certain ideas or themes might have been rejected or overlooked.<sup>41</sup> Looking in this way at what a writer jettisons can heighten appreciation of how they give themselves a distinct identity. It also affords some sense of what ideas were realistic, viable options for knowing the ideas available from other thinkers sheds some light on what was actively rejected or modified. Thus the study of intellectual sources illuminates the inclusions as well as the exclusions of an oeuvre, providing a clearer sense of the choices a thinker makes in becoming who they are. The process of reading, borrowing and discarding is a form of literary self-making where the raw materials are not just the thinker's immediate self but also the traditions available to them.<sup>42</sup>

But to demonstrate that a thinker belongs to or deviates from a tradition

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<sup>41</sup> While Donnellan sometimes comments in passing on the aspects of a thinker's thought passed over by Nietzsche (1982:xiii,105,111-13,117), he rarely speculates why. Describing, for example, some of the dimensions of Montaigne's thought that Nietzsche did not pick up on, he merely notes that he "conveniently ignored" (1982:36) them. In introducing his work, Donnellan expresses discomfort with his focus on what thinkers share, given that what defines them can be their difference (1982:xiii). But this is a non-issue if, as here, thinkers are simultaneously compared and contrasted. Williams is better than Donnellan at pointing to the parts of a thinker's oeuvre that were rejected by Nietzsche and at suggesting why Nietzsche might have done this.

<sup>42</sup> Bloom's general point that:

We need to stop thinking of any poet as an autonomous ego, however solipsistic the strongest poets may be. Every poet is a being caught up in a dialectical relationship (transference, repetition, error, communication) with another poet or poets (1973:91)  
is apposite here, even if the way I try to illustrate the relationship is not his.

need not imply that they are inferior, derivative, unoriginal or reactive.<sup>43</sup> While a binary opposition between tradition and innovation characterizes some conceptions of creation, it need not be assumed a priori. Indeed our inspection of one branch of Nietzsche's genealogy can increase awareness of his originality and creativity by bringing into focus the areas and ways in which he really did innovate. This replaces a gross sense of originality which sees each thought as created 'ex nihilo' with a limited but more refined enjoyment of Nietzsche's ability to adopt ideas and mark them with his indelibly personal impress. Less is more. Human's comments in "Belief in Inspiration", while not addressing the question of intellectual borrowing, are a propos:

the imagination of a good artist or thinker is productive continually, of good, bad and mediocre things, but his **power of judgement**, sharpened and practised to the highest degree, rejects, selects, knots together ... All the great artists have been great workers, inexhaustible not only in invention but also in rejecting, sifting, transforming, ordering. (1986:83#155.FN's emphasis).<sup>44</sup>

Before proceeding to consider in detail the concepts that Nietzsche took over and developed from the moralists, it is necessary to examine what his general approach to the moral life owes to their example, to see what happens when moral analysis moves from salon to civilisation.

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<sup>43</sup> As Bloom notes "poetic influence need not make poets less original" (1973:7).

<sup>44</sup> The works of the middle period continually reflect on what constitutes genius. This is possibly a consequence of Nietzsche's former relationship with Wagner but also stems from his wider interest in greatness.

Chapter Two  
From Salon to Civilization:  
Nietzsche's approach to morality

This chapter looks at Nietzsche's emergence as a genealogist of morals and considers the major characteristics and purposes of the middle period's analyses of moral life. This is compared with the approaches La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort take to morality and convergences and divergences between their approaches and Nietzsche's are discussed. Nietzsche's critique of free will, the role of aesthetics in ethics, the place of reason and the centrality of elite individuality are also considered and it is shown that aspects of the new morality Nietzsche adduces are derivable from some of the moralists' ideals.

The middle period can be thought of as Nietzsche's apprenticeship as a genealogist of morals for the evolution of moral designations is explored from several angles. Binding his various analyses of the history of morality is the claim that since the advent of Christianity, morality has essentially been a collective force quashing individuality. While sometimes conceding that collective dominance was necessary for societies to endure and prosper, Nietzsche believes that it can now be superseded, making room for an ethos which encourages those who can to expose and extend their strong individuality (1982:61#105,82#131.1974:175#117).

The last sentence of the first passage in Human's "Of First and Last Things", reveals Nietzsche's image of himself as valiantly opening up new vistas in studying the evolution of morality:

Mankind likes to put questions of origins and beginnings out of its mind: must one not be almost inhuman to detect in oneself a contrary inclination? (1986:12#1.cf.32#37)

Instead of questioning beginnings, most approaches to morality simply "glorify the origin", believing "that what stands at the beginning of all things is also what is most valuable and essential" (1986:302#3.cf.1982:30-31#44).

Nietzsche's investigations show the prudence of not scrutinising the source of moral evaluations, for the conclusion "pudenda origo" (1982:30#42)

surfaces repeatedly. His probings continually expose the mundane, venal and sometimes sordid beginnings of many of morality's loftiest claims:

How little moral would the world appear without forgetfulness! A poet could say that God has placed forgetfulness as a doorkeeper on the threshold of the temple of human dignity (1986:49#92.cf.51#96,73-4#137,76#141,179#489,232,#90,#91,382#285.1982:20#26,32#49,59#102,143#248.1974:114#49).<sup>1</sup>

But Nietzsche is not really urging shame at morality's past - indeed, one of his aims is to transcend standard practices of praise and blame (1986:27#28,29#34,41#56,57-59#107,58#107). Rather he is suggesting that many of the things that have made morality possible would be deemed shameful by that same morality (1986:117#246). Instead of engendering shame, he aims to highlight the blinkers, limitations and vulnerabilities of current moral frameworks.

Nietzsche assembles reminders about morality's past for two main purposes - the scholarly and the practical. The scholarly is simply the service of truth - he sees his histories as giving an honest account of how morality evolved. However despite the repeated paeans to truth in this middle period, its service is not the sole *raison d'être* of his enterprise. The second, related reason for his histories of morality is practical, being connected with his project of a transvaluation of values. Nietzsche seems to believe that exposing the undignified origins of much moral life and the limitations of moral frameworks will loosen the hold of existing values, making superior individuals more willing to entertain and experiment with new values (1974:253#319).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Compare La Rochefoucauld's point that "Ceux qui prisent trop leur noblesse ne prisent d'ordinaire pas assez ce qui en est l'origine" (1977:102 #17). However this is from the Liancourt manuscript and given the doubts about its authorship and the uncertainty of whether Nietzsche read it, no claim about him consciously developing this tenet can be made.

<sup>2</sup> However as Science notes, changing morality requires generating new values as well as discrediting old ones (1974:122#58). This practical orientation also means that Redding's claim that :

In his mature genealogy, Nietzsche is not interested in the origins of cultural phenomena like morality *per se*; rather his focus is the practical/transformation of culture - knowledge here is in the service of



However the virtues and values Nietzsche adduces are not entirely novel. Rather he appropriates certain traditional goods (cf. Honig 1993:46) but justifies them in a new way, hoping that individuals will come to feel differently about certain old values and value them for different reasons. In the middle period at least, it is not so much a transvaluation of values that Nietzsche aspires to as a transvaluation of the evaluation of values, which allows certain old goods to endure but to be esteemed for different reasons. This is apparent in a passage from "The Wanderer and His Shadow" speculating on what it will mean to be "Free of morality":

the individual virtues, moderation, justice, repose of soul, are not [in decline] - for when the conscious/mind has attained its highest degree of freedom it is involuntarily led to them and comes to recognise how **useful** they are (1986:361/2#212.FN's emphasis).<sup>3</sup>

This is also evident in Daybreak's "There are two kinds of deniers of morality" which distinguishes Nietzsche's approach to morality from La Rochefoucauld's and concludes that:

I do not deny - unless I am a fool - that many actions called immoral ought to be avoided and resisted, or that many called moral ought to be done and encouraged - but I think the one should be encouraged and the other avoided **for other reasons than hitherto**. We have to **learn to think differently** - in order at last, perhaps very late on, to attain even more: **to feel differently** (1982:60#103.FN's emphasis.cf.1986:27 #28.1974:186#132)

Thus one of the middle period's major criticisms of the moral life is Socratic - that it is lived without reflection and examination. In his middle

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a re-valuation of existing values (in Patton 1993:214/5)  
cannot be applied to his early genealogies, for these are interested in both.

<sup>3</sup> As such Donnellan's argument that:

there are underlying conventional aspects of morality which Nietzsche would have had to ignore assiduously to see in Chamfort a true predecessor of his own philosophy ... most of his [Chamfort's] remarks on the topics of vice, virtue and ethical values indicate that his method was predicated on a rigorous application of traditional moral and philosophical standards ... there is little to suggest his German admirer's complete revaluation of moral assumptions. (1982:112/13)  
is unpersuasive. Allegiance to traditional values is no impediment to being one of Nietzsche's forebears. Here Donnellan seems like many commentators, to exaggerate the extent of Nietzsche's moral innovation.

period Nietzsche sometimes advocates a rationalised morality, requiring that values be respected and actions admired for defensible reasons rather than through habit, custom or appeal to the divine. His is "a morality of rationality" (1986:322#45) and he expounds his ambition for a more rational moral life early in Science:

**the great majority of people lacks an intellectual conscience ...** Everybody looks at you with strange eyes and goes right on handling his scales, calling this good and that evil. Nobody even blushes when you intimate that their weights are underweight; nor do people feel outraged; they merely laugh at your doubts. I mean: **the great majority of people** does not consider it contemptible to believe this or that and to live accordingly, without first having given themselves an account of the final and most certain reasons pro and con ... what is goodheartedness, refinement or genius to me, when the person who has these virtues tolerates slack feelings in his faith and judgements and when he does not account **the desire for certainty** as his inmost craving and deepest distress - as that which separates the higher human beings from the lower (1974:76#2.FN's emphasis.cf.253#319.1982:97#149). <sup>4</sup>

A recurrent theme in Nietzsche's exposé is that much moral life, which is such a source of human pride and supposedly raises us above the animals, is actually based on something as inglorious and unreflective as habit (1982:25#34). For the individual to be moral simply requires following the rules laid down by the community without demur (1986:109#227,361#212.1982:10#9,18#19,59#101,61#105.1974:101-2#29). And familiarity breeds content. Because of its ease, acting habitually creates pleasure so that the individual is rewarded

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<sup>4</sup> Note the similarities between this and Science's account of the madman in the market place proclaiming the death of god (1974:181-2#125). On Nietzsche's continuation of Socratic practice, Dannhauser traces the shifts in the depiction of Socrates across Nietzsche's career, offering this as a microcosm for the wider changes and continuities in his thought. Dannhauser notes that "during the second stage of his development Nietzsche is most favourably disposed to Socrates". (1974:20) Nehamas offers a long discussion of Nietzsche's "ongoing, complicated, ambivalent, competitive" relationship with Socrates, but does not discuss the works of the middle period in this regard (1985:24-31). As the comparison with Socrates indicates, to argue that there are affiliations between Nietzsche's work and the moralist tradition does not exclude the possibility of his affiliation with other strands of western thought.

with a pleasing sensation in following the grooves of custom (1986:52#97,53 #99).<sup>5</sup> The pleasure comes to be associated with moral action and is then mistaken for its effect. Of course this is not how the individual experiences their moral life - they believe that they are acting for good, indeed elevated reasons. For Nietzsche though, the agent's self-understanding and experience of morality are insufficient to explain it and his further probing of what are taken to be moral motivations discloses collective interest.

As this suggests, attributing morality to custom relocates rather than resolves the problem of its genesis. To explain custom, Nietzsche posits the interest a group has in its preservation and expansion, so that the real source of morality becomes communal self-interest (1986:50#95,53#99,107#224,232 #89,318-19#34,320#40,321#44.1982:16#18,82-83#132,105#173.1974:73-4#1, 92-3#21,174#116,175#117,191#143,238#296,258#328). The precepts of custom can thus be seen as collective utility whose origins have been forgotten. This explains why moral values are hostile to real individuality for morality arises to keep the community alive and prosperous and believes it cannot afford deviations that might threaten these goals.

Thus by Nietzsche's account, any action that did not serve or that violated the common interest was given a moral hue and dubbed evil, rather than just being seen as sub-optimal, risky or imprudent (1986:34#39,51#96, 232#90,324#57.1982:10-11#9,59#98,83#132.1974:79#4). Of course the assumption is that, contrary to the liberal view, the individual is the servant of the community and not the community of the individual. But moral discourse masks such subordination, persuading individuals that they achieve their highest potential by acting in accordance with its rules. Nietzsche again deconstructs morality, for while much morality prides itself on being untainted

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<sup>5</sup> However Daybreak's "Metamorphosis of duties" notes that Kantian morality is an exception to this, never allowing the sense of duty to become customary, easy or familiar. Hence Nietzsche's conclusion that it contains a concealed "remnant of ascetic cruelty" (1982:163#339).

by considerations of utility, <sup>6</sup> he shows that utility, or at least that of the collective (which can differ from or be antithetical to some individuals') is at the core of moral evaluations.

However in telling his story about the evolution of moral designations, Nietzsche is not sanctioning a utilitarian conflation of what the community sees as useful with the morally correct (1986:109#227). Instead he points out that the new, which is seemingly threatening to the group and labelled evil, actually promotes its preservation in some instances (1986:107#224, 1974:73#1, 79#4). This suggests that what is nominally evil can sometimes be functional and thus, by the logic of enlightened collective interest, should be labelled good.<sup>7</sup>

Nietzsche aims to analyse morality from a standpoint beyond current conceptions of good and evil. One of the things we should learn to think and then feel differently about is the significance of free will in moral life. But Nietzsche's critique of free will derives from more than his insistence on the force of custom and habit. It also gives him a means of radically attacking prevailing moral and legal doctrines, for jurisprudence, Christian and Kantian ethics all assume that individuals choose to act morally, and from this comes their personal responsibility, dignity as individuals or hope for eternal happiness (1986:72#133, 226#51, 312-13#23, 314-5#28). Belief in free will also makes accountability possible - because actions are chosen, individuals are answerable. Defying the umbrella ethos of free will, Nietzsche rejects its corollary of answerability as firmly as the premise:

man can be made accountable for nothing, not for his nature, nor for his motives, nor for his actions, nor for the effects he produces ... the

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<sup>6</sup> Although as Daybreak observes:

Moral sensibilities are nowadays at such cross-purposes that to one man a morality is proved by its utility, while to another its utility refutes it (1982:138#230).

<sup>7</sup> To further turn the screw, Nietzsche points out that when new cultural forces meet strong resistance, this can strengthen them (1986:200-1#632 cf. 1982:113-4#192). Hence that which is nominally good, the bulwark of custom, can serve what it would dub evil, innovation, just as that originally dubbed 'evil' can end by contributing to community survival and thus become good.

history of the moral sensations is the history of an error, the error of accountability, which rests on the error of freedom of will (1986:34#39, cf.53 #99,57-8#107,230#78.1982:93#148.1974:169#110).

Conceding that the belief in free will has had some good consequences, Nietzsche depicts it as one of "the fundamental errors" that has served humanity's evolution (1986:306-7#12) and the growth of individuality (1974:175#117). However it should now be superannuated, rendered obsolete by "scientific study" (1986:79#144) (illustrating Chapter One's point that the middle period presents its views on psychology as part of the scientific tradition). Human also acknowledges that holding people responsible for their actions has some social utility for punishing those who damage the community deters others, just as rewarding useful acts encourages their emulation (1986:56-7#105). But this should not be confused with inherent moral responsibility or character - it should not be pretended that punishment and reward are practised for anything more than their demonstration effect (cf.1986:72#133, 314-5#28).<sup>8</sup> Daybreak suggests that Christianity has gone too far in the game of praise and blame, so that individuals are not only lauded for good action, but whatever happens to them is interpreted as desert, as return for their actions or intentions (1982:47-8#78,50#86).<sup>9</sup> Against this ubiquitous attribution of praise and blame, Nietzsche poses Antique conceptions of guilt and responsibility, pointing out that the Greeks believed in pure misfortune - things could befall a person without it being presumed that this was in some way

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<sup>8</sup> According to Donnellan this is an idea Nietzsche picked up from Rée (182b:604). However if action is not the product of free will, the notion of deterrence loses its bite.

<sup>9</sup> A noteworthy exception to this comes in Human's discussion of "[t]he fantasy of many Christian saints, [which] has been dirty to an uncommon degree", but:

by virtue of the theory that these desires are actually demons raging within them they [the saints] do not feel any very great sense of responsibility for this state of things; it is to this feeling that we owe the instructive candidness of their self-confessions (1986:76#141).

deserved.<sup>10</sup>

Nietzsche's alternative to free will is a belief in the original innocence of all actions (Chapter Four). For him action is based on compulsion or necessity rather than choice or calculation.<sup>11</sup> Actions discharge some vital, necessary force and in this they resemble natural forces, which move not out of any sense of right or wrong but simply because they must - doing so is part of what they are (1986:36#43,55#102,57-8#107,72#133,305#9).

Nietzsche also insists that any action is the outcome of a web of dependencies - history, drives, motivations, opportunities and circumstance (1986:45#70,305-6#10,306#11,314-5#28,325#61.1982:81#130), so that isolating causality, as doctrines of free will do, is even more problematic (1986:22#18) as is attributing personal responsibility. The sense of agency that the belief in free will is based on derives from feeling independent but Nietzsche points out that this can be illusory; ignorance of dependence does not negate it (1986:306#10.1982:78#125).

Nonetheless faith in free will is widespread; people assume that freedom is their elemental condition and bondage aberrant (1986:21#18). This belief also appeals to human vanity, which helps to explain why challenges to free will's supremacy in moral life meet such resistance (1986:226#50.306#12.1982:80-2#130).<sup>12</sup> The assumption of free will is also obdurate because of the way it is structured into language and because it has seeped beyond the ethical into other realms, so that metaphysics presupposes the possibility of isolating

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<sup>10</sup> The way Christianity engenders guilt becomes a major concern in Nietzsche's Genealogy.

<sup>11</sup> However at times he suggests that inferior humans calculate (1986:109#227.1982:167#360.1974:77#3), so that in some cases this point about the compulsive nature of action applies to all actors and at others only to noble ones.

<sup>12</sup> This lends weight to my claim (Chapter Four) that the term vanity is, for the most part, used differently from that of egoism in the middle period. Were vanity universal like egoism, the belief in free will would be insuperable. If, in turn, Nietzsche believed this, the considerable energy he expends arguing against free will would be in vain.

drives and attributing causes and treats free will as an ontological condition.

In mounting his broad challenge to the bases of conventional moral judgements, Nietzsche is, in important respects, following La Rochefoucauld for the French writer also tacitly shares Socrates' mission of upsetting society's complacency about its moral judgements. The moralist complains that "Tout le monde se plaint de sa mémoire, et personne ne se plaint de son jugement" (1977:53#89), insisting that a fundamental flaw in much moral evaluation is its simple faith in appearances, its acceptance that moral life is what it seems, and that a person can justly be praised or blamed for their behaviour (cf. Hauterive 1914:25-6. Gosse 1918:40). Much of the Maximes is dedicated to disclosing the naivete of this, to showing that "Le monde récompense plus souvent les apparences du mérite que le mérite même (1977:59#166.cf.95-6 #34). This work continually reveals that morality can be much more, much less or the exact opposite of what it seems, and highlights the difficulty of locating 'le mérite même'. One reason La Rochefoucauld reiterates these themes is that convincing people of the deceptiveness of appearances and the superficiality of assessments based thereon is not easy: "nous ne croyons pas aisément ce qui est au-delà de ce que nous voyons" (1977:69#265).

The inadequacy of judging moral life from appearances is evidenced time and again in the Maximes in various ways, by claims that illustrate how complex and multi-faceted the moral world is (James 1969:360). For La Rochefoucauld most things are pluri-causal so that drawing inferences about motivations, and thus what is morally praise- or blameworthy, from apparently moral outcomes is dubious.<sup>13</sup> "La vanité, la honte, et surtout le tempérament, font souvent la valeur des hommes, et la vertu des femmes" (1977:64#220).

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<sup>13</sup> Hauterive claims that:

Le moraliste revient sans cesse à cette idée que nous ne pouvons savoir le mobile précis des actions humaines; que juger les hommes d'après leur mérite ou d'après leur succès est impossible, puisque tout dépend des passions ou du hasard. On ne peut donc pas admirer; il ne faut pas admirer. (1914:183).

However I reject the conclusions he draws from this and argue that all does not depend on the passions or fortune and that there are actions that La Rochefoucauld deems laudable.

What is nominally the same action or quality in different people can derive from different impulses in each:

L'amour de la gloire, la crainte de la honte, le dessein de faire fortune, le désir de rendre notre vie commode et agréable, et l'envie d'abaisser les autres, sont souvent les causes de cette valeur si célèbre parmi les hommes (1977:63#213.cf.#215,95#24)<sup>14</sup>

Conversely, an apparently single motivation can manifest itself in various ways:

L'avarice produit souvent des effets contraires; il y a un nombre infini des gens qui sacrifient tout leur bien à des espérances douteuses et éloignées, d'autres méprisent de grands avantages à venir pour de petits intérêts présents (1977:87#492)

Similarly:

Il y a diverses sortes de curiosité: l'une d'intêret, qui nous porte à désirer d'apprendre ce qui nous peut être utile, et l'autre d'orgueil, qui vient du désir de savoir ce que les autres ignorent (1977:59#173.cf.65-6#233).

As can be inferred from the maxims about curiosity and bravery, within an individual, action can be produced by a complex of competing urges and interests, so that a pure drive or motive is rare indeed and even disentangling the various impulses that give rise to action is difficult. As explored in the following chapters, the works of Nietzsche's middle period evince similar sensitivity to the knottness of moral life, to the fact that "several paths and motives can lead to the same action" (1986:42#58), that some of these are non-moral (1986:49#92,138#313,289#326,327#70,393#346), that the gulf between professed and actual motivation can be wide (1986:191#596) and that this can derive from the actor misunderstanding their own motives (1986:317-8#33) as much as from the desire to deceive. A major contention of this dissertation is that this sensibility was shaped by his reading of the French moralists,

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<sup>14</sup> As Moore puts it, La Rochefoucauld reveals that:

There are many factors in what we dismiss as a single quality. Our names for the virtues are in fact umbrella-words. We think we are describing one thing, but what we speak of is in fact an amalgam (1969:33.cf.34).



especially La Rochefoucauld.<sup>15</sup> As Daybreak exclaims:

Actions are **never** what they appear to us to be! We have expended so much labour on learning that external things are not as they appear to us to be - very well! the case is the same with the inner world! Moral actions are in reality 'something other than that' - more we cannot say, and all actions are essentially unknown (1982:72#116.FN's emphasis).<sup>16</sup>

As indicated, one reason for La Rochefoucauld's critique of the role of appearances in moral evaluation is that they are often deceptive and unrepresentative.<sup>17</sup> "Nous aurions souvent honte de nos plus belles actions si le monde voyait tous les motifs qui les produisent" (1977:80#409.cf.59#170) - a variation of Nietzsche's 'pudenda origo' refrain. Another of La Rochefoucauld's arguments against focusing on appearances is the danger of

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<sup>15</sup> Compare Williams who writes that for La Rochefoucauld:

personal integrity is a shifting balance of forces, unconscious impulses at war with each other, and coming to consciousness dressed up in the deceptive clothes of ideal and virtues and disinterested nobility. Our good is always mixed with bad, our wisdom always mixed with 'folie', our egoism always bars the way for our impulse to sincerity and self-knowledge. All these ideas stream into Nietzsche's mind from La Rochefoucauld (1952:175).

Donnellan also notes that La Rochefoucauld and other moralists show humans' lack of insight into their own motives (1982b:597)

<sup>16</sup> That the sort of moralism Nietzsche and La Rochefoucauld practice had been or could be accused of reductionism is apparent in Human's "Objection" (1986:32#36). My emphasis on their attunement to the multifarious quality of moral life is at odds with Donnellan's detection of reductionism in this period. He writes that Nietzsche's:

method of psychological analysis at this new stage of his work, reducing every aspect of human behaviour to a basic motive often disturbingly at variance with the conscious one, obviously owes much to La Rochefoucauld and his school (1982:xi.cf.Donnellan 1982b:598)

and later that:

Nowhere is the influence of the French on Nietzsche's middle period more apparent than in his adoption of La Rochefoucauld's reductionist methods of moral analysis ... (1982:70)

While La Rochefoucauld does attribute most things to amour-propre, the variety of its manifestations (below and Chapter Four) frees his analysis from the predictability and monochromism of most reductionism.

<sup>17</sup> Often but not always. La Rochefoucauld suggests that personal appearance can be telling (1977:67#249).

surfaces becoming morality's sole concern, until all that matters is seeming virtuous. The preoccupation with appearing virtuous can spawn hypocrisy and self-deception for the former is concerned with appearing virtuous to others (1977:64#218,65-6#233,86#489) and the latter to the self (1977:125) while both are indifferent to or ignorant of the difficulty of acting in a genuinely moral way. La Rochefoucauld suggests that hypocrisy can breed self-deception for hypocrites become so accustomed to pretense that they eventually forget it is feigned: "Nous sommes si accoutumés à nous déguiser aux autres qu'enfin nous nous déguisons à nous-mêmes" (1977:55#119.cf.77#373, Schabert 1986: 74)

However the moralist goes further and attacks moral evaluations at their foundation, contending that the very separation of vice from virtue is tenuous for vice is hard to escape:

les vices nous attendent dans le cours de la vie comme des hôtes chez qui il faut successivement loger; et je doute que l'expérience nous les fît éviter s'il nous était permis de faire deux fois le même chemin (1977:61#191).

Prevalence becomes ubiquity in the claim that action is compounded of vice and virtue:

Les vices entrent dans la composition des vertus comme les poisons entrent dans la composition des remèdes. La prudence les assemble et les tempère, et elle s'en sert utilement contre les maux de la vie (1977:60#182)<sup>18</sup>

As this point about the shaping power of prudence indicates, pointing to vice's prevalence does not entail helplessness in the face of it,<sup>19</sup> although as La Rochefoucauld suggests, vice can be overpowered not just by virtue but by

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<sup>18</sup> Lewis makes an interesting point, observing that for the moralist: vice clearly holds a more fundamental ontological position than virtue, if only because - as the basic fact of "moral life" - it is never thrown into question. Virtue may consist of vice in disguise, but not vice versa, and only vice is represented as an inevitable experience of life (1977: 128/9).

<sup>19</sup> According to Hippeau: la faculté qu'il charge d'opérer cette synthèse en assemblant et temperant les vices n'est pas la Raison chère aux stoiciens, mais la Prudence (1967:84).

other vices: "Ce qui nous empêche souvent de nous abandonner à un seul vice est que nous en avons plusieurs" (1977:62#195). Here again the complexity of moral life and the insufficiency of assuming causes from outcomes are evident.

Although La Rochefoucauld does not mount an explicit critique of free will, one of his major purposes is to point to the constraints on free action and to dispel the idea that seemingly moral outcomes are always chosen. "Quand les vices nous quittent, nous nous flattons de la créance que c'est nous qui les quittons" (1977:61#192). "Si nous résistons à nos passions, c'est plus par leur faiblesse que par notre force" (1977:55#122). At a general level, two of the major forces influencing action are nature and fortune. Nature furnishes individuals with certain strengths and qualities (1977:61#189) and fortune the opportunity to realise them: "La nature fait le mérite et la fortune le met en oeuvre" (1977:58#153.cf.49#53,#XIV128). The twists of fortune can also disclose hidden qualities, both to the self and to others (1977:75#344,#345,78 #380.cf.Nietzsche 1986:224#36). The moralist further suggests that fortune can shape as well as illuminate virtues, it can be a vehicle for self-improvement as well as self-discovery: "La fortune nous corrige de plusieurs défauts que la raison ne saurait corriger" (1977:58#154). However, fortune elevates some to positions for which nature has not supplied the personal qualities and in most cases the incongruence between person and position is insurmountable. Such individuals remain ill-suited to their new situation and incapable of appearing natural (1977:83#449).<sup>20</sup>

At the individual level, humours, interest, self-love and passion must be added to the list of forces beyond our control that influence outcomes: "Le bonheur et le malheur des hommes ne dépend pas moins de leur humeur que de la fortune" (1977:50#61). Interest can overpower or engulf virtue (1977:59 #171,70#275) or, like fortune, be its vehicle, as it can for vice: "L'intérêt met en oeuvre toutes sortes de vertus et vices" (1977:68#253). Thus "L'intérêt que l'on accuse de tous nos crimes mérite souvent d'être loué de nos bonnes

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<sup>20</sup> This could be directed at the nouveaux nobles who were entering the French aristocracy at the time of La Rochefoucauld's writing. See Chapters Seven and Ten for further references to this.

actions" (1977:72#304). Like self-love (Chapter Four), interest works in myriad ways, taking different and sometimes conflicting guises (1977:48#39,#40).

The power of the passions is also established early in La Rochefoucauld's work:

Il y a dans le coeur humain une génération perpétuelle de passions, en sorte que la ruine de l'une est presque toujours l'établissement d'une autre (1977:46#9).

as is our relative helplessness toward them: "La durée de nos passions ne dépend pas plus de nous que la durée de notre vie" (1977:45#5,cf.#7,81#422). Concealing them is also difficult, for their strength means that the passions "paraissent toujours au travers de ces voiles" (1977:46#12).

While recognising the play of these forces is a necessary step in their husbandry and our self-knowledge - "Il s'en faut bien que nous connaissions tout ce que nos passions nous font faire" (1977:84#460) - it is not a sufficient one for these forces are protean and elusive. As La Rochefoucauld notes, the humours' caprice "est encore plus bizarre que celui de la fortune" (1977:49#45). Their power and autonomy are more fully depicted further on:

Les humeurs du corps ont un cours ordinaire et réglé, qui meut et qui tourne imperceptiblement notre volonté; elles roulent ensemble et exercent successivement un empire secret en nous: de sorte qu'elles ont une part considérable à toutes nos actions, sans que nous le puissions connaître (1977:72#297).

The passions too can take diverse and deceptive forms (1977:46#11), so that yielding to them, even when they seem reasonable, can be perilous (1977:46#9).

Along with these forces effecting individuals comes 'la paresse' - laziness or inertia. Laziness can join or struggle against other passions in (over) determining action<sup>21</sup> and the moralist suggests that the individual's

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<sup>21</sup> La Rochefoucauld's portrayal of 'la paresse' battling other passions illustrates Hirschmann's claim that in the seventeenth century the soul was conceived of as a battleground for the struggle of vice with vice as well as with virtue. He argues that "the idea arose ... at opposite ends of the thought and personality spectrum of the seventeenth century: Bacon and Spinoza" (1977 21.cf.40-41) but makes no mention of La Rochefoucauld, even though he refers to the French moralist elsewhere (1977:11,15).

power over 'la paresse' is minimal. This is due to its presence as "la plus ardente et la plus maligne" (1977:97#54) of passions and to its absence, for it is the passion "la plus inconnue" whose harm is "insensible" and "très caché" (1977:97#54):

le repos de la paresse est un charme secret de l'âme qui suspend soudainement les plus/ardentes poursuites et les plus opiniâtres résolutions ... (1977:97/8#54).

La paresse, toute languissante qu'elle est, ne laisse pas d'en [les violentes passions] être souvent la maîtresse; elle usurpe sur tous les desseins et sur toutes les actions de la vie; elle y détruit et y consume insensiblement les passions et les vertus (1977:69#266.cf.79#398,86 #487)

It can be inferred that 'la paresse' is the source of the weakness that threatens virtue (1977:83#445) and which can give rise to vice (1977:55#120, 86#482).<sup>22</sup> However in characteristic fashion, La Rochefoucauld indicates that weakness can also be the source of virtuous action (or inaction), although this is often unjustly attributed to goodness (1977:59#169,66#237,86#479,#481). This highlights further the challenge that his depiction of the messiness of moral life poses to conventional practices of praise and blame.<sup>23</sup> The good conduct of many older people, for example, derives from incapacity rather than virtue and so should not be praised (1977:53#93). La Rochefoucauld insists that only those capable of vice should be lauded for their virtue, for only their

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<sup>22</sup> Jean Starobinski attributes great significance to the role of 'la paresse' in the moralist's thought and this is in line with his argument about the moralist's ethic of force (Chapter Eight). As he puts it "lorsque la force devient un valeur suprême, la faiblesse prend figure de faute capitale" (1966: 29) Inertia's importance is one of the few things E.D.James agrees with in Starobinski's analysis (1969:353). However Starobinski ignores that 'la paresse' can have good outcomes - he mentions it only as a source of vice.

<sup>23</sup> This also suggests that Nisard's view that in La Rochefoucauld's work as in that of Pascal, La Bruyère and Nicole that:

les passions y sont traitées en suspectes. L'autorité de ces grands moralistes est surtout dans l'unanimité de leur défiance contre les passions ... (1896:302)

is exaggerated.

good behaviour is chosen (1977:66#237).<sup>24</sup>

So, because La Rochefoucauld presents all these factors - fortune, nature, the humours, the passions, interest and self-love - as affecting action and inaction, isolating which one or combination is active at any time is difficult. This, plus their strength, mutability and evasiveness means that the power an individual has to act freely is limited indeed: "Toutes nos qualités sont incertaines et douteuses en bien comme en mal, et elles sont presque toutes à la merci des occasions" (1977:85#470). "Quoique les hommes se flattent de leurs grandes actions, elles ne sont pas souvent les effets d'un grand dessein, mais des effets du hasard" (1977:50#57.cf.50#58). "L'homme croit souvent se conduire lorsqu'il est conduit" (1977:49#43.cf.60#177). All this suggests that Nietzsche descends from La Rochefoucauld in contending that traditional notions of praise and blame for moral outcomes, of responsibility and accountability, require severe reconsideration.

Given La Rochefoucauld's powerful depiction of the web of dependencies constraining free action and the difficulty of identifying with certainty, let alone mastering, the many forces affecting us, Nietzsche's rejection of free will could have been nourished by reading the moralist's views.<sup>25</sup> Ironically however, this could also mean that Nietzsche's attack on this religious notion is fuelled by a religious position, for despite the minimal references to the transcendent in Maximes,<sup>26</sup> one way of reading its sustained

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<sup>24</sup> As James notes, there is a sense in the moralist's work of virtue as conquest - actions are more virtuous when we struggle against adverse inclinations to perform them. He compares this with Kant (1969:353).

<sup>25</sup> According to Starobinski, for La Rochefoucauld man's greatest fault is believing he is free (1966:23).

<sup>26</sup> The only religious references in first edition of the Maximes, which Nietzsche knew, are to humility as a Christian virtue (1977:76#358) and "la Providence" (1977:96#39) although this maxim was edited out of the later editions. The preface of the first edition also claims that it is compatible with the views of the Church fathers (1977:153-4).

Most of the other religious references appear in the Liancourt manuscript, but it is not certain that La Rochefoucauld authored this nor that Nietzsche read it. This manuscript refers to the devil (1977:102#13) and God

attack on the belief in individual freedom is as a variant of the Jansenist position, which makes humans basically powerless and dependent on grace for their goodness.<sup>27</sup> As this reference to Jansenism signals, Pascal is another obvious source of Nietzsche's critique of free will yet La Rochefoucauld would have been a more attractive forebear given that the religious inspiration for his attack on free will is less obvious than Pascal's.<sup>28</sup> Moreover La

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(103#22) and alludes to the Fall (102#10,103#22). God is also named in the supplement to the 1693 edition (1977:104#38).

<sup>27</sup> Noting that La Rochefoucauld's work was influenced by Jansenism (1948:78), Benichou writes that:

Les jansenistes pensaient que le salut de l'homme depuis le péché d'Adam et la chute ne peut resulter que d'une faveur gratuite de Dieu, et non de l'effort humain, aussi incapable d'obtenir par lui-même la grace que d'y resister; penser autrement c'était mettre l'homme au/niveau de Dieu et rendre inutile la venue et les souffrances du Christ, en attribuant à la creature le pouvoir de se sauver seule (1948:78)

As Bordeau notes:

Non plus ... que Port-Royal, La Rochefoucauld n'admet le libre arbitre ... il refuse à l'homme la direction spontanée de ses actes, il donne la prépondérance aux passions, aux emotions involontaires sur l'intelligence et sur la raison (1895:104.cf.Hauterive,1914:111).

He adds later that:

en niant la liberté humaine, il flattait les Jansenistes, aussi certain messieurs de Port-Royal approuverent fort les Maximes (1895:125).

<sup>28</sup> For more on Nietzsche's relationship to Pascal, see Donnellan (1982:38-64,136-41), Andler (1920) and Williams (1952).

Whether there is a religious dimension to the moralist's thought has long been debated. Prevost-Paradol, for example, sees him as "respectueux envers la religion" and as assuming human corruption since the Fall. He takes the moralist's prefatory reference to the fathers of the Church seriously (1895:142-3) and cites approvingly the view of one of the moralist's (unnamed) contemporaries that "les chrétiens commencent ou votre philosophie finit" (1895:144). Bordeau echoes this, depicting the Jansenist view of original sin as part of the background to the Maximes (1895:103-4). Hauterive, while noting the absence of explicit religious references (1914:17-21), agrees that a Jansenist view is one of the things underlying the moralist's approach to morality (1914:111-12,124.cf. Gosse 1918:27-8.Krailsheimer 1962:85.Levi 1964:203.Schabert 1986:70). Hauterive's point provides a useful corrective to Donnellan's 'content analysis' approach to religion in the moralist's work, allowing him to infer that La Rochefoucauld's "concern with religion is only nominal; no mention is made of God or Christianity." (1982:89) Hauterive

Roche foucauld offers a secular response to the web of dependency constraining action, advancing things like taste and bodily rather than divine grace as responses to it.<sup>29</sup>

As this intimates, while La Roche foucauld highlights the impediments to free action he does not conclude that individuals are powerless to shape their deeds. "La fortune et l'humeur gouvernent le monde" (1977:82#435) but not tyrannically; they are not entirely unresponsive to pressures individuals exert. This is evident in the above reference to prudence, and elsewhere La Roche foucauld advises that "Un habile homme doit régler le rang de ses intérêts et les conduire chacun dans son ordre" (1977:51#66), evincing some

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concludes that La Roche foucauld was "plutôt sans religion que contre la religion" (1914:121) and that he suppressed his religious references to win favour with the epicuriens (1914:162).

Christine Liebich rejects this consensus, arguing that the moralist's assimilation to Jansenism is forced (1982:9). She attributes the coherence of his thought to its worldly rather than its Augustinien aspects (1982:10,257-8). Similarly Vivien Thweatt acknowledges that Jansenism was important in shaping the moralist's ideas (1980:17) but does not conclude that he concurred fully with it (1980:67-8). For present purposes, the precise role of religion in the moralist's outlook need not be decided - all that matters is that religion is less obviously a factor in La Roche foucauld than in Pascal.

<sup>29</sup> Starobinski refers to La Roche foucauld's "restauration esthétique de la nature humaine" (1966:225.cf.Tocanne 1978:243.Westgate 1968:72.cf.77-8). As Fine notes:

While La Roche foucauld may seem to profess a perspective which is not too far removed from Pascal's, his writings do not illustrate the all-important spiritual leap from the deep realisation of man's sorry lot to the need for divine salvation (1974:18.cf.14).

This is echoed by Thweatt:

La Roche foucauld paints a portrait of seventeenth century man as he sees him in his earthly pursuits, while Pascal portrays man in the light of the eternal. La Roche foucauld's area of inquiry is limited to what Pascal calls the cupidinous or concupiscent world ... (1980:88).

According to Hippeau, La Roche foucauld's explicit worldly focus brings him closer to the Epicuriens than to the Jansenists:

tandis que les chrétiens espèrent pour triompher des défaillances fatales de la nature corrompue, les epicuriens essaient, par des moyens purement humains, de tirer du mal quelque bien. Ils tentent d'aménager eux-mêmes le monde à leur profit, comme s'il n'y avait pas à compter sur Dieu et deviennent les négateurs plus ou moins conscients et plus ou moins avoués de toute religion (1967:9).



belief in agency. Such belief is also apparent in his claim that "Il faut ... que la raison nous fasse ménagers de notre bien et de notre confiance" (1977:77 #365). His catalogue of the intrinsic and extrinsic forces shaping action does not therefore amount to an argument for impotence - instead he advises that, as far as possible, these forces be recognised and husbanded - or rather this is what superior individuals should strive for.<sup>30</sup> In the case of an adventitious factor like fortune, "Il n'y a pas d'accidents si malheureux dont les habiles gens ne tirent quelque avantage" (1977:50#59). While elsewhere he says that a little madness is sometimes needed to master fortune (1977:73#310), these claims can be reconciled, for as some degree of 'folie' is inescapable (1977:62#207), a superior person will be capable of this (cf. Lewis 1977:127). The claim that "Pour être un grand homme, il faut savoir profiter de toute sa fortune" (1977:75#343.cf.83-4#453) is further proof that, pace Hauterive (1914:111) and sometimes Starobinski (1966:23,24,32)<sup>31</sup> not all humans are

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<sup>30</sup> I also disagree with Clark's appraisal that:

Almost all the authors in the genre of treatises on the passions that flourished in seventeenth century France proposed at least some method of controlling them, either by repressing them or by channelling them to effective use. La Rochefoucauld is distinctive in his persistent depiction of the passions, love included, as being beyond human control (in Margitich et Wells 1987:252).

Sutcliffe similarly discerns an argument for impotence in La Rochefoucauld, seeing him as arguing that:

Man is not free. He is subject to the laws of a rigorous determinism and to the vagaries of chance ... he is conditioned by his temperament, the source of his passions, and by the situation created by circumstances which are constantly changing (1966-67:234).

However at the conclusion of his article Sutcliffe concedes that:

the hero remains possible, remains present in the maxims, the hero whose energy, whose virtue gives the lie to determinism and breaks the mechanisms of chance. It is a moral rather than an intellectual force (1966-67:241).

His ultimate position then resembles that advanced here - that superior individuals are capable of husbanding the forces that constitute them. (Chapter Eight discusses the role of heroism in La Rochefoucauld's thought.)

<sup>31</sup> As Hippeau argues, the moralist:

réserve un rôle à la liberté. Il décele donc simplement ... les tendances secrètes qui/gênent l'exercice de la raison, qui la trompent, qui font d'elle, non plus une faculté autonome (1967:80/1).

utterly helpless in the face of fortune.<sup>32</sup> A later aphorism is explicit about the room to manoeuvre with fortune:

Il faut gouverner la fortune comme la santé: en jouir quand elle est bonne, prendre patience quand elle est mauvaise, et ne faire jamais de grand remède sans un extrême sans un extrême besoin (1977:79#392).

In fine then, La Rochefoucauld's analysis of the moral life is characterised by a number of elements that resonate in Nietzsche's approach. These include a critique of the faith in appearances as naive and an insistence on the complicity and the complexity of the forces that contribute to seemingly moral outcomes. La Rochefoucauld is also cognisant of the web of dependencies that constrains action and for all these reasons is cautious about imputing moral accountability to individuals. However the moralist does not conclude from this the individuals are helpless; rather he recommends that superior types strive to identify and husband the internal and external forces that move them.<sup>33</sup>

Nietzsche's repudiation of the doctrine of free will does not amount to a rejection of all forms of freedom either. He shares La Rochefoucauld's interest in the latitude superior types can take in wrestling with the forces that constrain and sustain them and echoes his view that greatness combines

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Similarly Fine says that:

La Rochefoucauld's maxims on interest outline a kind of *sagesse* which consists of proper ordering and execution of one's interests with a view to the most efficient expenditure of energy ... (1974:70)

As James concludes:

Man does not lose all power of self-direction ... in some of the maxims which ... show that tendency in La Rochefoucauld's thought which would destroy the foundations of rationality, freedom and value, restrictions are made which imply that these foundations survive (1969: 351).

<sup>32</sup> Although elsewhere the *Maximes* suggests that fortune determines how much it will be exploited: "La fortune tourne tout à l'avantage de ceux qu'elle favorise" (1977:50#60).

<sup>33</sup> James describes the moralist's position thus:

A large area of men's activities /is ... beyond their control, but otherwise the range of choice and value judgement may, for a few, be enlarged by self-knowledge and effort (1969:360).

wisdom and folly (1972:164#107). Nietzsche repeatedly describes the higher type of human as a free spirit, implying that some freedom is available which must differ from free will. Free spirits are cognisant of their general unfreedom, recognising the dependency elemental to existence but they greet this with neither despair nor passivity (1986:325#61). Instead they attain a clearer view of the amount of freedom attainable and strive to realise this, despite the massive restrictions (1986:110-11#231).

As Nietzsche's attack on the notion of free will indicates, abandoning belief in primal and complete free will is another example of the free action of free spirits. And in general they are devoted to liberating themselves from habit, dogma, collective opinion and Christian belief (1986:108#225,110#230, 158#427,289#329,354#182.1974:239#297). This equation of freedom with self-responsibility applies to caring for the self and acquiring the necessities of life (Chapter Seven) as well as to ideas (1986:389#318). Free spirits exercise freedom in pursuing the truth (1986:133#288) no matter how unsavoury it may be nor how much personal change, struggle and self-overcoming it demands (1986:211#4.1982:35#56.1974:171#110) nor how much opprobrium it inspires (1986:191#595,263#211). Thus daring to know is an invaluable form of freedom in the middle period, and the courage to pursue knowledge its attendant virtue (1974:115#51,228#283). This represents a marriage of old and new values according to Nietzsche, for while the belief that pursuing knowledge provides "supreme happiness" is ancient (1982:222#550), the complete honesty now possible, due to the growth of scepticism and science is "the youngest virtue, still very immature ... still hardly aware of itself" (1982:191#456.cf.1972:266#335).

Some of Chamfort's observations about the qualities of and forces active in moral life echo La Rochefoucauld's. That there is something askew in his society's moral evaluations and practices is evident in his description of France where "il est souvent utile de montrer ses vices, et toujours dangereux de montrer ses vertus" (1968:163#493.cf.101#237). He likens the confusion of the moral world with "le produit des caprices d'un diable devenu fou" (1968:62#50.cf.105#258) and one of Chamfort's characters declares that: "La

manière dont je vois distribuer l'éloge et la blâme ... donnerait à un plus honnête homme l'envie d'être diffamé" (1968:268#977). Much of this moral disarray and indeed corruption is attributed to reason (1968:53#7.cf.61#46, 65#71) and to society's distance and alienation from nature (1968:53#8,#9, 159#470) which illustrates one of the Rousseauian strands of Chamfort's thought.<sup>34</sup> However a later aphorism suggests that while the effects of reason have been evil, this is a necessary evil, for things would be even worse without reason (1968:60#39).

Reason is thus Chamfort's 'pharmakon', able to harm or cure (Derrida 1981:100), which suggests that the real source of society's moral confusion and corruption is the misuse of reason, rather than reason itself. If so, this means that while Nietzsche is following Chamfort and La Rochefoucauld in calling attention to his society's faulty moral judgements, he is closer to Chamfort in believing that this can be alleviated by a more rational approach. This faith emerges forcefully when Chamfort declares that:

Il y a peu d'hommes qui se permettent un usage vigoureux et intrépide de leur raison, et osent l'appliquer à tous les objets dans toute sa force. Le temps est venu où il faut l'appliquer ainsi à tous les objets de la morale, de la politique et de la société; aux rois, aux ministres, aux/ grands, aux philosophes; aux principes des sciences, des beaux-arts, etc. Sans quoi, on restera dans la médiocrité (1968:63/4#63)

Chamfort and Nietzsche are thus partial legatees of the Enlightenment with its

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<sup>34</sup> As Taylor notes for Rousseau:

Nature is fundamentally good, and the estrangement which depraves us is one which separates us from it ... The original impulse of nature is right, but the effect of a depraved culture is that we lose contact with it. We suffer this loss because we no longer depend on ourselves and this inner impulse, but rather on others and on what they think of us, expect from us, admire or despise in us, reward or punish in us. We are separated from nature by the dense web of opinion which is woven between us in society and can no longer recover contact with it (1989: 357).

The link in Rousseau's work between affirming nature's goodness and affirming autonomy evident in this passage (cf. Taylor 1989:359,361-2) is also, as shall emerge, apparent in Chamfort's thought. The impact of Rousseau on Chamfort's thinking in general emerges often in the literature (Pellisson 1895: 25,28,30. Dousset 1943:41. Dagen in Chamfort 1968:28. Ridgway 1984:41-42. Merwin in Chamfort 1984:43,52. Arnaud 1992:20,207).

faith in the redemptive power of reason and belief that extending reason's dominion requires unusual courage - the daring to know.<sup>35</sup>

Chamfort compares and contrasts the passions with reason. At times he suggests that the passions are good for them, or at least those that have endured from primitive times, keep humans in touch with the natural (1968:53:7). The natural is a good thing for Chamfort<sup>36</sup> as it is for La Rochefoucauld even though they conceive of what is natural differently. One of Chamfort's longer passages, however, suggests that the passions can debase and degrade (1968:76 #118) probably because, as explained elsewhere, they are by their very nature prone to exaggeration (1968:65#72.cf.124#325). Without this 'inconvenient' tendency to excess, the passions would make people happier than "cold" reason, for they "font vivre l'homme, la sagesse le fait seulement **durer**" (1968:76#118.C's emphasis).

Ultimately though it seems that Chamfort's is a fairly traditional view, where what matters is that reason temper passion. Reason might not dominate the self (1968:66#84) but it can harmonise its parts:

Le premier des dons de la nature est cette force de raison qui vous élève au-dessus de vos propres passions et de vos faiblesses, et qui vous fait gouverner vos qualités mêmes, vos talents et vos vertus (1968:65#74)

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<sup>35</sup> This bears out Ridgway's wider point that Chamfort is a legatee of Voltaire as well as Rousseau (1984). It also requires a questioning on both counts of Williams' claim that "Chamfort's insistence that reason corrupts "became a commonplace in Nietzsche's thought (1952:86/7).

<sup>36</sup> Such assertions of nature's goodness reveals that Arnaud's claim is too one-sided. He writes that in his view of nature Chamfort:

is perhaps at his most original, for the eighteenth century perceived nature as good, harmonious, and generous, whereas he saw nature as a dreaded mistress, a demiurge who skilfully doled out reason and passion to humans in her laboratory, in order to insure that her work would endure. For irresistible instinct was required to force the species to reproduce under tyrannical conditions (120/21).

Support for Arnaud's depiction of nature emerges in Chamfort's views on reproduction (Chapter Ten). Arnaud overstates his case a little though as Kant was another eighteenth century thinker with a view of nature working behind individual's backs and sometimes contra their intentions to ensure good outcomes.

Chamfort's thought is not therefore structured by a nature and passion versus reason dichotomy, despite this sometimes seeming the case.<sup>37</sup> Instead reason and passion are both natural capacities and paramount is the proper use of both (cf. Dagen in Chamfort 1968:29). Both flow from and allow humans to return to nature, to recover a certain harmony within themselves and, potentially, restore this to the social order, thus ending or reducing its moral disorder.<sup>38</sup>

However Chamfort sometimes qualifies this image of reason and harmony, suggesting that the self is not sovereign over all the things affecting it. One very La Rochefoucauldian passage, for example, testifies to the power of the unknown: "On est heureux ou malheureux par une foule de choses qui ne paraissent pas, qu'on ne dit point et qu'on ne peut dire" (1968:81#152). La Rochefoucauldian themes reappear in the changeability of desires and judgements - both between and within individuals (1968:297#1113) and in the

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<sup>37</sup> As Merwin puts it:

Chamfort ... like many of his contemporaries, used the terms [reason and nature] vaguely, with meanings that are largely composed of emotional overtones. The terms' relation to each other seems to shift without Chamfort being aware of the fact, so that sometimes the rational is the true expression of the natural, and sometimes ... it contradicts it (in Chamfort 1984:43).

<sup>38</sup> While there is some truth in Ridgway's point that, by comparison with Rousseau, Chamfort's

blistering attack on contemporary society ... was not balanced by a vision of virtuous bliss in the bosom of nature (1981:336)

life in 'the state of nature' is portrayed by Chamfort as purer and less perverse than that in society (1968:159#470). Nature is often invoked as a source of goodness and compared with society.

Delineating the three major functions of the term nature in the eighteenth century, Mauzi describes a third that sounds very like Chamfort's idea of nature:

[Dans] le troisième sens ... le mot "nature" ne renvoie plus à ce qui est immédiat, ni à ce qui est nécessaire, mais à ce qui est idéal. La nature est cette image parfaite de l'homme et du monde, recomposé par la raison et la conscience morale. Que ces facultés soient considérées comme innées ou comme acquises, elles n'en conservent pas moins le pouvoir de fonder un absolu. (1965:560/1)

This also continues some of La Rochefoucauld's notions, for he sees the natural as an ideal to be striven for rather than an immediate or necessary reality.

compound, complex nature of all things, including moral life:

Dans les choses, tout est **affaires mêlées**; dans les hommes, tout est **pièces de rapport**. Au moral et au physique, tout est mixte. Rein n'est un, rien n'est pur (1968:77#126.C's emphasis)

Like La Rochefoucauld, Chamfort is aware of the importance of artful husbandry of the forces at play in the self. Noting that a weak character can negate a powerful position, he says that "Celui qui ne sait pas ajouter sa volonté à sa force, n'a point de force" (1968:271#999). Criticism of those who expunge the passions because they are too powerful is also implied, for a skilful rider can control their horse (1968:272#1005.cf.124#325).<sup>39</sup> However there is less insistence on the management of strengths, virtues and vices in Chamfort's work than in La Rochefoucauld's, probably because the latter is more emphatic about the variety of forces struggling within and against the self.

Although Chamfort accords greater power to reason than does his predecessor, La Rochefoucauld's morality is not devoid of reason. La Rochefoucauld suggests that reason can mitigate desire for we want things less passionately the better we understand them (1977:82#439.cf.105#44), which again evokes the traditional ideal of intellect taming appetite. An early maxim declares that "Nous n'avons pas assez de force pour suivre toute notre raison" (1977:49#42), implying that strength, rather than reason, is deficient. This exemplifies an important criticism made in the Maximes - when people lack the strength to realise their potential, whether this be of reason or will, rather than admit their shortcomings or strive to surpass them, most circumscribe their view of what is achievable (1977:48#30,67#243). Moreover Maxim #97 (1977:53) praises the faculty of judgement but how much esteem this thereby accords reason is unclear, for reason's relationship to judgement is never fully spelt out. It would seem that the two are not co-extensive, with judgement embracing more than reason and including taste. As a passage below shows, La Rochefoucauld suggests that being natural strengthens good judgement, but being natural is not simply a function of reason, which further implies that

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<sup>39</sup> Chamfort's imagery may be alluding to Plato's Phaedrus here.

judgement includes but transcends reason.

However while La Rochefoucauld accords a role to reason in moral life, the middle period's emphasis on reason, daring to know and following the truth show Nietzsche to be a greater rationalist than the seventeenth century moralist and closer to Chamfort in this regard. The lesser power accorded to reason by La Rochefoucauld is apparent in claims like that above that fortune can correct our faults more than reason (1977:58#154), that wisdom is at the mercy of fortune (1977:74#323), that rational desires are rarely ardent (1977:85#469) and that "Les passions sont les seuls orateurs qui persuadent toujours" (1977:45#8). His insistence that 'la folie' and wisdom are intimately related also shows that reason is not sovereign (1977:62#207,63#209,210,95#23).

However, the middle period's emphasis on courageous pursuit of the truth renders Nietzsche more of an Enlightenment figure than even Chamfort, for the French moralist harbours some ambivalence about the value of pursuing truth. Several passages express the danger in an unbridled pursuit of the truth, for too much knowledge means too few illusions, dooming one to despair and "la mort de l'âme" (1968:57#26.cf.65#76). A later aphorism suggests that truth is unattainable (1968:127#342)<sup>40</sup>. Nevertheless, elsewhere Chamfort contends that while pleasure (le plaisir) can be based on illusions, the only source of happiness (le bonheur) is truth (1968:81#153). Another passage chastises those who need illusions and who retreat from the brink of truth (1968:120#296.cf.222#763) and the passage that accuses some moralists of too bleak a view of humans and others of too rosy a one concludes "Est in medio verum" (1968:54#14) - implying that truth can be discovered. Another long passage describes the person disabused of illusions as "l'homme par excellence" (1968:127#339). Such types do not despair but laugh; they are good company, free of pedantry and indulgent towards those who still have illusions. This is the side of Chamfort that Eva Katz captures when she claims that he demanded honesty (1968:46). Thus Nietzsche's equation of freedom and fulfilment with the

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<sup>40</sup> However there is a certain ambiguity in this claim. That "L'homme ... ne peut raisonnablement prétendre de trouver la vérité" could mean that truth is found via unreason, but this seems to be drawing a long bow.



pursuit of truth in the middle period could have been reinforced by these later remarks from Chamfort, whereas the earlier ones about the value of illusions sponsor the sort of view Nietzsche espouses in his other periods.<sup>41</sup>

As mentioned, one of the forces that La Rochefoucauld puts beyond the individual's control is inertia. That inertia can shape outcomes is touched on by Nietzsche (1986:193#608) and has some parallel with his larger point about the grip of habit on individual action and thought and the content bred by familiarity. La Rochefoucauld writes that:

L'esprit s'attache par paresse et par constance à ce qui lui est facile ou agréable; cette habitude met toujours des bornes à nos connaissances, et jamais personne ne s'est donné la peine d'étendre et de conduire son esprit aussi loin qu'il pourrait aller (1977:86#482.cf.48#30,67#243).

However for the moralist inertia is an internal, personal 'force' and in contrast to Nietzsche, he does not labour the idea that custom is promoted by the collective to serve its own ends. Such a perspective is for the most part foreign to the French moralist whose purview remains the salon, rarely extending to speculation about the growth of civilisation or the dictates of collective self-preservation. Two maxims only approach this sort of thinking. One claims that some values serve the weak and suppress the strong:

On a fait une vertu de la modération pour borner l'ambition des grands hommes, et pour consoler les gens/médiocres de leur peu de fortune, et de leur peu de mérite (1977:72/3#308).<sup>42</sup>

Another asserts that mediocre spirits condemn whatever is beyond them (1977:

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<sup>41</sup> Given this, Williams' claim that Chamfort's "emphasis on the illusion necessary to life" is one of the things that links his work to Nietzsche's (1952:86) cannot be applied wholeheartedly to the middle period.

<sup>42</sup> Tocanne is not wrong but exaggerating when he claims that La Rochefoucauld:

semble prêt parfois, dans une ligne de pensée qui fait en revanche songer à Nietzsche, à faire de certaines vertus, de la modération en particulier, une construction humaine inventée par des faibles pour protéger contre les forts. (1978:167)

Moreover he overlooks that fact that La Rochefoucauld and Nietzsche, at least in his middle period, have good things to say about moderation as well as criticising it. Moderation is, for example, a virtue of the 'honnête homme'. When we read the moralist attacking it, it may be that this is the old heroic ethos, which also has some hold on his loyalty, speaking.

Chamfort's attitude to custom is different again. Consonant with his general critique of social values, he suggests that many absurd conventions and formalities are excused as custom (1968:97#216.104#249) although this does not just apply to France, for comparison with the Hottentots is made. Rather than draw Montaigne's or Descartes' relativist, conservative conclusion from the diversity of conventions, Chamfort uses the variety of social and cultural mores to condemn the fact that anything can be legitimated as custom,<sup>44</sup> thus continuing the Enlightenment critique of tradition.<sup>45</sup> However in an almost complete turnabout, a later passage defends tradition, claiming that those who criticise a custom or opinion often evince their own immaturity rather than the absurdity of the practice. Of such conventions Chamfort concludes that:

On serait porté à penser quelquefois qu'elles ont été établies par des gens qui avaient lu le livre entier de la vie, et qu'elles sont jugées par des gens qui, malgré leur esprit, n'en ont lu que quelques pages (1968: 56#21).

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<sup>43</sup> La Rochefoucauld's other major reflection on social dynamics appears in "De la Société" 's discussion of centripetal and centrifugal forces. While people need, desire and seek society, they continually act to undermine it:

Chacun veut trouver son plaisir et ses avantages aux dépens des autres; on se préfère toujours à ceux avec qui on se propose de vivre, et on leur fait presque toujours sentir cette préférence, c'est ce qui trouble et détruit la société (1977:111#II).

(The parallels with Kant's notion of 'unsocial sociability' are striking). However again La Rochefoucauld is not thinking on the same scale as Nietzsche - the moralist's major interest is the face-to-face society of the salon, not the larger and more anonymous modern societies that are also part of Nietzsche's concern.

<sup>44</sup> Katz writes that "Nothing angered Chamfort more than the acceptance of things with the excuse "C'est l'usage" (1968:41).

<sup>45</sup> Cassirer paints the general background to this:

The eighteenth century is imbued with a belief in the unity and immutability of reason. Reason is the same for all thinking subjects, all nations, all epochs, and all cultures. From the changeability of religious creeds, of moral maxims and convictions, of theoretical opinions and judgements, a firm and lasting element can be extracted which is permanent in itself, and which in this identity and permanence expresses the real essence of reason. (1951:6)

As such, in Nietzsche's ideas on custom and habit there is a continuation of Chamfort's rationalist critique of tradition<sup>46</sup> as well as the transposition of some of La Rochefoucauld's aperçus. Some of the latter are taken from the enclosed arena of salon life and transformed into dominant themes in Nietzsche's analysis of morality and its history. The theatre of moral observation changes, but some of the themes remain.

As Nietzsche's reference to the need to learn a new way of feeling and the invocation of the Antique conception of responsibility intimate, he points toward another form of freedom that might be attained in the future. This is connected to the idea about the original innocence of all action, for a Nietzschean ideal is the person who discharges their innate energies and inclinations without shame or self-consciousness. As Chapter Four's discussion of self-love illustrates, Nietzsche reviles the way Christianity and other doctrines based on free will make people guilty and uncomfortable about natural inclinations. He wants to slough off these oppressive ideas and evolve a different way of acting and judging moral life. Science puts this succinctly: "What is the seal of liberation? - No longer being ashamed in front of oneself" (1974:220#275)

Such insistence on the original innocence of actions does not, however, mean that evaluating and discriminating between them is impossible, that 'anything goes' (1986:325#61). As Human declares, when the idea of intrinsic human evil is surmounted:

We then come to recognise that there is no such thing as sin in the metaphysical sense; but, in the same sense, no such thing as virtue either; that this whole domain of moral ideas is in a state of constant fluctuation, that there exist higher and deeper conceptions of good and evil, moral and immoral (1986:41#56).

Nietzsche adumbrates different criteria for moral judgements of the future,

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<sup>46</sup> As Teppe puts it, Chamfort and Nietzsche: avaient la même âpreté dans l'extermination des mensonges et des préjugés, et la même volonté de dénoncer le mal au mépris de toutes les conventions. (1950:148)

imbuing ethics with aesthetic considerations. Thus a good action is a beautiful one, and beautiful action is more likely to emanate from those who take pleasure in their power, rather than the weak and timorous. As Human notes:

he who has finally attained to power pleases in almost all he does and says, and ... even when he causes displeasure he still seems to please ... (1986:190#595).

Beautiful action can be expected from confident individuals bathed in self-love who act spontaneously rather than from those cramped by moral imperatives. One way of promoting self-love is to liberate people from the notion of free will and its view that individual wickedness is to blame for bad outcomes. This higher form of freedom is available to individuals who know their unfreedom, who appreciate that their actions are compounds of various forces, some of which are beyond their control. Such is "the wise, innocent (conscious of innocence) man" described by Human (1986:59#107). And, as Daybreak's "Distant prospect" proclaims:

we shall restore to men their goodwill towards the actions decried as egoistic and restore to these actions their **value- we shall deprive them of their bad conscience!** .../ we thus remove from the entire aspect of action and life its **evil appearance!** This is a very significant result! When man no longer regards himself as evil he ceases to be so! (1982:93/4#148. FN's emphasis. cf. 1986:26#27, 72#133, 77#141, 1974:236#294)

This suggests that the complex, cautious, divided free spirit of the present will be overcome and that free spirits of the future will not be forced to battle the sceptic within before acting (1986:110#230, 1974:229#284). A similar view is intimated in Chamfort's summary of morality as "Jouis et fais jouir, sans faire ni de mal à toi ni à personne" (1968:123#319) although, as Chapter Four reveals, Nietzsche is usually insouciant about the harm that the self-expression of superior types might cause others. However he would endorse Chamfort's view if its implication were that one should not seek pleasure through hurting others.

In injecting moral judgement with an aesthetic component and limiting the attainment of its this revised morality's ideals to the superior few, Nietzsche is closer to La Rochefoucauld than to Chamfort. Contrary to much conventional wisdom, a positive morality is discernible in La Rochefoucauld's

work - the moralist neither demonstrates the impossibility of virtuous action nor seeks to destroy all values and ideals.<sup>47</sup> An ethos with a strong aesthetic component can be reconstructed from the Maximes<sup>48</sup> although it is clear that its prescriptions do not extend to all, with the moralist repeatedly distinguishing 'grands' from 'petits', 'communes' or 'médiocres' spirits (1977: 56#125,69#265,72-3#308,76#357,77#375,95#31).<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> I reject Hirschmann's view that La Rochefoucauld is among those thinkers who:

delved into its [human nature's] recesses and proclaimed their "savage discoveries" with so much gusto that the dissection looks very much like an end in itself ... in general it was undertaken [by others] to discover more effective ways of shaping the pattern of human actions than through moralistic exhortation or the threat of damnation. (1977: 15.cf.Schabert 1986:70)

While the moralist engages in neither moralistic exhortation nor threats of damnation, he still adduces a positive morality. Hippeau is more to the point when he argues that:

ceux qui sont avertis par les Maximes et qui voient clair /... doivent ... d'après La Rochefoucauld, pratiquer la vertu. Mais comme ils savent qu'elle n'est faite que de vices déguisés, ils fabriqueront en pleine conscience, des vertus avec des vices. (1967:83/4)

<sup>48</sup> According to Lewis, La Rochefoucauld:

links the subduing of pessimism to a necessarily communal objective; to make social relationships, as well as verbal ones, a work of art, to judge an impoverished society ... by artistic criteria instead of applying unattainable moral standards (1977:111.cf. Starobinski 1966:211. Morgues 1978:71.Thweatt 1980:145.Truchet in La Rochefoucauld 1977: 22)

Thweatt argues that aesthetics does not replace ethics (1980:202.cf.Tocanne 1978:216-7) but that the moralist's view contains elements of both (1980:146. cf.Tocanne 1978:217). The relationship between La Rochefoucauld's ethics and aesthetics is considered below.

<sup>49</sup> As Weinberg notes "Nietzsche finds in La Rochefoucauld's Maximes the potential germ for an aristocratically aesthetic ethos" (in O'Flaherty 1976:92) and more generally that:

the aristocratic civilisation of seventeenth century France - a school of manners, taste, intellectual rigor, urbane scepticism ... serves as the ideal model of an aesthetic ethics with which Nietzsche confronts the Philistine and inelegant grossness of his contemporary Germany, the military power that overcame the French Army while remaining far behind the cultural achievements of the nation it had vanquished in 1871 (in O'Flaherty 1976:91).

Evidence of this aestheticism comes in the fact that, in questions of the self, La Rochefoucauld often puts his faith in the shaping power of taste rather than reason.<sup>50</sup> Reason facilitates our understanding of who we are, but taste allows us to mould, amend and improve our identity. That taste is constitutive of the self is suggested in the assertion that "On renonce plus aisément à son intérêt qu'à son goût" (1977:78#390) and in the moralist's insistence that taste is or should be individual and that happiness comes with the satisfaction of the self's specific desires:

La félicité est dans le goût et non pas dans les choses; et c'est par avoir ce qu'on aime qu'on est heureux, et non par avoir ce que les autres trouvent aimable (1977:49#48)

This is echoed in the reflexion on "Du Faux" (1977:125-7#XIII) for "Il faut savoir discerner ce qui est bon en général, et ce qui nous est propre" (1977:126#XIII).<sup>51</sup> However most ignore or are ignorant of this link between happiness and individualism:

il y a peu de gens qui aient le goût fixe et indépendant de celui des autres; ils suivent l'exemple et la coutume, et ils en empruntent presque tout ce qu'ils ont de goût (1977:122#X)

This is not to suggest that taste is the still point of the turning self.

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Compare Truchet:

Le style ... c'est enfin, pour La Rochefoucauld, l'aristocratique croyance en l'existence d'une certaine race d'hommes (in La Rochefoucauld 1977:24.cf.Hippeau 1967:157.Lewis 1977:148/9. Tocanne 1978:216).

<sup>50</sup> According to Dens imputing such importance to taste is part of a wider movement in the second half of the seventeenth century in France (1981:84):

Le goût est à l'origine un sentiment qui nous attire vers un objet ou une personne. Bien souvent la raison profonde de cette attirance nous échappe et nous serions même parfois en peine de la justifier. Le goût s'oppose en ceci au raisonnement ... (1981:86)

But as I argue below, the moralist sees no necessary antagonism between taste and reason.

<sup>51</sup> Again this is typical of the time, as Stanton points out:

Often used as a metonym for the entire range of "feeling", taste provides an alternative mode of knowledge to the crude rules devised by others (1980:203).

Given the volatility of identity, that "On est quelquefois aussi différent de soi-même que des autres" (1977:56#135) taste can change, especially with age (1977:54#109,67#252). And mindful of his own methodological observations, La Rochefoucauld is sensitive to the difficulty of disentangling taste from other dimensions of the personality, showing it to be influenced by pride (1977:136#XVII) or self-love and the humours (1977:123#X). Fidelity to his own wider position is further reflected in "Des Goûts"'s discussion of the danger in generalising about taste, for it varies with and within individuals. Thus some have bad taste in all things, others in some. Some follow their tastes, others do not. Some have strong tastes while others are indecisive (1977:122#X). But the well-tempered taste admired by the moralist is uncommon:

il est très rare, et presque impossible, de rencontrer cette sorte de bon goût qui sait donner le prix à chaque chose, qui en connaît toute la valeur, et qui se porte généralement sur tout ... (1977:122#X.cf.126#XIII)

underscoring the aristocratic bent of his ethic.

However the power to discern the right price for things is attributed to reason in "Du Faux" (1977:125-27#XIII), which allows for reason and taste to be partners not rivals in shaping identity. As the remainder of the above point about reason's husbandry suggests, reason and nature can co-operate:

Il faut ... que la raison nous fasse ménagers de notre bien et de notre confiance; et il faut, au contraire, que la nature nous donne la bonté et la valuer (1977:77#365.cf.James 1969:351)

This again illustrates La Rochefoucauld's reluctance to nominate any force as architectonic in personality and shows his ethic to combine rational and aesthetic dimensions which, as suggested, is the case with Nietzsche's, even if the moralist evinces less faith in reason:

Il faut que la raison et le bon sens mettent le prix aux choses, et qu'elles déterminent notre goût à leur donner le rang qu'elles méritent et qu'il nous convienne de leur donner; mais presque tous les hommes se trompent dans ce prix et dans ce rang, et il y a toujours de la

fausseté dans ce mécompte (1977:127#XIII.cf.68#258).<sup>52</sup>

As this passage shows, the education of taste by reason is to be striven for but rarely attained (cf.1977:131#XV), underlining once more the limited edition of La Rochefoucauld's goods.

Thus La Rochefoucauld upholds taste as an, albeit not the sole, important shaping force in identity and tries to inculcate it in its readers, so that at times this book becomes a manual of aesthetic ethics.<sup>53</sup> Hence its descriptions of things like 'politesse' and 'galanterie' of 'l'esprit' (1977: 54#99,#100) and of the subtlety true delicacy requires (1977:56#128). This indicates once more that his work is not dedicated solely to destroying values

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<sup>52</sup> Thus Moore's claim that in the moralist's work reason is, "captive, limited, deceived. The mind is at the mercy of the heart, and indeed the body" (1969:39) is overstated. Benichou is also exaggerating when he claims that:

L'esprit, ou la raison, au lieu d'accompagner et d'éclairer l'épuration de l'affectivité, ne servent plus qu'à en dissimuler les hontes. L'intellect, le serviteur conscient de la gloire, devient l'instrument aveugle de l'égoïsme (1948:106).

Fine's assessment that:

reason is, ideally the natural means by which the 'honnêtes gens' avoid falsehood. Esprit can conform fully to the natural character of an individual, but often it is based on a distorted image of self and of others (1974:23.cf.Lewis 1977:150)

is more accurate, although his later attempt to link La Rochefoucauld to the wider seventeenth century position overstates the moralist's position. While he claims that:

The inherent 'right' of reason to rule, even if proven illusory in practice, still reflects an ethical and philosophical assumption of seventeenth century thought ... (1974:32)

it seems more correct to suggest that reason is dethroned, but not exiled or decapitated by La Rochefoucauld. Instead it becomes an equal citizen in the republic of the self, struggling for influence along with the passions, interest, the humours, nature and fortune.

<sup>53</sup> As James notes:

La Rochefoucauld sets out to give men - or at least the privileged few - a better grasp of their moral nature with a view to right judgement and right action. This practical aim is most marked in the Reflexions. (1969:359)

According to Lewis, this is typical of the era:

For the seventeenth century 'la Morale' was not merely an abstract philosophical discipline. It was also a practical guide to good living (1964:7).



and ideals. But in many ways the "Réflexions Diverses" offer a more appropriate venue for elaborating a positive morality than the aphorisms (cf. Truchet in La Rochefoucauld 1977:16) for their more expansive form facilitates the development of ideas, their connection with one another and their consideration with greater detail and subtlety than the aphorism. Thus it could be that one of the explanations for the false impression that La Rochefoucauld lacks a positive morality is the focus on his aphorisms and neglect of the reflexions,<sup>54</sup> for it is easier to debunk values than to elaborate new ones in an aphorism (cf. Lewis 1977:148-9). However the lineaments of his positive morality are present in the aphorisms, so this cannot be a sufficient explanation of this wrong view.

It is possible that the aesthetic quality of La Rochefoucauld's prescriptions obscures their moral import and explains the perception that his work contains no positive ethic. However the aesthetic quality of La Rochefoucauld's ethic derives less from the values advocated than from the way they are defended. As with Nietzsche, many of the values are traditional ones like courage, politeness, honesty, goodness, merit, self-knowledge and consideration of others.<sup>55</sup> What emerges from the Maximes is that it is good

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<sup>54</sup> As Thweatt notes:

the Réflexions are too often neglected or are given only passing attention. They are, however, the *mise en scene* of La Rochefoucauld's human comedy and a personal statement of his own social values (1980:130. cf. Truchet in La Rochefoucauld 1977:16)

Lewis also argues that reading the Réflexions can elucidate the Maximes (1977:45. cf. Truchet in La Rochefoucauld 1977:16). Thweatt explains that not only are the Reflections neglected, little is known about their origins:

Little is known about the composition of the various chapters that make up the Réflexions. Although it would seem likely that they circulated privately during La Rochefoucauld's life-time, they did not appear in print at all until the beginning of the eighteenth century; and in many instances knowledge of the dates at which they were composed remain uncertain (1980:133).

<sup>55</sup> As Hippeau notes:

Il accepte simplement les vertus traditionnelles ... Il les reconnaît une fois pour toutes comme utiles, nécessaires au fonctionnement de la société (1967:85. cf. 161)

This is echoed by Lewis (1977:126) and Thweatt, who writes that:

to do or be these things because such a life is beautiful and pleasing - to the tasteful self as well as to its cohort. This is evident in the vocabulary used to depict the good life, for terms like delicacy, subtlety, grace, pleasing and gentleness abound.<sup>56</sup>

Further evidence of the aesthetic character of the moralist's morality comes in his emphasis on the natural as a criterion for good action and comportment. As with Nietzsche's view, there is an aspect of compulsion or necessity in 'le naturel' for:

une chose, de quelque nature qu'elle soit, ne saurait être belle, et parfaite, si elle n'est véritablement tout ce qu'elle doit être, et si elle n'a tout ce qu'elle doit avoir (1977:97#49).

However being natural does not mean unleashing all desires, impulses, and instincts - again Nietzsche follows La Rochefoucauld in insisting that this is not an ethos where anything goes. This is manifest in the Maximes' dismissal of "La plupart des jeunes gens [qui] croient être naturels, lorsqu'ils ne sont que mal polis et grossiers (1977:77#372) and the advice that, having discovered what is natural to us, we must "le perfectionner autant qu'il nous est possible" (1977:113#III). This also signals that the natural is not a static notion but allows for learning from others, responding to new situations and improving the self. Indeed there would be no point prescribing moral refinement if natural

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La Rochefoucauld does not set out to destroy the values by which his generation lived ... He tries rather to examine the reality behind the words to which the honnêtes gens of the seventeenth century gave an allegiance that was all too frequently a matter of outward observance rather than of inward conviction. His attacks are centred on the falsity and hypocrisy by which roles and values are deformed rather than on those roles and values in and of themselves (1980:245. See Clark 1987 for the opposite view.)

<sup>56</sup> Stanton identifies Montaigne as the source of this aesthetic, aristocratic ethos, noting that while:

a rich convergence of elements ... made Montaigne a model for the seventeenth century honnête homme ... it was his vision of a select society devoted to the beautification of life and ... the representation of his self as art that determined the substance of seventeenth century honnêteté (1980:25).

inclinations could not be enhanced by effort.<sup>57</sup> But in all these cases, it is vital that, if the individual has found their own style, the new be incorporated as subtly and cohesively as possible into the self's extant features:

ces qualités acquises doivent avoir un certain rapport et une certaine union avec nos propres qualités, qui les tendent et les augmentent imperceptiblement ... il faut les unir et les mêler ensemble et qu'ils ne paraissent jamais séparés (1977:114)

Thus it requires effort and education to be natural, as illustrated in the description of "un art de la nature dont les /regles sont infaillibles" (1977: 45 /6#8). In describing the requirements for this La Rochefoucauld's work again resembles a manual of manners. However his insistence that appearing to want to appear natural is an immediate obstacle to doing so (1977:82#431) makes being natural an art whose effort must be concealed and further illustrates that the natural does not necessarily embrace the immediate but can countenance artifice.

"De l'air et des manieres" (1977:113-15#III) posits a close connection between being natural and finding what is uniquely good for the self and in maxim #25 La Rochefoucauld suggests that human individuality has its counterpart in the natural world: "Chaque talent dans les hommes, de même que chaque arbre, a ses propriétés et ses effets qui lui sont tous particuliers" (1977:95). Thus while the moralist appeals to nature as a source of the good, this does not yield universal prescriptions:

ce qui convient à quelques-uns ne convient pas à tout le monde ... il n'y a point de règle générale pour les tons et pour les manières et ... il

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<sup>57</sup> This is born out by Stanton:

In the seventeenth century ... nature and naturalness have more to do with the effects of Art than with its origins. Nature in its raw or primitive form ... is often characterized as uncouth, unappealing, vulgar, brutal. (1980:176)

And Dens notes that:

Le bon goût n'est donc pas une motion innée, un simple don de la nature, mais doit se cultiver et s'affiner par l'expérience et la réflexion (1981:102).

n'y a point de bonnes copies (1977:113#III).<sup>58</sup>

Instead each must find what is peculiarly natural to them although most are oblivious to this, preferring to imitate others and thereby distort their specific, natural self. This emphasis on discovering and developing one's style rather than imitating explains why La Rochefoucauld upholds children as exemplars of the natural.<sup>59</sup> Not yet corrupted by desires to emulate others, they remain faithful to and expressive of their individuality (1977:113#III). However while children "sont encore renfermés dans cet air et dans ces manières que la nature leur a donnés" (1977:113#III), being natural is about autonomy rather than automism. It requires finding and enhancing one's own style and not aping others (1977:96#43.cf.56 #134) rather than expressing any and every impulse (cf. Starobinski 1966:220).

In many of these regards Nietzsche can be seen as following La Rochefoucauld. The work of both is marked by an appeal to nature for criteria of good action and acceptance that all natural emanations are not equally worthy. Within the range of natural actions, a hierarchy of beauty and value can be established. Natural actions are not necessarily valued for their immediacy; a cosmetic touch can make them more appealing, although this must be light and in harmony with the self's natural tendencies. But for neither thinker does nature yield universal prescriptions - just as actions can be ranked, so can individuals acting naturally.

How crucial respecting the self's innate tendencies is for La Rochefoucauld is obvious in "Du Faux"'s depiction of this as a panacea, for

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<sup>58</sup> Although La Rochefoucauld concedes that grace and politeness are universal goods, they must be instantiated in an individualised way:

la bonne grâce et la politesse conveinent à tout le monde; mais ces qualités acquises doivent avoir un certain rapport et une certaine union avec nos propres qualités, qui les étendent et les augmentent imperceptiblement (1977:114#III).

<sup>59</sup> Related to this is La Rochefoucauld's critique of examples in moral life. The short reflection "Des Exemples" argues that examples always produce bad effects and are inferior to the originals (1977:119#VII). Maxim #230 (1977: 65) is less critical, contending the actions based on examples are always more diluted than the originals, so never as bad nor as good as their inspiration.

such respect removes falsity from taste and conduct, harmonises appearance and substance, promotes judgement, reason and balance and allows action to derive from choice instead of custom or chance (cf.1977:126#XIII). All of this again indicates that the moralist's higher human is not the plaything of internal and external forces.

This accent on style, individuality and autonomy need not, however, suggest isolation and insensitivity or indifference to others. On the contrary, one of the reasons La Rochefoucauld champions such values is their contribution to the art of pleasing,<sup>60</sup> an inherently social as well as aesthetic concept (cf.Dens 1981:15). The importance of others is evident in the closing segment of "De l'air et des manieres" (1977:115#III) where a strong argument in support of the natural is its audience appeal:

Mille gens déplaisent avec des qualités aimables, mille gens plaisent avec de moindre talents: c'est que/les uns veulent paraître ce qu'ils ne sont pas, les autres sont ce qu'ils paraissent; et enfin, quelques avantages ou quelques désavantages que nous ayons reçu de la nature, on plaît à proportion de ce qu'on suit l'air, les tons, les manières et les sentiments qui conviennent à notre état et à notre figure, et on déplaît de ce qu'on s'en éloigne (1977:114/5#III.cf.133-34#XVI)

In fact it would seem that the only proof of attaining the natural, of correctly finding one's proper propensities and following or enhancing them in a

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<sup>60</sup> For Thweatt, the art de plaire which:

was part of the legacy inherited from the Astrée and from the Hotel de Rambouillet and part of their peculiar conception of classical antiquity. The art of pleasing was a key aspect of the Classical idea of beauty (1980:54)

illustrates her point about the merger of ethical and aesthetic elements in the moralist's work. She explains that:

The art de plaire was by no means devoid of moral and religious content. Pleasing, in the sense of consideration for others, was as consonant with the ethical import of honnetête as with its aesthetic aspects, with the good as with the beautiful, with the authentic vrai as with the surface style and semblance of it (1980:55).

This provides a useful corrective to views like Dens' which accentuate the appearance aspect of such an ethos to the exclusion of substance. His claim that "L'art de plaire implique une esthetique visuelle qui ignore nos motivations intérieures" (1981:19.cf.17,139) is, when applied to La Rochefoucauld, an exaggeration.

propitious way, is the ability of the natural self to please others.<sup>61</sup> This again illustrates the aesthetic, aristocratic and inter-subjective bent of La Rochefoucauld's ethos - it is good to be someone who pleases those with good judgement and taste.

However La Rochefoucauld's aestheticism is not co-extensive with his ethics, for in several places he acknowledges that vices can please and merit repulse. Sometimes this observation comes as part of his critique of the wider moral world and its distorted values, for "Nous plaisons plus souvent dans le commerce de la vie par nos défauts que par nos bonnes qualités" (1977:53#90. cf.59#162). There is also a suggestion of bad odour in some of his references to self-making for he sometimes intimates that this amounts to covering up rather than obliterating bad qualities (1977:59#162,83#442). From this it seems that Dens is too cavalier when describing the moralist's attitude as "Si notre moi nous gêne, pourquoi ne pas le camoufler par des dehors engageants?" (1981:37).<sup>62</sup> At other times though La Rochefoucauld's comments on the gap between aesthetics and ethics lack a critical edge and seem simply to acknowledge that the two spheres are not synonymous. He observes that "Il y a des gens dégoûtants avec du mérite, et d'autres qui plaisent avec des défauts" (1977:58#155) and that "Il y a des personnes à qui les défauts siéent bien, et d'autres qui sont disgraciées avec leurs bonnes qualités" (1977:67#251.cf.76 #354). Such remarks might signal the ascendancy of an aesthetic ethos over traditional merit, especially as the moralist does not always attack this

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<sup>61</sup> As Stanton puts it:  
the comprehensive art of honnêteté predicates knowledge and praxis of a single element, the sign plaire. Inversely, the same sign comprises the chief means for perceiving the many manifestations of honnêteté (1980: 119).

<sup>62</sup> Starobinski takes a similar position, suggesting that appearances are paramount: "[L]es valeurs esthétiques ... se substituent aux impératifs moraux et prendre à leur tour valeur d'impératifs" (1966:211.cf.223). This also means that for La Rochefoucauld donning masks is legitimate so long as one knows one is doing so (1966:226). However as shall emerge, I think that La Rochefoucauld's position is more ambiguous than this.

disjuncture between the good and the pleasing or they could simply draw attention to a distinction between the two domains.<sup>63</sup>

The importance of pleasing also helps to explain La Rochefoucauld's praise of personal diversity for "On ne plaît pas longtemps quand on n'a que d'une sorte d'esprit" (1977:81#413) and "Ceux qui n'ont que d'une sorte d'esprit ne peuvent plaire longtemps" (1977:112#II.cf.Dens 1981:51). Of course such diversity is also a fact of human psychology, as evidenced by the moralist's characterisation of the protean, contrary self (1977:85#478). However he admires those who can turn their diversity to desirable outcomes, can make the different aspects of their self seem natural and harmonious. Nietzsche continues La Rochefoucauld's celebration of the multiple self (1986: 218#17) but for different reasons. It is less its capacity to please than the resources this diversity provides for self-making and self-overcoming that attracts Nietzsche. There is a sense in which personal diversity is an end in itself for him, something that is good simply because it gives the self depth, richness and variety. And if Nietzsche's powerful individual pleases others in all they do, this seems to be a happy consequence, rather than criterion of, their superiority.

The gap between what is ethically good and what is pleasing which La Rochefoucauld depicts is not pursued by Nietzsche. Nietzsche's position seems to be that because the capacity for self-making and re-making is the preserve of superior types, this aestheticism is good in itself and will produce desirable outcomes, for the strong, superior type's taste is unerring. Whether this departs

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<sup>63</sup> Tocanne makes a related point when he writes that La Rochefoucauld: glisse vers une morale de l'authenticité, qui ne se confond pas exactement avec une morale de la vertu, car une conduite authentique peut être moralement bonne ou mauvaise. (1978:216)

James notes that "Aesthetic and moral values are affirmed side by side by La Rochefoucauld (1969:355) which allows that:

Moral virtue is left in tact with his recognition that certain aesthetic features of social relations are compatible with or even derive from moral defect (1969:359).

This means that Starobinski is exaggerating when he describes the moralist's aestheticism as a substitute morality.

from desirable moral values is irrelevant, suggesting that the embryonic privileging of aesthetics over ethics in La Rochefoucauld is more fully developed by Nietzsche. This comes out most clearly in Science's "One thing is needful"

To "give style" to one's character - a great and rare art! It is practiced (sic) by those who survey all the strengths and weaknesses of their nature and then fit them into an artistic plan until every one of them appears as art and reason and even weaknesses delight the eye ... Whether this taste was good or bad is less important than one might suppose, if only it was a single taste! (1974:232#290)

As we have seen, one of the reasons La Rochefoucauld values personal diversity is its capacity to please others. One of the reasons he values 'l'art de plaire' is, in turn, its contribution to social cohesion, for when others are pleased, the centrifugal forces endangering social life are minimised:

Comme il est malaisé que plusieurs personnes puissent avoir les mêmes intérêts, il est nécessaire au moins, pour la douceur de la société, qu'ils n'en aient pas de contraires. On doit aller au-devant de ce qui peut plaire à ses amis, chercher les moyens de leur être utile, leur épargner des chagrins ... (1977:112#II.cf.111)

From a Nietzschean perspective, La Rochefoucauld's aesthetic ethos could then be a form of collective domination and individual domestication, urging individuals to conceal egoistic tendencies and present a pleasing appearance to others so that community can continue. As Stanton's pithy formulation has it "The doctrine of honnêteté places an ethic of repression at the service of an esthetic of seduction" (1980:193). However as the society La Rochefoucauld wants reproduced is that of the salon and the ideals he advocates are available only to the superior few even within this sector of society, the aristocratic bent of this ethos might justify its constraints. Indeed, reining in the self is not intrinsically repulsive to Nietzsche, for he criticises:

All those who do not have themselves sufficiently under their own control and who do not know morality as a continual self-command and self-overcoming practised in great things and in the smallest ... (1986:322#45.cf8#4)

Paramount for Nietzsche is the goal that discipline, restriction and self-denial serve, and the aim of the French moralist is not to quash excellence and promote mediocrity. La Rochefoucauld is therefore innocent of the accusation



Nietzsche levels at many moralities - that they are a means for the many to suppress the superior few. Moreover, as the coming chapters will reveal, many of the values La Rochefoucauld advocates enjoy Nietzsche's endorsement.

Something resembling La Rochefoucauld's and then Nietzsche's emphasis on individuality is manifest in Chamfort's writing and he also suggests that this has its basis in nature for "la nature prodigue des êtres individuellement different" (1968:51#1).<sup>64</sup> Those insensible to peculiarity are mediocre or lazy, accepting gross classifications and focusing on resemblances (1968:51#1) - a point echoed in Science's claim that the mediocre "lack eyes for seeing what is unique. Seeing things as similar and making things the same is the sign of weak eyes" (1974:212#228). Chamfort praises the prudence of the eagle which "consiste à suivre hardiment son caractère, en acceptant avec courage les désavantages et les inconvénients qu'il peut produire" (1968:59-60#38). Lack of such courage diminishes for "Les hommes deviennent petits en se rassemblant" (1968:64#65.cf.64#66). Even if procuring no tangible benefits for oneself or others, doing what pleases and interests the self is invaluable (1968:124#324) for no single way of life or set of ideas and principles is suitable for all (1968:201-2#662.cf.297#1113). This insistence on individuality and difference also indicates that general doctrines can offer no guide to the good life for, as Chamfort notes, although it can offer a few good remedies, philosophy cannot offer specifics (1968:55#17).

However while Chamfort reiterates La Rochefoucauld's emphasis on finding and pursuing what is uniquely good for the self, and appeals to nature's guidance in this, there is no real aesthetic component in his individualism. Chamfort does not espouse an aesthetic notion of the self and the criteria for determining the good life are not aesthetic. His above-mentioned cognisance of correct husbandry of the self is a relatively minor aspect of his ethos and his work is devoid of any idea of self-making. As

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<sup>64</sup> As Pellisson notes:  
c'est un spécifique qu'il cherche ... un *modus vivendi* qui convienne à sa nature propre et au milieu détermine dans lequel il se trouvait place. (1895:186)

evidenced above, traditional virtues like courage are invoked to promote individualism and, like Nietzsche, Chamfort seems to defend it as a good in itself, irrespective of the pleasures it might afford others. Indeed, if anything, Chamfort attacks the art of pleasing, which seems to mark a major division between him and La Rochefoucauld. Chamfort's critique of social values means that success in pleasing others and thereby making one's way in the world is more indicative of corruption and inauthenticity than attainment of the natural self:

il y a un genre de facilité, d'insouciance, de faiblesse, de déraison, qui plaît beaucoup ... l'homme, dont on fait ce qu'on veut, qui appartient au moment, est plus agréable que celui qui a de la suite, du caractère, des principes, qui n'oublie pas son ami malade ou absent, qui sait quitter une partie de plaisir pour lui rendre service, etc. Ce sera une liste ennuyeuse que celle des défauts, des torts et de travers qui plaisent (1968:103#247. cf.74#106.101#237.106#261.266#968)

A later anecdote notes that being likable does not necessarily make one worthy of being loved (1968:297#1109) and a dialogue reveals that being virtuous need not make one likeable (1968:350#XV), reminding us again of the skewed nature of social judgements.

This is not to suggest that we can infer backwards from someone pleasing to their being corrupt or artificial for Chamfort allows that some please by pleasing themselves: "L'homme qui se rend aimable pour une société, parce qu'il s'y plaît, est le seul qui joue le rôle d'un honnête homme" (1968:147#422.cf.127#339). This concession, coupled with the above allusion to the 'unpleasing' person at their friend's sickbed, suggests that there is room for some convergence in the two moralists' views on the art of pleasing. La Rochefoucauld insists and Chamfort implies that there is a qualitative difference between pleasing 'le monde' and pleasing a select, superior few. This is even more evident in Chamfort's description of 'M',<sup>65</sup> who is "très

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<sup>65</sup> Many commentators see the character 'M' as the mouthpiece for Chamfort himself. As Teppe writes:

Parfois, il lui arrive de se dépeindre, de se confesser, et même, dépassant l'introspection, de s'élever à une maxime universelle. Se designant par la majuscule M en général, il nous livre les secrets de son âme ... (1950:118)

aimable et [a] nulle envie de plaire, si ce n'est à ses amis ou à ceux qu'il estime" (1968:237#830. The difference between society and friendship will be developed in Chapter Six). Nonetheless the moralists differ in their emphasis on pleasing these select others - for La Rochefoucauld it is a key ingredient of the good life whereas for Chamfort, as for Nietzsche, it seems to be a happy consequence of being true to oneself.

The résumé of La Rochefoucauld's aesthetic ethic comes in the profile of the 'honnête homme', who embodies the virtues, practices and qualities the moralist most admires<sup>66</sup>. Aggregating the moralist's references to the 'honnête homme' provides an identikit of the superior human being for "L'honnêteté [n'est] d'aucun état en particulier, mais de tous les états en général" (1977:107#61.cf. Thweatt 1980:200). And it is to the attainment of such 'honnêteté' that La Rochefoucauld's prescriptions tend (cf. Starobinski 1966:212. Baker 1974:25). Such creatures are 'habile', polite, graceful, considerate of others, capable of "un mérite extra.ordinaire" (1977:53#95) and untroubled by pride (1977:62#203,126#XIII). While they can and should delight in their

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Arnaud sees 'M' as a more composite character, contending that, Chamfort expressed resistance only through his character: "M\_\_", who displayed Chamfort's qualities and shortcomings - to excess. This ideal self was composed of a little bit of Mirabeau and a lot of himself (1992:124)

For Katz 'M' "strongly resembles Chamfort or the man Chamfort would like to be" (1968:37.cf. Donnellan 1982:112, Dagen in Chamfort 1968:30). All of this suggests that 'M' provides a guide to Chamfort's values and prescriptions.

<sup>66</sup> Compare Bordeau 1895:127. Strowski 1925:20 and Thweatt 1980:240/1. More generally Dens notes that:

la théorie de l'honnêteté entre 1660 et la fin du siècle ... atteint un point culminant au début de 1680, après quoi elle amorçe un fléchissement (1981:36).

He identifies Méré as its source (1981:12,21) and says that:

L'honnête homme représente pour le classicisme ce que l'humaniste représentait pour la Renaissance; un idéal à imiter et à poursuivre (1981:23/4.cf. Stanton 1980:18)

Dens identifies two streams from this source - those who make Christian values prime and those who elevate worldly ones. He situates La Rochefoucauld in the latter (1981:25) and Pascal in the former (1981:30).

achievements in private, they do not in public (1977:72#307). However the acceptance of different standards in public and private should not suggest that the 'honnête homme' is licensed to dissemble. On the contrary, a mark of true 'honnêtes gens' is admitting their flaws to themselves and to others (1977:62 #202) for self-knowledge is one of their major goals (cf. Donnellan 1982:92).<sup>67</sup>

Moreover for La Rochefoucauld self-knowledge is dialogical. The community of 'honnête gens' is vital to its attainment,<sup>68</sup> which explains why "C'est être véritablement honnête homme que de vouloir être toujours exposé à la vue des honnêtes gens" (1977:62#206. This is developed in Chapter Six). The pursuit of self-knowledge also allows superior types to resist the empire of appearances, which, as shown above, is a major problem in the moral world: "Nous gagnerions plus de nous laisser voir tels que nous sommes, que d'essayer de paraître ce que nous ne sommes pas" (1977:84#457). The significance La Rochefoucauld accords self-knowledge is further evidence of the presence of traditional values in his thought,<sup>69</sup> even though the self that

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<sup>67</sup> This could suggest an important place for reason in La Rochefoucauld's thinking. However while reason has a role to play in this pursuit, it is not the sole source of self-knowledge. As shown, fortune can facilitate it and the passions can promote it (1977:80#404). Its pre-requisites will be discussed more fully in Chapter Six.

<sup>68</sup> My reading is antithetical to Morgues' claim that "The reality he thought worth pursuing was to be found only in the lonely confrontation of self by self" (1978:44). Similarly, Bordeau writes that "sa conclusion est la même que celle de Hobbes, qui ... signalait l'homme comme un loup pour l'homme" (1895:121). Redding detects the "implicit individualism of the French moralist's framework" (in Patton 1993:221 fn7). Clark also finds "a sceptical, subjectivist sort of individualism implicit throughout the Maximes" (1987:68) and for Jeanson this becomes isolation and superiority, for his La Rochefoucauld sits imperiously in judgement on his fellow humans (1963:107).

While La Rochefoucauld's ideal of the natural is individualistic in its insistence that each must find what is natural to them, as the above discussion of the art of pleasing and the following one of self-knowledge testify, this does not make his entire ethic individualistic.

<sup>69</sup> Although self-knowledge appears to be a wholly secular good in the moralist's thought, Levi suggests that it too has a religious heritage. Revealing that the French moralists of the seventeenth century drew on the work of Marsilio Ficino (1964:3.cf.333), he notes that:

pursues such knowledge is not conceived of conventionally as our discussion of his psychology amply testifies.

As the description of the person who pleases by pleasing himself indicates, Chamfort continues the ideal of 'l'honnêteté', allowing that 'honnêtes gens' are real (1968:54#12.55#16.127#339) if rare (1968:227#786.cf. 264#951.358#LI).<sup>70</sup> Such types find little to edify them in social life (1968: 81#154). However the existence of l'honnêteté and its value as a goal is less evident in Chamfort's work than La Rochefoucauld's, which could explain why Chamfort seems to criticise existing morality rather than espousing an alternative and, as a corollary, why there is less of a prescriptive aspect to his writing.<sup>71</sup> This negative emphasis is, of course, connected with Chamfort's infamous misanthropy (Arnaud 1992:xxiii,5,40,112) for several passages express contempt for humanity. Those seeking to know humans are warned to overcome their repugnance (1968:67#86.cf.152#452) and being sad and melancholy is an occupational hazard for students of humanity (1968:145 #417). Distaste for humans is defined as good taste (1968:187#599.cf.95#209, 96-7#214) and acts of goodness are attributed to the fact that the devil cannot be everywhere at once (1968:359#LX). In a claim analogous to La Rochefoucauld's depiction of la paresse, Chamfort suggests that the only forces constraining misanthropy are shortcomings, such as weak character or lack of

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Ficino explicitly founds his philosophy as well as all moral activity on the knowledge of the self. He quotes for this attitude the authority of Augustine ... he explains that the soul is like a mirror in which the divine image can be seen. Self-knowledge is therefore the means to achieve a knowledge of /God (1964:42/3).

<sup>70</sup> Compare 'Letter to A...' (20.8.1756 in Chamfort 1968:366).

<sup>71</sup> For Epstein, Chamfort "claims no wisdom, unlike La Rochefoucauld or La Bruyère or Vauvenargues" (in Arnaud 1992:ix) a point echoed by Arnaud (1992:114). Their assessments continue older views, for Pellisson writes that "ces pensées desolées n'expriment point une doctrine" (1895:135) and Dousset sees Chamfort as "le moraliste sans moralité" (1943:131). Challenging this consensus though is Katz's claim that "unlike La Rochefoucauld, Chamfort establishes a scale of values" (1968:45). I would agree that Chamfort does establish a scale of values (although not that this distinguishes him from La Rochefoucauld) but maintain that his is not as obvious as the Duc's.

ideas (1968:111#270). The only remedies for the apparent inevitability of misanthropy are withdrawing from society (1968:275#1024)<sup>72</sup> or remaining and steeling one's heart or seeing it broken (1986:224#771).

However Chamfort's saturnine view is not unremitting for elements for a critique of misanthropy exist in his work.<sup>73</sup> While contempt for humans is sometimes presented as clairvoyance, in other passages Chamfort attributes it to a perspective that sees only the dregs of humanity. There is also his reminder that "On ne juge pas d'une ville par ses égouts et d'une maison par ses latrines" (1968:103#245), echoing his earlier (misplaced) criticism of La Rochefoucauld as seeing only the latrines and never the palace (1968:54#14). Sometimes Chamfort's disgust is clearly directed at his society rather than humanity as a whole (1968:105#257, 112#275),<sup>74</sup> although these stances are not mutually exclusive, as his comment that humanity's intrinsic evilness is heightened by society (1968:121#307) illustrates.<sup>75</sup> Chamfort also sees misanthropes as really lovers of humanity (1968:105#258), implying that what

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<sup>72</sup> Compare 'Letter to A...' 20.8.1756 in Chamfort (1968:366).

<sup>73</sup> As Pellisson notes:

on commet une erreur autre qu'une injustice, quand on le taxe de misanthropie; sa misanthropie, s'il en a parlé lui-même, ce n'est qu'en commettant une impropriété d'expression. Il fut ... mélancolique, au sens etymologique du mot; misanthrope non pas, il ne pouvait pas être, et pessimiste, moins encore (1895:284)

More recently Furbank has observed that "misanthropy is one of the many poses that Chamfort tries out but cannot make stick" (1992:6).

<sup>74</sup> Chamfort's terminology does not always help to distinguish how global his attack on 'le monde' and social life is. Terms like 'société' and 'le monde' for example, seem to be used in reference to his own society as well as to human association in general. For example, one aphorism begins with reference to "La société, ce qu'on appelle le monde" (1968:96#214) but ends with the lament "Pauvre humanité!" (1968:97#214), implying a critique of social interaction in general. However, another aphorism associates "La société" and "ce qu'on appelle le monde" with "les cercles, les salons" (1968:105#257) indicating criticism of the local scene only.

<sup>75</sup> This makes Williams' reference to "Chamfort's view that ... society ... corrupts human nature" as one of the things that links his thought with Nietzsche's" (1952:87) too uni-causal a description of the moralist's position.

is under attack is not humanity per se but its current degeneration and that some sense of how humanity could and should be underpins his own apparent misanthropy. This peeps through, for example, in his question:

Qu'est-ce que la société, quand la raison n'en forme pas les noeuds, quand le sentiment n'y jette pas d'intérêt, quand elle n'est pas un échange de pensées agréables et de vraie bienveillance? (1968:89#179)

But as intimated, this alternative vision is barely hinted at in Chamfort's work. Virtue can be aspired to (1968:127#342), although in one passage it is defined in the negative, as desirable because it is not vice (1968:85#176). Even a minimal equation of the good with the useful is rejected for what is useful changes (1968:159#471). Interestingly though, Chamfort implies that the converse, that the bad is the harmful, does hold, indicating that what is harmful is eternally so. (As shown, Nietzsche argues the opposite, suggesting that what appears to harm a society at one stage can actually contribute to its long term strength.) Thus, despite occasional glimpses of an alternative morality in Chamfort's claims that the good person is refreshed by good action while the bad cavils at it (1968:305#1159) and that honest people know the truth (1968:127#339), this moralist's energy is devoted to a critique of current conditions. One possible explanation for his failure to prescribe is that he follows the tenet of individuality through to its logical conclusion more consistently than does La Rochefoucauld or Nietzsche. Thus it may be that no positive morality is pushed strenuously by Chamfort because each must find their own virtue.

Another factor mitigating Chamfort's misanthropy, and one that makes him so appealing to Nietzsche and his "gay science" (1974:257#327) of "the eternal comedy of existence" (1974:75#1.cf.Williams 1952:86), is the laughter that sometimes accompanies or overcomes this misanthropy:

A voyant ce qui se passe dans le monde, l'homme le plus misanthrope finirait par s'égayer, et Héraclite par mourir de rire (1968:100#229).

A later passage suggests different kinds of misanthropy - while some is Timonian and melancholy, some can be "moins sombre et quelquefois même très gai" (1968:257#918). Elsewhere disabused lucidity, sometimes a cause of misanthropy, is associated with merriment (1968:127#339). Conversely 'M'

suggests that as complete perspicuity would create bitterness, it is better to alter one's perspectives and see the humorous side of things, for this maintains one's health (1968:203#670). One maxim asserts, as Nietzsche notes (1974:149#95), that "La plus perdue de toutes les journées est celle ou l'on n'a pas ri" (1968:66#80). Nietzsche later praises "the laughter of higher men" (1974:202#177) which, given his admiration for Chamfortian joy, suggests that the moralist belongs to this cohort. And being a laughing misogynist is just one of the oxymoronic facets of Chamfort's rich, contrary character that Nietzsche admires (1974:149#95).<sup>76</sup> Delight in Chamfort's contrasts is something Nietzsche takes over from Chamfort himself (1968:126#335) and again this complexity and variety seems to be valued by each as an end in itself. Thus while La Rochefoucauld is witty, he is not the laughing misanthropist Chamfort is, so that when the tone of Nietzsche's work is humorous rather than ironic, joyous rather than clever, the figure of Chamfort is evoked.

Such comparing and contrasting of the moralists shows that Nietzsche's emphasis on elite individualism blends strands from both, for in his work a strong aesthetic view of the self is yoked to a belief that individualism demands traditional virtues like courage, strength and fortitude. However as is the case with Chamfort, Nietzsche drops La Rochefoucauld's concern with the ability to please and implies that individualism and discovery of the self in its specificity is a good in itself, needing no further defense. This is perhaps explained by the fact that Chamfort and Nietzsche are writing in the wake of Romanticism where such things were accorded central value. And they have probably both also absorbed some of liberalism's emphasis on the value of the individual, although this is a more powerful influence on Nietzsche than Chamfort, as Nietzsche is writing in an intellectual tradition influenced by

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<sup>76</sup> Commentators frequently mention this aspect of Chamfort's personality. As Arnaud puts it:

Chamfort was of reactive temperament, reacting all the more strongly against himself. He never remained set in his ideas, nor let his hatreds rest (1992:122).

He later notes that Chamfort "never attempted intellectual self-integration" (1992:125).



thinkers like JS Mill and Kant. However even if Nietzsche is closer to Chamfort than to La Rochefoucauld in this, Chapters Six to Ten reveal just how important intersubjectivity and peer recognition are in the works of Nietzsche's middle period, a dimension that is usually overlooked in commentaries on his work.

This chapter has examined the ways in which Nietzsche's analysis of moral life, his critique of current moralities and his prescriptions for a new moral outlook appear against the backdrop of the work of La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort. When it comes to attacking current morality, Nietzsche continues both moralists' neo-Socratic mission of disturbing society's complacency about its moral judgements. To this end all three show the mystery and complexity of psychology and morality and highlight the web of dependencies that hems action in, although these themes are more powerful in La Rochefoucauld and Nietzsche than in Chamfort. Nietzsche continues La Rochefoucauld's contention that because of these dependencies, traditional notions of praise and blame for moral outcomes, of responsibility and accountability, demand reconsideration.

When moving from an analysis of moral life to the advocacy of a higher morality, each thinker also suggests that careful management of the multiple self is required in the face of these constraints, although again, because they accentuate the constraints, La Rochefoucauld and Nietzsche pay more attention to the requisite husbandry than does Chamfort. As this suggests, neither La Rochefoucauld nor Nietzsche concludes that free action is impossible but each advocates that such action recognise the web of dependencies within which all humans operate and so try to carve out some freedom within that.

Nietzsche also follows La Rochefoucauld in adducing an ethos which synthesises old and new goods. Both justify many traditional values by aesthetic criteria. Each is clear, however, that only an elite can aspire to this new ethos so that while each invokes nature in defense of these goods and neither sees nature as yielding universal prescriptions. Acting morally and hence beautifully requires the recognition of individuality and specificity.

Chamfort gestures toward a revised morality and appeals to nature to justify new standards of what it is good to be, but he does not articulate this alternative as fully as do La Rochefoucauld and Nietzsche. Nor does he continue La Rochefoucauld's accent on an aesthetic morality nor share his predecessors' interest in the art of pleasing. Although Nietzsche also pays little attention to the art of pleasing, the aesthetic accent in ethics is even sharper in his thought than La Rochefoucauld's. Yet while Nietzsche follows La Rochefoucauld in imbuing this new morality with a strong aesthetic component, his reasons for this are different and he attributes a greater role to reason in this new ethos. In according reason a central role, Nietzsche follows the Enlightenment side of Chamfort.

Chapter Two has surveyed the aspects of Nietzsche's approach to the analysis of moral life that might have been suggested or reinforced by his acquaintance with the work of La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort. However even if Nietzsche worked these things out quite independently of his reading of the moralists, this chapter shows that the middle period's style of moral analysis belongs, in part, to the moralist tradition 'an sich'. Chapter Three "If brevity be the soul" goes on to speculate about the impact that the moralists' use of style might have had on Nietzsche.

One of the things distinguishing the works of the middle period from those before is the use of the aphorism, which is evident in each of the books of this period (and many after). Many commentators hold that Nietzsche's reading of the French moralists was a crucial source for his experiments with form. This is not to suggest that the moralists were the only ones whose example Nietzsche followed. Other writers of aphorisms whose work Nietzsche knew include Goethe, Lichtenberg (1986:336#109), Sterne (1986:239#113) and Schopenhauer. Donnellan, however, contends that the French were the most important source here (1982:x-xi,122,131,164-5). Weinberg also makes the French the dominant influence on Nietzsche's adoption of the aphorism, nominating Pascal and La Bruyère as other French forebears (in O'Flaherty 1976:93). The importance of the French is reiterated by del Caro who invokes Lukacs' belief that they were the major influence (1989:164)<sup>1</sup> and Alexander Nehamas cites Nietzsche's admiration for the pre-Socratics and for the French moralists (1985:14) as reasons for his employment of the aphorism.

Yet while Nietzsche experiments with this tool from the French moralists' dissection of moral life, the aphorism proves unequal to many of his new analytical tasks. As Chapter Two indicates, one of the major ways his analysis departs from La Rochefoucauld's is its scope, both temporal and spatial. Nietzsche explodes the boundaries of the moralist's reflections, moving from the salon to the wider, modern society and to the history of such societies, showing (or making assertions about) how moral practices and values have evolved. With this interest in history, he builds upon Chamfort's example for both are legatees of the Romantic movement and have inherited its historical sense, in theory if not entirely in practice.

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<sup>1</sup> Although Del Caro notes that Nietzsche "considered himself to be the first master of the aphorism among Germans" (1989:161) he goes on to contend that many of Human's aphorisms resemble Schlegel's fragments and echo some of their concerns (1989:161-2).

While brevity might be the soul of wit, and wit may be one of the many qualities Nietzsche admires about the moralists, the aphorism's ability to animate the other qualities Nietzsche values and strives to realise in examining moral life is not so great. Trying to accommodate Nietzsche's expanded analysis of moral life within the aphoristic form is like getting a camel through the eye of a needle. Thus as suggested in the Introduction, the unsuitability of the aphorism for many of Nietzsche's aims must be added to the usual list of explanations for his stylistic variety. Yet while the literature is replete with explanations of the appeal of the aphorism to Nietzsche, few consider its limitations.

A notable exception to this is Kaufmann<sup>2</sup> who writes that:

Involuntarily almost, Nietzsche is driven from style to style in his ceaseless striving for an adequate medium of expression. Each style is characteristically his own, but soon found inadequate, and then drives him on to another newer one. Yet all the experiments cohere because they are essentially not capricious. Their unity one might call "existential".(1950:71)

In his influential work on Nietzsche, Nehamas challenges Kaufmann's claim that Nietzsche's stylistic plurality derives from his inability to find a single adequate form of expression. Nehamas "thoroughly" rejects the suggestion that

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<sup>2</sup> Williams (1952) is another. George Brandes also questions the aphorism's suitability for Nietzsche, albeit from a different angle. He notes how:

It is strange that this man, who learned such an immense amount from French moralists and psychologists like La Rochefoucauld, Chamfort and Stendhal, was able to acquire so little of the self-control of their form. He was never subjected to the restraint which the literary tone of France imposes upon every writer as regards the mention and exhibition of his own person. (1909:55)

Donnellan makes a similar point to Brandes':

In contrast to the guarded approach of the La Rochefoucauld school of maximists, who favour 'on' or 'nous' as subjects of their statements on human nature, but never 'je', Nietzsche is not afraid to introduce what is a (sic) times strongly personal element into his rhetoric, more reminiscent in this (sic) respect of Montaigne's confessional style or the direct engagement of Pascal (1982:157).

the aphorism, along with Nietzsche's other styles, could be found wanting (1985:20), volunteering a more positive explanation for Nietzsche's shifting style.<sup>3</sup> Although there is much to recommend Nehamas's argument, Kaufmann's point should not be so thoroughly dismissed for there are many reasons why the aphorism is unsuitable for the new analytic tasks Nietzsche takes on. This becomes especially evident when his approach to morality is compared with those of La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort.

But the aphorism is just one of several styles Nietzsche practises in his middle period. Just as much of the secondary literature is silent on the question of the aphorism's shortcomings, so, as Nehamas points out, it is purblind to Nietzsche's stylistic diversity (1985:18,22).<sup>4</sup> The works of the middle period evince this plurality for they often use paragraphs of varying lengths which resemble La Rochefoucauld's Réflexions Diverses in form and, to some extent, function. Nietzsche also writes caractères, anecdotes and 'petits dialogues philosophiques', styles employed by Chamfort. Thus the maxim or aphorism is not the only element of style Nietzsche adopts from our two moralists. A more comprehensive view of the relationship between the moralists's style and

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<sup>3</sup> Nehamas attributes Nietzsche's stylistic diversity to choice rather than necessity, to strength rather than lack, by arguing that it allows Nietzsche to intrude himself as an author into his works. As Nehamas sees it, Nietzsche wants "always to insinuate himself between his readers and the world" (1985: 37) in order to make "his own presence as an author impossible to overlook" (1985:38). His constant shifting of styles means that "Nietzsche's interpretations announce themselves as such" (1985:40) for "his many styles make it impossible to get used to his presence and ... to forget it ... They show his perspectivism without saying anything about it" (1985:40).

<sup>4</sup> For Nehamas, studies of Nietzsche's style that focus on his use of the aphorism to the neglect of his other modes of writing are doomed to be incomplete (1985:19).

Nietzsche's shows that what he really continues is their stylistic diversity. As such my argument shares Nehamas's focus on Nietzsche's "most multifarious art of style" (1985:19)<sup>5</sup> but traces this to the moralists, instead of seeing them as Nehamas seems to, as only sources of the aphorism.

As suggested, those who discuss Nietzsche's use of the aphorism tend to focus on its attractions. In this they are following Nietzsche's example for he ventures some explanations of the aphorism's appeal. Several comments are made in the middle period that seem designed to justify his newly-acquired brevity of expression.<sup>6</sup> One aphorism, for example, contends that only poor writing shows the process as well as the outcome of thought (1986:93#188) and another that once the house has been built, the scaffolding should be collapsed (1986:391#335). An earlier aphorism praises brevity by implication, suggesting that only ponderous thinkers are prolix (1986:245#143) and this is echoed in a passage in Science suggesting that long, convoluted sentences are attempts to conceal a writer's flaws (1974:227#282). Human also insists that a short thought need be neither shallow nor shadowy (1986:243#127). A few pages later Nietzsche notes that maxims can express the most durable of ideas, even if or perhaps because, they mean something different to each new age (1986:250#168.cf.336#108.1974:211#226). And a dialogue in Human argues

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<sup>5</sup> Nehamas follows the lead of Ecce Homo in referring to Nietzsche's stylistic plurality in this way. Note though that Hollingdale translates this as "manifold" (Nietzsche 1979:74).

<sup>6</sup> Williams' comments on Nietzsche's praise of the aphorism are interesting here. He writes that:

one feels that Nietzsche is defending the aphorism as a form, not only to others ... but also to himself. He does not, in fact, feel at home in it, and has to convince himself that it, too, produces 'truth' (1952:53).

that unusual style filters superior readers from others (1986:327-8#71).<sup>7</sup>

Others explain Nietzsche's use of the aphorism by claiming that it subverts systematisation and the belief in unity, identity, univocal meaning and discrete cause. According to Shapiro the fragmented form "defeats the idea that in reading we are identifying with a single, continuous thought process" (1989: 22). Nehamas notes that aphorisms "are not systematic, not discursive and not argumentative" (1985:14) and sees them as part of Nietzsche's use of style to attack traditional philosophy. This echoes Kaufmann's point that Nietzsche's use of the aphorism derives from his philosophical objections to system building. Kaufmann further connects it with Nietzsche's preference for posing questions rather than giving answers (1974:82 in Nehamas 1985:15). Similarly for Sarah Kofman the aphorism evades definitive interpretation and so promotes a plurality of interpretations. It also conveys a vision of perpetual motion (1972:163-4 in Nehamas 1985:15-16). Kofman also takes up Nietzsche's claim that his style is a screen, arguing that the use of the aphorism, as well as of metaphor, distinguishes noble readers from others (1972:166 in Nehamas 1985:15). Aphoristic expression is also seen as permitting the display of conflicting emotions and ideas (Allison 1985:xxiv).

Many of these lines of interpretation impute a realist dimension to

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<sup>7</sup> In Book Five of Science Nietzsche continues to reflect on the middle period's adoption of the aphorisms in a (long) passage on brevity, adducing three major arguments in its favour. The first is his 'style as sieve' argument - his unorthodox style separates desirable readers from "just 'anybody'" (1974: 343#381). This echoes a point made in Human that unusual style filters superior readers from others. The second reason is the cold bath approach to problems - "quickly into them and quickly out again" (1974:343-4#381). Nietzsche's final reason is a desire not to corrupt the virtuous by expounding his immoralism at length (1974:345#381).

Nietzsche's use of the aphorism and his discontinuous style in general, holding that he uses style to represent as accurately as possible something about the world or his perspective on it. Some of this supposed congruence between form and content is challenged however by Human's riposte that fragmented form need not signal a fragmented work (1986:243#128).<sup>8</sup>

Del Caro attributes the aphorism's appeal to Nietzsche's:

fear of becoming a Fachidiot, an expert on some narrow field, and to his profound belief that one must spend time on and with oneself, which means that Nietzsche was no great lover of those who wrote long books and placed demands on his critical patience and weak eyes. As an advocate of the new, of transformation, and of the unexplored, he was by temperament inclined to be synoptic (1989:162).

Like Kaufmann he links it with a preference for suggestion over declamation (1989:164) and sees it as conducive to creative freedom (1989:165). Del Caro also cites Lukacs' association of the aphorism with the observation of social change (1989:163-4). Salomé offers a more pragmatic explanation, the sort hinted at in Del Caro's reference to Nietzsche's 'weak eyes', when she claims that the aphorism was forced on Nietzsche by "illness and by his way of life" (in Gilman 1987:117). Her view is echoed by Hayman (1980:215).<sup>9</sup>

Whatever the reasons for the aphorism's attractions, many commentators accept that knowing Rée and reading the French moralists stimulated Nietzsche's interest in this form. According to Donnellan's study of the impact that reading French writers had on Nietzsche's development:

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<sup>8</sup> Compare Nietzsche's later reflections on the ideas in Human in the preface to Genealogy:

from the beginning they were not isolated thoughts, nor random nor sporadic ones, but sprang from a common root, from a primary desire for knowledge (1956:150#II).

<sup>9</sup> Hayman claims that:

The style of the book [Human] had been determined partly by physical pain: both his eyes and his head compelled him to write tersely, telegraphically. (1980:215).

His footnote refers to a letter to Peter Gast (5.10.1879) in which, presumably, Nietzsche tells Gast this.



Nowhere is the influence of the French on Nietzsche's middle period more apparent than in his adoption of La Rochefoucauld's reductionist methods of moral analysis ... [and] his use of the aphorism and maxim forms. (1982:70)

In considering the role of the aphorism in Nietzsche's work, it would therefore be illuminating to consider its role in the work of La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort.

According to Starobinski, the disjointed form of La Rochefoucauld's Maximes reflects the de-centred self that work depicts - the diversity and contradiction of personality are mirrored in his writing (1966:22). This line of argument is analagous to the 'realist' accounts of Nietzsche's use of the aphorism above. However one problem with his approach is that when Starobinski moves from describing the chaos of La Rochefoucauld's 'natural man' to outlining the moralist's aesthetic ethos, he fails to consider what the new relationship between style and substance might be. Starobinski cites the Reflexions as well as the Maxims to illustrate this aesthetic ethos but nowhere notes that a reflexion is not a maxim nor that reading a collection of the former creates quite a different impression from a collection of the latter. Given this lacuna, other explanations of the moralist's use of the maxim need to be considered.

Attunement to individual specificity is apparent in La Rochefoucauld's methodological prescriptions as well as his ethical ones (Chapter Two). This attunement explains the moralist's insistence that moral analysis attend to detail and avoid generalisation for when the aim is to assess moral motivations as accurately as possible, appreciating individuality is a vital, albeit daunting goal:

Pour bien savoir les choses, il en faut savoir le détail; et comme il est presque infini, nos connaissances sont toujours superficielles et imparfaites (1977:54#106).<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> According to Moore such attention to detail is overlooked by most of the moralist's readers:

La Rochefoucauld is given no credit for what perhaps made up the chief novelty of his writing, this objectivity of attitude, patience in distinguishing small hidden features of behaviour, untrammelled

The need to attend to the particulars of each individual in order to understand them also explains why "Il est plus aisé de connaître l'homme en général que de connaître l'homme en particulier" (1977:82#436).

Chamfort shares La Rochefoucauld's interest in detail, suggesting that real knowledge of the world can only be gleaned from "mille observations fines" (1968:89#177). While Chamfort acknowledges that some consider attention to minutiae trivial, the separation between the great and the petty underpinning such disdain is false for "ces petites choses soient très importantes au succès des plus grandes affaires" (1968:89#177). In this Chamfort echoes La Rochefoucauld's idea that the great person has broad vision as well as an eye for detail. Elsewhere Chamfort claims that in small matters people show themselves as they really are (1968:62#52), indicating again that truth lies in the fine print. 'M' equates immaturity with only knowing how to read "les gros caractères" (1968:309#1186) and Chamfort's critique of other moralists' propensity to generalise has been discussed.

The importance of minutiae obviously helps to explain the appeal of the aphorism to the moralists for the aphorism is a device suited to honing in on detail. As the coming chapters show, such sensitivity to the details of psychology is something Nietzsche also evinces in his middle period. Although he segregates humans into higher and lower types and does not hold all individuals to be equally unique, in other ways Nietzsche is alive to the details of and differences between drives and motivations, paying microscopic

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persistence in seeing how things actually work, how men really behave (1969:38).

attention to matters of psychology. Thus like La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort, he might have been drawn to the aphorism as a vehicle for finely-honed observations. As Nietzsche's critique of free will suggests, the pursuit of such finely-grained knowledge is impeded by language, for language is inadequate to expose and express that which is specific or unique:

words really exist only for **superlative** degrees of these processes and drives; and where words are lacking, we are accustomed to abandon exact observation because exact thinking there becomes painful ... (1982:71 #115.FN's emphasis)

As language cannot offer Nietzsche the precision psychological study demands, style might go some way to compensate for this.

However as the above point about stylistic diversity indicates, neither La Rochefoucauld nor Chamfort confine themselves to aphoristic writing. A more rounded appreciation of their work requires consideration of their other writing techniques. From this wider vantage point it emerges that the association of specificity, novelty and individuality with the aphorism requires modification. As La Rochefoucauld's *Reflexions* illustrate, the detail of what is peculiar or unique can sometimes be better exfoliated in a longer form.

The *Reflexion* plays no part in Chamfort's repertoire and other stylistic devices distinguishing him from La Rochefoucauld are his *caractères*, anecdotes and '*petits dialogues philosophiques*'. These are all media for an even fuller expression of specificity than the maxim or aphorism for they eschew the sort of universalism that a seemingly definitive aphorism can convey and allow individual voices to resonate through the text. As Chamfort's opening remarks concede, the aphorism is vulnerable to a generalised reading for although superior readers do not infer that maxims are of necessarily general import, inferior ones might (1968:51#1). *Caractères*, anecdotes and dialogues, by their very form, are less susceptible to such inferences. And these forms are emulated in Nietzsche's middle period for, although not as common as the aphorism or *reflexion*, there are short dialogues that might have been modelled on Chamfort's example (cf. Williams 1952:87,180) with

exchanges of ideas between characters who are anonymous or known only by a letter.<sup>11</sup>

Dagen's claim that the fragmentation of Chamfort's work "correspond à l'éclatement d'une société dont l'histoire se décompose en histoires" (in Chamfort 1968:25) is analogous to the way Lukacs links Nietzsche's style with social change. Katz has a slightly different take on this, although she only discusses Chamfort's maxims. For her the quality of Chamfort's maxims implies that things can change and possibly for the better. She compares his maxims to La Rochefoucauld's and argues that Chamfort's maxims do not aspire to the same completeness or certainty as his predecessor's:

They do not presuppose that there are limits to ideas and that one can give them definitive expression. By rejecting the self-sufficient quality of the traditional maxim and by rejection the stability which this quality implies, Chamfort /rejects hopelessness. Things can change ... as long as they are not immutable, they are not irreparable. The maxim of Chamfort is a vital form (1968:45-6).

The aphorism is but one of several styles Nietzsche practises in this phase. He often, indeed more frequently, uses paragraphs of varying lengths which resemble La Rochefoucauld's Réflexions Diverses in form and, to some extent, function. That Nietzsche writes caractères, anecdotes and short dialogues also shows that the maxim or aphorism is not the only element of style adopted from the moralists. Therefore along with emulating some of their particular devices, he also continues the moralists' stylistic diversity.

However while making finely-honed moral and psychological observations and finding the best means for communicating them are important aspects of the middle period, they do not exhaust Nietzsche's interest in moral

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<sup>11</sup> See Nietzsche 1986:327-8#71.333#90. "The Wanderer and His Shadow" also begins and ends with a dialogue between these two characters. 1982:138#226,#232.139#234.194#465,#467.197#477.199#483.199-200#485.201#491,#492,#493.208#519. (144#255) continues the dialogue format but extends its length considerably. 1974:104#33.146#93.200#168.201#172.203#181.205#190.216-17#255.254#320.

life. A strong historical aspect informs his approach to morality<sup>12</sup> and, as Chapter Two argues, Nietzsche assembles reminders about morality's past for two main purposes - the scholarly and the practical. The first serves truth, the second the transvaluation of values. Nietzsche's analysis of moral life looks back to a time when the Christian ethos and its modern offshoots were unknown and forward to a time when they will be obsolete, at least for superior types. As this suggests, and the whole conception of genealogy shows, appeal to history plays a pivotal role in Nietzsche's accounts of morality and this is something that distinguishes his work quite sharply from La Rochefoucauld's.<sup>13</sup>

Just as Nietzsche's use of history is dual purpose, having scholarly and practical value, so his appeal to history operates at two levels - the particular and the general. At the particular level he is interested in showing how moral designations have evolved, so traces the origins of a drive back to need, fear, weakness or the quest for self- or communal-preservation. At the general level history is marshalled to show that these designations have evolved - how they have is less pertinent for the mere fact that things were done or seen differently indicates their malleability.<sup>14</sup> Thus despite the varnish of eternity coating moral values and doctrines of human nature, Nietzsche insists on their mutability (1986:12-13#2,19-20#16,26#27,36#42,54#101,58#107,163#443,268#223,321#43.1974:174-5#116), illustrating this with accounts of past moral evaluation and experience (1982:26-7#38,82#131,99#157,116#195.1974:196-7#152).

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<sup>12</sup> As Hayman notes:

In practice, Nietzsche moves away from his declared objective of concentrating on small, inconspicuous truths. Many of his statements centre moralizingly on major developments in the history of morality (1980:200).

<sup>13</sup> Some illustration of this comes in Baker's observation that the belief that knowledge of history is essential to the prudent man is absent from the Maximes (1983:217).

<sup>14</sup> As Nehamas puts it "Having an origin is being part of history, and this implies that it is at least possible also to have an end". (1985:33)

However Nietzsche's use of history is more successful in the general than the particular. This might be because his knowledge of the past derives mainly from his philological studies and is therefore largely confined to classical Greece and Rome, although he is also knowledgeable about the Renaissance.<sup>15</sup> Beyond this Nietzsche seems to have little knowledge of or interest in the specifics of past social formations yet frequently alludes to historical eras other than these - to the primeval times of "earlier cultures" (1986:36#43), "the longest and most remote periods of the human past" (1974: 175#117) and to "these primeval conditions" (1986:353#181). However allusion is the 'mot juste' here for Nietzsche often appeals to the past without evidence or examples. Thus while he makes much of the historical sense acquired since the Romantic period (1982:117-18#197, 1974:137#83, 268#337) and insists that "to understand history we have to go in quest of the living remnants of historical epochs - we have to **travel**" (1986:268#223.FN's emphasis), with the exception of antiquity, there is little evidence of such journeys informing his work. For much of the time Nietzsche waves a hand in the direction of the past but provides little to support his claims about how it was in the beginning.<sup>16</sup> What seems to matter most is the fact, rather than the

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<sup>15</sup> He appears to have learned much about the Renaissance from the lectures of a colleague at Basel, Burckhardt. (Gilman 1987:62,136)

<sup>16</sup> Discussing Nietzsche's views on crime and punishment, Brandes notes that:

As Nietzsche, who is so exclusively taken up by the psychological aspect, discards all accessories of scholarship, it is impossible to examine directly the accuracy of his assertions. The historical data will be found collected in Rée's paragraphs on resentment and the sense of justice ... (1909:34)

Hayman writes that:

The historical insights which so impressed Jacob Burckhardt were based less on research than on guesswork. Nietzsche was ingenious at applying self-knowledge to social movements, cantilevering out into the remote past from/analysis of his own needs for self-assertion, reassurance, revenge, destruction, hero-worship. (1980:1/2)

For Hayman the beginning of the middle period was that "the decisive moment of submitting to a habit he would never throw off - generalizing on the basis of inadequate research" (1980:190). Compare Berkowitz's description of the later Nietzsche's use of history:

facts, of history (1986:321#43). Thus in Nietzsche's case (with the exception of Antiquity and the Renaissance), 'Il est plus aisé de connaître l'histoire en général que de la connaître en particulier'.

Insofar as La Rochefoucauld is concerned with origins, it is usually the history of a certain psychological drive - he compares the drive's provenance in the self with its public manifestation. One of the Reflexions is devoted to the psychological origins of most illnesses (1977:125#XII). Although he alludes to four major epochs - 'l'âge d'or,' 'd'argent', 'd'airain' and 'de fer' (1977:125#XII), they really only enframe his discussion of psychosematic sickness - there is no strong sense of history being vital to his explanation. And while La Rochefoucauld makes passing reference to the past elsewhere (1977:53#92,128-30#XIV,136#XVII,138#XIX) his major interest in temporality is at the personal level, in ageing for example and how this affects conduct, drives and capacity (1977:53#93,54#109,112,63#210,64#222,75#341,80#408,81#416,418,423,82#430,83#444,84#461,131-2#XV,137-8#XVIII). An interest in death also pervades his work (1977:47#21,23,26,63-4#215,64#221,88-90#504) but again this illustrates that his interest in time is, like that in society, on a much smaller scale than Nietzsche's.

While Chamfort continues his predecessor's concern with detail and specificity, this co-exists in his work with a wider vision and greater historical sense, illustrating another aspect of Chamfort's Romantic legacy. Chamfort discusses, albeit briefly, why society and government have evolved (1968:64#67,72#98) and asserts that history has been a series of horrors (1968:160#473). In general a stronger sense of the past informs Chamfort's thought than La Rochefoucauld's (1968:163#491,272#1003). However for the most part, a hand is waved in the direction of social evolution rather than any detailed analysis of it being undertaken which suggests that Nietzsche is continuing Chamfort's example in his handwaving approach to history. Moreover

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Nietzsche names no names, dates no events and shows scant concern for variations, anomalies and details ... Nietzsche's genealogy, strikingly devoid of any empirical evidence or scholarly apparatus, is anything but patiently documentary (1993:81.cf.84).

Chamfort's style offers no model for accommodating a more empirical approach to history, for, lacking the Reflexion form, his modes of expression are all more suited to the brief expression of ideas, rather than the more careful exfoliation of an argument that a genuine interest in history and its variety would demand.

Nietzsche's analyses are diachronic, reaching back, rhetorically at least, to the dim recesses of human evolution and in this they continue, but intensify, Chamfortian handwaving. But unlike Chamfort, Nietzsche is writing in the wake of Hegel and has so thoroughly imbibed the belief in the shaping power of history, the belief that "The becoming drags the has-been along behind it" (1982:32#49), that he emphasises the way the past informs the self at its most personal. Thus to La Rochefoucauld's portrait of the protean self, Nietzsche adds history:

to know ourselves: we require history, for the past continues to flow within us in a hundred waves; we ourselves are, indeed, nothing but that which at every moment we experience of this continued flowing (1986:268#223.cf.218#17).

However this infusion of the self with history makes Nietzsche's handwaving even more culpable than Chamfort's given that he wants to accentuate the significance of the past. Because Nietzsche also wants to insist that the self, or at least superior self, is a composite of details, his failure to supply the sort of historical detail that informs identity is troubling.

As Nietzsche's vignette of the self flowing with history also intimates, understanding history and especially the history of moral sensations becomes a crucial component of self-knowledge, implying that another reason for Nietzsche's interest in genealogy is its contribution to self-knowledge. A genealogy of morals informs us about part of the process through which we have become what we are. His genealogy of morals and of the self also illustrates the ways in which the potential of the superior has been truncated when the values propounded have been those of the mediocre many:

Our weak, unmanly, social concepts of good and evil and their tremendous ascendancy over body and soul have finally weakened all bodies and souls and sapped the self-reliant, independent, unprejudiced men, the pillars of a **strong** civilisation (1982:100#163.FN's emphasis).



In this we see again the twin dimensions of Nietzsche's appeal to the past - the scholarly and the practical - for his aim is not just to show how the potential of superior types has become suppressed but also to begin to undo this distortion. Coming to see what is erroneous in inherited values and ideas might instigate emancipation from them. As Science exclaims:

To this day the task of **incorporating** knowledge and making it instinctive is only beginning to dawn on the human eye and is not yet clearly discernible; it is a task that is seen only by those who have comprehended that so far we have incorporated only our errors and that all our consciousness relates to errors (1974:85#11.FN's emphasis).

This difference in historical sense between Nietzsche and La Rochefoucauld and, to a lesser extent Chamfort, becomes even more salient in matters of style for while Nietzsche adopts the aphorism from the moralists, this is singularly unsuitable for the times when his analysis takes a broad trajectory in moral observation and speculation. Born of a limited arena - the salon<sup>17</sup> - the aphorism cannot bear the historical breadth that attracts Nietzsche. His purview often requires lengthier argument and illustration (or allusion) than the aphorism can offer which explains why, when he wants to emphasise the history of moral designations or exemplify alternative moralities, he reverts to the longer paragraph form, which can occupy two or more pages<sup>18</sup> and which, following La Rochefoucauld, might be better called a

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<sup>17</sup> Liebich sees La Rochefoucauld's style as reflecting salon life:

Les préoccupations diverses du groupe rendent compte des Maximes et de leur extrême variété. Comme le salon dont il est sorti, le recueil de La Rochefoucauld n'est pas non plus d'inspiration unique, mais relève de traditions multiples, a première vue incompatibles. Comme les sujets traités, le ton du recueil n'est pas uniforme ... nous estimons que les Maximes de La Rochefoucauld conservent la trace du milieu eclectique et varié du salon de Mme de Sable (1982:113).

Later she adds that:

la pluralité même des lectures possibles nous semble une caractéristique de la culture mondaine dans la mesure où l'auteur refuse l'affirmation dogmatique d'un point de vue (1982:373).

<sup>18</sup> Thus del Caro's claim that " In The Dawn and The Gay Science, we see works that could have been written as expository prose, for they have a thematic unity" (1989:162) is curious for large tracts of these books are

reflexion than an aphorism.<sup>19</sup> Williams is one commentator who attends to this, observing that:

Nietzsche feels the epigram form to be a shackle, a drag on his expression. This explains why his genuine epigrams are usually poor in quality, and also why he tends to expand them into essayettes. It is the opposite tendency to La Rochefoucauld's. The number of sections which can be called epigrammatic is relatively small. Nietzsche's favourite form is the short paragraph, from one to four/or five pages, in which a salient thought is stated, investigated and summed up. The influence of La Rochefoucauld is apparently here again one which Nietzsche was unwilling to submit to, and he is not happy when writing pure epigrams (1952:48/9.cf.53,180).

However Williams does not entertain the possibility that in writing 'essayettes', Nietzsche is following La Rochefoucauld's example, but it is the example of the 'Réflexion' rather than the maxim. Instead Williams nominates Pascal as the source of this (1952:180) but it is curious that while Williams is aware of Nietzsche's stylistic diversity, he is either oblivious to this same trait or sees it as of negligible significance in La Rochefoucauld.<sup>20</sup> So Nietzsche can be

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expository prose. He writes as if they comprised only aphorisms. Compare Kunnas' description of Human as "ce recueil de sentences et d'aphorismes" (1980:98), illustrating again the point about commentators' aphorism fetish.

<sup>19</sup> As Moore notes:

He was careful to give his first edition a triple title: Réflexions ou Sentences et maximes morales. Many of what we refer to as Maximes are really 'réflexions' if we adhere to the usual meaning of réflexion as a series of comments or definitions, of undetermined length. The Maxime is an epigram, a single thought reduced to its most concentrated expression. (1969:6)

<sup>20</sup> Kaufmann (in Nietzsche 1974:178fn15) also ignores the Reflexions when commenting on La Rochefoucauld's impact on Nietzsche. Patton's claim that length is not a criterion of the aphorism (1993:x) licences the continued labelling of Nietzsche's long paragraphs as aphorisms. However this deviates considerably from the standard view that length is a crucial determinant of an aphorism (Zellner 1954:28). It is also somewhat unsatisfactory given Nietzsche's praise of brevity which is one of the things drawing him to the aphoristic form.

Donnellan seems to be of a similar view to Patton, suggesting that Nietzsche's aphorisms stand "between/ the curt maxim" and "the more expansive essay" (1982:154/5). He concedes that Nietzsche's aphorisms are unusually long and tries to defend this by comparing them to La

read as wedding Chamfort's awareness of history's significance with an element of La Rochefoucauld's style - the reflexion.

The aphorism is suitable for some of Nietzsche's foci - especially when he remains on La Rochefoucauld's terrain and feels, for the most part, that an historical perspective is less imperative. This is the case in his discussion of things like friendship (1986:136#296,137#305,139#327,180#499,186#559,274#247), women (1986:150#377,#383,151#391,152#398)<sup>21</sup> and manners (1986:139#324,#328). However even on these topics the aphorism is not the sole vehicle for Nietzsche's ideas,<sup>22</sup> further highlighting its limitations.

Early in Human Nietzsche applies the genealogical method to his own practices and experiences some 'pudenda origo' because of the unscientific origins of the aphorism and close psychological observation in general (1986:33#37). This disturbs him because, as shown in Chapter One, he likes to portray his forays into psychology as part of the scientific tradition. Although he goes on to defend the aphorism by reference to its fruits, citing the work of Rée, his discomfort reflects the fact that not all of the characteristics that mark the middle period off from his previous writings sit comfortably together. In this case, Nietzsche's pride in positivism clashes with his legacy from the salon. Some of the other tensions have been illustrated throughout this chapter where it has emerged that the aphorism is an inappropriate vehicle for Nietzsche's attempts at a more systematic and a more historical analysis of the issues in moral life and identity formation than its

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Rochefoucauld's Reflexions. However instead of considering that Nietzsche is writing reflexions in the manner of the moralist, he 'solves' the problem by saying that La Rochefoucauld also wrote long aphorisms! (1982:155)

<sup>21</sup> However as Chapters Nine and Ten show, some of Nietzsche's discussions of gender do take an historical perspective and thus expand beyond the aphorism. This chapter also shows that his reflections on women illustrate perfectly the point about handwaving history, for in 'explaining' women's position, he often refers to the past but provides little to evidence his assertions.

<sup>22</sup> See (1986:118-9#250.1974:112#47) for lengthier discussions of manners. Nietzsche's more extended discussions of friendship will be canvassed in Chapter Six and of women in Chapters Nine and Ten.

masters, the French moralists, made. Thus although the aphorism might be suited to a fine grained analysis of personality and to the communication of specificity, this is only one aspect of Nietzschean analysis. When he moves beyond this, the aphorism rapidly loses its utility. However this chapter has also shown that while use of the aphorism is a characteristic Nietzsche's work shares with that of the French moralists, he also perpetuates their stylistic diversity. This need for an array of styles can, in turn, be linked in part back to the limitations of the aphorism.

Chapter Four.  
All is not Vanity:  
Egoism, Self-love and Vanity.

Chapter Two contended that one of the motives of Nietzsche's genealogy of morals was to discredit values that simply serve the common interest and to clear the ground for the creation or resurgence of those fostering strong individualism. In this questions of egoism, self-love and vanity take on central importance. This chapter analyses the role these concepts play in the works of the middle period and considers what contribution reading the French moralists might have made to Nietzsche's thinking about them. Nietzsche's originality and distance from his French forebears will also become evident. While Donnellan suggests that La Rochefoucauld is a crucial influence on Nietzsche's thinking about egoism<sup>1</sup> and vanity,<sup>2</sup> it will be shown that, as William notes,<sup>3</sup> Chamfort could also be an important source for many of these ideas, especially with his affirmation of self-love and his particular

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<sup>1</sup> La Rochefoucauld introduced him to the central thesis of egoism as the only possible source of the "moral" phenomena, the positive implication of which insight Nietzsche was henceforth to expand and elaborate until they (sic) became the most significant element of his mature philosophy ... the effect of La Rochefoucauld's work on Nietzsche was much more significant than that of the Essais or the Pensées (1982:65).

More generally, Ellenberger notes that:

the systematic search for deception and self-deception and the uncovering of underlying truth ... seems to have started with the French moralists of the 17th century. La Rochefoucauld in his Maxims unmasked virtuous attitudes and acts as disguised manifestations of amour-propre ... Nietzsche, who was an admirer of both the French moralists and of Schopenhauer was another exponent of the unmasking trend.(1970:537.cf.Clark 1987:73)

<sup>2</sup> "Many of the analyses [of vanity] restate observations already made by La Rochefoucauld". (Donnellan 1982:76.cf.1982b:599)

<sup>3</sup> Among the affiliations between Chamfort and Nietzsche that Williams identifies are Chamfort's "distinction between pride and vanity" and his view that society "is in essence a continual battle of opposed individual interests in which vanity is the main driving force" (1952:87).

critique of vanity. The chapter concludes by looking at the relationship of egoism, self-love and vanity to justice.

"From Salon to Civilisation" also shows Nietzsche trying to forge an analysis of action devoid of the dominant evaluations of good and evil, one which has an a priori assumption of moral innocence. The concept of egoism is crucial here for Nietzsche identifies it as the provenance of all action. Egoism is a natural force that he sees as sharing nature's amorality. This is clear in Daybreak's "The realm of beauty is bigger" where a thought experiment is mooted - that human action be seen as nature is and enjoyed for the variety of its forms, without the intrusion of moral judgement (1982:194-5#468). This echoes Human's claim that:

it is absurd to praise and censure nature and necessity. As he [the man of knowledge] loves a fine work of art but does not praise it since it can do nothing for itself, as he stands before the plants, so he must he stand before the actions of men and before his own. He can admire their strength, beauty, fullness, but he may not find/ any merit in them (1986:57/8#107.cf.27#28.1982:9#3)

In these passages the movement toward moral evaluation by aesthetic criteria discussed in Chapter Two can be discerned. But the general point is that egoism is the primary datum of human life, with morality appearing later to interpret the actions egoism generates. In Daybreak, discussing "Drives transformed by moral judgements" Nietzsche declares that in itself, no drive has:

any moral character at all, nor even a definite attendant sensation of pleasure or displeasure: it acquires all this, as its second nature, only when it enters into relations with drives already baptised good or evil or is noted as a quality of beings the people has already evaluated and determined in a moral sense (1982:26#38).

Later he asserts that:

there is nothing good, nothing beautiful, nothing sublime, nothing evil in itself, but ... there are states of soul in which we impose such words upon things external to and within us. We have again **taken back** the predicates of things, or at least remembered that it was we who **lent** them to them (1982:133#210.FN's emphasis.cf.1986:54#101,55#103,77 #141)

As this implies, the terms egoism and self-love carry no negative

connotations in Nietzsche's analyses<sup>4</sup> - that they usually do testify to morality's traditional function of preserving the collective and treating self-interest as threatening (1986:232#91,296#385.1982:91#143,134#215,207#516.1974:258#328). But rather than seek new, untainted words to express these forces, Nietzsche tries to rehabilitate existing ones. In "The word 'vanity'" he acknowledges that transvaluing words in this way is not, however, an easy task:

It is troublesome that certain words which we moralists cannot avoid using bear within them a kind of moral censure deriving from those ages in which the most immediate and natural impulses in man were made heretical ... There is no help for it, we are obliged to use such words, but when we do so we must close our ears to the whisperings of ancient habits (1986:325#60).

This also indicates that in Nietzsche's depiction of egoism and self-love we witness a transvaluation of values rather than just of the process of evaluation. Here he does not simply forward new reasons for valuing these things but gives drives that had been discredited a new status. As this reference to transvaluation intimates and the "two kinds of deniers" section of Daybreak illustrates, contrary to some of his rhetoric, Nietzsche does not try to evaluate the whole of moral life from some neutral, amoral zone. Rather than going beyond good and evil altogether he aims to transcend Christian and post-Christian notions of good and evil and in their stead put new values, recycled classical ones or traditional goods with new contexts and/or new rationales (cf. Berkowitz 1993:3).

At the core of Nietzsche's analysis of moral life is the idea that all action is egoistic (1986:12#1,71#133,382#285.1982:93#148.1974:114#49) and, in the first instance, innocent.<sup>5</sup> "The innocent element in so-called evil acts"

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<sup>4</sup> As Donnellan notes:

egoism represents for him neither "sin" ... nor even "vice" in the traditional moralistic sense, but simply an inescapable condition of existence of the human organism (1982:72).

<sup>5</sup> Nietzsche associates this idea with Wagner, writing in Science's "Schopenhauer's followers" of "what is distinctively Wagnerian in Wagner's heroes: I mean the innocence of the utmost selfishness" (1974:154#99).

in Human asserts that:

All 'evil' acts are motivated by the drive to preservation or, more exactly, by the individual's intention of procuring pleasure and avoiding displeasure; so motivated, however, they are not evil (1986: 53#99.cf.56#104).

This idea returns a few sections later in "The innocent element in wickedness" which declares that "pleasure in oneself is neither good nor bad" (1986:55 #103). It is developed shortly after in a passage from Human visited above, "Unaccountability and innocence":

It is the individual's sole desire for self-enjoyment (together with the fear of losing it) which gratifies itself in every instance, let a man act as he can, that is to say, as he must: whether his deeds be those of vanity, revenge, pleasure, utility, malice, cunning or those of sacrifice, sympathy, knowledge ... Everything is innocence: and knowledge is the path to insight into this innocence. If pleasure, egoism, vanity are **necessary** for the production of the moral phenomena ... who could venture to denigrate those means? (1986:58#107.FN's emphasis)

Similarly "The apostate of the free spirit" in Daybreak claims that such a spirit "counts the theory of the **innocence of all opinions** as being as well founded as the theory of the innocence of all actions" (1982:35#56.FN's emphasis).<sup>6</sup> No matter what its goal, form or forum, egoistic action (a tautology in Nietzsche's estimation) is accompanied by a sensation of power which in turn brings a diffuse feeling of pleasure which might be called the pleasure of self-assertion (1986:56#104).<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> As such Dannhauser's point that:

The gay science describes the process [of existence] without explaining it; it affirms life without judging it. The scientific view is not deadly, for it liberates man by teaching him that his existence is innocent (1974:171)

contains some truth but it is unclear why he waits until discussing Science to mention it, for as these quotations show, this view is part of the middle period as a whole. However as Chapter Two argues, and the rest of the dissertation will evidence, Nietzsche does not simply affirm life without judging it in the way Dannhauser claims he does.

<sup>7</sup> Here Nietzsche's analysis is refreshingly self-reflexive. Human's "Pleasure in Knowledge" numbers the pleasures that pursuing knowledge brings and includes the fact that:

one here becomes conscious of one's strength; for the same reason, that is to/say, that gymnastic exercises are pleasurable even when there are



The innocence of egoism also has a parallel in aesthetics for Daybreak praises "innocent music" which:

thinks wholly and solely of itself, believes in itself, and has forgotten the world in contemplation of itself ... [it] speaks to itself of itself and no longer knows that there are hearers and listeners and effects and failures (1982:145#255).

As shall be shown, egoism's laudable self-absorption and autonomy contrasts with vanity's heteronomy, a view compatible with Nietzsche's wider critique of honour (Chapter Eight).

Insistence on egoism's innocence is clearly linked to the sustained attack on free will waged in the middle period. As Nietzsche's emphasis on the original innocence of action suggests, one of the reasons he repudiates the idea of free will is his rejection of its corollary that action is inherently moral and thus praise- or blameworthy, because freely chosen (1986:53#99). However the ambiguity of the term 'innocent', allowing it to bear the neutral meaning of beyond praise or blame or to be a term of approval, is reflected in his thinking.<sup>8</sup> Despite attempting a disinterested analysis of the initial innocence of egoism, at many points Nietzsche's discussion takes on a moral hue and such egoism becomes not just a brute fact about human action but something to be celebrated. I call this the slide from egoism to self-love, with self-love denoting the affirmation of egoism. This occurs when supposedly amoral descriptions of egoism become celebrations of self-love with Nietzsche arguing that the egoism at the core of action be not just acknowledged but embraced.<sup>9</sup>

This slide from egoism to self love is apparent in the passage in Human describing the Christian who, if only momentarily, is freed of the self-contempt

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no spectators (1986:119/20#252).

<sup>8</sup> The German noun is *Unschuld* and the adjective *unschuldig*. Both can connote innocence that is freedom from guilt (hence *un-Schuld*) or innocence that is freedom from knowledge, that is ignorance or naivete. The former is approving (or at least not disapproving), the second is more neutral.

<sup>9</sup> This same slide is evident in Nietzsche's appeals to nature. Although he frequently insists that nature must be looked upon as an innocent, amoral zone, at others he continues the Romantic gesture toward nature as a source of the good, as prescribing how life should be organised.

aroused by his religion's "false, unscientific interpretation of his actions and sensations" (1986:72-3#134). Such a person is not released into a dispassionate view of the self and its action but into self-love, experiencing the novelty of "pleasure in himself, his contentment at his own strength ... he loves himself again, he feels it" (1986:72#134). Although the Christian misinterprets "the love with which fundamentally he loves himself" (1986:73#134) as divine, Nietzsche's approbation of this primal self-love is unmistakable. In "The Wanderer and His Shadow" Socrates is promoted as a guide to morals and reason for the future, partly because he endorses the "joy in living and in one's own self" (1986:332#86). Daybreak's tenet that self-loathing is incompatible with goodness and that the good person must first be "benevolently and beneficently inclined towards himself" (1982:207#516.cf.#517)<sup>10</sup> also suggests that rejecting self-abnegating morality leads not to an impartial appreciation of egoism but to the joy of self-love.

So notwithstanding the middle period's continual rhetoric about scientific knowledge being disinterested and disengaged and its aim to analyse action before imposing moral judgement, Nietzsche's tendency toward a doctrine giving positive moral value to egoism seeps through. Instead of such egoism representing the primary, neutral datum of human life, with his new moral interpretations being added to egoistic actions later, in some instances Nietzsche's analysis of egoism has an a priori normative element and this immediate affirmation of ego can be termed self-love.

Three possible explanations for this occasional elision of egoism and self-love can be discerned. The first is a slight sloppiness. On this reading, egoism and self-love should represent discrete stages of the analysis with

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<sup>10</sup> Nietzsche writes:

Bleiben wir immerhin für unsere Zeit dabei, daß Wohlwollen und Wohltun den guten Menschen ausmache; nur laßt uns hinzufügen:,, vorausgesetzt, daß er zuerst **gegen sich selber** wohlwollend und wohltuend gesinnt sei!" (1969:252#516.FN's emphasis)

As Chapter Five shows the term 'Wohlwollen', which Hollingdale translates as benevolence, is also used positively to describe relationships between people.

egoism being the neutral datum of human life and self-love a moral gloss on this. Should the discussion sometimes slide between the two, this is an analytical misdemeanour and is not to be accorded undue significance. By this interpretation Nietzsche's establishment of egoism as life's immediate datum means that his subsequent, more subjective ethic of self-love has a solid and realist foundation and his ethical system an 'amor fati' quality - seeing reality and affirming it. This ethic takes a basic fact about human life, egoism, and allows people to feel good about it, in contrast to prior moral doctrines that have, as indicated, made ego a four letter word.<sup>11</sup> Nietzsche's reflections at the end of the first book of Human on how to live in the truth without falling into despair and nihilism would seem to fit with this - the world has no meaning in itself but the courageous can incorporate this truth and forge lives which are "much simpler and emotionally cleaner than our present life is" (1986:30#34).

Another explanation of the elision is that in praising, rather than just describing, egoism Nietzsche is deliberately compensating for the calumny it suffers in current moral frameworks. Such correction could be required before egoism can be restored to a position of neutrality in future moral schemas, as it cancels out past condemnations. This means that Nietzsche's praise for egoism is a short term, strategic measure adopted for the purpose of eventually neutralising the term, so that egoism will ultimately occupy a neutral position in his analysis. Examples of this include the discussion of the "Morality of the mature individual" in Human (1986:50#95), the injunction to "Throw off discontent with your nature, forgive yourself your own ego" in "Forward" at the close of Book Six of Human (1986:134-5#292) and "A Suggestion" (1982: 48#79) and "Distant Prospect" (1982:93-4#148) in Daybreak.

The third cause of this elision could be that Nietzsche's very ambition to isolate egoism as a neutral, natural force is fatally flawed so that he would never be able to separate primary data from supposedly ex ante moral

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<sup>11</sup> The middle period's views on sexuality (Chapter Ten) sometimes take a similar path.

projections in a clear and distinct way. As such the supposed elision is inevitable and not really an elision for the two things - fact and interpretation - are knotted together from the start. This is the sort of explanation Nietzsche's later work inspires, when it questions the fact/value separation and the disinterested love of truth that the middle period so lauds.

Whatever the reason or reasons for Nietzsche's occasional conflation of egoism and self-love, there is a third important component to his analysis of such primal drives in the self - vanity. Prima facie it could seem that the term vanity [die Eitelkeit], which appears frequently in the middle period, particularly in Human,<sup>12</sup> is synonymous with egoism [der Egoismus]. Such equivalence is implied in an exchange between the Wanderer and his Shadow, which concludes that vanity is like egoism - ubiquitous, albeit not always visible:

The Wanderer: I thought a man's shadow was his vanity; but his vanity would never ask: 'ought I, then, to flatter?'

The Shadow: Neither does a man's vanity, insofar as I know it, ask ... whether it may speak; it never ceases from speaking (1986:301.cf.225 #46).

However it would seem that the Shadow's knowledge does not go far enough since for Nietzsche vanity need not be the all-pervasive feature of action that egoism is. Vanity is typical but not universal. Daybreak's observation that "there are always innumerable vain people" (1982:99#159.cf.1986:46#79) signals this distinction for the egoistic person is not common but tautological.

The middle period therefore provides an alternative to seeing egoistic actions as either neutral or positive for when Nietzsche wants to criticize the ego's emanations he employs the traditional notion of vanity. This is, to be sure, an imperfect account of his lexicon for there are occasions when vanity

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<sup>12</sup> Compare Donnellan:

The theme of vanity seems to play an almost disproportionate role in Nietzsche's aphoristic works. It is analyzed ... much more frequently than the wider concept of egoism itself. The frequency and the variety of forms in which it occurs suggest that the characteristic occupied a central role in Nietzsche's view of human psychology (1982:76).

Note too that Rée's first work, which was never published, was On Vanity (Salomé in Gilman 1987:117).

does seem to function like egoism and bear neutral or positive connotations. The aphorism "Skin of the soul", for example, does not seem to castigate vanity:

Just as the bones, flesh, intestines and blood vessels are/ enclosed in a skin that makes the sight of man endurable, so the agitations and passions of the soul are enveloped in vanity: it is the skin of the soul (1986:47/8#82.cf.58#107,382#285)

Likening vanity to a part of the body, to a natural function, gives some indication that it is not to be condemned. Moreover it should not be assumed that because vanity conceals the passions it is culpable for in the middle period Nietzsche shares the French moralists' view that although self-transparency and some measure of self-revelation are generally good, the latter is not an unmitigated good. Some self-concealment and dissimulation can be not only necessary but desirable.

However as a rule, while Nietzsche strips the terms egoism and self-love of their pejorative connotations, the notion of vanity is not similarly transvalued. Although the passage from Human above testifies to his desire to rehabilitate the term vanity and free it of its "moral censure", for the most part it retains its critical force, allowing Nietzsche to show that while all action is egoism, all is not vanity.<sup>13</sup>

The middle period's first sustained discussion of vanity comes shortly after the skin metaphor in Human 's "Vanity" (1986:48-9#89) where vanity is

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<sup>13</sup> Thus my reading differs from Donnellan's, which claims that Nietzsche: uses the term "vanity" (Eitelkeit) to designate a broader range of meaning than is normally associated with it; it appears to contain the ideas of egoism and self-interest (1982:76).

Donnellan goes on to argue that:

vanity and self-interest, traditionally associated with emptiness and worthlessness, are admitted by Nietzsche as necessary, if often unattractive, ingredients in confident behaviour (1982:79).

While this at least concedes that Nietzsche sometimes gives vanity negative connotations, which is not the case with egoism and hence challenges Donnellan's own claim above, I reject his suggestion that vanity is a necessary ingredient of confident behaviour (cf. Donnellan 1982b:599). The synonymy of egoism and vanity is also implied in Hayman's claim that for Nietzsche "none of the human virtues could survive without vanity and self-seeking" (1980:218).

diagnosed as a dearth of self-love. Unable to take pleasure in themselves, the vain look to others for confirmation of their worth (cf.1982:172#385). Nietzsche is careful to indicate though that not all quests for social approval derive from vanity - the good opinion of others is also sought for reasons like utility and benevolence [Wohlwollen]. Vanity is thus a corrupt form of seeking affirmation because it signals an absence of self-love and autonomy and because it necessarily demeans others. The vain can only feel affirmed by feeling superior and must subordinate others to confirm their (falsely inflated) value (1986:322#50). Thus vanity is rivalrous (1986:84#158) and this instinct is mostly absent in superior types (Chapter Eight).<sup>14</sup> Vanity is also a corrupt form of egoism, taking egoism's natural interest in the self and pleasure in self-assertion to the extreme. This last point sheds much-needed light on Nietzsche's earlier aphorism attributing extreme actions to vanity (1986:46#74) for on its own it is unclear whether this aphorism praises or blames extreme actions and hence vanity (cf.1986:73-4#137 where vanity is again critically associated with excess).<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> I therefore also reject Donnellan's claim that:  
there is a clear line of development in Nietzsche's thought from the numerous analyses of pettier aspects of vanity in Human to the self-sufficient narcissism of the superman. (1982b:599)

<sup>15</sup> Although Nietzsche is typically seen as celebrating excess (1986: 294#365) and condemning moderation as a virtue forged by the weak, the middle period shows some praise for moderation. As Chapter Two mentioned, it is nominated as an individual virtue that will survive rational scrutiny (1986: 361-2#212.cf.75#139,272#230,289#326). As Chapter Two also noted, this could be another aspect of Nietzsche's inheritance from the moralists, especially given La Rochefoucauld's ideal of the 'honnête homme'. As Dens writes:

l'honnêteté requiert un contrôle de soi peu commun. La mondanité condamne toute manifestation excessive, que ce soit dans l'ordre des sentiments ou des gestes. Les grandes passions n'ont pas de place dans l'univers de l'honnête homme, ou en tout cas pas leur exteriorisation (1981:29).

This captures only one side of the moralist's view however. In La Rochefoucauld's self-portrait, for example, we read that:

J'approuve extrêmement les belles passions: elles marquent la grandeur de l'âme, et quoique dans les inquiétudes qu'elles donnent il y ait quelque chose de contraire à la sévère sagesse, elles s'accroissent si bien

In fact Human's first long passage on vanity outlines most of the contours of this trait and many of Nietzsche's subsequent discussions of vanity amplify or modify its ideas. However his analysis is so nuanced and attuned to the multifarious quality of moral life, that there is no sense of tedium or repetition in his examinations of vanity. Nietzsche's acute analysis of this trait shows him to be a true descendent of La Rochefoucauld, for it evinces many of the features for which this French moralist is renowned such as subtlety and variety.

- Some sense of how variegated vanity is comes in Nietzsche's illustration of a single trait spawning different outcomes:

One person retains an opinion because he flatters himself it was his own discovery, another because he acquired it with effort and is proud of having grasped it: thus both do so out of vanity (1986:183#527).

Similarly, declaring one's faults to or concealing them from others can both be the work of vanity:

When a man conceals his bad qualities and vices or openly admits them, in both cases his vanity is seeking its advantage: one has only to observe how subtly he distinguishes before whom he conceals these qualities, before whom he is honest and open-hearted (1986:138#313.cf. 227#56.1982:225#558).

Furthermore vanity can, as "Vanity" suggests, be excessive and lose control, making the vain "go so far as to neglect their own advantage" (1986:49#89). Alternatively as the just-cited "Vanity of the tongue" indicates, the vain are capable of careful calculation and manipulation. Restating one of La Rochefoucauld's descriptions of amour-propre, Nietzsche shows that just as vanity can be lucid when attempting to manipulate and deceive others, it can

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d'ailleurs avec la plus austère vertu que je crois qu'on ne les saurait condamner avec justice (1977:168).

This is not explicable simply by chronology for although the Maximes were written later, some admiration for grand passion remains.

Chamfort also oscillates between praise of moderation and praise of excess. He declares on the one hand that "Est in medio verum" (1968:54#14) and on the other that although violent points of view and extremes frighten most, they suit strong souls and vigorous characters (1968:127#340).

be purblind regarding itself, engaging in massive self-deception:

The vain man wants not so much to predominate as to feel himself predominant; that is why he disdains no means of self-deception and self-outwitting. What he treasures is not the opinion of others but his own opinion of their opinion (1986:185#545.cf.224#38.1982:172#385).

Vanity's myopia is also visible in "Capital sin against the vain" (1986:272 #234) which depicts the vain person projecting their motives onto others and therefore being unable to discern the real reasons for another's acts. Generosity is interpreted by vanity as humiliation so vanity cannot see things as they are as well as seeing things that are not there.

This point about the vain's need to feel that they enjoy the good opinion of others indicates that while vanity manifests itself in many forms, the heteronomy outlined in "Vanity" is its recurrent feature. We continually witness vanity's need for an audience. This comes not from any genuine desire to communicate with others but because, lacking self-love, the vain cannot live by their opinion of themselves alone but must be fortified by the opinion they want others to hold of them (1986:140#338,152#401,276#263.1982:136#219). Two brief passages detecting vanity in those of whom it is not characteristic make this clear. Of the first, who is not exceptionally vain but "Vain exceptionally" Nietzsche writes:

He who is usually self-sufficient is vain and receptive to fame and commendation on exceptional occasions, namely when he is physically ill. To the extent that he feels himself diminishing he has to try to recoup himself from outside through the opinion of others (1986:185 #546).

The second's vanity is "behind the times":

The vanity of many people who have no need to be vain is a habit, retained and exaggerated, from a time when they did not yet have the right to believe in themselves and had first to beg for this belief from others in small coinage (1986:188#583).

Both passages also illustrate the claim in Chapter Two that Nietzsche's analyses of moral life are not reductionist but keenly aware that actions and personalities can be admixtures. The same motive can take different guises (1986:46#79) just as different motives can give rise to the same behaviour. Science's illustration of love generating similar outcomes to vanity is a prime



example of this (1974:218#263) and "Vanity" 's recognition of the various motives behind opinion-seeking demonstrates it further (cf.1986:138#314,289 #326,327#70,393#346).

Moreover quite different traits can cohabit a single personality. Such sensitivity to the variegated quality of moral life also allows Nietzsche to see that strikingly different motivations sometimes cooperate to produce a single action, which is another of La Rochefoucauld's themes. This co-operation is evident in "Comedy", one of Human's later passages devoted to vanity, where vanity blends with "goodwill [Wohlwollen] towards our admirers" to let us "harvest love or honour for deeds or works which we have long since cast from us" (1986:297#393). Although it was suggested above that vanity is antithetical to beneficence, the subtlety and acuity of Nietzsche's analyses of human behaviour prevent him from drawing strict boundaries between moral forces and allows the findings of his psychology to go on surprising us. In this endless fascination with the intricacy and elusiveness of moral life his similarities with La Rochefoucauld surface again. This also puts him in the company of those moralists Human describes as sensitive to "the complexity in the apparent simplicity" of human behaviour who direct their attention to:

the interlacing of motives, to the delicate conceptual illusions woven into it, and to the individual and groups of sensations inherited from of old and slowly intensified (1986:310#20).

As mentioned, one of vanity's characteristics is its need to assert superiority. However in the light of the middle period's anti-reductionism and the above discussion of egoism's pleasure in self-assertion, it cannot be assumed that the desire to feel one's power is necessarily a function of vanity (1982:110#189). Nor is vanity responsible for all feelings of superiority. On the contrary, Nietzsche attacks the idea of universal equality and is anxious to demonstrate the superiority of some people to others (1986:316#31,373#263.cf. 1974:177#120).<sup>16</sup> This requires that some feelings of superiority be warranted

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<sup>16</sup> In a young Marxian moment, however, Nietzsche distinguishes between "Two kinds of equality". One seeks to reduce everyone to the lowest common denominator and the other to raise all up (1986:136#300). While clearly preferring the equality that elevates, Nietzsche does not, in contrast to Marx,

- indeed one of his great complaints against the modern era is the way Christian and post-Christian equality doctrines have discouraged superior types from acknowledging their greatness. However exceptions like those noted notwithstanding, intrinsically superior types are not usually vain or hungry for praise (1986:144#360). Their sufficiency of self-love obviates the need to inflate their significance or project it for its own sake and as such they know no desire to harm or reduce others (1986:392#344). This idea appears in "The evil of the strong":

(The evil of the strong harms others without giving thought to it - it has to discharge itself; the evil of the weak **wants** to harm others and to see the signs of the suffering it has caused.) (1982:169#371.FN's emphasis. cf. 1986:139#329.1974:87#13.cf.Kaufmann 1950:166).<sup>17</sup>

However this negative correlation between vanity and greatness reveals how far vanity has evolved. Human offers a brief genealogy of this trait in "The great utility of vanity" (1986:353-4#181) and claims that strong individuals originally sought to magnify their image in others' eyes in order to more easily intimidate them. This followed the realisation that what mattered most was the amount of power others perceived one to have, that enhancing one's reputation for power was a way of increasing effective power. From this Nietzsche concludes that vanity was originally very useful, at least to the powerful. Now however:

We know vanity only in its feeblest forms, in its sublimations and small doses, because we live in a late and very ameliorated state of society (1986:353#181).

Although modern vanity remains preoccupied with the opinion of

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advocate it. In the light of his general views, this passage must be seen as evaluating the ways the "thirst for equality" can satisfy itself rather than prescribing its satiation.

<sup>17</sup> Paul Patton picks up on this point that only the weak seek to hurt others (1993:157) and uses it to support his wider claim that Nietzsche adduces a notion of power that need not entail domination (1993:145). However he ignores Nietzsche's unblinking acceptance that superior types can damage others inadvertently even though this indicates that minimising such damage and domination is not of primary concern to Nietzsche. Neither setting out to hurt others nor caring whether one does is the mirror image of Nietzsche's attitude to the art of pleasing, discussed in Chapter Two.

others, just how far it has mutated from "these primeval conditions" (1986:353 #181) is evident in its being no longer the preserve of the strong but of feeble types aspiring to greatness (1986:90#170). Now the need to diminish others, even if only in one's mind, signifies an all too common pettiness (1986:43 #63). Should superior types damage others, this is more likely to occur in action than in thought and as indicated, is an unintended consequence, rather than goal, of their action. In thus returning to the idea of the innocence of egoism we arrive at the question of its relationship to justice, of what room there might be for any sense of obligations to others in a moral space dominated by belief in the ubiquity and innocence of egoism. However before going on to consider this, we turn to the French moralists' views on egoism, self-love and vanity to see what Nietzsche's thinking about these issues might have adopted, adapted or rejected from La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort.

Evidence for the tenet that Nietzsche is using La Rochefoucauld as a touchstone for his ideas about egoism, vanity and self-love comes in the moralist being named in a passage discussing the inevitability of egoism. La Rochefoucauld's maxim (#374) about the illusion of loving another for love of them is then cited to illustrate Nietzsche's argument (1986:71#133). However a careful inspection of the moralist's views on the clutch of issues surrounding egoism reveals how far and in what ways Nietzsche dissents from La Rochefoucauld in content if not approach for the moralist shows little sense of egoism as innocent nor self-love as affirmative. However in using vanity as predominantly a critical term, Nietzsche is following La Rochefoucauld's lead.

La Rochefoucauld's most extended discussion of 'amour-propre' comes in a long 'maxim' (more like a reflexion)<sup>18</sup> that was suppressed after the first

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<sup>18</sup> Truchet refers to "la grande maxime liminaire sur l'amour-propre" (in La Rochefoucauld 1977:20) although given Chapter Three's point about brevity being a defining feature of maxims, classifying this two page passage as a maxim seems remiss. Keeping in mind Moore's point (Chapter Two) that La Rochefoucauld's original title referred to maxims, sentences and reflections, it would seem more appropriate to call this passage a reflexion. This is what James calls it (1969:350).

edition (1977:91-3#1)<sup>19</sup> although as Nietzsche knew the first edition, his knowledge of it can be presumed. This remarkable passage considers self-love in its many mutations, showing it to be co-extensive with existence itself for "toute la vie n'[en] est qu'une grande et longue agitation" (1977:93#1). Self-love loves all things for itself (cf.1977:52#81), making people idolise themselves and tyrannise others if the opportunity arises. Amour-propre is inexorable and insatiable, impetuous, protean, capricious, duplicitous and self-deceiving. Impenetrable in its depths and elusive in its variety, self-love conceives monstrous passions and then disowns them. Despite loving all things for itself, its keen attention to and lucid perception of the world beyond itself sometimes borders on omniscience. Contradictions cohabit self-love, allowing it to be simultaneously "impérieux et obéissant, sincère et dissimulé, miséricordieux et cruel, timide et audacieux" (1977:92#1). It has multiple tastes, inclinations and capacities; it can focus with all its might on trivia, it can promote austerity and its own punishment. But its ruin in one place is its reassertion in another.<sup>20</sup> Self-love is ubiquitous and inescapable:

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<sup>19</sup> This passage is pivotal in the debate about the moralist's religious framework, as Liebich notes:

le morceau sur l'amour-propre ... est un des éléments que l'on invoque pour une lecture augustinienne. Ceux qui plaident en faveur de cette lecture des Maximes accentuent l'inspiration théologique de la maxime. Ils estiment que puisque La Rochefoucauld évoque un thème cher aux Augustiniens, il devait entendre par là la même chose qu'eux (1982: 206.cf.Thweatt 1980:73,99. Westgate 1968:69).

Liebich reads its suppression as evidence of La Rochefoucauld's movement from a transcendent to a more secular outlook. Some support for her interpretation comes in Levi's claim that in La Rochefoucauld's work, "[amour-propre] still has an implicit reference to the theory of grace expounded in the Augustinus" (1964:229) and that he "is clearly conscious of the theological overtones attached to the term (1964:230). Such connotations become explicit in the Liancourt maxim that:

Dieu a permis, pour punir l'homme du péché originel, qu'il se fit un dieu de son amour-propre pour en être tourmenté dans toutes les actions de sa vie (1977:103#22)

However as noted in Chapter Two, the authorship of this work is uncertain, so citing it as evidence of moralist's religious view would be problematic.

<sup>20</sup> Little wonder that Starobinski reads 'amour-propre' as a force decentring the self (1966:19).

Il est dans tous les états de la vie, et dans toutes les conditions; il vit partout, et il vit de tout, il vit de rien (1977:92#1).<sup>21</sup>

As was the case with Nietzsche's long passage on vanity, La Rochefoucauld's other discussions of self-love return to the themes announced in this section<sup>22</sup> although the analysis of self-love in the maxims is pallid by comparison - none are as forceful or enthralling as the long discussion. In the maxims we read that self-love is skilful or cunning (1977:45#4), cruel (1977:95#32) yet the supreme flatterer (1977:45#2). Much of its territory is incognito (1977:45#3). Pride is inseparable from self-love (1977:137#XVIII) and this love tolerates criticism of its opinions more readily than of its tastes (1977:46#13). Self-love's mixture of myopia and perspicuity appears in the fact that although people can be deceived about themselves, most know themselves sufficiently to want to conceal their faults (1977:87#494).

As this suggests, his invocation of the moralist notwithstanding, Nietzsche's discussions of the innocence of egoism and self-love diverge from La Rochefoucauld's especially when Nietzsche slides into the affirmation of self-love.<sup>23</sup> There is some continuity in Nietzsche's depiction of egoism for

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<sup>21</sup> As well as providing a source for Nietzsche's thinking about the ubiquity and power of egoism, it is also possible that this reflection on self-love is a source for later ideas about the will to power. The idea of the will to power is often taken to have been partially inspired by Schopenhauer's depiction of the world as will, but this does not invalidate my hypothesis about it being a legacy from La Rochefoucauld. It is possible that the moralist and Schopenhauer are independent sources for Nietzsche's thinking about the will to power or that Schopenhauer's ideas about the will were affected by his reading of La Rochefoucauld. As Ellenberger notes, Schopenhauer knew the work of the French moralists and according to Deschanel "souvent ne fait qu'alourdir les idées qu'il prend à La Rochefoucauld" (1885:68). Teppe also points out that Schopenhauer read and was influenced by La Rochefoucauld and by Chamfort (1950:146).

<sup>22</sup> According to Fine this reflection "although withdrawn subsequently by the author, is vital to a thorough understanding of his thought on this subject". (1974:54)

<sup>23</sup> According to Donnellan egoism is a ubiquitous theme in La Rochefoucauld's work, being:

the hydra-headed unifying motif of his collection of maxims, present, in one form or another, in almost every statement (1982:66)

like the moralist's self-love it is ubiquitous, contradictory, proud, capable of cruelty and liable to take diverse guises but given Nietzsche's insistence on the original innocence of egoism, it is unsurprising that he divests it of the criticism woven into La Rochefoucauld's account of self-love.<sup>24</sup>

But maybe the distance between Nietzsche and La Rochefoucauld is not as great as it first seems, for woven into the moralist's account of self-love is a fascination with, and sometimes love for, self-love which belies the passage's official story. The moralist's discussion of self-love is thus at odds with itself - its style and tone convey a delight in the mystery and magnetism of self-love and the loving way its movements are traced mute the passage's express condemnation of them. So the moralist's portrayal of self-love, like love for

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He argues that for La Rochefoucauld:

The reprehensibility of egoism is felt as self-evident. With Nietzsche however, the destructive analysis is only one stage towards a healthier realization of human motivation. He, too, exposes man's self-deception and the ugly self-interest which passes itself off as idealism, but it is the ignorance itself which he considers harmful, not necessarily the underlying motivation which he discovers. (1982:73).

How this reprehensibility meshes with Donnellan's later claim that:

The Frenchman rejoins Nietzsche ... in his rejection of guilt and bad conscience, which are replaced by an ideal of honest self-knowledge and self-acceptance (1982:92)

is unclear. While I agree that Nietzsche continues La Rochefoucauld's praise of self-knowledge, I see little sense of the innocence of all actions in the moralist's work.

<sup>24</sup> Such criticism is consistent with a reading of self-love that continues the Jansenist view. How Liebich can write of La Rochefoucauld's "acceptation sans condamnation du pouvoir de l'amour-propre [qui] indique bien la distance entre lui et Esprit" (1982:212) is unclear. Indeed her argument does not require a neutral reading of amour-propre for she could hold that, continuing the religious orientation, La Rochefoucauld condemns it in this long passage but drops the passage as he diverges from the religious framework.

While not putting the point as strongly as Liebich, Gosse suggests that La Rochefoucauld's criticism of self-love was not as harsh as it is often taken to be:

La Rochefoucauld stoutly denied [that everybody acted nobly for the sake of other people], but he was not so excessive as his commentators in his condemnation of that self-love which he declares to be the source of all our moral actions. (1918:42)

one's mistress, blends love and loathing (1977:54#111)<sup>25</sup> and shows the text to be enacting one of the moralist's larger points - the soul as battleground of warring impulses. It might also be that the moralist's writing and its ability to draw us in and lull our criticism of self-love could be intended to reveal how attractive and seductive the lure of self-love can be. Nevertheless the contrast between the moralist's overt criticism of self-love and Nietzsche's insistence on its innocence (and sometimes goodness) reinforces the point that in his depictions of egoism, Nietzsche is transvaluing a value rather than just giving new justification to an old good. The most that can be said is that in his affirmations of self-love, Nietzsche is accentuating the affirmation that sometimes peeps through La Rochefoucauld's analysis of this force.

La Rochefoucauld's claim that "*la vanité nous agite toujours*" (1977:83 #443) could suggest its identity with self-love.<sup>26</sup> In the moralist's analysis vanity shares self-love's ambivalence and can foster virtue (1977:62#200,68 #263) or disrupt and loosen it (1977:78#388). But in general the identity of vanity and self-love does not hold; there seems to be less cunning and insight plus more buffoonery in vanity as La Rochefoucauld depicts it. This is especially apparent in vanity's association with garrulousness for the vain

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<sup>25</sup> The moralist's ambivalence toward the term reflects its etymology, for as Levi explains:

amour-propre was at one time connected with the Platonist ascent from love of earthly things to love of God. It was the state of the lover who failed to rise beyond the love of himself and the attraction of the form of beauty within himself ... the term had long been used in an equally pejorative but looser sense by the ascetical writers, for whom it was the equivalent of 'vainglory' or 'self-will', an addiction to one's own honour or comfort which militated against the abnegatory and ascetical practices they advocated ... [but] For the scholastics it could continue to be the fundamental and entirely healthy inspiration of all human acts ... (1964:225).

<sup>26</sup> As Fine notes:

the term amour-propre is given various connotations in the context of particular maxims. At times La Rochefoucauld seems to equate it with interest or egotism ... at others it is associated with pride (1974:63. fn14.cf.Thweatt 1980:159).

Moore makes a similar point: "he uses ... several (terms) which do not seem to be entirely synonymous ... *intérêt, amour-propre, gloire, orgueil*" (1969:94).

prefer speaking badly of themselves to remaining silent (1977:56#138,cf.#137, 96#35), just as vanity, rather than malice, makes us speak badly of others (1977:86#483). While vanity is, like self-love, linked with flattery, it is flattered (1977:58#158) whereas self-love flatters, making vanity the fooled rather than the fooling side of the self and illustrating again how the self's multiplicity allows some of its parts to work against others. While self-love prides itself on its taste, vanity can make us violate taste (1977:85#467). Whatever reason we have for feeling distressed, wounded vanity or interest is usually the cause (1977:65#232) and shame and jealousy are so painful because vanity can offer them no consolation (1977:83#446).

Closely related to self-love and vanity is pride but the claim above about their inseparability (1977:137#XVIII) notwithstanding, the moralist does not always depict them as identical (1977:48#33). Like self-love and vanity, pride takes diverse forms, playing "tous les personnages de la comédie humaine" (1977:93#6). Pride can also spawn virtuous action along with vicious (1977:48#37,84#463,97#51). Its paradoxes are further apparent in its double movements. Pride both fosters and diminishes envy (1977:70#281) for when one feels inferior to another and hence envious of them, pride steps in to restore self-esteem. Pride is both proud and ashamed of feeling jealous (1977:85#472) for La Rochefoucauld deems jealousy nobler than envy because it strives to defend what one thinks is rightfully one's own (1977:47#28). Like self-love, pride tries to conceal weaknesses from the self (1977:48#36) but in doing so also hides the remedies to these (1977:94#19) (anticipating a point in Chapter Six, that self-knowledge requires humility). And even when we manage to diminish some of our faults, pride takes strength from this thereby effacing any net gain in virtue (1977:83#450).

Although La Rochefoucauld's depiction of self-love, vanity and pride suggests them to be all-pervasive, this is not strictly so - vanity and pride can be surmounted and self-love can be turned to the service of self-knowledge, as suggested in Chapter Two. Thus the moralist seems to entertain and encourage the possibility that self-love's lucidity toward others can become self-reflexive. In fact his writing and its highlighting of human foibles and



weaknesses is a way of redirecting self-love's gaze, for in witnessing, via the text, these shortcomings in others, self-love's natural inclination to consider everything in relation to the self might result in the scrutiny of behaviour and appearances also being turned self-ward, revealing one's own deficiencies and delusions. As Lewis notes:

To seek self-understanding is to apply to oneself the lessons derived from observing others ... the Maximes and the Réflexions Diverses record perceptions that are represented as perceptions of others (1977:87)

What is envisaged then is not eliminating self-love which is impossible (Fine 1974:57) but redirecting it - turning it against itself, or at least the ignoble parts of the self.<sup>27</sup> Were such redirection impossible, La Rochefoucauld would hardly lament the fact that most education inspires a

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<sup>27</sup> I therefore reject Lewis's conclusion that the theory of self-love affirms "the impossibility of accurate self-perception" (1977:86). As Chapter Six argues the moralist holds that such perception is possible, even if unattainable in isolation from others. My reading also clashes with Levi's, who argues that 'amour-propre' is incompatible with and can never inspire virtue (1964:230). Against these positions, Fine notes that:

In order to serve its true interests, self-love would have to acquire a more enlightened view of itself. La Rochefoucauld amply shows that the faults committed by amour-propre stem from this lack of self-knowledge. It often happens that the counterfeit image devised by self-love is taken at face value by that very amour-propre ... (1974:56).

He later argues that:

Since the enlightened use of self-love implies dispelling our blindness to the nature of our amour-propre, sincerity in self-study is advocated ... (1974:88)

I also support Fine's general conclusion that "Actions motivated by self-love may be socially detrimental or beneficial, depending on its management" (1974:88). Morgues makes a related point:

Self-centred of course, as it [lucidity] represents the ultimate satisfaction of our ego, it has a priceless value for it suggests the distance which separates man acting blindly through the impulses of self-love and man clear-sightedly taking stock of his situation against the greatest difficulties (1978:65).

Similarly, Tocanne's claim that

[les Maximes] invitent d'abord à une lucidité intérieure, ironique et critique, qui ... amenera à reconnaître qu'on l'est toujours, que toute conduite enferme une part d'amour-propre (1978:216).

requires that self-love recognise this about itself.

second self-love in young people (1977:68#261). His criticism requires that there be a type of education that diminishes or manages self-love and, as I have suggested, the moralist's writing is part of such an education. Indeed there is a precedent in La Rochefoucauld's work for self-love overcoming itself in this way and this comes in his analysis of friendship. Noting that we can only love things in relation to ourselves, La Rochefoucauld says that we are following our taste and our pleasure in preferring our friends to ourselves, "c'est néanmoins par cette préférence seule que l'amitié peut être vraie et parfaite" (1977:52#81).<sup>28</sup>

Similarly while vanity and pride might agitate us the whole of our lives, they need not dominate our life as a whole; they can be chronic without being comprehensive of the self. Consistent with the argument in Chapter Two, other virtues and vices can play a role in constraining and rechanneling these forces. And although La Rochefoucauld asserts that pride is present equally in all people, with the only difference being the means of manifesting it (1977:48#35) he also shows that overcoming pride, and vanity, is possible. 'Honnêtes gens', because of their commitment to self-knowledge, are not vain,<sup>29</sup> are capable of humility and "ne se pique de rien" (1977:62#203).

However for a more positive appraisal of egoism and self-love in the French moralist tradition, we must turn from La Rochefoucauld to Chamfort. Although questions of egoism and self-love are not obvious among his dominant concerns, some of what Chamfort says on these matters could have

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<sup>28</sup> As Lewis notes:

In friendship as in love, egocentricity remains the fundamental factor; yet friendship differs from love in one crucial respect - it does entail a real preference for the friend, whereas in love the lover continues to prefer himself (1977:122).

<sup>29</sup> As La Rochefoucauld's Self-Portrait reveals, having and avowing a balanced appraisal of the self, of its strengths and weaknesses, is a way of avoiding vanity:

Tant biaiser et tant apporter d'adoucissement pour dire les avantages que l'on a, c'est, ce me semble, cacher un peu de vanité sous une modestie apparente et se servir d'une manière bien adroite pour faire croire de soi beaucoup plus que l'on n'en dit (1977:166).

contributed to Nietzsche's affirmation of self-love. Following Rousseau, Chamfort insists that there is a sort of pride or self-love that is acceptable, indeed necessary, in 'honnêtes' individuals although unlike Rousseau he sometimes refers to this as 'amour-propre'. Chamfort can also call it 'orgueil' but either way he departs from La Rochefoucauld's use of these terms.<sup>30</sup> This more positive notion of self-love comes out forcefully in a passage separating pride from vanity where pride is "haut, calme, fier, tranquille, inébranlable" while vanity is "vile, incertaine, mobile, inquiète et chancelante" (1968:75 #112). Pride magnifies a person whereas vanity inflates them; the former is a source of virtue and the latter of vice and deceit. There is a form of pride compatible with God's commandments and a form of vanity that contains the seven deadly sins (1968:75#112).<sup>31</sup>

A later passage discriminates between vanity and "un just amour-propre" (1968:139#402). The latter cannot be eradicated from human nature which implies that for Chamfort, as for Nietzsche, vanity can, or at least from some individuals. Just self-love asks that we be appreciated by those around us and its promptings belong "à la nature bien ordonnée" (1968:139#402),

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<sup>30</sup> Mauzi paints the wider historical backdrop to this, observing that "Des la fin du XVIIe siècle, l'amour-propre est largement réhabilité." (1965:636) He contrasts this with the status of self-love in La Rochefoucauld's work:

Comment accorder la théorie de l'amour-propre selon La Rochefoucauld, et la réhabilitation de ce même amour-propre considéré comme le foyer unique de toutes les ressources de l'être humaine, comme une sorte d'élan vital d'où jaillissent aussi bien les vertus que les vices? On en sera réduit à inventer, comme le fait Rousseau des distinctions trop subtiles entre l'amour-propre et l'amour de soi. (1965:89)

<sup>31</sup> Chamfort's inheritance of Enlightenment views might be relevant here, for some of the older religious ideas buttressing the belief that 'amour-propre' was sinful had been attacked. As Cassirer notes:

The concept of original sin is the common opponent against which all the different trends of the philosophy of the Enlightenment join forces (1951:141).

A little later he writes that:

the opinion that man through the fall has lost all his ability to attain the good and the true without divine grace is most emphatically rejected (1951:159).

echoing Chamfort's Romantic turn to nature as a source of goodness. Vanity, by contrast, provokes weak or corrupt natures. The dignity of self-love is also evident in 'M's claim that his respect for himself sometimes inspires others to respect him (1968:268#979). 'M' further validates self-love by refusing a post on the grounds that it "ne convient ni à l'amour-propre que je me permets, ni à celui que je me commande" (1968:266#964). Among the needs of the noble soul listed in another passage are "l'amour-propre d'un coeur genereux et, en quelque sorte, l'égoïsme d'un grand caractère" (1968:80#147).<sup>32</sup> While some of Chamfort's other discussions are less emphatic about the dignity of self-love, they mention it without criticism (1968:89#177, 94#204), suggesting something closer to Nietzsche's idea of the neutrality of egoism.

Despite his enthusiasm for or neutrality toward self-love, Chamfort does not transvalue it totally for other passages use the term critically (1968:57#28, 84#169, 208#694) and one makes it synonymous with vanity (1968:133#358). The traditional adverse view of self-love resonates powerfully through another, describing its needs as "les plus tyranniques, et qu'on doit le plus combattre" (1968:84#174) and elsewhere Chamfort indicates that self-love can be overcome (1968:126#333). All this suggests that in his view self-love is not necessarily good but that there is a just and dignified variety of it that is worthy of affirmation. However even this regional affirmation of self-love is closer to Nietzsche's view than most of La Rochefoucauld's explicit remarks about amour-propre.

As the above comparisons of vanity with proper self-love suggest, Chamfort continues La Rochefoucauld's criticism of vanity (1968:126#333, 244#862, 268#976, 311#1195) although at one point he also continues the moralist's wider sense of the complexity of moral life, showing that vanity can produce good outcomes (1968:78#132). Although many of Chamfort's references to vanity are part of his general critique of society's corruption (1968:52#3, 82

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<sup>32</sup> Katz also notes the positive resonances that self-love can have for Chamfort:

the need for appreciation in love, which can only come from someone equal to ourselves, is the effect of "un juste amour-propre" (1968:45).

#159,95#209,97#214,#217,115#290,147#422,152#456), when he does consider it as an aspect of individual psychology, there is much that Nietzsche could have picked up and developed. Evidence of this comes in the above description of vanity as inflating the self and elsewhere vanity is dismissed as petty (1968: 153#460). Chamfort associates vanity with lack, as Nietzsche does when he attributes vanity to a lack of self-love. For Chamfort:

Vain veut dire vide; ainsi, la vanité est si misérable qu'on ne peut guère lui dire pis que son nom. Elle se donne elle-même pour ce qu'elle est (1968:74#105).

Vanity is again contrasted with a more solid sense of personal dignity (1968:55 #19) although Chamfort, in true Romantic style, witnesses this sense of personal dignity and recognition of it in others, in simple, reasonable, ordinary types,<sup>33</sup> which is at odds with Nietzsche's suggestion that only great individuals can overcome vanity.

Whatever their provenance, Chamfort's honest individual is autonomous like Nietzsche's superior person, acting on the basis of their own standards and beliefs and not seeking popular acclaim:

Ceux qui rapportent tout à l'opinion ressemblent à ces comédiens qui jouent mal pour être applaudis, quand le gout du public est mauvais ... L'honnête homme joue son rôle le mieux qu'il peut, sans songer à la galerie (1968:79#141.cf.57#25)

Such autonomy is as great and as unusual for Chamfort as it is for Nietzsche:

Ne tenir dans la main de personne, d'être l'**homme de son coeur**, de ses principes, de ses sentiments, c'est ce que j'ai vu de plus rare (1968: 63#55.C's emphasis)

In sum then, when Nietzsche's analyses of the forces of egoism, self-love and vanity are read against the backdrop of the works of La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort, he both descends and dissents from their positions. Nietzsche follows both moralists in using the term vanity mostly in the pejorative and in this continues, rather than transvalues, the traditional

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<sup>33</sup> This fits with Pellisson's more general observation that:

Au delà de l'horizon du monde de la cour et des salons, il distingue la foule des humbles et des inconnus, et il croit qu'on y trouve des esprits droits, des âmes saines, que les abus, les préjugés, les conventions, n'ont pu ni fausser, ni corrompre (1895:198).

notion of vanity. There is however, some originality in his diagnosis of vanity, especially his suggestion that it derives from insufficient self-love. La Rochefoucauld makes no suggestion that the cause of vanity is any such shortage - for the obvious reason that he does not see such love as necessarily a good thing. Although critical of vanity, La Rochefoucauld evinces no sense of it being powered by an emptiness at the core of the self that results in the rapacious need for the good opinion of others. This is probably due to the fact that there is less emphasis on individuality and autonomy in the moralist's thought than in Nietzsche's - inter-subjectivity and the value of the opinions of others - or at least of equal others - are explicit features of the moralist's depiction of the good life. However as Chapters Six and Eight show, Nietzsche's emphasis on individuality and autonomy should not obscure the importance of inter-subjectivity and the opinion of peers his work also contains. As will emerge, the major difference between Nietzsche and La Rochefoucauld on the question of inter-subjectivity and peer recognition comes in accent and tone rather than content.

Nietzsche's portrayal of vanity is in many ways closer to Chamfort's, for both associate vanity with emptiness and pettiness. Chamfort's affirmation of some forms of self-love and the contrast he draws between this and vanity could also have fuelled Nietzsche's belief in an inverse correlation between vanity and self-love. However while Nietzsche insists that freedom from vanity and sufficient self-love are the preserve of superior types, Chamfort acknowledges these traits in ordinary people too.

Whatever the substantive similarities and differences between Nietzsche's views on the cluster of issues surrounding egoism and those of his French predecessors one way in which Nietzsche shows himself to be their heir is the quality of his analyses. Nietzsche's careful observations of forces like vanity, self-love and egoism, their subtlety, mobility and variety, show him to be a true descendent of La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort for he perpetuates their endless fascination with the intricacy and elusiveness of moral life.

As suggested in the Introduction to this study, Nietzsche's originality

vis-à-vis the French moralists appears in the way his analysis of a concept like vanity is interwoven with considerations of justice the way justice is conceived of in spatial terms. To see how justice relates to egoism in Nietzsche's thought, several of the points raised in the analysis of egoism, self-love and vanity must be re-assembled. The first is that because actions are not the exercise of individual free will they enjoy an original innocence. The second is that some humans are superior to others and the third that such types do not intend to harm others in asserting their greatness. Combining these tenets suggests no obvious place for justice in Nietzsche's thinking about egoism. This is because his ideas about action and accountability seem to exclude the very things that constitute justice. Irrespective of its rival definitions, at the core of justice is the idea that one party can legitimately make some claim to be considered in the actions of another. While different notions of justice debate what valid grounds for consideration are (need, merit, concern, solidarity, inalienable right) and how far they extend, the core idea remains that, in certain circumstances, justice requires one party to circumscribe their actions in consideration of another. From this the possible antagonism between this and Nietzsche's analysis of action is obvious.

Nietzsche is quite explicit about the tension between the orthodox notion of justice and his first point above, declaring that:

He who has fully grasped the theory of total unaccountability can no longer accommodate so-called justice that punishes/and rewards under the concept of justice at all: provided, that is, that this consists in giving to each what is his own (1986:56/7#105).

A propos the second point above, in "The Wanderer and His Shadow" justice exemplifies those virtues society can practise without loss and so differs from "The virtues that incur loss", "virtues belonging among non-equals, devised by the superior, the individual" (1986:318-19#34). From this it could be inferred that claims to justice cannot obtain between the unequal - an idea supported by "With a great goal"'s assertion that with such a goal "one is superior even to justice, not only to one's deeds and one's judges" (1974:219#267). Let us then explore this apparent antagonism between egoism and justice in Nietzsche's work.

Among the first reflections on justice in the works of the middle period is Human's inquiry into the "Origin of Justice" which examines its connection with equality. Nietzsche contends that rather than reposing upon the presumption of a priori equality of persons, justice develops only when such equality becomes manifest: "Justice (fairness) originates between parties of approximately equal power" (1986:49#92.c.f. Williams 1952:40). Partners in conflict act justly toward one another primarily because they realise the parity of their strength and hence that combat is likely to result in mutual attrition rather than a clear victory for either side. Negotiation replaces competition but this bargaining assumes reciprocity only because of its partners' equal coercive potential. Fairness thus begins as prudence and disinterest as interest in self-preservation. As such justice is no exception to Nietzsche's thesis that egoism is the source of all action and that current moral schemas have obscured the ordinary, interested and utilitarian beginnings of their highest moral claims.<sup>34</sup>

A similar relationship between justice, equality and power emerges in Daybreak's discussion of "the natural history of rights and duties" (1982:67 #112). It argues that rights were not conferred by virtue of some abstract, universal equality among individuals but according to degrees of power. In conceding rights others acknowledge and seek to preserve the recipient's power. Should a dramatic alteration in that power occur, the rights change too:

Where rights **prevail**, a certain condition and degree of power is being maintained, a diminution and increment warded off. The rights of others constitute a concession on the part of our sense of power to the sense of power of those others. If our power appears to be deeply shaken and broken, our rights cease to exist: conversely, if we have grown very much more powerful, the rights of others, as we have previously conceded them, cease to exist for us (1982:67#112.FN's emphasis)

Thus Nietzsche contends that the possession of rights was not initially inalienable or inherent but contingent upon power or, more precisely, the power an agent was perceived to possess. (Again we see why vanity was so

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<sup>34</sup> This can be read as extending one of Chamfort's aperçus for he suggests that prudence reinforces justice (1968:119#292) although not, as Nietzsche does, that it is its source.



useful, for by augmenting perceptions of one's power, more rights could be won.) This passage also echoes Human's point that one party recognises another's equality out of prudence and self-interest rather than any moral sense of what is fair.

The direct connection between rights and power, and the originally concrete, calculating, pragmatic quality of rights conferral is also expressed in Human's "Of the rights of the weaker":

**Rights** originally extend **just as far** as one **appears** valuable, essential, unlosable, unconquerable and the like, to the other. In this respect the weaker too possess rights, but more limited ones (1986:50#93.FN's emphasis).

However Human later explains that the original circumstances of rights conferral have been forgotten, their connection with power obscured. An initial, temporary equilibrium between individuals and their powers gradually became encrusted and the possession of rights lost its pragmatic, realist justification. The distribution of rights came to be seen as "a sacred, immutable state of affairs" (1986:319#39). Nietzsche also notes that the weak, having an interest in the status quo and not wanting to realign rights according to powers, saw their advantage in perpetuating the idea that the prevailing distribution of rights was not fluid but fixed. Thus we see how rights could move from being a reflection to a source of power.

From this it would seem that for Nietzsche justice is attuned to equality and inequality. Justice should never presuppose equality - equal treatment must be earned. Because justice is based on how one party perceives another, equal status is not a premise of agents' exchanges but a consequence of recognising equivalent power. The spatial aspect of Nietzsche's reflections on power and equality is that the sense of justice depends upon the distance between the agents. When two parties are close enough to see how close their mutual power is, justice can enter their dealings. When some distance separates them, be it social, physical or psychic, they do not see themselves as engaged in reciprocal relations nor having any responsibility to one another, so questions of justice do not enter their calculations. This link between justice and proximity becomes conspicuous by its absence when a section of Human

recounts a situation devoid of both. In "Errors of the sufferer and the doer" a poor person curses a rich one for taking one of his possessions, but the social and psychic gulf between them leaves the latter oblivious to the full extent of his 'crime':

the rich man does not feel nearly so deeply the value of a **single** possession because he is used to having many: thus he cannot transport himself into the soul of the poor man and has not committed nearly so great an injustice as the latter supposes. Both have a false idea of one another. The injustice of the powerful which arouses most indignation in history is not nearly as great as it seems ... we all, indeed, lose all feeling of injustice when the difference between ourselves and other creatures is very great, and will kill a gnat, for example, without the slightest distress of conscience (1986:47#81.FN's emphasis).

Justice as closeness reappears some passages later when Nietzsche explains how easy it is for rulers to be cruel. Cruelty is devoid of justice because it inflicts undeserved suffering, ignoring any claim the other has to respect, desert or even compassion. The leader who orders but does not execute cruelty:

does not see it and his imagination therefore does not feel responsible. From lack of imagination most princes and military leaders can easily seem harsh and cruel without being so (1986:54#101).

This section goes on to explain that the powerful only see their actions in terms of cruelty (and hence justice) when the distance between them and their victim diminishes. Then they acquire some sense of the other as "neighbour" (1986:54#101),<sup>35</sup> as in some respect near to them. Concluding this passage Nietzsche points out that the idea that others are close to or like us is not innate but has to be learned and he links this directly with the question of egoism:

**Egoism is not evil**, because the idea of one's 'neighbour' ... is very weak in us; and we feel almost as/free of responsibility for him as we do for plants and stones. That the other suffers has to be **learned**; and it can never be learned fully. (1986:54/5#101.FN's emphasis).

Nietzsche's use of natural analogues in expressing the necessity and innocence of egoism thesis is evident again here too.

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<sup>35</sup> Nietzsche's term is "Nächsten" (1969:509#101).

Human further explores the problem of empathy, its relation to justice and the question of distance in "Self-defence" where Nietzsche concludes that as imagination can never bridge the chasm between individuals, it is impossible to fully know the suffering our actions inflict. They always occasion some unintended harm and we are therefore never entirely responsible for the pain:

When one does not know how much pain an act causes, it is not an act of wickedness; thus a child is not wicked, not evil, with regard to an animal: it investigates and destroys it as though it were a toy. But does one ever fully **know** how much pain an act causes another? (1986:56 #104.FN's emphasis) <sup>36</sup>

Daybreak considers this problem of imputing responsibility to others from the obverse side. "What is our neighbour?" points to the difficulty of knowing exactly how much of what we experience originates from another. Our egoism might assume that others are the source of certain sensations, when really they are not responsible:

We attribute to him (our neighbour) the sensations his actions evoke in us, and thus bestow upon him a false, inverted positivity. According to our knowledge of ourself we make of him a satellite of our own system: and when he shines for us or grows dark and we are the ultimate cause in both cases - we nonetheless believe the opposite! World of phantoms in which we live! Inverted, upsidedown, empty world (1982:74#118)

Therefore despite an original expectation that Nietzsche's thinking on action and accountability would allow no margin for justice, it turns out that this concept does play some role in his thinking about human interaction. Rather than jettisoning any notion of justice he advocates a conception that differs from those prominent in modern political thought; "what is needful is

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<sup>36</sup> One of La Rochefoucauld's maxims makes a point that could be read in the same vein, declaring that "Il n'y a guère d'homme assez habile pour connaître tout le mal qu'il fait" (1977:69#269). However as this could also be interpreted as commenting on the insufficiency of self-knowledge and ignorance of one's bad motives, it would be tenuous to identify it as a source for Nietzsche's thinking on this.

a new **justice!**" (1974:232#289.FN's emphasis.cf.1986:165#452). This new notion of justice repudiates ideas of inherent equality. Rejecting a priori notions of a fair distribution of rights and duties, it argues that just outcomes can only derive from the relative and shifting power of contending parties. As such they can also only ever be temporary for as powers change, so should attendant privileges. This is clear from the conclusion to a forementioned section in Daybreak:

The 'man who wants to be fair' is in constant need of the subtle tact of a balance: he must be able to assess degrees of power and rights, which, given the transitory nature of human things, will never stay in equilibrium for very long ... being fair is consequently difficult and demands much practice and good will, and very much very good **sense**. (1982:67#112. FN's emphasis)

This insistence on the need for practical wisdom in negotiating just outcomes, combined with the rejection of universal human equality indicates that Nietzsche's new notion of justice is more an old one recycled, for his thinking about justice is closer to Aristotle's than to any modern western thinker's. Aristotle's claim that it is as unfair to treat unequals equally as it is to treat equals unequally captures one of Nietzsche's major grievances against modern theories of society and politics.<sup>37</sup>

The notion discerned in some of Nietzsche's reflections on the justice of actions and interactions - that justice depends on closeness - suggests that growing closer to another heightens their claim to consideration in our

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<sup>37</sup> In The Politics Aristotle writes that:

it is thought that justice is equality; and so it is, but not for all persons, only for those who are equal. Inequality is also thought to be just; and so it is, but not for all, only for the unequal. We make bad mistakes if we neglect this 'for whom' when we are deciding what is just (1981, IIIix, 1280a7:195)

Berkowitz identifies Aristotle as a source for the later Nietzsche's view that the weak invent morality, in particular that the inferior wield claims to equality and justice as a lever against the strong. He also notes that the view is expressed by Thrasymachus in Plato's Republic (1993:95.fn19).

actions.<sup>38</sup> Nonetheless this appeal for justice can never be complete because proximity never can; by definition, some distance always divides individuals. Certain aspects of our dealings with even those we recognise will escape the claims of justice for two major reasons. The first is that 'perpetrators' can never fully know the harm they inflict and cannot justly be held accountable for what is either not their intention or not in their control. The second is that an honest victim is an uncertain one, admitting the probability of error in imputing responsibility to another.

Moreover the justice as closeness tenet does not always hold when Nietzsche considers justice as seeing. To get his thinking on justice in perspective, it must be seen that, as argued in the Introduction, its strongest interest lies in the justice of our perspectives and the judgements derived therefrom. The burden of his interest in matters like impartiality and giving to all things their due really rests there. And when discussing justice as seeing, Nietzsche sometimes holds the reverse of the justice as proximity postulate, arguing that things can be seen more clearly, and hence more justly, from a distance. As such, just seeing requires overcoming egoism's perspective that

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<sup>38</sup> This idea of promoting justice by bringing what is distant closer takes a somewhat different form in Human's "Political value of fatherhood". Nietzsche argues that only men with children should have some say in public affairs, because having descendants gives them a "just and natural interest" in society's future. Having sons makes a man:

unegoistic, or, more correctly, it broadens his egoism in respect of duration and enables him seriously to pursue objectives that transcend his individual lifespan (1986:167#455).

He fails to specify why having daughters does not give one a stake in posterity. And could it be that, unlike men, women do not need children to qualify for a voice in public affairs because already possessed of broad visions?

The likely explanation of this exclusively male, indeed patriarchal in the literal sense, view of political participation is the model on which it is, however consciously, based - the Greek polis. But Nietzsche is here outlining a view of how things ought to be and it is surprising that his ought is so limited by an is, or rather was. Nor can women's exclusion from political participation be wholly explained by the view often attributed to Nietzsche that women are innately and insuperably inferior for, as Chapter Nine shows, this is not an accurate account of the middle period's portrayal of women.

the things close by are larger and more important than those distant (1974:199 #162).<sup>39</sup> Therefore the egoism that Nietzsche holds as endemic in humans must be, in some measure, surmounted for the attainment of a just perspective. Without this, knowledge of the self, as of all things, will be skewed, showing that Nietzsche's insistence on the inevitable distance and mutual incomprehension between individuals does not result in solipsism. In the case of the self, proximity obscures clairvoyance, just as distance does with others:

We always stand a few paces too close to ourselves, and always a few paces too distant from our neighbour. So it happens that we judge him too much wholesale and ourselves too much by individual, occasional, insignificant traits and occurrences (1986:296#387).

(A corollary of this, that self-knowledge requires input from others, is explored in Chapter Six).

This chapter has argued that, given Nietzsche's attempt to analyse action from a standpoint beyond current designations of good and evil and his belief that all action is, in the first instance, egoistic, necessary and hence innocent, the notions of egoism, self-love and vanity have special importance in his work. It has shown that in (usually) using the term vanity in a critical way, Nietzsche is continuing rather than transvaluing its traditional sense even though his diagnosis of vanity as a shortage of self-love has some originality. When it comes to egoism and self-love Nietzsche is concerned to transvalue these terms, firstly by showing that action is inescapably egoistic and that this should not be condemned and secondly by arguing that self-love should be seen as a good, as making beautiful action possible. However he sometimes conflates these notions and supposedly neutral analyses of egoistic action acquire a positive hue, becoming a priori affirmations of self-love.

It has been shown that in using vanity to criticise certain egoistic actions, Nietzsche is continuing the example of La Rochefoucauld and

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<sup>39</sup> Again there is a glimmer of this interest in perspective and correct seeing in Chamfort, for one maxim observes that:

Celui qui est juste au milieu, entre notre ennemi et nous, nous paraît être plus voisin de notre ennemi. C'est un effet des lois de l'optique, comme celui par lequel le jet d'eau d'un bassin paraît moins éloigné de l'autre bord que de celui où vous êtes (1968:74#103)

Chamfort. In transvaluing egoism and self-love however, he deviates considerably from La Rochefoucauld's overt criticism of 'amour-propre' although Nietzsche can also be seen as accentuating the fascination with self-love that sometimes peeps through the moralist's analysis. Nietzsche's affirmation of self-love has a more solid background in the thought of Chamfort. But content notwithstanding, in his analyses of egoism, vanity and self-love, Nietzsche shows himself to be a true descendant of the moralist tradition, for his work exhibits a fascination with psychological minutiae and the subtlety and variety of moral analysis for which the moralists are renowned. This chapter has also shown how the debate about justice and equality is interwoven with Nietzsche's discussion of egoism and its innocence.

As Chapter Six argues, when it comes to social relations, friendship (and its mirror image - enmity) is the only forum where justice can legitimately be premised upon equality. That chapter will also argue that Nietzsche's insistence on the centrality of egoism does not preclude friendship, at least among equally superior types. This insistence notwithstanding, Nietzsche's portrayal of friendship also implies that the boundaries between self and other are not always clear, distinct and fixed. And just as this chapter has shown Nietzsche's praise for self-love, Chapters Six and Ten will show how self-love can be spurred by the love of others. However before exploring how relations with others can nourish things like justice and self-love, it is necessary to show that friendship is also a counterpoise to pity. "The greatest danger" therefore examines Nietzsche's views on pity and its cognate emotions.

Emotions like pity, empathy, sympathy and benevolence pose a direct challenge to Nietzsche's contention that all action emanates from egoism for they seem to efface the self and prefer another.<sup>2</sup> This is one of the reasons why the writings of the middle period expend such energy analysing this family of emotions. This chapter examines Nietzsche's views on pity and related concepts and in doing so advances some other reasons why these emotions so occupy him. Turning then to the moralists it looks at how his reading of La Rochefoucauld might have contributed to his thinking on these matters,<sup>3</sup> for Chamfort has next to nothing to contribute to this.<sup>4</sup> The chapter

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<sup>1</sup> From Science's aphorism: "Where are your greatest dangers? - In pity" (1974:220#271). Reflecting on Human in the preface to Genealogy Nietzsche writes that:

The point at issue was the value of the non-egotistical instincts, the instincts of compassion, self-denial and self-sacrifice, which Schopenhauer above/all others had consistently gilded, glorified ... Yet it was these very same instincts which aroused my suspicion ... It was here, precisely that I sensed **the greatest danger** for humanity (1956: 153/4.my emphasis).

<sup>2</sup> Asceticism poses a similar threat to Nietzsche's premise about the ubiquity of egoism, not through its preference for another but because it seems to deny and efface the self. He therefore goes to considerable lengths to expose asceticism as disguised egoism or vanity (1986:73-4#137,75#141.1982:68-9 #113). Science also exposes the egoistic impulse in "the type of magnanimity that has always been considered most impressive", arguing that "it contains the same degree of egoism as does revenge, but egoism of a different quality" (1974:114#49).

Donnellan notes that Rée believed in genuinely disinterested pity (1982b:602) which suggests that one of the reasons Nietzsche argues so hard against it is to convince his friend.

<sup>3</sup> According to Andler "La médiocre estime ou La Rochefoucauld tient la pitié ... a eu tout de suite l'adhésion de Nietzsche" (1920:192) and Bauer argues that Nietzsche "appreciait chez La Rochefoucauld son "mépris de la pitié" (1962:36). However these are rather limited views of the moralist's as well as of Nietzsche's view of pity.



concludes by considering the justice of pity.

For Nietzsche pity is an emotion overvalued by current moral frameworks and as is his wont, he turns to history to show that it has not always been so valorized (1986:56#103,322-3#50.1982:86#134,#135,88#139,104-5#172). Pity's overestimation can be partly attributed to the fact that, as discussed in Chapter Two, current moral frameworks suppress the expression and enhancement of strong individuality. In promoting the denial of one's own concerns and individuation and the absorption into another, pity and its cognate emotions make a virtue of self-denial and living and feeling for others rather than for the self (1982:82#131,87#137,91#143,105#174.1974:153#99,270#338).<sup>5</sup> The antagonism between pity and egoism and the need to reverse the hierarchy currently holding them are noted in Human:

The most senile thing ever thought about man is contained in the celebrated saying 'the ego is always hateful'; the most childish in the even more celebrated 'love thy neighbour as thyself'. - In the former knowledge of human nature has ceased, in the latter it has not even begun (1986:296#385)

Science elaborates upon this antagonism between pity and self-development, suggesting that when the former draws us into the concerns of others, it distracts us from the much more important but also more demanding task of the latter:

All such arousing of pity and calling for help is secretly seductive, for our "own way" is too hard and demanding and too remote from the love and gratitude of others, and we do not really mind escaping from it - and from our very own conscience - to flee into the conscience of the others and into the lovely temple of the "religion of pity" (1974:270 #338).

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<sup>4</sup> Chamfort's greatest relevance comes from his illustrations of the egoistic drives that underlie seeming selfless acts. He argues that vanity rather than the disinterested quest for truth drives philosophy (1968:146#421,152#456,153 #460) and that vanity is the hidden motivation of saints (1968:152#453). As will emerge, some of Nietzsche's remarks on benevolence also echo a passage from Chamfort.

<sup>5</sup> Ironically though Nietzsche notes that egoism can produce 'goodness' by omission for "Most people are much too much occupied with themselves to be wicked" (1986:48#85). This illustrates La Rochefoucauld's point about the danger of inferring backwards from outcome to motive (Chapter Two).

Extrapolating from some of the ideas reviewed in the last chapter it could be expected that Nietzsche's emphasis on the universality and primacy of egoism and his celebration of self-love would lead him to repudiate a drive like pity. Similarly his argument that seeing others as like us and feeling their pain is not innate but must be learned suggests a low priority for drives like empathy and sympathy. However as examining his views on this family of feelings illustrates, while he launches a frontal attack on pity, his opinions are actually more complex and nuanced than might be anticipated *prima facie* and than is usually acknowledged in the literature. For example, Dannhauser's Nietzsche "deprecates pity" (1974:21). Berkowitz's finds pity and compassion detestable (1993:123,126) and Graham Little has Nietzsche suspecting pity as a motive (1993:43.cf.Russell 1946:738). Taylor claims that Nietzsche "declared benevolence the ultimate obstacle to self-affirmation" (1989:343.cf.518) so that it must be repudiated by those aspiring to "higher fulfilment" (1989:423.cf.455, 499,516). There is some truth in these claims but they are too one-sided to do justice to the middle period's more nuanced portrayal of pity. A more searching view of this period's depiction of these drives also shows that pity does not always involve self-renunciation nor the love nor gratitude of others and that its 'lovely temple' is overrun with money-lenders.

One of the middle period's earliest analyses of pity comes in "The desire to excite pity" in Human (1986:38-9#50) which begins by endorsing one of La Rochefoucauld's views. According to Nietzsche the French moralist discriminates between people capable of reason and others, suggesting that pity be the province of the latter. This group, the commoners, are not driven by reason so need emotions like pity to spur them to help others. For the rational, pity is not only redundant but dangerous because it "enfeebles the soul" (1986: 38#50). This does not mean however, that pity is irrelevant for La Rochefoucauld. Nietzsche introduces the moralist's distinction between having pity and expressing it where appropriate, recommending the latter to those with reason. Thus in both its directions Nietzsche suggests that for La Rochefoucauld pity has value only for the inferior, for they require its promptings before assisting the suffering and when suffering themselves, only

they are stupid enough to take comfort from a show of pity from others.

Nietzsche questions the second half of this equation and indicates that the moralist has not been sufficiently suspicious of pity-seekers' motives, making him probably the first to accuse La Rochefoucauld of a deficit of distrust! Nietzsche suggests that what motivates the afflicted to seek pity is not stupidity but the desire to hurt those not similarly disadvantaged. Moreover such power to hurt affirms the strength of the pitied, making them feel less vulnerable and pitiable. Thus by Nietzsche's analysis, because it induces the other to suffer on our behalf, making oneself an object of pity is a triumph rather than a diminution of the self. Hence his conclusion that:

The thirst for pity [Mitleid] is thus a thirst for self-enjoyment, and that at the expense of one's fellow men; it displays man in the whole ruthlessness of his own dear self: but not precisely in his 'stupidity', as La Rochefoucauld thinks. (1986:39#50)

Nietzsche's censorious tone in thus analysing pity is somewhat surprising given his view that all action is egoistic and initially innocent. However it seems that his criticism of pity-seekers is the same as that of the vain - both can only feel powerful by subordinating others which, as we have seen, betokens weakness, dependence and a dearth of self-love.

Toward the end of the same book of Human (1986:55-6#103) Nietzsche looks briefly at pity from the other side, arguing that displaying it generates pleasure rather than pain and that, as such, practising pity is not a negation but a manifestation of egoism and self-enjoyment. Pity's pleasures are multiple. Firstly the emotion is pleasant in itself. If acted upon it brings that primal gratification of all action - what Chapter Four dubbed the pleasure of self-assertion. Thirdly, when the one suffering is close to us, pity distances us from rather than bring us closer to them and thus mitigates our suffering on their behalf (cf. 1982:137#224).

That pity derives more from pleasure than self-effacement and shared pain is also illustrated in the brief passage in Human on "Sympathizers" [Die Mitleidigen]. It claims that "Natures full of sympathy" are never as ready to delight in others' success as in their misery, which would be the case if such sympathy were primarily a function of fellow-feeling. Indeed such

'sympathizers' are likely to feel disgruntled by another's success, because they "feel they have lost their position of superiority" (1986:138#321.cf.136#299. 1982:48#80,86#136,137#224.1974:176#118). Similarly by suggesting that pity can conceal envy, the aphorism "Pity" [Mitleid] indicates that a show of pity can be an assertion of superiority, allowing us to take revenge on one we usually envy (1986:295#377).

Combining these twin perspectives on pity, those of seeker and giver, seems to reveal pity as a positive-sum game accommodating the manifestation of complementary powers. The seeker exercises power by inducing the pitier to suffer on their behalf. The pitier meets this by quelling their suffering via the disengagement and other pleasures pity affords. But rather than depict pity as a kind of modern "Homer's Contest" where the will to damage others enjoys a positive and mutually beneficial outlet (cf.1982:45#76), Nietzsche follows La Rochefoucauld in portraying pity as a game the inferior play. This is especially clear in Science's declaration that "Pity is the most agreeable feeling among those who have little pride and no prospects of great conquests" (1974:87#13). It is also evident in Human's "Joying with" which echoes the point about the rarity of sharing another's pleasure. Indeed the capacity for such celebration becomes the mark of a higher person (1986:228#62.1974:271 #338).<sup>6</sup> In this Nietzsche again accepts La Rochefoucauld's equation of pity with lower forms of life but capacity to reason is not the crucial variable separating higher and lower.<sup>7</sup> Instead the major factor seems to be the extent

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<sup>6</sup> In German this association shows up in the language so that those 'mit Freunde' feel 'mit-Freude'.

<sup>7</sup> This is not to suggest that rational capacity is irrelevant to morality but Nietzsche's view of their relationship is unclear. Human declares that morality is closely "tied to the quality of the intellect" for acting in accord with moral convention can require a good memory or powerful imagination (1986:42#59). But this could be ironic, especially given an earlier claim that acting against moral convention requires a good memory (1986:40#54). Later Nietzsche describes those rare types who combine moral and intellectual genius (1986:84 #157) and are capable of the broadest empathy and broadest suffering which again suggests that quality of mind is closely tied to morals. However the ambiguity of his ensuing scepticism toward such types makes it uncertain whether he genuinely mistrusts them or is voicing the response of the mass of

of rivalry one feels, the extent to which one takes independent pleasure in the self rather than subordinating others for self-elevation. As per vanity, such malicious, hierarchising pity seems to derive from a shortage of self-love.

However one obstacle to the symmetrical exchange of powers pity seems to afford is that, while inciting pity might assert strength, receiving it does not. It signals instead a diminution of the pitied's stature and thus offends their vanity.<sup>8</sup> This is why, according to "Pity and contempt", pity used to be seen as born of disdain rather than goodness or generosity (1986:322-3#50.cf. 136#299.1982:16-17#18,86#135.1974:87#13). And just how strange it is to ordain pity a primary virtue emerges in "Devil's advocate" which points out that another's suffering is a precondition of pity (1986:325-6#62). Those who want this virtue to flourish must also wish for burgeoning misery. Thus the paradox of pity is that while it seems to recoil from and strive to alleviate suffering, it is actually parasitical upon it. This also reveals the contradiction in the fact that, inspired by Christianity, the modern sensibility wishes to foster pity while simultaneously shunning the suffering that nourishes it (1986:259 #187.1974:112-13#48,270#338). In each of these passages Nietzsche employs a different technique to throw the contemporary reverence for pity into question. The first is diachronic, showing that pity was not always highly regarded and the second a synchronic, 'conditions of possibility' argument, indicating that even had pity always been revered it is underpinned by a contradictory logic.

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ordinary mankind. It would seem that for Nietzsche a powerful intellect is a necessary but not sufficient condition of the higher moral life and that lower types cleave to common, debasing moralities because they lack not reason but other personal qualities. Indeed if his analyses are accurate, lower types require a good deal of cunning and calculating reason to execute their acts against others.

<sup>8</sup> As Daybreak's aphorism "Tried and Tested Advice" illustrates there is an exception to, or perhaps it is further proof of, this rule. This passage contends that, paradoxically, the best way to console a sufferer is not to - to persuade them they are beyond consolation. The consolation that cannot console relieves misery because "it implies so great a degree of distinction that they at once hold their heads up again" (1982:171#380).

Toward the end of Book II of Daybreak Nietzsche conducts a sustained analysis of pity, and one of these passages, "No longer to think of oneself", surveys his major views and offers some new thoughts on this topic (1982:83-5#133). Its overarching theme is again that pity, in thought or deed, is essentially egoistic even though this need not be conscious. The egoism of pity is approached from a variety of angles and in this we witness anew how complex and multi-faceted is Nietzsche's notion of the moral life and how it avoids crude reductionism. Having summarised some of pity's motivations, he declares that:

All of this, and other, much more subtle things in addition, constitute 'pity' [Mitleid]: how coarsely does language assault with its one word so polyphonous a being! (1982:84#133)

One motive for pity is honour, for our standing in our own or others' eyes would be diminished if we did not help the needy. Another is the desire to assert power but Nietzsche suggests that this is power over the random misfortune that has befallen the victim rather than over the victim himself. In showing pity to a victim, we make a statement against fortune. A further motive comes when the suffering of another is seen as a warning to ourselves and in helping to remedy their pain we assert our strength against possible threats to our wellbeing (cf.1986:370#239,#240). This impulse to pity can come from the instinct for self-defence or it can be motivated by revenge but unlike the envious pity referred to above, this is not revenge directed against an individual but against circumstance. Nor is it revenge in the usual sense of responding to something one has experienced but a sort of pre-emptive revenge against what could happen, as signalled by another's misfortune. In many of the sources of pity Nietzsche outlines here, its human object is immaterial, attesting in a different way to pity's primary concern with the self. This passage also runs through the pleasures pity offers. The pitier feels free of the other's pain, feels free to decide whether to assist, anticipates the praise to be enjoyed for helping, enjoys the sheer action involved in helping and, again, via action, asserts some power in the face of fortune.

This same passage (1982:83-5#133) further illuminates the multiple motives behind pity by presenting those without pity as a foil to those with.

Nietzsche points out that both types feel and act from egoism but their egoism takes different forms. The pitiless do not scent danger everywhere so feel no threat from another's mishaps. Nor are they as vain as pitiers for their sense of power is not affronted by the whims of fortune. The pitiless also keep a greater distance from their fellows, not seeing themselves as their sibling's keeper. Having experienced more pain than pitiers, they are not so offended by it and accept that others must suffer too. They detest pity's soft-heartedness (cf.1982:106#174) and cannot bear to be seen as vulnerable or easily moved, which reiterates La Rochefoucauld's fear that pity enfeebles the soul.

In the next book of Daybreak though, Nietzsche suggests that in rare accesses of pity, the pitiless feel liberty and ecstasy: "it is a draught appropriate to warriors, something rare, dangerous and bitter-sweet that does not easily fall to one's lot" (1982:104#172). This helps to explain how they can find tragedy appealing and suggests that as an interruption to the 'normal' flow of emotions, pity is tolerable. Only when it becomes the element of existence, as in the modern age, is it so roundly condemned.

Associating pity with soft-heartedness raises another of Nietzsche's criticisms of it when its practice is widespread. As the description of pity enfeebling the soul indicates, it is anathema to the sorts of martial qualities he so often valorizes. When pity rules, suffering is seen as the greatest evil and people lose the ability to endure hardship and privation as well as the attendant personal strength and resistance. Moreover the reign of pity saps the capacity to inflict suffering as well as to endure it. The danger of this becomes evident when Nietzsche contends that ruthlessness not only requires greater strength than surviving harm but is a precondition of greatness (1974:255#325). Greatness requires the ability to endure, inflict and witness pain without flinching.

However there is something of 'the gentleman protesting too much' in such attacks on pity, especially given that just pages after celebrating the capacity to inflict pain Nietzsche confesses that:

I only need to expose myself to the sight of some genuine distress and I am lost. And if a suffering friend said to me "Look, I am about to die; please promise to die with me", I should promise it; and the sight

of a small mountain tribe fighting for its liberty would persuade me to offer it my hand and my life (1974:270#338)

In the light of this admission, Nietzsche's relentless attacks on pity are further illuminated by Human's depiction of denial as a form of confession:

He who denies he possesses vanity usually possesses it in so brutal a form he instinctively shuts his eyes to it so as not to be obliged to despise himself (1986:224#38).

The idea of insistence compensating for ~~anxiety~~ also emerges in Nietzsche's analysis of Pascal who, "like one who is afraid, . . . talked as loudly as he could" (1982:53#91). Thus it is following Nietzsche's lead to suggest that in attacking pity so vehemently, he is striving to curtail the power of his own sympathetic side which he deems undesirable.

The connection between overcoming pity and self-overcoming is made in Daybreak's "Striving for distinction" which entertains the possibility of:

doing hurt to others in order thereby to hurt **oneself**, in order then to triumph over oneself and one's pity and to revel in an extremity of power! (1982:69#113.FN's emphasis).

Why Nietzsche would curtail the impulse to pity brings us back to the tension between pity and self-development introduced at the start of this chapter. If a zero-sum relationship between caring for others and care of the self is posited then reducing or annihilating the first must increase the second. However while both premises might be questioned, even from a Nietzschean position (as Chapters Six and Ten show), there is a qualitative difference between claiming that freeing oneself of pity frees one to focus on the self and that ruthlessly hurting others not only contributes to self-development but is a precondition of greatness.

Daybreak's "To what extent one has to guard against pity" (1982:85-6 #134) introduces yet another reason to eschew this emotion, pointing out that by advocating that the pitier share in the suffering of another, its ambition is to increase aggregate unhappiness (cf.1982:87#137). As such there is nothing emancipatory in the logic of pity - one suffering and another sharing it only compounds the overall misery. Although Nietzsche suggests an alternative response which transcends the cycle of suffering, this does not mean that he thinks that suffering is to be avoided. Contrary to the spirit of the age, he



contends not only that suffering can be productive but that it is a concomitant of real joy. Hence pity's attempts to stamp out suffering are not only self-contradictory, as shown above, but militate against true happiness. This is clear in one of the final passages of the middle period which equates praise of pity with love of comfort:

How little you know of human **happiness**, you comfortable and benevolent [gutmütigen] people, for happiness and unhappiness are sisters and even twins that either grow up together or, as in your case, **remain small** together. (1974:270#338.FN's emphasis)

However again a distinction needs to be drawn. The claim that to know the greatest joy one must also know the greatest pain is not the same as claiming that ruthlessly hurting others is a prerequisite of both. These tenets would only be inextricable if hurting others for sport were the highest good (or the deepest suffering) yet thus relying on another for one's greatest or lowest states would smack of the vanity, rivalry and dearth of independence that Nietzsche is elsewhere so critical of. Indeed the previous chapter shows that the noble do not set out to harm others deliberately - that is the province of the petty. Thus it would seem that Science's claim that greatness requires the ability to hurt others only holds when there is a zero-sum relationship between self-development and kindness to others rather than being a general postulate of the middle period. In order to explain why Nietzsche launches such attacks against pity it is also necessary to consider the above point - that his attack on pity is also the product of Nietzsche arguing against himself, trying to 'shout down' and purge himself of a powerful strain of fellow feeling in his personality.<sup>9</sup>

However the middle period's critique of pity and its cognate emotions is not confined to exposing their real motives nor attacking their adverse consequences. Nietzsche also frequently criticises the idea at the core of pity - that the 'principium individuationis' can be transcended to allow one to feel as another does. As "No longer to think of oneself" (1982:85#133) and

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<sup>9</sup> I also suspect, but have no evidence, that Nietzsche's attack on pity is associated with his fear of being an object of pity, given the chronic illness he suffered.

"Empathy" [Mitempfindung] in Daybreak (1982:90#142) indicate, in rejecting this possibility Nietzsche is attacking a central tenet of Schopenhauer's philosophy, a point reiterated in the passage on "Schopenhauer's followers" in Science (1974:153#99).<sup>10</sup> In good genealogical fashion Nietzsche attempts to discredit fellow-feeling by showing its manifestations to have emanated originally from fear and mistrust:

man, as the most timid of all creatures on account of his subtle and fragile nature, has in his **timidity** the instructor in that empathy, that quick understanding of the feelings of another (and of animals). Through long millennia he saw in everything strange and lively a danger: at the sight of it he at once imitated the expression of the features and the bearing and drew his conclusion as to the kind of evil intention behind this ... (1982:90#142.FN's emphasis)

This depiction of primal insecurity echoes the above suggestion that, unlike the pitiless, contemporary pitiers scent danger everywhere so while pity's growth is usually read as progress, Nietzsche discerns a certain atavism in this. He goes on to argue that such empathy is more typical of timid peoples as a whole, with "proud, arrogant men and peoples" (1982:90#142) being less practised in it because they need it less. Here again we encounter a variation on La Rochefoucauld's association of pity with inferior human types although, characteristically, Nietzsche expands the site of moral observation from salon to civilization.

While manifestations of fellow-feeling might have lost their protective function, Nietzsche insists that they retain their simulated quality so that should we appear to feel the same emotion as our neighbour, we are really only successfully imitating its effects (1982:89-90#142). Indeed it looks as if manifesting the signs of another's emotions is the furthest that fellow-feeling can go for Nietzsche contends that it is almost impossible to know exactly how another feels or what they suffer (1982:83-5#133). Although curiosity is one of the things fuelling pity (1986:144#363), pity does not yield real knowledge of the other but presumes to know what they feel and how best to remedy it

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<sup>10</sup> One wonders if Nietzsche's expression of "compassion" for Schopenhauer because of his "frivolous and worthless rubbish", his faith in the unifying power of pity, is intentionally ironic (1982:90#142).

(1986:228-9#68). That this trivialises the other's experience is put forcefully in Science's "The will to suffer and those who feel pity":

Our personal and profoundest suffering is incomprehensible and inaccessible to almost everyone; here we remain hidden from our neighbour, even if we eat from one pot. But whenever people **notice** that we suffer, they interpret our suffering superficially. It is the very essence of the emotion of pity that it strips away from the suffering of others whatever is distinctively personal. Our "benefactors" [Wohltäter] are, more than our enemies, people who make our worth and will smaller (1974:269#338.FN's emphasis).

Nietzsche's claim that the farthest pity can extend is imitating the effects of another's suffering implies yet another response to La Rochefoucauld's view. It would seem that recommending simulated pity to superior, rational types is unnecessary for all pity is simulated and, as it is an impossibility, genuine pity cannot even be the domain of commoners. Instead simulating seems to be the resort of all in Nietzsche's opinion, meaning that the new distinction between higher and lower becomes the awareness and acceptance of such simulation, rather than the fact of it.

As indicated in the introduction to this chapter, Nietzsche examines an array of emotions that share the characteristic of absorbing the other into the self. Thus far we have examined pity as a practice that is, for the most part, expressed in face-to-face relations. However Human's "Error regarding life necessary to life" (1986:28-9#33) considers this emotion on a larger plane, examining the idea that individuals can so transcend individuation that they come to feel one with a wider reality. Nietzsche argues that such broad empathy is inaccessible to most for the majority are simply concerned with themselves and their immediate interests, lacking the will or imagination to venture beyond. Only exceptional types have access to wider feeling (cf. 1986: 42#59,84#157) but Nietzsche argues that even with them it is not truly universal empathy but extends only to a portion of the world.

This limitation turns out to be an advantage though, as this passage goes on to contend that were such universal empathy attainable it would devastate because it would reveal an ultimately goalless humanity comprised predominantly of banal, unexceptional individuals. Awareness of this would

lead exceptional, empathising humans to despair so even when achievable, this wider empathy is dangerous. Hinting at what will become a powerful theme in his later writings, Nietzsche concludes that because "Every belief in the value and dignity of life rests on false thinking" (1986:28#33) it may be necessary for even superior individuals, unless poets, to retain illusions if they are to value life. Thus to doctrines advocating universal empathy, Nietzsche responds that it is impossible for most and dangerous for the rest. In this qualification of the middle period's positivism we see also see Nietzsche reiterating one side of Chamfort's reaction to truth - that its unconstrained pursuit brings misery and despair.

This comprehensive critique of pity and its cognates should not be taken to imply that Nietzsche sees no room for goodness or regard for others in social relations. Indeed by his analysis, most acts of pity are neither of these things; pity's lovely temple is crawling with money-lenders. Just as the last chapter showed Nietzsche's belief in the importance of higher individuals being well-disposed toward themselves, an early passage in Human (1986:38 #49) advances benevolence [Wohll wollen] as an alternative to pity because it expresses genuine goodness toward others. Although "immeasurably frequent" and "very influential", the small daily practices of benevolence are overlooked by most analyses of morals and manners. However Nietzsche's ethno-methodology shows benevolence to encompass:

those social expressions of a friendly disposition, those smiles of the eyes, those handclaps, that comfortable manner with which almost all human action is as a rule encompassed ... it is the continual occupation of humanity, as it were its light-waves in which everything grows; especially within the narrowest circle, within the family, is life made to flourish only through this benevolence. Good-naturedness, friendliness, politeness of the heart are never-failing emanations of the unegoistic drive and have played a far greater role in the construction of culture than those much more elevated expressions of it called pity, compassion and self-sacrifice (1986:38#49.cf.38#48,189#589). <sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Acknowledging the importance of benevolence as a social bond does not imply that it is the only one. This passage goes on to discuss the power of malice in social relations. In manifesting itself in innumerable small ways malice resembles benevolence, however Nietzsche contends that benevolence

As this indicates, benevolence is not the power struggle that pity is nor does it thrive on others' misery. This passage also suggests that benevolence has the oxymoronic quality of being unegoistic action. But Nietzsche qualifies this, pointing out that "there is indeed very little of the unegoistic" in benevolent deeds (1986:38#49). Thus it can be inferred that it is not benevolence's freedom from egoism that elevates it but that it does not subdue the other to affirm itself. Rather benevolent inclinations are fulfilled when others are uplifted. As the passage "Do not be ill too long" (1986:388#314) indicates, sympathy [das Mitleid] becomes grudging, whereas benevolence does not, giving freely of itself without counting the cost.

In the light of these features it is unsurprising that Nietzsche later describes as benevolent the superior spirit who dons the mask of mediocrity so as not to offend the majority - they act 'aus Mitleid und Güte' (1986:352 #175).<sup>12</sup> Further praise for benevolence appears in "Assorted Opinions and Maxims" where "Two-horse team" unites it with other drives identified as good in the middle period. "[A] warm benevolence [Wohlwollen] and desire to help" are associated with "the drive to clean and clear thinking, to moderation and restraint of feeling" (1986:261#196). Thus if pity be the tie that binds and strangles, benevolence is a superior social nexus, although not confined to the superior in society.

However benevolence as a diffuse and authentic expression of goodness does not substitute entirely for pity, empathy or sympathy. A careful reading reveals that Nietzsche does not discredit these latter emotions in toto but suggests that their authentic manifestation is limited to a narrow band of human interaction - friendship. This is hinted at in the passage above from Science where our most personal suffering is incomprehensible to "almost

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is its antidote. (1986:39#50) This praise of benevolence is also close to one of Chamfort's passages which asks:

Qu'est-ce que la société, quand la raison n'en forme pas les noeuds, quand le sentiment n'y jette pas d'intérêt, quand elle n'est pas un échange de pensées agréables et de vraie bienveillance? (1968:89#179)

<sup>12</sup> As this and the passage below (1986:37#46) illustrate 'das Mitleid' does not always bear negative connotations in the middle period.

everyone" among our neighbours and would-be benefactors (1974:269#338). The exceptions are our friends for its final paragraph counsels helping "only those whose distress you **understand** entirely because they share with you one suffering and one hope - your friends" (1974:271#338.FN's emphasis).<sup>13</sup>

Friends' ability to know one another this intimately echoes Human's "Sympathy [Mitleiden] more painful than suffering" (1986:37#46) which claims that contrary to the analyses of pity canvassed above, feeling for another's suffering can be more painful than the suffering they have undergone. The passage justifies its title by claiming that while our friend might endure the shame and the adverse consequences of their action, we suffer more from their act because we feel their shame more powerfully than we would our own. This is because we believe in "the purity of his character more than he does" (1986:37#46). This belief means that love for our friend surpasses their own self-love which is not the sort of situation that Nietzsche's insistence on egoism would usually acknowledge. This passage also goes against the grain of his analysis of pity in several ways. It makes no suggestion that entering the feelings of another is impossible but only that it can be destructive because aggregate suffering is increased. It offers strong testimony to friendship's power to obscure boundaries between individuals and so departs from his scepticism about transcending individuation. It does not scorn nor suspect the idea of valuing another above the self and thus also allows that egoism is not always the dominant human emotion but that friendship can mute this impulse.<sup>14</sup>

The centrality of shame as a source of suffering evident in "Sympathy" is echoed in the middle period's penultimate line where the response to "What do you consider most humane?" is "To spare someone shame" (1974:220#274).

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<sup>13</sup> Little's claim that for Nietzsche "Friends need no pity or false concern" (1993:25) is a little overstated. Friends do not, to be sure, warrant false concern but not all pity is this.

<sup>14</sup> Berkowitz claims that Zarathustra cannot account for "the moment of intimacy and melting of barriers in friendship" (1993:219) but this is not a problem for the middle period.

Similarly one of Human's final aphorisms advocates enhancing the joy of victory by not debasing the opponent: "The good/victory must put the conquered into a joyful mood, it must possess something divine that does not **put to shame** (1986:392/3#344.FN's emphasis). This reinforces the earlier point that the noble personality does not aim to demean others for its elevation does not rely upon their subordination. It also intimates an idea to be more closely examined in the next chapter - that enmity, like friendship, is an arena of equality.

Other themes from "Sympathy" reappear in Daybreak's "Growing tenderer" (1982:87#138) which provides further evidence that this passage is not entirely anomalous in Nietzsche's thinking. "Growing tenderer" describes a response to the suffering of a loved one. The first reaction is shock for we had assumed that the happiness they radiated to us signalled their well being. The next is greater tenderness so that "the gulf between us and him seems to be bridged, an approximation of identity seems to occur" (1982:87#138). This testifies again to Nietzsche's concession that friendship can eclipse individuation to some degree. Then we aim to comfort the friend, not as pity would by presuming to know their palliative but by trying to discern what would best alleviate their particular pain.<sup>15</sup> These arguments also limit the claim above that all pity is imitation for there is no sense that one friend is merely simulating another's sadness; on the contrary, one's sadness moves the other in a real and powerful manner. Here Nietzsche is in effect reversing his own and La Rochefoucauld's position, suggesting that not all pity is or should be imitation but that only among noble types can it enjoy some authentic expression.

However while this discrete, sensitive, respectful pity contrasts markedly with the garrulous sympathy [das Mitleiden] of women that "bears

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<sup>15</sup> Such intimate knowledge of another is vital for effective revenge too (1986:318#33) so that the potency of both requires some proximity. Revenge will be elaborated upon in Chapter Eight's discussion of honour but for the moment note that revenge and pity mirror one another as malice and benevolence do, and as we shall see, enmity and friendship do.

the sick man's bed into the public market-place" (1986:279#282), Nietzsche maintains that even in such a 'best case scenario', suffering debases its victim and pity elevates its practitioner. This means that its emergence in even the most intimate of relationships creates hierarchy and discord. And because even suffering shared between friends increases aggregate misery, it is vulnerable to the charge that pity compounds rather than transcends suffering. A more emancipatory alternative mooted by Nietzsche retrieves the ancient practice of relieving suffering by offering it something productive and joyful. Here, instead of pitying the other, with the model we make of ourselves we try to both sooth and inspire them beyond their misery. Thus Daybreak notes that:

the question itself remains unanswered whether one is of **more use** to another by immediately leaping to his side and **helping** him - which help can in any case be only superficial where it does not become a tyrannical seizing and transforming - or by **creating** something out of oneself that the other can behold with pleasure: a beautiful, restful, self-enclosed garden perhaps, with high walls against storms and the dust of the roadway but also a hospitable gate. (1982:106#174.FN's emphasis.cf.1986:259#187)

As this indicates, Nietzsche's attack on pity need not have as its corollary indifference to or even delight in the suffering of others. Instead this passage gestures toward an alternative response to the suffering of friends, one that breaks the cycle of suffering and increase in collective misery that pity promotes. And in intimating this alternative, Nietzsche is following the example of La Rochefoucauld.

What emerges from all of this is that the esteem in which Nietzsche holds any manifestation of fellow-feeling must be discerned from the context of its presentation. His major criterion for evaluating action is thus the stance the actor takes toward themselves, their action and the world. As such, emotions and drives are not ruled out a priori nor whole categories of action condemned in a single bound. Instead what matters is the actor's demeanour and personal qualities.<sup>16</sup> This point, that it is not so much the type of action

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<sup>16</sup> This is not to suggest that any kind of action can be engaged in nobly for Nietzsche. Things like manual labour (1982:125-7#206) and money making (1974:93-4#21) are incompatible with nobility. Leisure is also such a vital part



as motive, stance and context that distinguishes superior from common types, obtains throughout the middle period and fits comfortably with one of the views Nietzsche shares with the moralists - that what is nominally the same action can have very different sources (1986:272#230,289#326). This emphasis on attitude and stance also makes Nietzsche a partial legatee of the tradition running from Augustine through Rousseau and Kant where what matters in evaluating action is the quality of the will rather than the deed itself.<sup>17</sup>

As mentioned, Nietzsche nominates La Rochefoucauld as inspiration for some of his own views on pity and in this same passage, parenthetically claims Plato as a critic of pity too (1986:38#50).<sup>18</sup> This coupling of Plato and La Rochefoucauld can partly be explained by the fact that each was writing at a time when a formerly dominant warrior ethic was in decline and indeed, each

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of the Nietzschean good life (1974:108-9#42) that it would be hard to be noble and always occupied with something outside the self. All of these claims reiterate classical beliefs.

<sup>17</sup> See Taylor (1989:83,365) for references to this tradition. This idea is made explicit in Beyond in a passage which also indicates the importance of self-love for nobility, although this is not the term used:

It is not his actions which reveal him [the noble human] - actions are always ambiguous, always unfathomable-; neither is it his 'works' ... it is the **faith** which is decisive here, which determines the order of rank here, to employ an old religious formula in a new and deeper sense ... **The noble soul has reverence for itself** ... (1977:196#287. FN's emphasis)

Solomon makes a similar point, although chooses a bad example, when he writes that Nietzsche:

is concerned ... with virtue and excellence, individual style and character that is not reducible to the actions a man has and has not performed or will perform. The man of character might perform any action - even cruel action - without detracting from his character. This shift from rules to style has opened up Nietzsche to many serious misinterpretations ... his point is ... to seriously go "beyond good and evil" to a conception of good (and bad) which pays less attention to rules and principles and more to individual virtue and excellence of character (1980:208).

This example is bad because as we have seen, Nietzsche suggests that cruelty is a sign of, rather than an exception to, superior character.

<sup>18</sup> La Rochefoucauld and Plato are twinned as critics of pity again in Genealogy and are joined there by Spinoza and Kant (Nietzsche 1956:154).

plays some part in contributing to its demise.<sup>19</sup> As critics of pity, each had to find some new basis for criticising it other than simply its unsuitability to the martial personality. Nietzsche however, because he wants to resurrect the warrior ethic, at least rhetorically (Chapter Eight), draws on this ethic to criticise pity as well as adopting some of his forebears' views.

Given his delight in unmasking apparently charitable acts as self-interested, pity would seem a prize candidate for attack from La Rochefoucauld. Yet the moralist has remarkably little to say on this subject in the Maximes or the Réflexions Diverses. It is the topic of one long maxim (1977:69#264) where, as expected, it is exposed as a form of amour-propre, for what moves us in the suffering of others is imagining ourselves suffering in the same way rather than any genuine feeling for them. The corollary of this, a point that Nietzsche could have but did not incorporate into his catalogue of pity's motives, is that one helps those in distress in the expectation that they will reciprocate in the event of one's own misfortune so that "ces services que nous leur rendons sont à proprement parler des biens que nous faisons à nous-mêmes par avance" (1977:69#266). Instead as shown, Nietzsche goes beyond this simple 'anticipated exchange' explanation of helping others to suggest the pleasure of self-assertion, the loss of honour and the pre-emptive revenge against fortune as motives for showing pity, although this last point shares La Rochefoucauld's view of the pitier envisaging their own suffering rather than feeling on the other's behalf.

The moralist's most extended reflection on pity comes in his Self-Portrait but even there it only occupies one paragraph among four pages. In attempting to expunge all traces of pity from his soul, Nietzsche is echoing the moralist's ambition to be entirely free of this emotion (1977:167). However for La Rochefoucauld being free of pity does not entail indifference to, let alone delight in, the suffering of others:

il n'est rien que je ne fisse pour le soulagement d'une personne affligée, et je crois effectivement que l'on doit tout faire, jusques à lui

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<sup>19</sup> On Plato's critique of the warrior ethic, see Taylor 1989:20,117,120. On La Rochefoucauld's, see Chapter Eight.

témoigner même beaucoup de compassion de son mal, car les misérables sont si sots que cela leur fait le plus grand bien de monde (1977:167/8).

Emulating pity is advocated because, however irrationally, it mitigates the victim's suffering which shows again that La Rochefoucauld advocates not cold indifference but doing the most to minimise another's pain. However this is an aspect of his argument Nietzsche studiously ignores. As we have seen, Nietzsche picks up on the next point that pity should be emulated rather than felt because it is a passion destructive of the 'well-made' soul which enfeebles the heart (1977:167). But, for the reason he gives above, Nietzsche deviates from the moralist who goes on to say that only in those who would not, through reason, act to assist another should this passion be encouraged (1977:167-8). From this it emerges that in order to claim the moralist as a forebear of his critique of pity, Nietzsche has to engage in quite selective attention and some careful excision, omitting those parts of La Rochefoucauld's argument that counsel concern and action for the suffering of others.<sup>20</sup>

Although we would not know it from Nietzsche's report, the moralist's discussion of pity moves immediately into one of friendship for he declares that "J'aime mes amis, et je les aime d'un façon que je ne balancerais pas un moment à sacrifier mes intérêts aux leurs" (1977:168). This continues his accent on assisting and relieving others and illustrates again that La Rochefoucauld is no champion of ruthlessness. However Nietzsche's intimation

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<sup>20</sup> As noted, one of the things separating Nietzsche from Rée at this time was the latter's belief in the possibility of genuine pity. It might be that in trying to persuade Rée out of this view, Nietzsche wants to strengthen his argument by invoking a thinker they both admire.

of an emancipatory alternative to pity between friends continues one of the moralist's arguments for the latter recommends that, when a friend is suffering:

[On doit] leur épargner des chagrins, leur faire voir qu'on les partage avec eux quand on ne peut les détourner, les effacer insensiblement sans prétendre de les arracher tout d'un coup, et mettre en la place des objets agréables, ou du moins qui les occupent ... (1977:112#II).

This suggests that, as with Nietzsche, there is a difference in La Rochefoucauld's analysis of pity between friends and between more distant acquaintances, for there is no sense here that it is the sufferer's stupidity that should be accommodated by a manifestation of pity. Instead, between friends, a more authentic exchange seems possible and their engagement should lift the sufferer beyond misery into the realm of beauty.<sup>21</sup> However Nietzsche is also following the moralist in suggesting that suffering cannot be entirely eradicated and is a necessary element of life (1977:93:8) although the moralist's work is not as emphatic about this as Nietzsche's.

Given the introduction's claim that the key concepts of the middle period examined in this study are interwoven with reflections on justice and that this reflects innovations in Nietzsche's thinking when compared with the French moralists, we now need to explore how questions of justice and equality play themselves out through spatial imagery in Nietzsche's analyses of pity. Although a multi-faceted emotion, we have seen that one of the ways pity operates is to assert proximity between consoler and consolee, with the former assuming that they can know and in some measure feel the experience of the latter - an assumption Nietzsche rejects for most cases. However as we have also seen, one of pity's pleasures is the way it increases the distance between subject and object, mitigating the former's suffering on the latter's behalf. Thus the proximity pity claims to generate is false on both counts - not only does it not bridge the individuation separating giver and recipient but it

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<sup>21</sup> As Baker notes:

When studied closely, La Rochefoucauld's condemnation of pity ... coincides with his other ideas on friendship (1974:23).

often enhances this, removing the former further from the latter's pain.

There is also a strong vertical movement in pity which becomes apparent in Nietzsche's analysis of how it used to operate, when signalling contempt rather than goodwill. In the past one offered pity because there was no pleasure in the suffering of an inferior, powerless creature. However as Science points out, because pity was a sign of contempt, the superior's response to the inferior's suffering could just as easily be cold and uncaring (1974:86-8#13). Were the sufferer one's equal, showing pity would debase and affront them, causing more suffering than the pain they were already experiencing. Even if the sufferer were not one's equal to begin with, they could approach parity in not appealing for mercy but suffering with proud stoicism. Respect for the other's dignity and equality prevents rather than prompts a display of pity (1982:86#135). Thus pity was once dispensed with the sort of justice Nietzsche admires (Chapter Four): weak, inferior types warranted it while the superior deserved to be spared it. However earning pity was no guarantee of its receipt - being weak and contemptible also licensed others to ignore your claims which illustrates a point made in the last chapter, that making claims on another used to be reserved to equals; inferiors could require nothing of their masters.

In the current moral climate the show of pity has lost all connection with justice and the show of pity to all and sundry, irrespective of status or stature, is encouraged. However Nietzsche also insists that although it is no longer so overt, some connection between pity and power remains. In the case of existing inequality, where one is suffering and feels disadvantaged, it has been shown that pity can provide a lever for the sufferer to reduce their inferiority and assert power over others by inducing them to feel pity. But as we have also seen, the act of giving pity re-institutes hierarchy. Thus while pity seems to posit parity between its parties, it actually elevates the consoler and subordinates the sufferer, who becomes the object of pity from one free of such sorrow but actively choosing to sympathise. As such, much pity for Nietzsche is condescension, not in the literal sense of sufferer and the consoler going down together but in the more colloquial sense of the latter looking

down on the former and boosting their own ego in doing so. But this is a corrupt form of superiority because, as per vanity, it relies on the subordination of another.

However as the discussion of pity between friends also indicates, not all pity asserts proximity falsely. Where its parties are friends and thus equal and kindred spirits, the suffering of one and response of the other can blur the boundaries between them, uniting them even further. The major problem here though is that when it is suffering that further fuses their horizons, the hierarchy pity must enforce introduces a new, vertical separation between them.

This is because, as Nietzsche's depiction of pity in the best case scenario indicates, pity is necessarily hierarchical - no matter how equal the parties be, once suffering afflicts one and the other responds sympathetically, their equality is destroyed even if only temporarily. This is apparent in his tender, careful description of one friend's dawning realisation of the other's suffering discussed above. Prior to this, admiration of them had bred the assumption that they were too far above us to receive anything we could offer. However, awareness that they are suffering gives us an opportunity to give them something and thus opens a new parity between us. As shown, this soon turns into a new hierarchy, with the formerly elevated friend debased and us elevated by their suffering and our sympathy (1982:87-8#138).

This inescapable element of hierarchy in the movement of sympathy could help to explain why, although Nietzsche's usual scepticism about eclipsing individuation is suspended when discussing friendship and its response to suffering, his emancipatory alternative to pity maintains a respectful distance between sufferer and respondent. Whereas his description of the pitiless praises the psychic and physical distance they put between themselves and others (1982:83-5#133), this respectful distance is seen as positive in a different way, as evidenced by the language expressing it. Instead of asserting proximity by "immediately leaping to his side", the respondent makes of themselves something beautiful and inspiring for the sufferer "to behold", which maintains a distance that is not alienating but holds them

together and is preferable to a "superficial" or "tyrannical" proximity (1982: 106#174).<sup>22</sup>

This idea of the distance that both separates and holds together is echoed in the imagery of the passage on benevolence above. The examples of "social expressions of a friendly disposition" it offers are "smiles of the eyes" and "handclasps" - both physical gestures which overcome alienation while maintaining distance between individuals. Both images also express horizontal connection which places individuals on the same plane. Such creation of parity, even if only temporary, is especially interesting given that some of the contexts in which Nietzsche observes it are structurally unequal: "Every teacher, every official brings this addition to what he does as a matter of duty" (1986:38#49). This indicates that in circumstances where inequality is given, benevolence can mute this and create some parity between people. Thus as indicated, benevolence is not about imposing or reinforcing power but defuses it in a way Nietzsche finds admirable.

Thus benevolence can create equality even if only briefly and, unusually for Nietzsche, this can be interpreted positively. As such benevolence can act in a way that he would think unjust and yet receive his praise. Benevolence's injustice derives from its generosity for, as mentioned, in giving freely of itself it resembles love and neither counts the cost nor deems the desert. Such indiscriminate giving explains why Nietzsche characterises love as stupid but also, paradoxically, as impartial. Its injustice is impartial because it lacks any criterion of distribution and like the rain, gives to all equally (1986:44-5#69).<sup>23</sup> Love's injustice also helps to explain

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<sup>22</sup> This theme is taken up much later in Ecce Homo:

My reproach against those who practise pity is that shame, reverence, a delicate feeling for distance easily eludes them, that pity instantly smells of the mob and is so like bad manners as to be mistaken for them ... (1979:44)

Similarly, Berkowitz's reading of Zarathustra refers to "the dialectic of closeness and distance that binds friends together" (1993:219).

<sup>23</sup> The terms in which Nietzsche discusses love's injustice suggest an early formulation of Zarathustra's "The bestowing virtue" (1972:99-104) for in Human he writes that:

Human's conclusion that "Economy of goodness is the dream of the boldest utopians" (1986:38#48) for love and goodness are not used sparingly or rationally - they overflow such limits.

This chapter has shown that, contrary to the general impression, a close reading of Nietzsche's views on pity and its fellow concepts reveals that he is not an implacable critic of them and that the true manifestation of some of pity's worthy features is the preserve of the great. It is therefore too general to dismiss pity entirely as a power game commoners play. It has also shown that while some of Nietzsche's attacks on pity take their cue from La Rochefoucauld, his reading of the moralist is quite selective for the Frenchman does not suggest, as Nietzsche sometimes does, that criticising pity is co-extensive with repudiating all bonds of human concern. Indeed one of La Rochefoucauld's major criticisms of pity is that it is an inferior form of concern for others. A careful examination of the middle period's depiction of pity reveals that this is also sometimes the case for Nietzsche.

From such a close examination it also emerges that there is a special connection between sympathy and friendship and that in this Nietzsche is again following La Rochefoucauld's example. What matters for Nietzsche is the forum in which pity's positive characteristics manifest themselves and the stance the actors adopt toward themselves and one another. In this regard friendship has special value in his eyes and can be a key variable in his assessment of the motives and consequences of action. The next chapter 'Equal among firsts' turns therefore, to a more detailed look at friendship.

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love possesses a rich cornucopia; out of this it distributes its gifts, and does so to everyone, even when he does not deserve them, indeed does not even thank it for them (1986:45#69).

Compare Hunt on the importance of generosity and not counting cost (1990: 142-3).



Friendship flourishes when identity matters (Little 1993:6).

Thus far it has transpired that for Nietzsche friendship can be an arena governed by equality, genuine knowledge of and sympathy for another, blurred boundaries of individuation and the overcoming of self-love. This chapter looks in greater detail at the middle period's depiction of friendship and explores connections with La Rochefoucauld's and Chamfort's views on friendship.<sup>2</sup>

As the introduction suggests, presenting Nietzsche who is so often portrayed as a misanthropist revelling in solitude, as a theorist of friendship seems odd.<sup>3</sup> Shklar for example, identifies him as a misanthropist (1984:194-5,

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<sup>1</sup> One of Nietzsche's letters to Elisabeth notes that:

perfect friendship is possible only **inter pares!** **Inter pares!** an intoxicating word; it contains so much comfort, hope, savour and blessedness for him who is necessarily always alone; for him who is "different" ... (8.7.1886 in Levy 1921:182.FN's emphasis)

<sup>2</sup> As will emerge in the footnotes, the middle period's views on friendship also connect at several points with the wider literature on friendship.

<sup>3</sup> Exceptions to this view tend to be commentators who have paid close attention to Nietzsche's middle period. These include Donnellan, Kaufmann (in Nietzsche 1974:6) and Tanner (in Nietzsche 1982:ix). However even those who concede that friendship is one of Nietzsche's concerns do not accord it the central role I do. Nietzsche is nominated by Graham Little as a source for his thinking about friendship but Little's book devotes only two pages to Nietzsche's view of friendship (1993:24-6) and this is drawn mostly from Zarathustra (1993:260). Berkowitz interprets the role of friendship in Zarathustra quite differently from Little, arguing that, far from being a good in itself, friendship is only valued insofar as it trains and strengthens one for perfect solitude (1993:218,219). "[T]he true form of friendship is radically instrumental" (1993:219) because, as he reads Zarathustra, friends aid self development and liberation which includes liberation from the need for friendship. Hence Berkowitz's conclusion that "Zarathustra's glorification of friendship intensifies rather than qualifies his radical individualism" (1993:220). As shall emerge, the middle period's discussion of friendship

222-3), defining misanthropy as "[t]he absence/of friendship" (1984:198/99). Discussing the middle period, Tarmo Kunnas writes that Nietzsche is cynical about friendship and does not believe that it can ever be sincere (1980:203). Commentators repeatedly note Nietzsche's praise of solitude (Dannhauser 1974:163. Donnellan 1982:13. Berkowitz 1993:217fn34,220. Sadler in Patton 1993:226,232). Recently Bonnie Honig has written that:

Nietzsche challenges man ... to overcome his originary terrors and face the fact that his need for closure and meaning engenders violence and isolation instead of the peace and friendship he seeks ... (1993:41)<sup>4</sup>

Against these views it is argued here that Nietzsche's interest in friendship and its authentic form is a real and powerful feature of the middle period<sup>5</sup> and shows him adopting and adapting yet another of the moralists' legacies. The differences between his views on friendship and those of La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort will also be surveyed and the chapter closes with

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differs markedly from this.

<sup>4</sup> Honig claims this despite casting Nietzsche as an exponent of virtue politics and acknowledging the centrality of agonism in his work, including the role others play in forming the self (1993:172). She links friendship with virtue rather than virtue politics and Nietzsche's place as an exponent of virtue (1993:3-4,5,41,186) perhaps explains why the twain are not allowed to meet. In general Honig sees Nietzsche as internalising the agonistic struggle, so that various parts of the self battle with one another. Such a view is also evident in Bergmann's description of the new era Human ushered in:

With self-conquest the new aim, the public display of the contest motif was accordingly devalued as hindering inner development ... The true conflict and intellectual challenge, he now decided, lay not without but within himself. The anti-motif turned inward, becoming a process of thinking against himself, against his earlier selves, as an attempt to free himself from the persona of his youthful rebellion. (1987:108)

However as this chapter shows, in Nietzsche's middle period there is no necessary antagonism between agonism within and without. Both can be important and indeed complementary forces in self-making, so that friends can assist in the self's struggle against itself. In this period, Nietzsche offers no reason why working on the self must be conceived of as a solitary effort.

<sup>5</sup> Friendship was also a powerful theme of his correspondence. For example, to Erwin Rohde he wrote:

Think what life would be like without a friend. Could one bear it? Would one have borne it? Dubito (12.12.1870.in Levy 1921:97).

a consideration of the relationship between justice, equality and friendship in Nietzsche's thought.

The middle period's first sustained reflections on friendship come in Book Six of Human - "Man in Society". Examining this book and the other portions of this period that consider friendship also reveals that Nietzsche's analysis of this relationship has all the variety and subtlety that his analyses of drives like vanity and pity do which, as suggested, is learned from the moralists. However one way Nietzsche's analysis of friendship departs from those of the moralists is that for him this institution can have a wider reach than private relationships. Friendship can have a political dimension - or rather his conception of a future social elite amounts to friendship writ large. Furthermore there is a layer of Nietzsche's analysis of friendship that connects it with readership and at certain points this dimension of his analysis meets up with the moralists' again. However these wider ramifications of friendship will be left in abeyance until Chapter Seven "Born Aristocrats of the Spirit". The current chapter looks at friendship as a private association.

Many of Nietzsche's reflections on friendship come in aphorisms but one of the first extended discussions is Human's "The talent for friendship" (1986:145#368). This passage contends that friendship can be conceived of as a ladder or a circle. When like a ladder, "in a state of continual ascent" (1986: 145#368), the individual finds new friends for each phase of their development so that those belonging to the ladder's sum of friends differ considerably from, and are unlikely to engage with, one another. The second sort of individual, the circle, takes different types as friends at the same point in time - the variety of their relationships is not diachronic but synchronic, because a function of the breadth of their personality rather than its serial metamorphoses. In the case of the circle, their friends, although different can associate with one another for sharing the nodal friend and, presumably, being drawn to such a multi-faceted individual, provides some basis for attraction to and involvement with one another. Daybreak's criticism of a zero-sum notion of friendship, which obtains when adding a new friend means subtracting an existing one, is orthogonal to this issue of friendship and exclusivity. The

exclamation that "he ought not to love me at the **expense** of others!" (1982:200 #488.FN's emphasis) suggests that friendship should share some of benevolence's bounty by having affection in abundance (cf.1982:200#489).

From Nietzsche's depiction of friendship as a ladder or a circle it would seem that friends reflect one's personality - those with wide interests sustain a variety of friendships while those who are one thing at one time and another at the next have successive relationships with different and mutually exclusive types (cf.1986:274#242). Daybreak suggests that friends perform a similar function when depicting "The friend we no longer desire" as one whose hopes cannot be satisfied. Here it can be inferred that because our friends are in some sense a reflection of us, when one of them has expectations we cannot meet estrangement is preferable to living with their reminder of our failure (1982:157#313).<sup>6</sup> And the idea that the friends we surround ourselves with testifies to something about us can be linked to Nietzsche's later suggestion that studying one's environment is a source of self-knowledge (1974:199#164).

The conclusion of Book Six (1986:148-9#376) provides another long reflection on friendship, offering a realistic yet optimistic account of this bond. The passage opens by pointing out that myriad differences separate even the closest friends, that friendship is a fragile achievement and that each individual is ultimately alone. However what begins as an apparent attack on illusions of solidarity and intimacy becomes an injunction to celebrate the reality of human relationships rather than lament their imperfections. A variation on Nietzsche's critique of free will, the passage argues that when we see that our friends must be as they are, regret that they are not otherwise evaporates. Acceptance of others and their apparent limitations should also be the corollary of self-knowledge for if we learn to see ourselves clearly and thus "despise ourselves a little" (1986:149#376), tolerance of others grows. Acquiring more realistic expectations about friendship in this way frees us to eventually celebrate it, despite its flaws, just as we can grow to love ourselves, warts notwithstanding

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<sup>6</sup> Compare (1986:291#344) where "being taken for something higher than one is" is described as "The most painful feeling there is".

(1986:230#81).

Continuing its realistic approach to friendship, this passage "Of friends" notes that sustaining friendship can require silence, discretion or ignorance about the friend's characteristics for people cannot endure too direct a knowledge of each other:

such human relationships almost always depend upon the fact that two or three things are never said or even so much as touched upon: if these little boulders do start to roll, however, friendship follows after them and shatters. Are there not people who would be mort-/ally wounded if they discovered what their dearest friends actually know about them? (1986:148/9#376.cf.1982:199-200#485).<sup>7</sup>

This echoes an earlier passage "One is judged falsely", which implies that friendship is incompatible with full knowledge of the other and that to remain such, friends must misjudge one another to some extent. Conversely, those indifferent to us can view us more perspicuously (1986:142#352). Daybreak's "Two friends" reiterates this idea that some friendships founder when one feels too well known by another (1982:152#287)<sup>8</sup> suggesting that friends cannot extend the perspicuity demanded by justice to one another.

However this same passage also acknowledges that friendship can falter when one feels insufficiently understood by the other, so that while delineating some of the defining features of friendship, Nietzsche remains alive to the variety of forms it takes and emotions it accommodates. The value of feeling understood by our friends also emerges in Human's section on "Presumptuousness". Tallying the costs of appearing presumptuous, Nietzsche warns that one should only display a proud demeanour when "one can be quite sure one will not be misunderstood and regarded as presumptuous, for example

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<sup>7</sup> This accords to some extent with the claim made by Horst Hutter in Politics as Friendship that:

friendship is an achievement often dependent on errors of judgement about a friend's or one's own character, and the ability to maintain a certain amount of silence ... (but) without as great a degree of openness as possible, there is no friendship. The intent to be open and honest is one of the defining characteristics of a friend (1978:14).

<sup>8</sup> Dannhauser picks up on this dimension of Nietzsche's view of friendship, but fails to point out that it is only one dimension (1974:163).

in the presence of friends and wives" (1986:147#373). The value of feeling understood returns in Daybreak's discussion of the importance of an environment where one can either remain silent or communicate the things that matter most (1982:167-8#364.cf.1974-211#226). If friends are choices<sup>9</sup> then the claim that they reflect something about the self is also strengthened. Daybreak's reference to the ability to speak or remain silent but either way be understood can also evoke the concept of friendship<sup>10</sup> for it resembles the idea that this relationship embraces intimacy and distance.

The question of how closely friends should know themselves and one another is taken up again in the final book of the first volume of Human - "Man Alone with Himself" although here it is examined in the reverse of "Of friends". Rather than self-knowledge being a pre-condition of realistic friendship, honest friends are here a pre-requisite of self-knowledge. Echoing La Rochefoucauld's idea of the obscurity of the self to the self, Nietzsche argues that this ignorance can be pierced by our friends (and enemies) so that through them a more accurate view of the self is attained (1986:179-80#491). In contrast then to the previous claims, in this section true friendship can be open and honest and provide an invaluable service to the individual in quest of self-knowledge.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> According to Little:

Friends are chosen or they are simply not friends ... friends find each other and aren't just thrown together (1993:39).

<sup>10</sup> This echoes a section from one of Nietzsche's letters to his sister Elisabeth:

It is precisely we solitary ones that require love and companions in whose /presence we may be open and simple, and the eternal struggle of silence and dissimulation can cease. Yes, I am glad that I can be myself, openly and honestly with you, for you are such a good friend and companion ... (22.1.1875 in Levy 1921:101/2).

The ability to speak or remain silent and be understood either way is also a criterion of the highest of Little's three types of friendship 'Communicating friendship' (1993:56).

<sup>11</sup> My reading of Nietzsche again clashes with Honig's, who contends that Sandel is not Nietzschean because Sandel:

rushes to refurbish practices of self-knowledge and introspection and

The importance of such knowledge for seekers after truth was raised in Chapter Two where it was argued that understanding history and especially the history of moral sensations is a crucial component of self-knowledge and therefore that one of the reasons for Nietzsche's interest in genealogy is its contribution to self-knowledge. Friendship can also act as a counterweight to the many impediments to self-knowledge outlined in the middle period (1974: 84#9,263#335,1982:72#116), such as the power of the unconscious (1982:76 #119,80#129,1974:262#333), the self's changeability and the absence of a fixed criterion for its measurement (1986:28#32), uncertainty about one's motives and a tendency to read these differently after the fact (1986:44#68), the desire for self-flattery (1986:224#37), proximity to (1986:296#387) and familiarity with the self (1986:388#316) and the capacity for self-deception (1982:172#385).

Indeed the quest for self-knowledge could be the variable resolving the apparent contradiction in these passages from Human about whether friendship can endure full knowledge of the other. If the individual aspires to be an 'honnête homme' of the classical French persuasion, they will value direct and open exchanges that expose their foibles and shortcomings. With such individuals a friend's perspicuity and honesty are not threats but fillips to friendship.<sup>12</sup> Daybreak's discussion of "The good four" virtues makes a

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to celebrate them, without reservation, as part of a practice of politics as friendship" (1993:175).

As the next chapter shows, construing politics as a type of friendship is not incompatible with Nietzsche's view, at least not that of the middle period.

This point about openness picks up on the second part of Hutter's description of friendship cited above. And outlining a general notion of friendship, Hutter claims that:

Criticism and self-criticism here become preconditions for the maintenance of the trust necessary for the perpetuation of friendship ... Friendship requires a form of Self-overcoming in which the friend becomes an honest but accepting critic (1978:17).

So again Nietzsche's discussion of friendship has parallels with other commentaries on this.

<sup>12</sup> The quest for self-knowledge is a vital aspect of Little's 'Communicating Friendship' which "stimulates honesty, trust and mutual self-knowledge" (1993:4.cf.37-8) and has a "capacity to take you out of yourself

connection between honesty, friendship and self-knowledge, advocating that we be "**Honest** towards ourselves and whoever **else** is a friend to us" (1982:224 #556.FN's emphasis). The situation of "else" here suggests that in being honest with ourselves we are a friend to ourselves, so that friendship becomes a model for self-knowledge.<sup>13</sup> However this emphasis on honesty should not imply that Nietzsche demands total frankness of friendship. As Human's "Attitude towards praise" indicates, other considerations can outweigh honesty and benevolent dissimulation is acceptable if it protects a friend's feelings (1986:144#360.1974:90#16). Conceding the need for the occasional noble lie is also consistent with Nietzsche's depiction of friendship as a blend of distance and proximity.

In different ways the passages "Of friends" and "The talent for friendship" highlight the idea that tolerating difference is a vital characteristic of robust friendship. As mentioned, "Of friends" shows the value of accepting then growing to celebrate our friends' differences from us while 'talent' seems to privilege the 'circle' model of friendship over the 'ladder'.<sup>14</sup> That friends need not be siamese twins recurs in "Humanity in friendship and mastery" (1986:272#231) where choosing a path different from the friend's nourishes

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while making you more aware of yourself" (1993:6). Little adds that:

sympathy is an important beginning [but] The special thing is that a friend 'can explain one to oneself' and that a 'man is able to see himself in his friend' ... knowledge is the critical thing in friendship, including knowledge of oneself (1993:40.cf.245)

<sup>13</sup> This is based on Hollingdale's translation of "**Redlich** gegen uns und was **sonst** uns Freund ist" (1969:274#556.Werke II.FN's emphasis). If 'sonst' is translated as 'otherwise', the point loses its force. It is interesting to compare this with Berkowitz's claim that in Zarathustra "friendship becomes for him a model for the spirit's intercourse with itself" (1993:221). However as Berkowitz reads Nietzsche, friendship is a model that should be eventually be superseded, leaving the erstwhile friend in splendid isolation.

<sup>14</sup> The passage "Brief habits" suggests that this has shifted somewhat by the time of Science. Preferring brief to enduring habits, Nietzsche numbers "human beings" among the former and "constant association with the same people" among the latter (1974:237#295) which seems to valorize the ladder model of friendship.



rather than undermines the relationship. Not only is such divergence "a high sign of humanity in closer association with others" (1986:272#231) but its absence dooms even authentic relationships.<sup>15</sup>

Thus while Nietzsche allows friendship to transcend the boundaries of individuation, this sort of absorption in the other is not an unmitigated good. Its danger is reiterated in his summary of "A good friendship" (1986:274#241) which advocates the artful use of intimacy and warns against becoming too close to another and 'confounding the I and Thou'. This section characterises the friend as respecting the other more than the self and as loving the other but, in contrast to "Growing tenderer" through sympathy (Chapter Five), not more than one loves oneself. Combining these views it would seem that friendship is not antagonistic to self-development but can enhance it through its perspicacity and celebration of difference. It is, however, a threat to the self when it compensates for self-development by allowing the friends to meld into, instead of take strength from, each other.<sup>16</sup> Such a view of friendship is

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<sup>15</sup> Compare Little's 'Communicating' friends who:

dread the tedium of being merely echoed in a conversation, their attitudes not enhanced or contradicted but xeroxed. Difference is a real attraction in a friend because it lets us be what we are not but might have been or wish to be ... Essentially what they share is the wish to be themselves. Being different from each other by being themselves makes them the same, spiritual kin (1993:13).

<sup>16</sup> The importance of friend's taking strength from one another was a persistent theme of Nietzsche's correspondence with Rohde:

if I had not my friends, I wonder whether I/should not myself begin to believe that I am demented. As it is, however, by my adherence to you I adhere to myself, and if we stand security for each other, something must ultimately result from our way of thinking - a possibility which until now the whole world has doubted (31.12.1873.in Levy 1921:91/2).

The following year Nietzsche reflects on:

how incomparably lucky I have been during the last seven years and how little I can gauge how rich I am in my friends. Truth to tell, I live through you; I advance by leaning on your shoulders, for my self-esteem is wretchedly weak and you have to assure me of my own value again and again ... (7.10.1874.in Levy 1921:98).

(Note that this other-dependence for self-esteem is the very thing Nietzsche condemns in vanity). Years later he writes that:

Friends like yourself must help me to sustain my belief in myself, and

expressed in Daybreak's "A different kind of neighbour love" which describes the sort of relationship favoured by those capable of grand passion:

it is a kind different from that of the sociable and anxious to please: it is a gentle, reflective, relaxed friendliness; it is as though they were gazing out of the windows of their castle, which is their fortress and for that reason also their prison - to gaze into what is strange and free, into **what is different**, does them so much good! (1982:196#471. FN's emphasis)

Thus in discussing friendship Nietzsche reiterates the point made in Chapter Five about the value of a respectful distance between individuals. Intimacy does not preclude separation but is nourished by a delicate balance of closeness and distance and in both cases the friend beholds in the other something that draws them out of the self. This balance between solidarity and individuation resembles the "warm and noble" intimacy mentioned in Daybreak (1982:152#288) while the importance of such equilibrium is apparent in the warning "Too close":

If we live together with another person too closely, what happens is similar to when we repeatedly handle a good engraving with our bare hands: one day all we have left is a piece of dirty paper. The soul of a human being too can finally become tattered by being handled continually ... One always loses by too familiar association with friends and women ... (1986:158#428)

Its importance is expressed in a more positive and elegant way by the aphorism "In parting":

It is not in how one soul approaches another but in how it distances itself from it that I recognize their affinity and relatedness (1986:275 #251).<sup>17</sup>

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this you do when you confide in me about your highest aims and hopes (24.3.1881 in Levy 1921:135).

And yet later he bemoans his lack of friends to Elisabeth:

my poor soul is so sensitive to injury and so full of longing for good friends, for people "who are my life". Get me a small circle of men who will listen to me and understand me - and I shall be cured! (8.7. 1886.in Levy 1921:183)

<sup>17</sup> A similar dialectic between distance and proximity in friendship seems to be at work in Kant's notion of friendship. His Doctrine of Virtue argues that:

Just as intimacy does not rule out distance but requires it for its strength and delicacy, conversely "The Solitary speaks" (1986:359#200) implies that even solitude need not exclude friendship. Here Nietzsche discusses and offers a remedy for the boredom that "a solitude without friends, books, duties or passions" <sup>18</sup> can bring, indicating that solitude can include these things. While the idea of solitude encompassing the last three items is unremarkable, to suggest that it can embrace the friend is certainly unconventional. If being alone can include a friend, the normal boundaries of self and other are clearly transgressed.<sup>19</sup> But if, as suggested, friends can sometimes know us better than we do, the idea that being with oneself can include the company of friends becomes less paradoxical. Similarly if genuine intimacy keeps a respectful distance, it is unlikely to be the sort of intrusion from which solitude is usually sought.

Nietzsche's other discussions of solitude do not adopt this inclusive stance but betray a more conventional understanding. Human's "Society as enjoyment", for example, points out that time spent alone heightens enjoyment

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The principle of mutual love admonishes men constantly to come nearer to each other; that of the respect which they owe each other, to keep themselves at a distance from one another (1964: 449).

Friendship requires "rules preventing excessive familiarity and limiting mutual love by the requirements of respect" (1964:469-70 in Honig 1993:219fn52). Again, such a relationship fits with Little's view of 'Communicating' friendship as a "way of coming close enough to see in but not so close as to be locked in" to another (1993:142). He derives this idea from D.W. Winnicott, especially Winnicott's notion of 'potential space'. This develops in childhood when "[t]here is a relationship between mother and child which simultaneously joins them and separates them" (1993:53). Little shares Winnicott's belief that this remains crucial throughout life; "The parallel with pure, adult friendship, a mysterious combination of togetherness and solitude, communication and reflection, is exact" (1993:54).

<sup>18</sup> "eine Einsamkeit ohne Freunde, Bücher, Pflichten, Leiden schaften" (1969:956#200. Werke I).

<sup>19</sup> Again comparison with Winnicott is apposite. Little reports that: In adulthood, Winnicott believes being able to be alone, literally or with a certain kind of friend, is the best measure of maturity (1993:54. cf.56).

of "the society of men", because company then becomes "a rare delicacy" (1986:289#333). "From the land of the cannibals" poses a choice between the solitary person consuming themselves or being consumed by the crowd (1986:291#348). The imagery of comestibles appears again in the aphorism on "The socialiser", depicting a person who loves company because they cannot love themselves: "Society's stomach is stronger than mine, it can digest me" (1986:369#235).<sup>20</sup> However while all these aphorisms from Human imply the conventional notion of solitude as the individual in isolation, none repudiates the inclusive variation above because they repose upon the individual /society dichotomy and ignore the intermediate category of friend. This also holds for much of the praise of solitude contained in Daybreak - it is always a release from involvement in the wider world rather than the friendship circle (1982:160#323,187#440,196#473,201#491,203#499.1974:114-15#50). As shall emerge, there is considerable precedent for this idea of solitude as removal from the wider world in Chamfort's thought.

In contrast to these examples, Daybreak's brief dialogue "Distant perspectives" (1982:199-200#485) does distinguish friendship from solitude, reiterating the earlier point that friendship cannot survive too much proximity between its partners. Solitude also denotes aloneness in other passages from this work (1982:197-8#479,210#531) so it seems that Human's inclusive image of solitude is not something Nietzsche retains, retreating instead to a more conventional notion. Although toward the end of Daybreak a form of solitude appears which includes friends (1982:227#566), these are dead friends - the

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<sup>20</sup> The attempt to lose oneself in society is criticised by La Rochefoucauld: Quand on ne trouve pas son repos en soi-même, il est inutile de le chercher d'ailleurs (1977:98#61).

On the issue of Nietzsche's imagery, at one point Chamfort also uses eating as a metaphor for social relations, for 'M' says of a boring acquaintance that "On le mange, mais on ne le digère pas" (1968:277#1032). A quotation in Little reveals that Francis Bacon also used the imagery of consumption to describe friendship, or its absence, for those without friends "become cannibals of their own hearts" (1993:21) - a view directly echoed by Nietzsche. One reason for the popularity of metaphors of consumption and comestibles is hinted at in one of Chamfort's passage where people go to the bore's place 'pour sa table', reminding us how much social life revolves around eating.

great thinkers of the past.

Some of the other important characteristics of friendship Nietzsche advances are fairly standard. One is attentiveness. Friends readily incline toward one another so when one has to work at listening to the other, friendship is on the wane (1986:274#247.cf.276#259). Discretion is another for the more friendship is talked about, the less likely it is to last (1986:275#252. 1974:90#16). Ability to delight on another's behalf is a third - indeed, the aphorism "Friend" defines friendship as "fellow rejoicing" (1986:180#499). However, as shown in Chapter Five, this capacity for 'rejoicing with' is the preserve of the noble personality - not all can feel so generously. An earlier aphorism also connects generosity with nobility (1986:180#497.cf.1974:117 #55), picking up again a theme from the last chapter's discussion of benevolence, goodness and love and from this chapter's look at zero-sum friendships.<sup>21</sup>

As all this indicates, for Nietzsche the talent for true friendship is the mark of a higher human being. A strong statement of how noble and unusual true friendship is comes in the conclusion of Science's "The things people call love". After several paragraphs arguing that love and avarice are not opposites but different phases of the desire to have, Nietzsche writes of a different love whose partners do not crave exclusive possession of one another but share "a higher thirst for an ideal above them" (1974:89#14). This uncommon love is friendship.

The rarity of true friendship is heightened by the fact that not only does

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<sup>21</sup> Again compare Hutter's account of generosity as characteristic of friendship:

Friends give to one another not in order to receive but ... to symbolize their affection ... the idea of the free gift is usually associated with ... friendship. (1978:21)

Nietzsche associates giving without counting the cost with benevolence too, which as shown in Chapter Five can characterise wider social relationships than friendships. Little's notion of Communicating friendship, derived partly from the Greeks, also replaces a zero-sum notion of association with a positive sum one, for in such relationships "everyone grows and expands in each other's interests" (1993:14).

being a true friend require exceptional qualities but, as friendship is based on equality and reciprocity, one's friends must also be exceptional types.<sup>22</sup> This indicates that despite Nietzsche's usual attacks on the notion of equality, friendship is an arena where it is possible. But the infrequency of associations between equally superior individuals is captured in the aphorism "Lack of friends" which, pointing out that envy can kill friendships, concludes that "Many owe their friends only to the fortunate circumstance that they have no occasion for envy" (1986:186#559).<sup>23</sup> While many relationships calling themselves friendships would not qualify as such under Nietzsche's criteria,<sup>24</sup> the rarity of friendship's occurrence need not undercut its reality and importance for Nietzsche. This indicates that the typical claim that Nietzsche "repeatedly denounces the belief in human equality as a vain conceit and calamitous fantasy" (Berkowitz 1993:1) fails to take account of the place of friendship in his thought.

To underscore the rarity of true friendship the works of the middle period recount examples of corrupt or inauthentic friendship. While friendship

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<sup>22</sup> There is some parallel with Aristotle's view as recounted by Hutter. For Aristotle:

Perfect friendship can ... be had with only a few. Friendships of pleasure and utility are possible with many, since many possess the accidental qualities that lead to the pleasant or the useful, but friendships based on virtue are possible only with a few because only the few are virtuous, and because it takes time to form them (Hutter 1978:108).

For Nietzsche however, the accent is on superior types rather than conventionally virtuous ones.

<sup>23</sup> Kunnas also picks up on this point about friendship being free from envy, writing that "Celui qui s'élève au-dessus de toute rivalité et de toute jalousie est seul capable d'une amitié pure" (1980:177). How this can be reconciled with his view that Nietzsche did not believe in friendship eludes me.

<sup>24</sup> Again there is some parallel between the view I attribute to Nietzsche view and Aristotle's. Hutter writes that for the latter:

Although perfect friendship occurs only rarely, it serves ... to define the characteristics of all other friendships. It is thus the norm by which friendships can be evaluated. (1978:108)

requires discretion, most cannot keep their friends' confidences (1986:139 #327). Idle people are not good friends, having too much time to talk about and interfere in their friends' business (1986:276#260). As the true friend's capacity to delight in another's joy signals, comparing oneself with the other as a way of bolstering the self is anathema to friendship. Envy threatens friendship, as mentioned, as does vanity for the vain will not spare even their friends in attempting to prove their superiority (1986:276#263). Most so-called friends cannot be relied upon in times of real danger so that the support and protection they seem to offer is illusory (1986:192#600). Just as higher friendships are nourished by difference, base ones are destroyed by it (1982:199#484,200-1#489).<sup>25</sup> This catalogue of inferior friendships serves two major purposes. One is to demonstrate that only special types have the talent for true friendship. The other, as illustrated in Daybreak's "A different kind of neighbour-love" (1982:196#471) is to provide a foil for such superior friendship so that a clearer sense of what it is emerges when its corrupt forms become visible.

However some of Nietzsche's remarks on friendship go beyond claiming that its higher form is the preserve of noble personalities to contend that these types require friendship to sustain and spur them on to greater heights. Human's "Fatality of greatness" makes a 'Homer's Contest' argument about the value of great types working with and struggling against one another:

The most fortunate thing that can happen in the evolution of an art is that several geniuses appear together and keep one another in bounds; in the course of this struggle the weaker and tenderer natures too will usually be granted air and light (1986:84#158).<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> However as Science's "Star friendship" demonstrates these are not the only possible attitudes to a friend's deviation. This passage describes a divergence that destroys friendship without enbittering its erstwhile partners (1974:225-6#279).

<sup>26</sup> Kant's idea of 'unsocial sociability' (Ungeseillige Geselligkeit) (1983:32) also resounds here. In his "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Intent" we read that:

It is just as with trees in a forest, which need each other, for in seeking to take the air and sunlight from the others, each obtains a beautiful, straight shape, while those that grow in freedom and separate from one

The need of higher types for friendship is even more obvious in a long passage on "The tyrants of the spirit" from Human's book on "Tokens of Higher and Lower Culture" (1986:122-5#261). This passage argues that the tendency of the great Greek thinkers to believe in their absolute rightness and become tyrants of the spirit has passed - scepticism is now too powerful to permit such hegemony. Instead future cultural authority will emanate from "the **oligarchs of the spirit**" (1986:124#261.FN's emphasis). This new oligarchy will be a group of like-minded higher humans who, despite their "spatial and political division" will constitute a "close-knit society whose members **know** and **recognize** one another" (1986:124#261.FN's emphasis). The passage goes on to illustrate how these superior spirits need and nurture one another:

how could the individual keep himself aloft and, against every current, swim along his own course through life if he did not see here and there others of his own kind living under the same conditions and take them by the hand ... The oligarchs have need of one another, they have joy in one another, they/understand the signs of one another - but each of them is nonetheless free, he fights and conquers in his **own** place, and would rather perish than submit (1986:124/5#261.FN's emphasis).

The relationship uniting these superior spirits evinces many of friendship's characteristics. Theirs is a relationship among equals, among superior types, it takes joy in the other, respects distance and provides genuine support and intimacy without quashing individuality.<sup>27</sup> The importance of kindred spirits for superior types is reiterated in Daybreak's "Seeking one's company":

Are we then seeking too much if we seek the company of men who have grown gentle, well-tasting and nutritious like chestnuts which

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another branch out randomly, and are stunted, bent and twisted. All the culture and art that adorn mankind, as well as the most beautiful social order, are fruits of unsociableness that is forced to discipline itself and thus through an imposed art to develop nature's seed completely. (1983:33)

This imagery also resonates throughout Nietzsche's later work (1974:331/3 #361.1973:181/2#262).

<sup>27</sup> Compare Little's remark that "The ideal soulmates are friends who are fully aware that each has himself as his main life project" (1993:18) and that: Nietzsche believed with the Greeks ... that friendship is a means towards the self-perfection of two human beings ... pure friendship is about the self or identity of each of the individuals ... (1993:24).



have been put on to the fire and taken from it again at the proper time? Who expect little from life, and would rather take this as a gift than as something they have earned (1982:199#482)<sup>28</sup>

These passages about the value of friendship to superior types challenge Donnellan's claim that Nietzsche valued friendship during this period but ranked the claims of individuality ahead of it because friendship is a static relationship that should not be allowed to impede individual growth (1982:84-5). The middle period neither depicts all friendship as static nor posits any necessary antagonism between it and individuality. Instead as mentioned, friendship can be a fillip to greatness. It is true that Science's "In praise of Shakespeare" initially appears to deny this, declaring that:

Independence of the soul! ... No sacrifice can be too great for that; one must be capable of sacrificing one's dearest friend for it, even if he should also be the most glorious human being, an ornament of the world, a genius without peer - if one loves freedom as the freedom of great souls and he threatens this kind of freedom (1974:150#98).<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Describing 'men who have grown gentle, well-tasting and nutritious' again couches human relationships in the imagery of comestibles.

<sup>29</sup> Juxtaposing this with an excerpt from a letter to Peter Gast is interesting:

I suffer terribly when I lack sympathy: nothing can compensate me, for instance, for the fact that for the last few years I have lost Wagner's friendly interest in my fate. How often do I not dream of him, and always in the spirit of our former companionship! ... with no one have I ever laughed so much ... All that is now a thing of the past - and what does it avail that in many respects I am right and he is wrong? As if our lost friendship could be forgotten on that account! And to think that I had already suffered similar experiences before, and am likely to suffer them again! They constitute the cruellest sacrifices that my path in life and thought has exacted from me - and even now the whole of my philosophy totters after one hour's sympathetic intercourse with total strangers. It seems to me so/foolish to insist on being in the right at the expense of love ... (20.8.1880 in Levy 1921:130/31).

Given that this was written before the publication of Daybreak (and hence Science) it could be that Nietzsche had changed his views when writing the "Shakespeare" passage. Or it could be that its insistence on the dispensability of even the dearest friends is an attempt to convince and/or console himself about this.

However as the hypothetical final clause makes clear,<sup>30</sup> friendship and independence are only sometime rivals and the middle period's many passages in praise of friendship abundantly indicate that not all friends jeopardise individuality. As also indicated, the great person's attitude toward friendship differs from most. Such choose friendship from a position of self-possession and sufficient self-love - they do not need approval from others as imprimaturs to their choices and decisions (1986:144#360) yet can cherish the estimation of a friend. Thus unlike the vain, when the noble personality looks for recognition this is a choice rather than a need and is based on their acknowledgement of the power of another's judgement (1982:186-7#437).<sup>31</sup> (Chapter Eight offers a fuller discussion of the question of recognition).

Several times the middle period refers to friendship in the Greek context (1986:143#354.1982: 204-5#503.1974:124#61) and it can be inferred that this tradition affected Nietzsche's thinking about such relationships. Indeed one of these references claims that the Greeks have been "so far the last, to whom the friend has appeared as a problem worth solving" (1986:143#354) which could imply that in taking up the baton of friendship, Nietzsche is carrying on where they left off. However this depiction of the history of problematising friendship is a little too sparse. As "Friendship" concedes, Antiquity "almost buried friendship in its own grave" (1982:205#503), almost

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<sup>30</sup> "wenn man nämlich die Freiheit als die Freiheit großer Seelen liebt und durch ihn **dieser** Freiheit Gefahr droht ... " (1969:377#98. Werke II.FN's emphasis).

<sup>31</sup> Again, there are powerful parallels with Little's 'Communicating Friendship' which is:

for the psychologically strong. It is the social medium of people who have a secure sense of themselves and are looking for encounters with other individuals equally at home with themselves and their purposes. Friends ... are not each other's keepers (1993:25).

This in turn is linked to the friendship/solitude dialectic for the best friends are often good at being alone (1993:12). This dialectic is completely overlooked by those readers of Nietzsche who assume that praise of solitude precludes that of friendship.

On friends' choice to defer to another, compare Hutter's claim that friendship means that the "Other has tremendous power over Self, a power which Self has given to Other voluntarily" (1978:12).

but not quite, for the French moralists also belong to this tradition of reflecting on friendship. Thus Nietzsche's views on friendship can be seen as owing something to the moralists he read during the middle period.<sup>32</sup> However, even if Nietzsche was impervious to the place of friendship in the thought of La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort, it will emerge that his views about friendship continue many of theirs.

In fact Nietzsche is repeating one of La Rochefoucauld's moves in turning to the Greeks as a source for his reflections on friendship and concluding from this that real friendship is now rare, for the latter observes that:

L'Antiquité en a fourni des exemples [de l'amitié]; mais dans le temps ou nous vivons, on peut dire qu'il est encore moins impossible de trouver un véritable amour qu'une véritable amitié (1977:136#XVII.cf. 85#473)

La Rochefoucauld's depiction of real friendship explains why it is so hard to attain and also has a prescriptive aspect, suggesting how to be and recognise a true friend. To this end it offers a catalogue of false or inferior friendships, for, as with Nietzsche, this allows La Rochefoucauld to distinguish higher from lower manifestations of this relationship and highlight how unusual the former is.<sup>33</sup> And despite Merwin's claim that for Chamfort friendship is among those

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<sup>32</sup> Reading Montaigne might also have shaped his views on friendship in this period. For a fuller discussion of Nietzsche's relationship with Montaigne see Donnellan (1982:18-37,134-6), Andler (1920) and Williams (1952). Montaigne is also a source for aspects of La Rochefoucauld's thought (Hippeau 1967:72-3,150,194.Fine 1974:99fn17.Thweatt 1980) and Chamfort mentions him a couple of times (1968:54#14.98#222).

<sup>33</sup> This distinction is often overlooked in the secondary literature, with many critics reading La Rochefoucauld as a detached cynic for whom solidarity is impossible or risible. His putative individualism was mentioned in Chapter Two and Hauterive reads La Rochefoucauld as one who no longer believes in friendship (1914:81-2). More generally, Stanton claims that in the ethic of *honnêteté* "the structures of exchange vital to friendship are replaced by superficial contacts ... the essence of human relations was distance ... the *honnête homme* shunned friendship with peers" (1980:88).

Like those above, Westgate claims that the moralist does not believe in true friendship (1968:75) but retracts this two pages later, saying that it does exist, although is extremely rare (1968:77). Other writers acknowledge the

illusions necessary for happiness (in Chamfort 1984:44)<sup>34</sup> it will be shown here that Chamfort holds friendship in high esteem for other reasons,<sup>35</sup> contrasting true friendship with what society takes it to be.

In contrasting true friendship with what society takes it to be, Chamfort is following La Rochefoucauld who argues that most friendships are driven by interest, self-love or vanity (1977:53#88). Ordinary friends are not concerned with one another's intrinsic merit but with the benefits they confer so that as La Rochefoucauld sees it, "Ce que les hommes ont nommé amitié" is basically

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existence of friendship in the moralist's thought (Truchet in La Rochefoucauld 1977:24.Liebich 1982:144-5,165) but few accord it as much significance as I do. Lewis (1977:107) comes closest to this but even he suggests that the moralist's notion of friendship is conveyed primarily in the negative (1977:121).

<sup>34</sup> It is possible that Merwin bases his claim on this excerpt from Chamfort's correspondence:

Je crois à l'amitié, je crois à l'amour: cette idée est nécessaire à mon bonheur: mais je crois encore plus que la sagesse ordonne de renoncer à l'espérance de trouver une maîtresse et un ami capables de remplir mon coeur. Je sais que ce qui je vous dit fait frémir: mais/telle est la dépravation humaine, telles sont les raisons que j'ai de mépriser les hommes, que je me crois tout à fait excusable (Letter to A... 20.8.1765 in Chamfort 1968:365/6).

On this basis Merwin's conclusion is valid but when Chamfort's other remarks about friendship are considered, Merwin's view is seen as too limited to do justice to Chamfort's.

Pellisson also sees Chamfort as suspicious of friendship but links this to his emphasis on autonomy for being someone's friend gives then some claim on us (1985:189). However, as my discussion of Chamfort's inclusive view of solitude and of the value of friends' opinions suggests, it is freedom from the wider social world rather than friendship that Chamfort seeks.

<sup>35</sup> As Teppe notes "de tous les sentiments l'amitié est celui que Chamfort paraît avoir éprouvé avec le plus de force." (1950:68.cf.Dagen in Chamfort 1968:21.Furbank 1992:6.Katz 1968:39). As with Nietzsche, the importance of friendship also comes out in Chamfort's correspondence. One letter, for example, describes his friendship with M. le comte de Vaudreuil as:

l'amitié la plus parfaite et la plus tendre qui se puisse imaginer ... Quand je dis des liens si forts, je devrais dire si tendres et si purs; car on voit souvent des intérêts combinés produire entre des gens de lettres et des gens de la cour des liaisons très constantes et très durables; mais il s'agit ici d'amitié, et ce mot dit tout dans votre langue et dans la mienne (Letter to l'Abbé Roman, 5.10.1875 in Chamfort 1968:388).

an exchange relation, sustained by the coincidence of self-interest (1977:52#83, 85).<sup>36</sup> Chamfort criticises instrumental friendships more positively when he writes that "L'amitié délicate et vraie ne souffre l'alliage d'aucun autre sentiment" (1968:126#334) and goes on to explain how glad he was his friendship with M-- was already fully developed before the occasion arose where M-- needed a service that only Chamfort could perform. That way any suspicion that the friendship could have been tainted by calculations of who could do what for whom was obviated as was the risk that "le bonheur de ma vie était empoisonné pour jamais" (1968:126#334). As a foil to Chamfort's 'delicate and true' friendship is M de la Popinière's view that the apex of friendship is a dog licking one's feet (1968:239#837).

According to La Rochefoucauld the power of self-love and interest in driving friendship also explain why in losing a friend our unfulfilled needs and foregone pleasure from their approval cause more hurt more than losing a person of merit does (1977:99#70). These points signal some parallel between the moralist's depiction of most friendships and his critique of moral judgement (Chapter Two) for their shared superficiality makes genuine merit of secondary, if any importance. Uninterest in the friend's merit also helps to explain why one so easily forgives their faults when they do not affect us

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<sup>36</sup> Liebich suggests that using commercial metaphors to characterise most friendships is way of condemning something that is supposed to be noble (1982:146). This seems correct but provides only one side of the picture for La Rochefoucauld also uses commercial metaphors in a positive way. He describes a laudable superiority as a price we imperceptibly give to ourself (1977:79#399). He defines "La souveraine habileté" as knowing the price of things (1977:67#244) and, as shown in Chapter Two, he describes judgement as knowing the price of all things. Using economic imagery to criticise social relations is, however, characteristic of Chamfort (1968:105#256, 184#581).

When the moralists do use economic imagery to criticise friendship, this provides an interesting background to Nietzsche's portrayal of true friendship which, as we have seen, defies economic rationality, for it gives without counting the cost. It is friendship without economy - or rather, as emerges below, within the sector of equals it is.

It is interesting to note that the instrumental approach to friendship drawn by La Rochefoucauld is typical of Little's 'Social friendship' (1993:76-104).

(1977:82#428). Most are oblivious to their friends' faults anyway - either through knowing them too well or not well enough (1977:81-2#426). La Rochefoucauld suggests that such ignorance is a boon to most relationships (1977:83#441) which survive because the friend's failures are not freely articulated (1977:73#319). This is, as we have seen, echoed in Nietzsche's discussion of the myopia some friendships need. It is also present in Chamfort's claim that:

La plupart des amitiés sont hérissées de **si** et de **mais**, et aboutissent à de simples liaisons, qui subsistent à force de **sous-etendus** (1968:121 #305. C's emphasis).

For La Rochefoucauld, as for Nietzsche, only superior friendships can survive their partners' mutual scrutiny whereas Chamfort remains dubious about the possibility of full and frank disclosure, even among true friends.

The power of self-love and interest are advanced by La Rochefoucauld to explain the immediate joy most take in their friend's happiness:

Le premier mouvement de joie que nous avons du bonheur de nos amis vient ni de la bonté de notre naturel, ni de l'amitié que nous avons pour eux; c'est un effet de l'amour-propre qui nous flatte de l'espérance d'être heureux à notre tour, ou de retirer quelque utilité de leur bonne fortune (1977:94#17)

This also helps to explain why most are not altogether displeased by a friend's adversity (1977:94#18). Chamfort agrees that "On n'aime pas à voir plus heureux que soi" (1968:94#203) which probably explains why, for him as for Nietzsche, those with great qualities have few friends (1968:75#110). Against such a backdrop it is also unsurprising that Nietzsche defines friendship as joying-with and sees this generosity as available only to the superior few. He suggests that, in most social interaction:

if we let others see how happy and secure in ourselves we are in spite of suffering/and deprivation, how malicious and envious we would make them! (1986:290#334).

In thus aligning generosity, superiority and friendship, Nietzsche is continuing another of La Rochefoucauld's themes for just as Nietzsche shows that envy kills friendship, the moralist contends that friendship kills envy (1977:78#376). This implies that real friends do not compare themselves with

one another or rather do not cast themselves as rivals in a zero-sum game.<sup>37</sup> However envy is so pervasive as to be more common than interest (1977:86 #486.cf.Thweatt 1980:183,187) which underscores how unusual and powerful true friendship can be. Thus while exceptional people are born without envy (1977:82#433), envy's eradication via friendship is also exceptional - in both senses. As this indicates, like Nietzsche La Rochefoucauld emphasises the rarity rather than the impossibility of true friendship and the fact that it is so uncommon helps to explain why, although such friendship is the highest good, most undervalue it (1977:106#45) and why most old people can become insensible to it, having never known its delights (1977:137#XVIII).

Chamfort is similarly aware of envy's ubiquity (1968:241#847) and his elevated view of friendship implies its incompatibility with envy for, as with La Rochefoucauld, real friends value one another for their qualities and strengths (1968:54#13). Intense friendship can bring suffering so extreme that frivolity looks wise (1968:123#315) but impassioned friendship can also endow the happiness of passion with the approval of reason (1968:123#316) which is evocative of the wider Romantic harmony of reason and nature that Chamfort envisages (Chapter Two). At the end of a long critique of the world and its putative pleasures, 'M' identifies "le repos, l'amitié et la pensée" as the only goods for a person without folly (1968:235#821)<sup>38</sup> and the only goods he cherishes are those of friendship (1968:266#966). Friendship is elevated and elevating for those who have known it disdain ordinary attachments and petty interests (1968:132#351). In contrast to this, the world is full of base attachments and interests masquerading as friendship: "Amitié de cour, foi de renards, et société de loups" (1968:94#202.cf.102#242.122#310.282#1057). This explains Chamfort's classification of society's friendship into three types:

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<sup>37</sup> Bordeau makes this connection too:

l'honnête homme, à part du reste des humains, est l'ami le plus sur ...  
l'honnête homme est né sans envie (1895:127).

<sup>38</sup> This is echoed in one of Chamfort's letters to l'Abbé Roman describing a six month retreat in the country, where he lived with only friendship, a garden and a library. He concludes that "C'est presque le seul temps de ma vie, que je compte pour quelque chose" (1968:378. Lettre V. undated).

"vos amis qui vous aiment; vos amis qui ne se soucient pas de vous, et vos amis qui vous haïssent" (1968:273#1011).

As indicated, one of the reasons La Rochefoucauld offers for the scarcity of true friendship is the demands it places on its partners. These derive primarily from the fact that the shared quest for self-knowledge is central to friendship. While most are too weak and changeable to sustain friendship (1977:136#VXII.cf.82:427) real friendship is flexible and indeed inexhaustible, because its partners embark together on the quest for self-knowledge.<sup>39</sup> And because the moralist sees the self as so protean, opaque and duplicitous (Chapters Two & Four) this project is never-ending. This Nietzsche's view that friendship promotes self-knowledge is a reflection of La Rochefoucauld's, for friendship's greatest effort is making the friend see their faults (1977:80 #410).<sup>40</sup> Moreover the demands of self-examination and self-revelation can

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<sup>39</sup> In characterising friendship as a joint venture in self-knowledge La Rochefoucauld is describing what occurred between his friends in their exchange of self-portraits. As Baker notes the art of the self-portrait assumes psychological acumen and lucidity toward self (1974:18.cf.30) and this genre had a confessional nature (1974:30). However in La Rochefoucauld's case, by comparison with Montaigne, the self-portrait was not written solely for self-knowledge - portraits were circulated among and commented on by friends (Baker 1969:30).

<sup>40</sup> As the moralist notes in his Self-Portrait:

J'ai ... une si forte envie d'être tout à fait honnête homme que mes amis ne me sauraient faire un plus grand plaisir que de m'avertir sincèrement de mes défauts. Ceux qui me connaissent un peu particulièrement et qui ont eu la bonté de me donner quelquefois des avis là-dessus savent que je les ai toujours reçus avec toute la joie imaginable, et toute la soumission d'esprit que l'on saurait désirer (1977:167).

The centrality this chapter accords to the pursuit of self-knowledge in La Rochefoucauld's work puts it directly at odds with Sutcliffe's claim that the moralist:

denies any enlightening virtue to consciousness. Man is the play-thing of self-love which blinds him to the true motives of his conduct (1966-67:234)

Sutcliffe associates the attack on self-knowledge with the moralist's deflation of heroism and magnanimity, for such types "know that [they are] capable of great things" (1966-67:234). However, as this chapter argues, La Rochefoucauld's promotion of self-knowledge is tied to his notion of greatness.



be met by an elite only, reinforcing the moralist's view that real friendship is rare because only superior types are capable of it. Some of its difficulty resides in the very disclosure of oneself to another for our friends "ont souvent de la peine ... laisser voir tout ce qu'ils en [de la coeur] connaissent (1977:112#II). There is also the problem of not trusting oneself, of fearing the self-knowledge yielded by such inquiry (1977:73#315). Long-standing friends are more adept at fostering our self-knowledge and less likely to feed our vanity with unadulterated admiration, which is another reason for the popular appeal of new friendships (1977:60#178). Chamfort also prizes old over new friends (1968:121#303) but not because they are more honest, illustrating his lesser emphasis on mutual self-disclosure.

That friendship's greatest effort is to help the friend see their faults is developed La Rochefoucauld's "De la Société (1977:110-13#II) which illustrates two earlier, related points - that there is a prescriptive aspect to his work and that the "Réflexions Diverses" offer a better forum for elaborating such a positive morality. The moralist notes that "Il faut être facile à excuser nos amis, quand leurs/ défauts sont nés avec eux" (1977:111/12#II)<sup>41</sup> which resonates in Nietzsche's point about becoming more tolerant of friends when

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The question of heroism is discussed in Chapter Eight.

However La Rochefoucauld's advocacy of the natural (Chapter Two) requires that a degree of self-knowledge be possible (cf. James 1969:357). Williams (1952) and Donnellan (1982) recognise La Rochefoucauld's drive to self-knowledge and detect it in Nietzsche's thought too, but neither associate it with friendship as I do. Williams refers to:

the ideal ... of final absence of pretence, of genuineness, which is in its turn bound up with the Renaissance ideal of the great man, beyond good and evil, a law to himself. Nietzsche's final conception of the 'vornehm' man, who dares to be himself ... is an extension of La Rochefoucauld's ideal (1952:175).

Donnellan suggests that:

Nietzsche's personal ideal continued to be the honesty about motivation which the intellectual conscience of a La Rochefoucauld stimulates and demands (1982:81.cf.82)

but he does not associate this with friendship.

<sup>41</sup> As he notes in his Self-Portrait:

je souffre patiemment leurs [mes amis] mauvaises humeurs et je n'excuse facilement toutes choses (1977:168).

we realise that they cannot be other than they are. The moralist further suggests that friends' faults can be forgiven if outweighed by their qualities (1977:112#II), indicating again that the form of friendship discussed here is the elite rather than popular for elite friends seem able to discern good from bad qualities despite the many obstacles to such perspicacity. We have also seen that La Rochefoucauld's elite friends value one another for their merit rather than the services they provide interest or self-love (1977:59#165). Of course such friends do fulfil one another's need for self-knowledge but this is not in the service of self-love, vanity or interest - rather it defies these forces, serving 'honnêteté' instead.

So it would seem that for La Rochefoucauld one of the things enabling elite friends to discern and value one another's merit is their joint venture in self knowledge. That the quest for self-knowledge is the preserve of the few is further evident in the fact that most think, but do not admit, that they are without faults (1977:79#397). Most are content to continue in their self-deception (1977:55#114) and/or conceal their faults to others whereas "Les vrais honnêtes gens sont ceux qui les [leur défauts] connaissent parfaitement et les confessent" (1977:62#202).<sup>42</sup> But honesty with oneself and others requires uncommon virtue. Along with courage and strength it demands humility for pride prevents the revelation of faults to others and oneself (1977:76#358,99#74) and "personne ne veut être humble" (1977:105#35).<sup>43</sup> Connected to this is sincerity, that "ouverture de coeur" (1977:50#62,116#V) which is rare (1977:50#62) and unavailable to the weak (1977:73#316. cf. Fine 1974:15. Truchet in La Rochefoucauld 1977:24. Morgues 1978:65. Liebhich

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<sup>42</sup> His Self-Portrait paints the moralist as such a person:

je me suis assez étudiée pour me bien connaître, et je ne manque ni d'assurance pour dire librement ce que je puis avoir de bonnes qualités, ni de sincérité pour avouer franchement ce que j'ai de défauts (1977:165).

<sup>43</sup> As Fine notes, this fits with the wider view of the Port-Royalists for whom:

introspection, like the psychological probing into the actions of others, is a humbling experience which puts one face-to-face with man's corrupt nature. (1974:17)

1982:255). Loving truth and loathing disguise, anxious to correct its flaws, the sincere self confesses its faults and their very admission helps to alleviate them for concealment is a vice in itself as well as compounding the vices it hides (1977:80#411).<sup>44</sup> But few can accept the sort of useful criticism offered by others (1977:58#147). All these factors emphasise that the quest for self-knowledge is restricted to an elite (cf. Lewis 1977:117. Liebich 1982:256) and that the virtues La Rochefoucauld valorises do not represent a universalisable ethos.

Although appreciating criticism is a crucial component of the quest for self-knowledge, the moralist is also aware that criticism need not derive from the commitment to truth and desire to advance self-knowledge. Criticism can be what has, since Freud, been called projection, where what we declaim about others reveals more about ourselves. La Rochefoucauld insists that "Si nous n'avions point de défauts, nous ne nous plaindrions pas de celui des autres" (1977:48#34.cf.50#55) and that "Tout le monde trouve à redire en autrui ce qu'on trouve à redire en lui" (1977:93#5.cf.97#47). Conversely the praise that others offer or withhold can also be projected: "La marque d'un mérite extraordinaire est de voir que ceux qui l'envient le plus sont contraints de le

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<sup>44</sup> As Mora notes:

ce qu'il voudrait implanter dans l'être profond de ceux pour lesquels il écrit, ce qui est ... pour lui, le véritable honneur de l'homme - du gentilhomme - c'est la lucidité; il ne faut pas se mentir à soi-même (1965:67.cf. Williams 1952:146. Hippeau 1967:83-4. Fine 1974:16,142. Tocanne 1978:216. Morgues 1978:64)

Why Morgues concludes that lucidity is "a gratuitous virtue, with little or no practical value as far as behaviour is concerned" (1978:65) is unclear for what is the quest for self-knowledge but a form of behaviour? Perhaps she means that even the lucid must continue some dissimulation in wider society (see below). Although the French moralist is not mentioned, La Rochefoucauld's view illustrates Lionel Trilling's general claim about national differences in the notion of sincerity:

In French literature sincerity consists in telling the truth about oneself to oneself and to others; by truth is meant a recognition of such of one's own traits or actions as are morally or socially discreditable and, in conventional course, concealed ... Not to know oneself in the French fashion and make public what one knows, but to be oneself, in action, in deeds ... is what the English sincerity consists in (1972:58).

louer" (1977:53#95.cf.57#144,70#280.84#462). But the virtuous self can be projected via praise too for "C'est en quelque sorte de donner part aux belles actions, que de les louer de bon coeur" (1977:82#432). These examples also illustrate how vital equality is to La Rochefoucauld's notion of friendship and its contribution to self-knowledge for while the 'honnête homme' should value criticism, only that emanating from fellow 'honnêtes gens' carries any weight. They alone are sufficiently self-aware, humble and committed to the truth not to derive their criticism from some failing of their own. As shown, Nietzsche continues this insistence on friendship 'inter pares'; for him, friendship is probably the only realm where human equality can prevail.

Just as the criticism of all comers should not be taken seriously, so disabusing others of their self-deception is not an unmitigated good for La Rochefoucauld (1977:53#92) - again, only a certain calibre of person can benefit from such knowledge. However even when friends criticise one another in the service of self-knowledge, enormous delicacy is required as the reflexion "Of Society" (1977:110-13#II) indicates. Rather than evince shock or disgust, it is more effective to bring the friend to see and correct their deficiencies (1977:112#II).

By contrast with La Rochefoucauld, Chamfort implies that even real and robust friendship cannot sustain full honesty between its partners. At one point he exclaims:

malheur à l'homme qui, même dans l'amitié la plus intime, laisse découvrir son faible et sa prise! J'ai vu la plus intimes amis faire des blessures à l'amour-propre de ceux dont ils avaient surpris le secret. Il paraît impossible que, dans l'état actuel de la société (je parle toujours du grand monde), il y ait un seul homme qui puisse montrer le fond de son âme et les détails de son caractère, et surtout de ses faiblesses, à son meilleur ami (1968:94#204).

As his parentheses remind us (and him?), this applies to social rather than genuine friendships but the caveat against trusting another is powerful.<sup>45</sup> An

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<sup>45</sup> Compare this advice to a friend:  
votre âme ne doit jamais être inséparablement attachée de personne ...  
il faut apprécier tout le monde, et remplir tous les devoirs de l'honnête

anecdote about Diderot indicates that those who confide in friends who might betray them, effectively betray themselves (1968:259#931) and such caveats against confiding in a friend are nowhere countervailed by passages delighting in the exchange of confidences by intimates in Chamfort's work. Similarly, a description of knowledge of the world and how to get it says that it:

est un résultat de mille observations fines dont l'amour-propre n'ose faire confidence à personne, pas même un meilleur ami. On craint de se montrer comme un homme occupé de petites choses, quoique ces petites choses soient très importantes au succès des plus grandes affaires (1968:89#177)

Although the importance of apparent trivia suggests that the friend is at fault in not appreciating this, there is not the same emphasis on friendship's honesty, self-disclosure and self-discovery in the work of Chamfort that there is in La Rochefoucauld and Nietzsche.

However Chamfort's failure to emphasise friendship's mutual disclosure does not mean that friends cannot develop one another. On the contrary, he insists that:

Il n'y a que l'amitié entière qui développe toutes les qualités de l'âme et de l'esprit de certaines personnes ... Ce sont de beaux fruits, qui n'arrivent à leur maturité qu'au soleil ... (1968:124#322).

The importance of reciprocity in friendship emerges when 'M' explains the demise of two friendships - one ended because the friend never spoke of himself and the other because he never spoke of 'M' (1968:203#672). The significance Nietzsche accords to living in a conducive environment reiterates Chamfort's advice that "il faut ne placer le fond de sa vie habituelle qu'avec ceux qui peuvent sentir ce que nous valons" (1968:112#274), indicating that friends are valuable in sustaining the self and proper self-regard. The obverse of this comes in 'M's' later observation that when we live with others their faults rub off on us (1968:224#770). Nonetheless Chamfort's praise for friendship does not focus on its capacity to increase its partners' self-

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homme, et même de l'homme vertueux ... (Letter to A... 20.8.1765 in Chamfort 1968:366)

knowledge in the way that La Rochefoucauld's and Nietzsche's does.<sup>46</sup>

While La Rochefoucauld sees that friendship's pursuit of self-knowledge can be exacting, the intimacy it requires and fosters also furnishes certain delights. Friends have endless occasion for sincere conversation (1977: 112#II) and are united by mutual trust.<sup>47</sup> The fullness and freedom of their familiarity is celebrated in "De la Confiance" (116-18#V) when La Rochefoucauld writes of those whose:

fidélité nous est connue, qui ne ménagent rien avec nous, et à qui on peut se confier par choix et par estime. On doit ne leur rien cacher de ce qui ne regarde en nous, se montrer à eux toujours vrais dans nos bonnes qualités et dans nos défauts même, sans exagérer les unes et sans diminuer les autres, se faire une loi de ne leur faire jamais de demi-confiances ... (1977:117#V).

A little later on he observes that:

On a des liaisons étroites avec des amis dont on connaît la fidélité; ils nous ont toujours parlé sans réserve, et nous avons toujours gardé les mêmes mesures avec eux; ils savent nos habitudes et nos commerces, et ils nous voient de trop près pour ne s'apercevoir pas du moindre changement ... on est assuré d'eux comme de soi ... (1977:118#V).

However these passages revelling in the proximity and comfort of friendship appear amidst an argument about the limits of such confidence (1977:117#V) which suggests that Nietzsche is also following La Rochefoucauld in praising intimacy that is not unlimited.

Another aspect of friendship La Rochefoucauld explores is the dilemma that arises when the internal goods generated by the confidence of friendship clash. What happens when one friend confides a secret that other friends might have an interest in knowing, or from whom we would normally not keep

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<sup>46</sup> Despite this, as Katz portrays Chamfort, he is with Nietzsche and La Rochefoucauld in depicting pursuit of the truth as a collective enterprise among friends. She writes that for the eighteenth century moralist:

The positive side of the situation ... lies in the fraternity of misanthropes ... made up of the few honest, disenchanted idealists (1968:36).

<sup>47</sup> Here my reading clashes directly with Clark's which holds that trust is not possible in La Rochefoucauld's thought (1987:68-69).

things simply by virtue of the openness of our relationship? The moralist counsels that the friend must vouchsafe the confidence of the first<sup>48</sup> and conceal himself from the latter even if this risks rupturing the other relationships (1977:118#V). A 'condition of possibility' claim can be reconstructed from this priority for confidence as trustworthiness is a prerequisite of confidence as self-exposure and sacrificing the former to the latter would undermine the whole institution of friendship the moralist so prizes.

This reveals a further similarity between the moralist's conception of friendship and Nietzsche's, for both can be read as valuing intimacy that is not tyranny and as recommending a respectful distance between friends. This is apparent in the conclusion to La Rochefoucauld's reflexion on Confidence:

On a souvent besoin de force et de prudence pour opposer à la tyrannie de la plupart de nos amis, qui se font un droit sur notre confiance, et qui veulent tout savoir de nous. On ne doit jamais leur laisser établir ce droit sans exception: il y a des rencontres et des circonstances qui ne sont pas de leur juridiction ... (1977:118#V),

It also emerges in his counsel that one should not probe one's friends too relentlessly for "il y a de la politesse, et quelquefois même de la humanité, à ne pas entrer trop avant dans les replis de leur coeur" (1977:112#II).<sup>49</sup>

However while Nietzsche continues the moralist's ideal of unintrusive intimacy, there is some difference in the role of this ideal in the thought of each. The moralist defends it on the basis that too great a conflation of the I and Thou could damage social cohesion, that too great a knowledge of the other could rend the social fabric in some way.<sup>50</sup> This may also elucidate the

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<sup>48</sup> That the moralist likes to think of himself as a keeper of confidences emerges in his Self-Portrait's claim that "Je suis fort secret, et j'ai moins de difficulté que personne à taire ce qu'on m'a dit en confidence" (1977:168).

<sup>49</sup> As Baker observes, the moralist sees a need for friendship to preserve its integrity and lucidity via distance (1974:23).

<sup>50</sup> This suggests some continuity between La Rochefoucauld's and Kant's views, for as Honig notes, an implication of the latter's view of unsocial sociability is that:

if he did not possess these unseemly features man could live with others in a society governed not by practices of respect but by love, presumably because he would have nothing to hide (1993:221.fn.74).

maxim suggesting that some appearances are better left unpenetrated (1977:70 #282) which seems anomalous in the context of his general critique of the domination of moral life by appearances to the detriment of substance and his usual championing of the quest for truth. The moralist cherishes respectful distance because it is polite, compassionate and facilitates social cohesion. Nietzsche continues the moralist's view about the value of respectful distance he does not replicate his rationale. In Nietzsche's case it may be inferred that such distance is a good in itself, a respect paid to the other by virtue of their dignity and individuality, suggesting that he has absorbed some of the liberal notion of negative liberty and its emphasis on the intrinsic importance of a circle around the self remaining free of social intrusion, irrespective of any wider benefits this might incur.

What emerges from the moralist's association of friendship with self-knowledge is that belonging to a community of similarly superior types is crucial to the good life as conceived by La Rochefoucauld and, as has been argued, Nietzsche perpetuates this view. Given the moralist's description of psychology and morality, it is unsurprising that honest interaction with others is critical to self-knowledge. The complexity and volatility of motivation, the continual danger of self-deception and the pull of self-love all conspire to keep the self opaque, but friends' joint venture in self-knowledge, in mutual self-disclosure and discovery, is a way of overcoming these obstacles. As this suggests, La Rochefoucauld does not depict self-knowledge as the prerogative of the sovereign, isolated individual. Knowing the self is intersubjective, for "Nous oublions aisément nos fautes lorsqu'elles ne sont vues que de nous" (1977:62#196) and "C'est une grande folie de vouloir être sage tout seul" (1977:65#231). This is why, as seen in Chapter Two, "C'est être véritablement honnête homme que de vouloir être toujours exposé à la vue des honnêtes gens" (1977:62#206). Interaction with others who prize self-knowledge - their own and others' - is therefore invaluable for La Rochefoucauld who, in contrast to Nietzsche, offers no praise of solitude of any sort. Rather, as "De la Retraite" argues, solitaires "oublient le monde, qui est si disposé à les oublier" (1977:137#XVIII). Thus those passages of the middle period



celebrating solitude mark Nietzsche's dissent from La Rochefoucauld.

That Nietzsche saw Chamfort as an advocate of the solitary life, of "philosophical renunciation and resistance" is evident in Science's description of him (1974:148#95).<sup>51</sup> Chamfort's praise of solitude shows in the way solitude is continually contrasted with life in society and found superior (1968: 111#271.112#272). One passage suggests that society is only good for fulfilling false or immature needs and desires (1968:124#323.cf.90#181.234-5 #821). Solitude helps to obviate misanthropy (1968:275#1024) and provides the luxury of being bothered only by one's own faults, which are at least more familiar than others' (1968:289#1098). But solitude is not just valued in the negative - Chamfort's discussion of solitaires like Rousseau accords it positive value, relating it to greatness, happiness and vision (1968:114#284).<sup>52</sup> Chamfort also follows Rousseau in suggesting the appeal of the self-sufficiency and simplicity available in life outside society (1968:234-5#821.cf.125#332) for it is easier to maintain liberty and integrity there (1968:115#289). The twin appeals of solitude, which allow one to avoid debasement and to achieve goods in their own right, is captured in the anonymous philosopher's claim that "Dans le monde tout tend à me faire descendre, dans la solitude tout tend à me faire monter" (1968:237#828).<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Nietzsche was not alone in this perception, as Chamfort's discussions of the opprobrium that befell his withdrawal from society indicate:

J'ai cessé d'aller dans le monde. Alors, on n'a cessé de me tourmenter pour que j'y revinsse. J'ai été accusé d'être misanthrope (1968:124 #323).

"On se fâche souvent contre les gens de lettres qui se retirent du monde" (1968:150#446.cf.237#828).

<sup>52</sup> The positive value of withdrawal from the world resonates in one of Chamfort's letters:

La retraite assurera en même temps votre repos ... votre bonheur, votre santé, votre gloire, votre fortune et votre considération (Letter to A... 20.8.1765 in Chamfort 1968:366).

<sup>53</sup> According to Vereker:

one of the most pervasive of late eighteenth century convictions [was] the belief that the naturally good life depended for its realisation on the provision of social conditions which would avoid all occasions of

However as the side of solitude that is good by omission indicates, the state Chamfort prizes need not betoken total isolation - it is possible for this praise to be of, what was called above, inclusive solitude. This is evident in the two major terms Chamfort uses for this, 'la solitude' and 'la retraite'. They seem to be synonymous, although 'la retraite' suggests withdrawal from the world, rather than the individual in isolation.<sup>54</sup> A further passage notes that those who renounce society's falsehoods and determine to deal only with people interested in reason, virtue and truth end up virtually alone (1968:115 #290) but this does not leave them entirely so. And as noted, 'M' includes friendship among the few things that matter to those who have quit the world (1968:235#821).<sup>55</sup> Thus while there is little praise of any sort of solitude from

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temptation (1967:241).

The provincial garden Chamfort retreats to is his variant of 'the natural paradise' that Vereker describes as permeating much eighteenth century thought:

whether conceived philosophically, displaced in time or imagined in some far off, recently discovered community [the natural paradise], had certain common characteristics. No temptations could occur; no choices ever had to be made; neither sin nor sorrow darkened the unimpeded joys of natural life (1967:244).

<sup>54</sup> From Mauzi's work it becomes obvious Chamfort's praise for withdrawal is part of the wider background of eighteenth century French thought. Mauzi notes that:

Dans les traites de morale, les utopies, les romans, et les contes moraux, la vie champêtre est constamment donné comme une vie exemplaire. L'existence campagnade offre l'image de la paix et de la plénitude de l'âme. Elle s'oppose à la vie mondaine, qui réduit le bonheur à la menue monnaie des plaisirs. (1965:363)

A few pages later he adds that:

Le rêve du repos rustique répond certainement aux deux aspirations les plus profondes des âmes du XVIIIe siècle: desir du bonheur et besoin d'innocence. Il prend tout son sens par opposition à la vie mondaine, ressentie à la fois comme malheureuse et coupable. (Mauzi 1965:366)

<sup>55</sup> Compare again one of Chamfort's letters which refers to "the companion of my solitude" (4.12.1784 in Chamfort 1982:72) and the earlier one describing his six months in the country with Buffon as time spent "dans la plus profonde et la plus charmante solitude" (Letter to l'Abbé Roman. 4.3.1784 in Chamfort 1968:383). A month later he writes to the same friend that:

Les lettres seront un de mes plus grands plaisirs dans ma retraite; et

La Rochefoucauld, it is present aplenty in Chamfort's work which could provide a source for Nietzsche's praise for solitude.<sup>56</sup> Moreover there is a way of reading some of Nietzsche's claims as making room for friendship in a solitary life and this inclusive view of solitude also exists in the work of Chamfort, for behind the solace of solitude is more a critique of society than a demand for oneness.<sup>57</sup>

Although offering no praise of solitude, La Rochefoucauld does distinguish between the company of friends and the wider social world:

Mon dessein n'est pas de parler de l'amitié en parlant de la société; bien qu'elles aient quelque rapport, elles sont néanmoins très différentes: la première a plus d'élévation et de dignité, et le plus grand mérite de l'autre c'est de lui ressembler. (1977:110#II)

While his delineation of the "commerce particulier que les honnêtes gens doivent avoir ensemble" (1977:110#II) tolerates and even requires some reserve and dissimulation, the friendship milieu is not "n'est composé que de mines" (1977:68#256). It is, as shown, powered by a commitment to honesty, self-disclosure, self-discovery and mutual trust.<sup>58</sup> Moreover not all

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d'avance elles lui prêtent déjà des charmes. (Letter to l'Abbé Roman. 4.4. 1784 in Chamfort 1968:380)

<sup>56</sup> According to Andler one of the main attractions of Chamfort's work for Nietzsche was its glorification of solitude (1920:224-5). However he seems to assume that this entails the non-inclusive view:

La tache principale de chacun, c'est d'abord d'être soi, et être soi ... être seul, car c'est mesestimer l'estime publique et manquer de consideration pour la renommée.(1920:225.cf.230)

What Andler seems to be getting at is that for Chamfort and Nietzsche being oneself requires withdrawing from society, but as argued here this need not be synonymous with being alone.

<sup>57</sup> As Mauzi notes "On peut y [dans les jardins] vivre sur un mode intermédiaire entre la clôture et la communication." (1965:370)

<sup>58</sup> Compare Lewis's claim that:

the exchange of private, confessional truths and personal views unspotted by the falsehood of omission clearly requires a degree of confidence that can only prevail in a still smaller, more exclusive community of kindred spirits. (1977:117.cf.122-3.cf.Liebich 1982:255)

The centrality of friendship for sincerity and self-knowledge is lost on those commentators who see only a self/other distinction in the moralist's thought.

resemblances between friendship and the wider social world are positive for the latter mirrors in a distorted way the friendship circle of the 'honnêtes gens'. All of friendship's virtues appear in the wider society in false form for the social world parodies sincerity (1977:50#62,77#366,78#383), confidence (1977:66#239,67#247,85#475,117#V), humility (1977:68#254), honnêteté (1977:62#202), confession of faults (1977:74#327,96#35,106#53)<sup>59</sup> and celebration of friendship (1977:70#279). All appear in the theatre of social life but are underpinned by vanity, ambition, the thirst for power and the desire to deceive the self or others.

La Rochefoucauld's observation that "Les hommes ne vivraient pas longtemps en société s'ils n'étaient pas les dupes les uns des autres" (1977:52#87) means that when honnêtes gens go into wider world they must become actors. As this signals, the moralist envisages no invasion of this world by the norms and practices of honesty and openness that govern the friendship circle. Instead a certain duplicity and role-playing are acceptable and indeed essential in wider social life for "L'intention de ne jamais tromper nous expose à être souvent trompés" (1977:55#118). In the world, commerce is not exclusively with 'honnêtes gens' and could never become so, highlighting the fact that although there is a prescriptive dimension to the moralist's work, this is directed at those already of superior quality. There is no reform plan in La Rochefoucauld's work to universalise the 'honnête homme' - its aim is to refine, not create, elite personalities. All that can be hoped for from those incapable of such nobility is that they recognise and submit to the superiority of others for "La plus grande habileté des moins habiles est de savoir soumettre

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Jeanson, for example, declares that:

Toute la psychologie de La Rochefoucauld est ainsi fondée sur le décalage entre un être pour soi qui est totalement déterminé, et un être pour autrui, tout entier défini par le souci de paraître. Ce qui revient à placer l'homme devant ce dilemme; ou bien être "vrai", mais dans une sorte de splendide isolement; ou bien se préoccuper d'autrui, et se condamner par suite à une radicale perversion de soi (1963:87).

<sup>59</sup> Nietzsche is also interested in false confessions (1986:227#56) and lists the suspicions one should harbour when someone reveals something of themselves (1982:208#523).

à la bonne conduite d'autrui" (1977:98#60). Obversely, when in wider society superior types encounter inferiors of birth or personal qualities, they should not abuse their advantage:

ils doivent rarement le faire sentir, et ne s'en servir que pour instruire les autres; ils doivent les faire apercevoir qu'ils ont besoin d'être conduits, et les mener par raison, en s'accommodant autant qu'il est possible à leurs sentiments et à leurs intérêts (1977:111#II).<sup>60</sup>

La Rochefoucauld's awareness of the falseness and duplicity of social relations is echoed by Chamfort for part of the latter's relentless criticism of social life is that there "tout est art, science, calcul, même l'apparence de la simplicité de la facilité la plus aimable" (1968:94#204). This world punishes those with virtue, integrity and intelligence (1968:59#37, 105#256, 112#273, 113#278, 115#288, 212#715), illustrating anew Chamfort's conviction that social values are in serious disarray (Chapter Two). Society barely recognises genuine affection or disinterested action (1968:113#280, 202#667) nor do its members have any real interest in one another (1968:316#1225). It is unsurprising that "Il y a des certains hommes dont la vertu brille davantage dans la condition privée" (1968:74#108) nor that this world is hostile to the burgeoning of genuine friendship, suggesting again that 'la retraite' can accommodate friendship. Social friends are not a true reflection of the self (1968:101#237) which compares with Nietzsche's point about our friends reflecting something about us and Chamfort further observes that in society there are always some acquaintances that cause embarrassment (1968:99#223).

As superior types cannot avoid society altogether, Chamfort follows La Rochefoucauld in accepting a different standard of behaviour between friends from that of wider social life and in conceding the need for decent individuals to pretend in order to protect themselves, even though this leaves them feeling "pénible et triste" (1968:113#279). What distinguishes the honest from the dishonest is that the former dissimulate for self-defense while the latter seek opportunities for this (1968:54#12.cf.55#16.77#125.241#847). But despite

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<sup>60</sup> I therefore reject Baker's claim that for La Rochefoucauld "Friendship is the microcosm whose laws are applied on a broader scale in the larger society" (1974:24).

Chamfort's consistent and harsh criticism of the public world, its opinions and evaluations (1968:71#90,#91,79#141,102#240,106#262,113#280,149#437,194#624) he does not suggest that virtuous individuals disdain this opinion entirely:

L'opinion publique est une juridiction que l'honnête homme ne doit jamais reconnaître parfaitement, et qu'il ne doit jamais décliner (1968:74#104).

This might be for reasons of prudence but elsewhere, in a move that tempers his praise of withdrawal and retreat, Chamfort implies that the virtuous person should never entirely ostracise themselves - they should maintain a delicate balance of belonging to and distance from society:

Il ne faut pas ne savoir vivre qu'avec ceux qui peuvent nous apprécier: ce serait le besoin d'un amour-propre trop délicat et trop difficile à contenter ... (1968:112#274)

He also recommends that we "conservez, si vous pouvez, les intérêts qui vous attachent à la société, mais cultivez les sentiments qui vous en séparent" (1968:248#878).<sup>61</sup>

Nietzsche follows both moralists in accepting the need for the superior to dissimulate in society (1986:290#338) while sharing Chamfort's recognition of the personal discomfort this can cause (1986:142#351). As this intimates, Nietzsche's work evinces an ambivalence toward masks and dissimulation that is often neglected by critics. On the one hand, the aesthetic element in his thought means that masks are laudable for they allow the self to conceal or

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<sup>61</sup> Chamfort's surprising mitigation of his usual attack on society could be explained by Merwin's thesis that the moralist's vehement defense of withdrawal stems from his profound ambivalence toward and dependence on the social world. Merwin refers to Chamfort's "simultaneous rejections of his society's judgement and need for its reassurances" (in Chamfort 1984:66) and observes that:

Chamfort never escaped that society and its attitudes for long, which is perhaps why his justification for withdrawing from it as a psychic or imaginative act was endless and essentially changeless, and why his preoccupation with leaving society often seems to be cast in the form of an attempt to convince, impress, or punish society itself (in Chamfort 1984:45)

It may therefore be that this more moderate approach to social life reflects the sober equilibrium Chamfort aims for.

diminish its negative traits and adopt more desirable ones (1974:132#77). The need to conceal oneself in the wider social world (1986:136#293,147#373,274 #246,289-90#334,290#338,352#175.1982:20#26,149#273,1974:213#236) and sometimes to spare another pain (1986:144#360,297#393.1974:90#16) also make some masks acceptable. But on the other hand the impulse toward sincerity and self-knowledge in the middle period makes deception and masks something to be avoided (1986:142#351,224#37). At other times Nietzsche is more neutral about the effects of acting for although he echoes La Rochefoucauld's point that repeated hypocrisy can result in self-deception, this can work for better or for worse:

He who is always wearing a mask of a friendly countenance must finally acquire a power over benevolent moods without which/the impression of friendliness cannot be obtained - and finally these acquire power over him, he is benevolent (1986:39/40#51.FN's emphasis.cf.1982:143#248).

As this suggests, the typical view of Nietzsche as one who "expressed a principled antagonism to sincerity, [and] ... spoke in praise of what they call the mask" (Trilling 1972:119) needs, upon reading the middle period, to be tempered.

In fine then, Nietzsche's depiction of friendship follows the French moralists' in many salient regards. Nietzsche and La Rochefoucauld look to Antiquity as an era when friendship was more fully appreciated. Nietzsche continues La Rochefoucauld's insistence that true friendship is rare and possible only between equals and elite personalities, that it requires equality among firsts. For both there is an intersubjective aspect to virtuosity and to the good life, even though there is an accent on solitude in Nietzsche's thought that is alien to La Rochefoucauld's but which has parallels with Chamfort's. It was also shown that Chamfort's inclusive notion of solitude was sometimes retained by Nietzsche. Nietzsche continues La Rochefoucauld's idea that friendship can be a spur to strength, be this in the quest for knowledge about the wider world or the self. Indeed for Nietzsche this is something of a false separation as the section entitled "'Know yourself' is the whole of science" reveals:

Only when he has attained a final knowledge of all things will man have come to know himself. For things are only the boundaries of man (1982:32#48)

The link between knowledge and self-knowledge is also evident in Science's claim that:

all founders of religion and their kind ... have never made their experience a matter of conscience for knowledge. "What did I really experience? What happened in me and around me at that time? Was my reason bright enough? Was my will opposed to all deceptions of the senses and bold in resisting the fantastic? None of them has asked such questions ... But we, we others who thirst after reason, are determined to scrutinize our experiences as severely as a scientific experiment - hour after hour, day after day. We ourselves wish to be our experiments and guinea pigs (1974:253#319).

And if, as Human declares, "Everything is innocence: and knowledge is the path to insight into this innocence" (1986:58#107.FN's emphasis), self-knowledge again appears as a central element of Nietzsche's inquiries.

The belief in friends developing one another is also present in Chamfort but not as forcefully as in La Rochefoucauld. Nietzsche also follows the latter in conceding that friends can know us better than we know ourselves, challenging the image of the sovereign self who is clearly delimited from others. Both celebrate the possibilities of such proximity but also insist that blurring the boundaries of individuation does not eliminate them for Nietzsche follows La Rochefoucauld's recommendation that friendship's closeness be contained. Both adduce an ideal of intimacy that is simultaneously lovingly close and respectfully distant, even though the rationale each harbours for this seems to differ, with La Rochefoucauld's concern for the social fabric contrasting with Nietzsche's tacit acceptance of the value of personal space.

A major difference between Nietzsche's analysis of friendship and the moralists' is the way his is interwoven with considerations of justice, although some of Nietzsche's ideas about this exist in embryo in the moralists' work. As demonstrated, Nietzsche sees friendship as a realm where equality can and must prevail. Therefore while he is usually scathing about equality doctrines, he does not eliminate all possibility of equality between individuals. Instead,



friendship is one of the few forums in which it can obtain.

Another arena where equality can prevail is enmity and, as this intimates, enmity is the mirror image of friendship for Nietzsche, just as benevolence is of malice.<sup>59</sup> Human makes this point about enmity and peerage in the negative, claiming that vanity prompts some to "exaggerate the worth of their foes so as to be able to show with pride that they are worthy of such foes" (1986:276#263). Just as friendship can inspire the noble personality to greater heights so enmity can be a fillip to greatness. As Science's "Open enemies" contends: "some people need enemies if they are to rise to the level of their own virtue, virility and cheerfulness" (1974:201#169). This also continues one of La Rochefoucauld's views for among the things that made Alexander great is "la puissance formidable de ses ennemis" (1977:128#XIV). The moralist tacitly compares the ability of great individuals to appreciate their enemies by noting that most seek reconciliation with their foes through fear or weakness (1977:52#82). This point is also touched on by Chamfort for whom indulgence toward one's enemies is sometimes born of stupidity rather than magnanimity. He concludes that "Il faut avoir l'esprit de haïr ses ennemis" (1968:79#143).

Despite their having equality in common, an interesting difference between friendship and enmity as Nietzsche presents them is that the latter can accommodate envy whereas, as has been shown, friendship cannot. Envy's ability to equalise makes it a way of recommending oneself to one's enemies for it shows that we compare ourselves with them rather than assuming superiority. For this reason those wanting to provoke their enemies assume a certain haughtiness (1986:296#383).

As our previous analyses of Nietzsche's views on justice show, justice has no necessary connection with equality and thus it cannot be concluded that because friendship is an arena of equality it is also one of justice. Indeed this chapter's discussion of the danger of knowing friends too intimately indicates

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<sup>59</sup> As Berkowitz reads it, Zarathustra conflates the categories of friend and enemy, so that our best friends are also our best enemies and vice versa (1993:218).

some ambivalence in Nietzsche's view of the justice of friendship, for if justice requires seeing things clearly and giving to things what is theirs, then blindness to a friend's faults is a form of injustice. Here a spatial conception of justice re-emerges but, reversing the idea in Chapter Four, in friendship justice decreases with proximity - the closer the friend, the blinder they are to our faults and the less just toward us. The idea of injustice as a boon to relationships is also evident in "Equilibrium of friendship":

Sometimes in our relations with another person the right equilibrium of friendship is restored when we place in our own balance of the scales a few grains of injustice (1986:137#305).

Its obverse comes in the point above - those at a greater distance see us more clearly and judge us more impartially. This association of distance, perspicacity and justice is explicit in Daybreak's "Distant perspectives":

when I am alone I seem to see my friends in a clearer and fairer light than when I am with them ... It seems I need a distant perspective if I am to think well of things (1986:200#485).

Despite this claim, when it comes to friendship, seeing things clearly and fairly is not synonymous with thinking well of them for it has been shown that Nietzsche sometimes posits that thinking well of friends can preclude lucidity about them.

A contrary view of the justice of friendship comes however with Nietzsche's idea that seeing friends clearly and close up enables us to foster their self-knowledge which in turn promotes justice overall, given that Nietzsche associates justice in general with perspicacity. He also argues that enhanced self-knowledge can increase fairness toward others for one becomes more tolerant of their faults in view of one's own and we thereby "restore our proper equilibrium with others" (1986:148/9#376).

This equation of proximity and justice is also played out in enmity, for enemies are in certain senses close - they resemble us, know us well and keep us in their sights. But in contrast to friends, enemies are rarely unjust toward one another (except when inflating one another's value through vanity). Enemies thus combine a degree of proximity with much lucidity. Usually an

enemy sees clearly the strengths and faults of the other and has an interest in cultivating this knowledge for it might afford some advantage in the struggle with them. Indeed in a hostile relationship, any extra knowledge about the antagonist is valuable, even when it has no obvious strategic use. This is one of the reasons why, according to Nietzsche, it can be so disconcerting when an enemy penetrates something we had thought secret (1986:142#352) because it increases their power over us. Moreover, like the friend, the enemy can enhance our self-knowledge for their close but impartial scrutiny might disclose traits hidden to the self (1986:179-80#491,274#248).<sup>60</sup> The lucidity of enmity is also suggested when La Rochefoucauld declares that "Nos ennemis approchent plus de la vérité dans les jugements qu'ils font de nous que de nous n'en approchons nous-mêmes" (1977:84#458). It is also evident in Chamfort's suggestion that fear of others is the beginning of wisdom (1968:76#116).

Considering friendship and distributive justice, it would seem that, as illustrated by his criticism of zero-sum notions of friendship and association of it with generosity, Nietzsche prizes friendship's 'gift-giving virtue'. This

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<sup>60</sup> I am assuming here that the learning referred to in the aphorism, "Path to Christian virtue" can entail self-knowledge, but concede that this is somewhat ambiguous.

On the point of enemies and lucidity, compare Hutter:

In distinction to friendship, enmity aims at closure. In enmity, Self purposively aims to be hidden ... for to remain open ... would give the enemy additional weapons (1978:14).

He also comments on the similarity of friendship and enmity:

Since friendship implies openness and, through it, a gaining of power through its renunciation, it can easily turn into the opposite of enmity.

The greatest friends make the greatest enemies (Hutter 1978:12).

It is interesting that Honig turns to Kant rather than Nietzsche to criticise Sandel's limited notion of friendship:

Kant rightly sees that the qualities that make for friendship with others, with the other, are the very same ones that make for betrayal. There is no way to have one without the presence of the other. Enmity cannot be held outside the bounds of friendship. Sandel, by contrast, disambiguates friendship ... (1993:177)

This is no doubt a consequence of her belief that there is no place for friendship in Nietzsche's thought.

suggests that it should share benevolence's bounty and impart ample affection. However the emphasis on equality among friends implies limits to friendship's liberality, that it should be more discriminating than benevolence. As Chapter Five shows, benevolence offers itself to all and sundry but is unjust in this impartiality because merit plays no part in its dissemination. By contrast it would seem that Nietzschean friendship should be more discerning in its generosity and give only to peers. In this manner justice is possible within friendship as long as it is partial and discriminating, giving freely of itself only to the worthy.<sup>61</sup>

While Nietzsche's views on the justice of friendship are somewhat contradictory, at least it, and enmity, are realms where some degree of justice is attainable. This stands in direct contrast to his depiction of relations between higher and lower types which are plagued by injustice. This is because both types of humanity are too far apart from one another to see the other clearly and hence justly. The shared understandings and recognition of superiority that hold noble friends and enemies together are wanting in inter-class relations and this makes for misinterpretations of the other class of humanity by both sides. The injustice inflicted by common types on higher ones comes when they systematically misread the latter's impulses, assuming that everyone acts for the same base and calculating motives as they do (1986:109#227). Nietzsche alerts free spirits to the illusion that they are known and appreciated by their inferiors, for such spirits:

imagine they excite envy among the mediocre and are felt to be exceptions. In fact they are felt to be something quite superfluous

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<sup>61</sup> In his critique of the Christian injunction to love thy neighbour, Freud expresses similar sentiments:

My love is something valuable to me which I ought not to throw away without reflection ... If I love someone, he must deserve it in some way ... my love is valued by all my own people as a sign of my preferring them, and it is an injustice to them if I put a stranger on/ a par with them (1961:56 /7).

which if it did not exist on one would miss (1986:393#345)<sup>62</sup>

The action of noble types is, as indicated, often construed as failing and foolish by ordinary standards whereas Nietzsche argues that it is not even amenable to such criteria. Because it belongs to a quite different species of action it is unjust to assimilate and compare it with the deeds of ordinary humans. In highlighting this problem of perception between such different types of humans, Nietzsche is developing La Rochefoucauld's observations that some good qualities can be neither perceived nor understood by those without them (1977:75#337) and that those incapable of great crimes have difficulty suspecting what others are capable of (1977:96#37).

This myopic inability to perceive distance and difference is reciprocated in the higher types' view of ordinary humans and lamented in Science's "Noble and common":

Very rarely does a higher nature retain sufficient reason for understanding and treating everyday people as such, for the most part, this type assumes that its own passion is present but concealed in all men ... But when such exceptional people do not see themselves as the exception, how can they ever understand the common type and arrive at a fair evaluation of the rule? ... This is the eternal injustice of those who are noble. (1974:78#3)

"The ultimate noblemindedness" reiterates this idea that noble types can be obtuse about their superiority and commit "an unfair judgement concerning everything usual, near and indispensable" (1974:117#55). The mutual myopia afflicting noble and base groups indicates again a correlation between proximity and injustice, although in this instance a false perception of proximity creates the injustice for neither group can see the distance between them and the other. Each evaluates the other by inappropriate standards, with

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<sup>62</sup> One exception to his general argument that inferior types cannot discern the distinction of superior ones comes in Human's "Free spirit is a relative concept":

the superior quality and sharpness of his intellect is usually written on the face of the free spirit in characters clear enough for even the fettered spirit to read (1986:108#225).

neither seeing the other for what they are nor giving them what is theirs.<sup>62</sup>

As the next chapter argues, one of the aims of Nietzsche's writing is to end this 'eternal injustice' by bringing noble types to recognition and affirmation of themselves and their peers and to a concomitant perception of the distance separating them from most humans. Thus Nietzsche's writings have a political purpose and strive to create justice by heightening awareness of distance and inequality. The idea that justice requires correct vision is also therefore related to Nietzsche's concern with the older, wider issue that is central to reflections on justice - who should rule and on what basis.<sup>63</sup> To such matters we now turn.

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<sup>62</sup> This develops Chamfort's claim that "on ne peut l'être [apprécié] que par ce qui nous ressemble" (1968: 139#402).

<sup>63</sup> As Schutte notes:

In his politics, Nietzsche was not as concerned with the transfiguration or self realization of individuals as he was with the conditions whereby a special class of artist-philosophers would acquire power over society.

The main issue for Nietzsche remained, Who would rule? (1984:175) However she sets up something of a false contest here. Nietzsche was concerned with the self-realisation and transformation of the strong individuals populating his 'special class' although not with that of all individuals. And as we have seen, artists play little role in this population in the middle period, suggesting another instance of Nietzsche's views being homogenised.

This chapter continues the analysis of friendship in the works of the middle period, taking it beyond private interaction and showing friendship to be a model for relations between the future social elite Nietzsche envisages. It also contends that this elite's power is grounded in its domination of intellectual and cultural production and that one of Nietzsche's aims is to galvanise this new elite via his writing. Closely related to this is a distinction between two sorts of aristocracy that can be discerned in the middle period. An old, aristocracy of birth model<sup>2</sup> jostles for position against a new, more inchoate notion of an aristocracy of spirit. This chapter shows how in the middle period Nietzsche's notions of spiritual supremacy give rise to notions of political supremacy.<sup>3</sup>

This chapter also reveals that a theory of 'care of the self' can be retrieved from Nietzsche's middle period and that this could accommodate the importance of embodiment in Nietzsche's new model of spiritual aristocracy. La Rochefoucauld is one of Nietzsche's forerunners in the importance attached to embodiment and his work also contains certain other ideas that could have contributed to Nietzsche's thinking about a new basis for aristocracy. One of the crucial differences though is that the superior types La Rochefoucauld depicts are not, nor aspire to become, a political elite. In the work of Chamfort, some of La Rochefoucauld's ideas about the importance of merit and spiritual qualities are developed and as such it has much to offer Nietzsche

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<sup>1</sup> 'Die geborenen Aristokraten des Geistes' is from "Quiet fruitfulness" in Human (1986:97#210).

<sup>2</sup> When Nietzsche writes as if aristocracy were a matter of birth, the early period's concern with birth and origins returns, although in that period the focus was nationalism. Nationalism conceives birth in horizontal terms whereas the aristocracy of birth model looks at it vertically.

<sup>3</sup> According to the Genealogy "political supremacy always gives rise to notions of spiritual supremacy" (1956:165#VI)

in his thinking about the bases of a new aristocracy. However Nietzsche remains impervious to the meritocratic strand in Chamfort's thought, reading him only as an egalitarian and enemy of all aristocratic sensibilities.

Human's long section on "The tyrants of the spirit" (1986:122-5#261), read in Chapter Six as testimony to the need of noble personalities for friendships to sustain and spur them on to greater heights, also has an obvious interest in social power. Its speculation about a new source for such power moves it beyond the realm of 'private' relations and lends its reflections on friendship a wider social and political import, for the passage suggests that this future social elite will relate to one another as friends. Such an arrangement would resemble the Greek polis where friendship played a potent role in informing the conceptualization of political life. As Hutter reports:

Friendship in ancient Greece ... was one of the chief relationships of the public life of the polis. Public space was taken up by friendships and enmities ... political life was conceived primarily in terms of friendship and enmity. Friends were considered indispensable for a successful public life. The meaning of politics lay in the fulfillment of friendship. The entire free citizenry of the polis was held to be related in the manner of friendship. Politics came thus to be seen as the means for the exercise of friendship. (1978:25)<sup>4</sup>

However the power base for the social elite Nietzsche envisages and seeks to shape will be essentially cultural and intellectual<sup>5</sup> whereas in the

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<sup>4</sup> As Shklar shows, the classical notion of politics as friendship was also adhered to by Machiavelli and Montaigne (1984:214,216). Montesquieu, by contrast, is a staunch critic of this, seeing friendship as:

a dangerous feeling for those who rule, since it might interfere with the primary obligations of justice ... In Montesquieu's impersonal state, personal qualities no longer make a difference (Shklar 1984:214-15). And Kant continues this view (Shklar 1984:216). Shklar sees Nietzsche as continuing the Machiavelli/ Montaigne approach:

ruling, as Nietzsche thought of it, should be a personal and creative activity, not the impersonal and blandly levelling policy of the modern legal state. (1984:224)

<sup>5</sup> As Williams notes, the middle period:

returns often to the idea that real culture implies a ruling caste, a significant development of his earlier view that it implied an elite of superior men working in the spirit of the genius (1952:40).

As part of the wider background to this thinking, Pletsch's observation that "an



Greek model its base comprised birth, property ownership and political power as well as intellectual and cultural authority. Nietzsche's emphasis on the realm of ideas is evident in Science's anticipation of:

the (higher) age that will carry heroism into the search for knowledge and that will **wage wars** for the sake of ideas and their consequences (1974:228#283.FN's emphasis. cf. 1986:162-3#442).

He is more specific about this when Human claims that "Learning to write well" means:

to assist towards making all good things common property and freely available to the free-minded; finally **to prepare the way** for that still distant state of things in which the good Europeans will come into possession of their great task: the direction and supervision of the total culture of the earth. (1986:332#87.FN's emphasis)<sup>6</sup>

Connected with this emphasis on ideas as a source of future social power is another crucial distinction between the Greek model and Nietzsche's. While the former aristocracy was based on noble ancestry and shared citizenship, the future one will be an oligarchy "of the spirit" whose members will be united by "spiritual superiority" (1986:124#261) even if separated by place and politics. This represents the germ of a crucial distinction between an 'aristocracy of birth' and 'an aristocracy of spirit'; a distinction separating the Antique model of cultural and political power from the future one Nietzsche hopes for and aims to contribute to. Unlike the aristocracy of birth, which believes that "In the community of the good goodness is inherited; it is impossible that a bad man could grow up out of such good soil" (1986:37#45), the aristocracy of spirit is more meritocratic. But because the term aristocracy "denotes, through its root, excellence or superiority elevated to a/position of

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aristocracy of intellect ... would become one of the bases of the [eighteenth century] theory of genius" (1991:2) is apt for, as he argues, Nietzsche adopts many of the other aspects of this theory.

<sup>6</sup> The term 'Europe' is later defined:

what is understood by Europe comprises much more territory than geographical Europe, that little peninsula of Asia: America, especially, belongs to it ... On the other hand, the cultural concept 'Europe' does not include all of geographical Europe; it includes only those nations and ethnic minorities who possess a common past in Greece, Rome, Judaism, and Christianity (1986:365#215).

power" (Stanton 1980:1/2), this new configuration can justly be called an aristocracy.

Thus while a noble pedigree might foster the spiritual characteristics demanded by membership of Nietzsche's new aristocracy of spirit, it is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition of them. This is evident in some of the comparisons made in the 'Tyrants' passage. Members of the spiritual oligarchy battle "the half-spirited and the half-educated and the attempts that occasionally occur to erect a tyranny with the aid of the masses" (1986:124#261). Those of the new oligarchy must therefore be educated, spirited and not of the mass but presumably meeting the first two criteria absolve one of the third for the mass Nietzsche spurns is not solely class-based. One can possess wealth and power and still belong to the many just as those with meagre means can be part of the superior few.

This is because quality of spirit represents the major cleavage dividing the many from the few for Nietzsche in the middle period (1982:160#323. 1974:77-8#3).<sup>7</sup> A crucial variable in this; in turn, is sufficiency of self-love which feeds this argument into Nietzsche's wider position on rivalry, comparison and autonomy. The link between nobility and self-love is suggested in Science's explanation of:

why we find so little nobility among men; for it will always be the mark of nobility that one feels no fear of oneself, expects nothing infamous of oneself, flies without scruple where we feel like flying, we freeborn birds (1974:236#294).<sup>8</sup>

Autonomy, the ability to decide one's values for oneself which Human at one

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<sup>7</sup> Kaufmann's remark that:

For the Protestant minister's son it seems to have been a foregone conclusion that human worth is a function not of blood but of the spirit (1950:136)

is apposite here although, while this notion might have had a religious origin, the use of 'spirit' I impute to Nietzsche has no transcendent connotations.

<sup>8</sup> What I have been describing as an insufficiency of self-love evolves into 'ressentiment' in the works after Zarathustra. The notion of resentment and its connection with a dearth of self-love is intimated in Science's "One thing is needful: "Whoever is dissatisfied with himself is continually ready for revenge, and we others will be his victims" (1974:233#290).

point calls "individual autocracy" (1986:366#218)<sup>9</sup> is a closely related feature of this spiritual nobility:

He is called a free spirit who thinks differently from what, on the basis of his origin, environment, his class and profession, or on the basis of the dominant views of his age, would have been expected of him (1986:108#225.cf.1974:76-7#2,98#23,114-15#50,202#174,258#328).<sup>10</sup>

Moreover sufficiency of self-love and autonomy are traits that need not be inborn but can be acquired. This is especially so as both are strengthened by the practice of self-making and self-overcoming. The relative insignificance of inherited as opposed to self-given qualities in forging higher human beings is apparent in Human's discussion of "Talent":

In as highly developed a humanity as ours now is everyone acquires from nature access to many talents. Everyone **possesses inborn talent**, but few possess the degree of inborn and acquired toughness, endurance and energy actually to become a talent, that is to say to

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<sup>9</sup> This is Hollingdale's translation of "individuelle Selbstherrlichkeit" (Nietzsche 1969:966#218) but individual self-mastery would also be accurate.

<sup>10</sup> Insofar as Nietzsche's new oligarchs of the spirit overturn convention and propose new values, they are closer to the Romantic than the Greek model of friendship for as Hutter notes:

the Romantic friendship community ... (had a) decided opposition to the standard societal forms and conventions ... It was a revolutionary community, both in terms of the artistic forms which it produced and in terms of the way of life that its members espoused. The artists so united saw themselves as missionaries and prophets of a new art and a new way of life. They stood in conscious opposition to the Philistinism and the emotional emptiness of established society, and proclaimed the ideal of the free artist, united freely in friendship with like-minded individuals. Most artists caught in this movement broke all ties ... and sought only those ties that could be voluntarily chosen ... (1978:187)

However as mentioned in the Introduction to this dissertation, in the middle period Nietzsche's faith lies in people of learning, the citizens of the republic of knowledge, as the founders of new values and ways of living rather than artists. Hunt seems to pick this up when discussing Nietzsche's vision:

a community of people who seek excellence of character would resemble a community of scientists in that the individual participant would learn from the experiments of others and from the critical reactions of others to one's own experiment (1990:178).

become what he is ... (1986:125#263.FN's emphasis.)<sup>11</sup>

Here the key variables in achieving nobility - toughness, endurance and energy - are inborn and acquired which again takes the accent off purely inherited qualities. Nietzsche's admission that toughness can be acquired as well as inherited poses the problem of identifying with any certainty whether a superior personality's strengths were inherited or acquired. Because supposed inborn strengths could lie dormant and underdeveloped and so require some activation, it would be safer to interpret any manifestation of fortitude, or indeed of any superior quality, as acquired because this can never be falsified. Some sense of the difficulty of distinguishing clearly between inherited and acquired strengths is communicated in "Miraculous education":

Under the same circumstances countless men continually perish, the single individual who has been saved usually grows stronger as a consequence because, by virtue of an inborn, indestructible strength, he has endured these ill circumstances and in doing so exercised and augmented this strength ... An education/that no longer believes in miracles will have to pay attention to ... how much energy is inherited? ... how much can new energy be ignited? ... (1986:115/16#242)

An important aspect of the noble personality Nietzsche identifies is the ability to rule and be ruled in turn (1974:228#283.cf.1986:284#311,303#6).<sup>12</sup> This relates to Aristotle's belief that a crucial dynamic of the polis is that its citizens rule and be ruled and as such they must know how to command and to obey. But Nietzsche gives this old idea a new twist, suggesting that such rule is not the prerogative of an aristocracy of birth but that those born into modest conditions also need to learn the art of ruling. This is evident in Human's aphorism "Teaching to command": "Children of modest families need

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<sup>11</sup> This is the first reference to 'becoming who one is'; an idea that plays such a pivotal role in Nehamas's reading of Nietzsche (1985). The idea re-emerges in Science (1974:219#270,266#335).

<sup>12</sup> As such Lingis' claim that for Nietzsche:  
what measures the nobility of a man is not a power over other men ...  
[but] the power by which he molds and fashions a human type, a  
power of his own dignity, his own distinction, his own difference, the  
power to make of his own life something distinguished. The strength  
of nobility creates a strong type of life in itself (in Allison 1985:52)  
rests upon a false separation.

to be taught how to command as other children need to be taught obedience" (1986:151#395). Why would such education be necessary if, as in the aristocracy of birth model, those from modest families could never aspire to social power? From this it seems that Nietzsche accepts that superior merit could elevate a person from the station to which they were born which clearly removes him from the aristocracy of birth camp. The next book of Human concedes that a noble birth confers advantage in the arts of commanding and obeying (1986:162#440.cf.1982:37#60) but, echoing the aphorism above, acknowledges that these can be acquired for it observes that those with mercantile and industrial power have learned to command, if not obey. Nietzsche also contends that the art of obedience "will no longer grow in our present cultural climate" (1986:162#440), insinuating that change in the cultural climate could change that too - especially since such capacities can be taught.

It is interesting to read Science's "On the lack of noble manners" in the light of this idea that the power of commanding and obeying can be acquired for, prima facie, the passage seems to assert the 'aristocracy of birth' model. Nietzsche suggests that socialism could be avoided if the industrialists and entrepreneurs who lead society could show some sign of superiority in their person: "If the nobility of birth showed in their eyes and gestures, there might not be any socialism of the masses" (1974:107#40). This is because:

at bottom the masses are willing to submit to slavery of any kind, if only the higher-ups constantly legitimize themselves as higher, as **born** to command - by having noble manners. The most common man feels that nobility cannot be improvised and that one has to honour in it the fruit of long periods of time (1974:107#40.FN's emphasis).

However the primary concern seems to be with claims to noble birth legitimizing rule rather than with the reality of pedigree for the passage suggests that what matters is not the fact of birth but the air of nobility and that this can be conveyed by a display of noble manners. That this air can be acquired and improvised is unknown to the common person - but supposedly not to other, uncommon ones - indicating again that nobility can be taught and

is not a simple matter of birth.<sup>13</sup> Daybreak's "Why so proud" also suggests some ambiguity in the distinction between what a noble personality inherits and what acquires from their upbringing (1982:147#267) and thus echoes Human's point about toughness.

More evidence for the 'aristocracy of spirit' reading comes in Human's "Culture and caste". This begins by declaring that a strong social division is necessary for the generation of a higher culture - there must always the workers and the leisured which evokes a return to the Greek model of masters and slaves (cf.1974:141#85,260#329). However this passage also gives an antique idea a new slant by contending that the modern separation between creative, leisured master of culture (cf.1974:141#85) and perfunctory labouring slave should not be made on the fixed basis of birth but spiritual merit. This permits some fluidity between social groups:

If an exchange between these two castes should take place ... so that more obtuse, less spiritual families and individuals are demoted from the higher to the lower caste and the more liberated in the latter obtain entry into the higher, then a state is attained beyond which there can be seen only the open sea of indeterminate desires. - Thus speaks to us the fading voice of ages past, but where are there still ears to hear it? (1986:162#439)

As the passage "Wealth as the origin of a nobility of birth" clearly evinces, while Nietzsche allows for and to some extent advocates social mobility, he is not glib or naive about its facility. He is acutely aware of the struggle facing a person of superior spirit with ordinary origins in overcoming the disadvantages of birth for money and the leisure it affords create conditions propitious to greatness. Conversely:

a very poor man usually destroys himself through nobility of disposition, it takes him nowhere and gains him nothing, his race is not

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<sup>13</sup> Even Nietzsche's emphasis on 'geboren' need not invalidate my 'spirit' reading if it is allowed that what matters is the rulers' belief that their rulers are born to rule. This passage could be read then as a variation on the Platonic noble lie. Nietzsche's claim about 'Der gemeinste Mahn' feeling that nobility cannot be feigned would be impervious to my 'spirit' reading if it said that 'Sogar/Selbst der gemeinste Mahn fühlt, daß die Vornehmheit nicht/zu improvisieren ist' (1969. Werke II 65/5#40) but without this emphasis it can suggest that the common person feels this whereas we uncommon ones do not.

capable of life ... to have less, as a boy to beg and abase oneself, is dreadful ... (1986:177#479).<sup>14</sup>

All this suggests that, by contrast with the Greek model, conditions of birth, while of great instrumental value in providing leisure and a good education and in preparing one to rule, are not the determinants of elite status for Nietzsche. The middle period sometimes allows that the poor are unfit for the good life not for intrinsic, insurmountable reasons but because they lack its enabling conditions.<sup>15</sup> Conversely while a 'good' birth might facilitate nobility of the spirit, it is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition. Its insufficiency is evident in the fact that for those lacking spirit, wealth and leisure will not create the good life:

For the possessor who does not know how to make use of his free time which his possessions could purchase him will always **continue** to strive after possessions: this striving will constitute his entertainment, his strategy in his war against boredom. (1986:283#310.FN's emphasis. cf.1974:94#21)

The passage compares this with "the moderate possessions that would suffice the man of spirit" (1986:283#310) and concludes that while the enjoyment of culture "is to **some** extent a matter of money, it is **much more a matter of spirit** (1986:284#310.FN's emphasis). So while the wealth that often accompanies noble birth might be an enabling condition of spiritual nobility,

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<sup>14</sup> The autobiographical undertone is striking here. Due to his father's early death, Nietzsche's childhood was spent in straitened financial circumstances and while winning a scholarship to Schulpforta furnished him a good education, he always had to be more penurious than his peers.

<sup>15</sup> The way poverty can promote resentment is captured in the vignette "When it rains" from Science:

It is raining, and I think of the poor who now huddle together with their many cares and without any practice at concealing these; each is ready and willing to hurt the other and to create for himself a wretched kind of pleasure even when the weather is bad. That and only that is the poverty of the poor. (1974:208#206)

This exemplifies a general point made in Chapter Four - that it is the weak who seek pleasure in hurting others.

it is not a necessary one (cf.1986:284#317).<sup>16</sup>

Further evidence that the new aristocracy's superiority will derive from spiritual qualities rather than birth-right comes in Daybreak's "Future of the aristocracy" which welcomes the entry of those of noble blood into "the orders of knowledge" (1982:120#201). According to this passage "the work of our free-spirits" has made it possible for members of the traditional nobility to "obtain more intellectual ordinations" and it implies that such intellectual and cultural work will now occupy them as politics once did. It can be inferred that because politics now appeals to mass sensibility, it is inhospitable to these noble types - it is becoming "indecent" for them to engage in politics (cf.1986:161-2#438.1982:107-8#179.1974:103#31). However while the traditional nobility's involvement in the production of knowledge and ideas is welcomed, it is clear that they are not co-extensive with this realm for their admission has been made possible by the free spirits already working there. Nor is there any indication that they will or should monopolize it - an eventuality that would render the aristocracy of spirit co-terminus with that of birth. Instead the impression is that the traditional nobility will infuse the realm of learning with old blood, uniting old strengths with new in the service of:

the ideal of **victorious wisdom** which no previous age has been free to erect for itself with so good a conscience as the age now about to arrive. (1982:120#201.FN's emphasis)

In sketching the distinction between an aristocracy of spirit and one of birth, Nietzsche is by his own account revivifying the spirit and achievements

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<sup>16</sup> Nietzsche endorses moderate wealth as better for society at large too, echoing the idea that began with Aristotle and was continued by civic republican thinkers like Machiavelli and Rousseau:

If property is henceforth to inspire more confidence and become more moral, we must keep open all paths to the accumulation of **moderate** wealth through work, but prevent the sudden or unearned acquisition of riches; we must remove from the hands of private individuals and companies all those branches of trade and transportation favourable to the accumulation of **great** wealth, thus especially the trade in money - and regard those who possess too much as being as great a danger to society as those who possess nothing (1986:382#285.FN's emphasis). This interest in the social distribution of wealth can be added to the list below of Nietzsche's discussions of conventional political questions.



of the Renaissance. Human's comparison of "Renaissance and Reformation" observes that:

The Italian Renaissance contained within it all the positive forces to which we owe modern culture: liberation of thought, disrespect for authorities, **victory of education over the arrogance of ancestry**, enthusiasm for science ... unfettering of the individual ... (1986:113#237.my emphasis)

This passage shares 'Tyrant''s point about burgeoning scepticism rendering a complete return to the Antique model impossible. Instead Nietzsche seems to hope for "the complete growing-together of the spirit of antiquity and the modern spirit" (1986:114#237) but fears that this might have been foreclosed by the Reformation and Counter-reformation. His ideal of the aristocracy of the spirit heads toward such a synthesis, combining the good features of the ancient and modern worlds and shedding the bad of both (cf.1982:118-19#199. cf.Detwiler 1990:116). Among the bad Nietzsche places, at times, "the arrogance of ancestry" (1986:113#237). This same goal of melding the best of the with the best of the new is expressed in "The "humaneness of the future" where the higher individual of the future is depicted as:

an heir with a sense of obligation, the most aristocratic of old nobles and at the same time the first of a new nobility - the like of which no age has yet seen or dreamed of ... (1974:268#337)

Another of the features Nietzsche retains from the old model of aristocracy is the importance of leisure (1986:132#283). However because free spirits do not idle away their free time (1974:108-9#42), this is probably best conceived as time free from other more worldly demands (1986:133-4#289). As this suggests, a related component of the traditional aristocratic worldview that Nietzsche adopts is disdain for a profession that confines one to a particular role and identity (1986:360#206). This importance of not being exhausted by a profession is evident in the work of La Rochefoucauld (Dens 1981:13) and of Chamfort for 'M' refuses several posts on the grounds that "Je ne veux rien de ce qui met un rôle à la place d'un homme" (1968:272#1006). And as Stanton notes, a strong anti-professional bias inheres in the French ethos of honnêteté (1980:47).

However even though a crucial distinction between an aristocracy of

birth and one of spirit is incipient in the middle period, with the latter model synthesising some old aristocratic values with some of Nietzsche's new goods, Nietzsche does not adequately elaborate upon nor always abide by it. This failure is, I submit, to his detriment.<sup>17</sup> The seemingly straightforward separation between these two models of aristocracy represents a central tension in his work (as captured in the title of this chapter) and the fact that he sometimes falls back on the aristocracy of birth model when criticising modernity helps to explain why he can be read as a reactionary, a nostalgic and/or a bio-determinist.<sup>18</sup> Such charges and confusions could have been avoided had Nietzsche developed the aristocracy of spirit model embryonic in his work. Moreover developing this new model would have afforded him all the critical purchase of the antique one without any of its liabilities.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> See Human (162-3#442) and Daybreak (124-5 #205,149#272), for examples that seem to perpetuate the aristocracy of birth model. However as "Of the people of Israel" indicates, the Jews might join the Greeks and Romans in providing a source for the idea of aristocracy in Nietzsche's work. Although they lack some of the noble heritage Nietzsche prizes, this can be overcome, so that the Jews represent a prototype for the aristocracy of birth model:

since they are unavoidably going to ally themselves with the best aristocracy of Europe more and more with every year that passes, they will soon have created for themselves a goodly inheritance of spiritual and bodily demeanour: so that a century hence they will appear sufficiently noble not to make those they dominate **ashamed** to have them as masters. (1982:125#205.cf.1986:175#475)(FN's *emphasis*)

This passage also suggested that, with time even noble inheritance can be acquired.

<sup>18</sup> The trend in the literature is to accept that Nietzsche's aristocracy is one of birth (eg. Detwiler 1990:14,111).

<sup>19</sup> Further still, there seems to be some incongruence between the aristocracy of birth model and Nietzsche's practice as a genealogist of morals. The trope of genealogy derives from the aristocratic prizing of pedigree but as Nietzsche's genealogies disclose again and again, the sources of many of the cherished higher values are actually mundane, base, sordid and/or interested. Thus his investigations discredit the claim to lofty origins and lineage on the part of values and if some analogy is drawn between this and the aristocracy of birth model, the aristocracy of spirit notion would seem more in keeping with the overall thrust of his work. Moreover Daybreak's point that literal genealogies usually reveal purity to be "the final result of countless

As the above reference to La Rochefoucauld's anti-professionalism indicates, the seventeenth century moralist is, along with Antiquity, a likely source for some of Nietzsche's thinking about aristocratic values. However as well as representing some of the old values to be synthesised into Nietzsche's new model of aristocracy, La Rochefoucauld offers ideas that could have affected Nietzsche's embryonic thoughts about the foundations for a new aristocracy. The moralist did not, for example, make spiritual superiority co-extensive with that of birth, so that among social aristocrats discriminations are made between higher and lower types<sup>20</sup> which offer a glimmer of the sorts of distinctions Nietzsche draws. La Rochefoucauld's belief that nobility of birth does not guarantee that of spirit is also evident in the discussion of a sort of elevation that does not rely entirely on fortune, birth, dignity or even merit. Those of superior spirit have an air that seems to destine them for great things and commands deference from others. In a gesture resembling Nietzsche's praise of sufficient self-love (Chapter Four), the moralist summarises this as "un prix que nous nous donnons imperceptiblement à nous-mêmes" (1977:79 #399).

But there does not seem to be much room for such superiority of spirit to be acquired, even among the well-born, for La Rochefoucauld repeatedly

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adaptations, absorptions and secretions ..." (1982:149#272) reinforces this idea that pure origins are spurious - what matters is self-making and self-overcoming - the strengths a people or an individual acquire for themselves.

<sup>20</sup> As Tocanne says, the moralist insists:

sur les qualités d'esprit et de jugement nécessaires pour être honnête homme: le naturel est le privilège d'une aristocratie de l'esprit, qui ne se confond pas avec une aristocratie sociale (1978:248).

Lougee's work shows that such a view was part of the wider background of the moralist's century. She says that the cultural development of this century was "the process by which behaviour superseded birth as the criterion of status" (1976:52). This is reflected in the practice of ennoblement, endorsed by meritocratic thinkers such as Du Bosc who:

envisioned a drastic extension of the mechanisms of ennoblement. Because men capable of illustrious deeds existed in all social groups, the reward of ennoblement should be held out to all ... By opening legal nobility to all who could earn it, ambitions would be raised, great actions would proliferate (Lougee 1976:43.cf.42).

suggests that strengths and weaknesses are innate, and when he writes like this, he is closer to Nietzsche's aristocracy of birth model than his aristocracy of spirit one.<sup>21</sup> The moralist notes, for example, that: "Il semble que la nature ait prescrit à chaque homme dès sa naissance des bornes pour les vertus et pour les vices" (1977:61#189.cf.58#153,82#433,128#XIV). The most that can be managed would seem to be the refinement rather than any radical re-making of these. Consonant with this is the moralist's suggestion that:

Les grandes âmes ne sont pas celles qui ont moins de passions et plus de vertu que les âmes communes, mais celles seulement qui ont de plus grands desseins (1977:95#31.cf.58#160,82#437).

However much hinges here on whether the capacity for grand designs, and economy in their realisation (1977:58#157,#159) is inborn or can be acquired. Most of La Rochefoucauld's thinking indicates the former so that this is not so much the tussle between inherited and acquired capacities witnessed in Nietzsche's work as an attempt to locate what is laudable in great action - is it the strengths of character or their deployment that make it possible.

This is not to imply that La Rochefoucauld allows no room for acquired qualities - indeed, as suggested, if this were the case, his work's attempt to enhance self-knowledge and genuine moral action would be futile. However his insistence that acquired qualities must comport with what is natural in the individual circumscribes the margin for self-making, indicating again that the accent is on refining and accentuating qualities rather than radical self-fashioning (1977:78#387).

As mentioned, the meritocratic component in Nietzsche's 'aristocracy of spirit' model is one of the things that distinguishes it from the 'aristocracy of birth'. There is also a quasi-meritocratic strand to La Rochefoucauld's thought in its belief that those of merit are likely to rise and that elevation is

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<sup>21</sup> Truchet suggests this when he writes that:  
il y a pour lui des hommes bien et mal nés, et il ne faudrait pas solliciter beaucoup certains textes pour y déceler des accents quasi nietzschéens (in La Rochefoucauld 1977:24).

the reward for merit (1977.79#400,401).<sup>22</sup> Conversely when fortune rather than merit elevates a person, they are unlikely to acquit themselves with dignity because they are ill-equipped for their new status (1977:83#449). Again though, this is a qualified meritocracy because it does not suggest that people of merit, no matter what their station, can ascend - instead it is confined to those already in the upper social echelons, whether they have arrived there by birth or acquired legal status. A difference related to the greater meritocratic component in Nietzsche's notion of aristocracy is his emphasis on intellectual qualities distinguishing superior from inferior. For the most part La Rochefoucauld accords little importance to intellectual powers, which fits with the point made in Chapter Two about the greater emphasis on reason in Nietzsche's thought than the moralist's. However a major exception to this emerges in the reflexion "De la différence des esprits" specifying which, among the many qualities great spirits can have, are proper and peculiar to them. These revolve around perspicacity for the great spirit can see even the furthest objects as if they were close and has breadth of vision as well as an eye for detail:

rien n'échappe à sa pénétration, et elle lui fait toujours découvrir la vérité au travers des obscurités qui la cachent aux autres ... Un bel esprit pense toujours noblement; il produit avec facilité des choses claires, agréables et naturelles ... Un bon esprit voit toutes choses comme elles doivent être vues; ... et il s'attache avec fermeté à ses pensées parce qu'il en connaît toute la force et toute la raison (1977: 133#XVI)

La Rochefoucauld's acknowledgement of some social mobility and his accent on spirit rather than birth as the crucial ingredient of nobility reflect the changes occurring in his society, changes that were magnified in the salon milieu. According to Lougee the salons were a melting pot for old and new nobility (1976:158). Their educative function allowed those who had been

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<sup>22</sup> But as Arnaud indicates, the belief that a meritocracy exists is typical of the aristocratic worldview:

What ... made the nobility a "breed" apart, ruling over men ... was the belief in blood. Heroism and virtue were supposed to be hereditary, and increased over time (1992:130).

newly ennobled to acquire the behavioural trappings appropriate to their new status (Lougee 1976:53-54,212). She thus suggests that the salon ethos was meritocratic for "The honnête homme was the man of whatever social origin who appropriated to himself noble civilité" (Lougee 1976:52) and:

esprit became a principle of social stratification in opposition to that of birth in the same way that "merit" became an argument for ennoblement (Lougee 1976:53).<sup>23</sup>

However even though the reality of social mobility might be part of the background of La Rochefoucauld's thought, the extent of such movement is not as great as that sometimes envisaged by Nietzsche. As Lougee makes clear, there were real limits to the meritocratic principle for only the newly ennobled benefitted from the privileging of esprit over birth. Those without a certain level of wealth and status were excluded:

the narrow range of wealth strata and of officeholding and professional types ... establishes that entrance to salons was restricted to members of specified power groups even if those groups were not identical with the old nobility. If salons were internally egalitarian ... they nonetheless comprised a social elite set off from the rest of French society (Lougee 1976:170.cf.212)

Thus a fundamental difference between Nietzsche and the moralist comes in the margin each allows for social mobility - unlike Nietzsche, La Rochefoucauld is not alive to the possibility that some from the lower orders have the potential for spiritual nobility. As Dens notes:

l'idée même du changement lui est antithétique car sa pensée accepte le principe de la separation des classes et de l'injustice sociale (1981:

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<sup>23</sup> As Lougee sees it this was one of the things that inflamed critics of the salon:

that behaviour should vary with status was central to all the attacks on salon culture. According to antifeminists, the salons and the women who led them perpetuated the disastrous extension to large numbers of lower-ranking individuals of behaviour appropriate only to a few personages of eminent rank (1976:98).

In the work of Chamfort, by contrast, the privileging of spiritual qualities over birth that animates Nietzsche's 'aristocracy of spirit' model is palpable. Although Chamfort's aphorism that "Dans l'ordre naturel comme dans l'ordre social, il ne faut pas vouloir être plus qu'on ne peut" (1986:79 #138) seems profoundly conservative,<sup>25</sup> his work is dedicated to showing that the social order is not dominated by 'natural' superiors and to demanding that social inferiors have the chance to show 'ce qu'on peut'. Nietzsche's idea of the importance of 'becoming what one is' has close parallels with Chamfort's arguments on this score.

Notwithstanding such constant criticism of society, Chamfort discerns some of the workings of meritocracy in it even if they are not the same as those La Rochefoucauld sees:

Il n'est peut-être pas vrai que les grandes fortunes supposent toujours de l'esprit ... mais il est bien plus vrai qu'il y a des doses d'esprit d'habileté à qui la fortune ne saurait échapper, quand bien même celui qui les a posséderait l'honnêteté la plus pure, obstacle qui ... est le plus

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<sup>24</sup> Clark's reading of the role aristocratic values play in La Rochefoucauld's thought is quite different. He reads the moralist as condemning rather than perpetuating aristocratic values, as "debunking the values of his class" (1987:72, cf. 69, 72). Clark explains the moralist's detached, classical stance (1987:68, 73) and the absence of references to his particular society (1987:61, 68) as La Rochefoucauld taking a critical distance from his world and suggesting, contrary to the aristocratic ethos, that morality and social role are dissociable (1987:62).

<sup>25</sup> Although a later aphorism could shed some light on it and reveal it to be directed at those with weak spirits rather than those of lowly social station: Il n'est pas rare de voir des âmes faibles qui, par la fréquentation avec des âmes d'une trempe plus vigoureuse, veulent s'élever au-dessus de leur caractère. Cela produit des disparates aussi plaisants que les prétentions d'un sot à l'esprit. (1968:84/5#175)

grand de tous pour la fortune (1968:98#221)<sup>26</sup>

Chamfort's work can thus be read as attacking the failure and urging the extension of this meritocratic tendency:

A voir le soin que les conventions sociales paraissent avoir pris d'écarter le mérite de toutes les places où il pourrait être utile à la société, en examinant la ligue des sots contre les gens d'esprit, on croirait voir une conjuration de valets pour écarter les maîtres (1968:96#212).

This image of the inferior ruling the superior returns when Chamfort calls "Cette impossibilité d'arriver aux grandes places, à moins que d'être gentilhomme ... une des absurdités les plus funestes" (1968:161#478) and likens it to donkeys keeping horses off a merry go round (cf. 1968:176#542). In his society merit and reputation are not usually qualifications for high office (1968:163#492); instead individuals are evaluated by title and wealth so that even if two people act in the same way or possess the same qualities, they are weighed on different scales, depending on their social status (1968:165#509). Those with merit but without rank, title and money face enormous obstacles whereas those with them are hugely but unfairly advantaged (1968:101#233, #235.203#671).<sup>27</sup>

That society suffers from a fundamental disjunction between merit and social power is later expressed allegorically by Chamfort:

Le monde et la société ressemblent à une bibliothèque où au premier

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<sup>26</sup> It is possible that Chamfort has himself in mind when discussing those superior types that cannot escape fortune for this is a way of reconciling his disdain for fortune and society with his considerable success. That he might be thinking autobiographically here is suggested in an excerpt from one of his letters:

comme le hasard a fait que ma société est recherchée par plusieurs personnes d'une fortune beaucoup plus considérable, il est arrivé que mon aisance est devenue une véritable détresse, par une suite des devoirs que m'imposait la fréquentation d'un monde que je n'avais pas recherché (undated Letter to A ... in Chamfort 1968:371).

<sup>27</sup> Again Chamfort's correspondence evinces his concern with this. He writes to the Abbé Roman:

je me suis indigné d'avoir si souvent la preuve que le mérite dénué, né sans or et sans parchemins, n'a rien de commun avec les hommes (4.3. 1784 in Chamfort 1968:382).



coup d'oeil tout paraît en règle, parce que les livres y sont placés suivant le format et la grandeur des volumes, mais au fond tout est en désordre, parce que rien n'y est rangé suivant l'ordre des sciences, des matières ni des auteurs (1968:101#236).

However he attacks the social structure not just because it gives power and privilege to those who might be unworthy of it and prevents others from rising as far as their talents permit but also because the vanity of rank inhibits the interaction of kindred spirits:

un vrai sage et un honnête homme pourraient la [l'inégalité des conditions] haïr comme la barrière qui/sépare des âmes faites pour se rapprocher. Il est peu d'hommes d'un caractère distingué qui ne se soit refusé aux sentiments qui lui inspiraient tel ou tel homme d'un rang supérieur; qui n'ait repoussé, en s'affligeant lui-même, telle ou telle amitié qui pouvait être pour lui une source de douceurs et de consolations (1968:98/9#222).

The social hierarchy also allows those of superior, noble spirit to be disdained by those whose only claim to nobility is their birth,<sup>28</sup> evincing the sort of disrespect for the higher goods of spirit and intellect that so rankles Nietzsche:

M de Castries, dans le temps de la querelle de Diderot et de Rousseau, dit avec impatience à M. de R ... / Cela est incroyable: on ne parle pas que de ces gens-là, gens sans état, qui n'ont point de maison, logés dans un grenier: on ne s'accoutume point à cela (1968:258/9#928.cf. 237#829).

Against what Nietzsche might call 'the arrogance of ancestry' Chamfort asserts the rights of noble spirits:

Tout homme qui se connaît des sentiments élevés a le droit pour se faire traiter comme il convient, de partir de son caractère, plutôt que de sa position (1968:115#291).

Nietzsche's allusion to the Aristotelian good of citizens ruling and being ruled in turn also exists in Chamfort's thought (and is probably another

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<sup>28</sup> A letter to a friend talks about being:

dans le monde ... ou vous portez le sentiment toujours pénible de la supériorité de votre âme et de l'infériorité de votre fortune ... (Letter to A... 20.8.1765 in Chamfort 1968:366)

As Arnaud notes:

Chamfort refused to accept automatic inferiority to the aristocrats, whose "self-assured stupidity" and self-proclaimed superiority he always detested (1992:27).

part of his Rousseauian heritage) for he objects that most social institutions:

paraissent avoir pour objet de maintenir l'homme dans une mediocrité d'idées et de sentiments qui le rendent plus propre à gouverner ou à être gouverné (1968:166#513).

Yet for neither does this mean that all have an equal capacity to rule - both Nietzsche and Chamfort evince a strong awareness that those of superior spirit are currently denied social power. Yet despite their sometime kindred thinking on this question of the 'arrogance of ancestry' and the potential of spiritual nobles, Nietzsche seems oblivious to Chamfort's defense of merit and attack on unearned privilege and power, reading him as a radical egalitarian rather than a meritocrat. Science laments Chamfort's support for and participation in the French Revolution but concedes that it would "be regarded as a much more stupid event" without Chamfort's "tragic wit" (1974:148#95).

While some of Chamfort's claims do licence Nietzsche's egalitarian reading:

Moi, tout; le reste rien: voila le despotisme, l'aristocratie et leurs partisans. - Moi, c'est un autre; un autre c'est moi; voilà le régime populaire et ses partisans. Après cela décidez (1968:168#517.cf.236 #826,243#855).

such passages do not overwhelm the more standard meritocratic critiques of the social system his work contains. Moreover Chamfort anticipates the sort of response Nietzsche makes to his attack on inequality, admitting that some critiques are petty and driven by what has come to be called the politics of envy. Chamfort cites from Montaigne: "Puisque nous ne pouvons y atteindre, vengons-nous-en à en médire" (1968:98#222). While he can understand such a sentiment, it appals him and he goes to great lengths to distinguish his own attack on inequality from such levelling down sentiments.

Nietzsche attributes Chamfort's support for the Revolution to the moralist's "hatred of all nobility by blood" explaining this as the "hatred and revenge" (1974:148#95) of the illegitimate child of a noble mother.<sup>29</sup> Because

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<sup>29</sup> Arnaud explains that Chamfort was:  
born out of wedlock, to an aristocratic mother and an obscure cleric, in 1740, in Clermont-Ferrand ... The child was ... farmed out to the family of a grocer and his wife, who lost a child ... born on the same

of the circumstances of his birth Chamfort was both drawn to and resentful of the social order that accepted but would not embrace him.<sup>30</sup> However while this might be a correct description of Chamfort's position and motivations, it is only partial. Chamfort's critique of the aristocracy of birth is not an attack on all aristocracy or hierarchy, nor is it driven solely by spleen. Instead it is a disgust at the way a calcified system grants power, status and privilege to those who 'earn' it simply by being descended from a line of warriors or making money by exploiting the poor (1968:160#476). Conversely this system undervalues individuals of talent and merit who happen not to have been born into its upper echelons.

Chamfort favours a new hierarchy based on the superior talent of individuals, irrespective of their social origins and so is attacking "la vanité de rang" (1968:52#3) rather than rank per se.<sup>31</sup> Had Nietzsche read Chamfort

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day. He was raised by this family under the name Sebastien Roch Nicholas. The boy learned who his true mother was when he was seven or eight. (1992:xi)

<sup>30</sup> Pellisson shares Nietzsche's view about the importance of Chamfort's birth in shaping his character and ideas (1895:11-12) as does Arnaud who writes that the knowledge of his origins:

established him for life in his ambiguous, highly charged relation with the aristocracy of the Ancien Regime, and with an early notion of what people will do to maintain appearances. It left the young boy with a sense of himself as a victim, but a victim always with a high opinion of himself. He grew up, consequently, with great ambition and an ample grudge (1992:xi.cf.xvi.5)

Furbank by contrast, thinks that "both Nietzsche and Arnaud somewhat overweight Chamfort's bastardy" (1992:6).

<sup>31</sup> Arnaud associates Chamfort's "precocious desire to start society (and the human race) afresh" with "his enthusiasm for the French Revolution" (1992:xxvi). He explains that:

Condorcet and Sieyes ... convinced him that politics was a "science" able to organize mankind rationally ... they ... convert[ed] him - superficially - to a precocious positivism, according to which the age of metaphysics would give way to that of universal Enlightenment. (1992:183.cf. Furbank 1992:4).

Thus Chamfort:

wanted the Revolution to free mankind from social "charlatanism" by replacing false hierarchies (birth and money) with valid ones

differently, without his own bias against the equality and fraternity of the French Revolution colouring his reception so dramatically, he would still have found much to disagree with but might also have discovered a Chamfort whose views were closer to his own embryonic ones about the need for a new aristocracy.<sup>32</sup> Such a find might not only have permitted Nietzsche a richer and fairer reading of Chamfort but it might also have allowed his own thoughts about aristocracy to become clearer.<sup>33</sup>

That Chamfort's attack on the aristocracy of birth is not a desire to level all distinctions, is evident in the notion of greatness pervading his thought. Examining this also reveals that Chamfort's definition of merit is very close to Nietzsche's, showing the meritocracy he advocates to be compatible with the Nietzschean ideal.<sup>34</sup> Like La Rochefoucauld before him and

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(intelligence and talent) (Arnaud 1992:xxix)  
the Third Estate was to replace birth by merit ... Chamfort had held on to this conviction since his school days, and it was perhaps the only one he never betrayed (Arnaud 1992:148.cf.98).

<sup>32</sup> As I read it, there is little evidence, at least in the middle period, to support Arnaud's claim that "Nietzsche deserves the place of honour ... in the pantheon of Chamfort's readers" (1992:268). Arnaud finds in Nietzsche the very sort of interpretation of Chamfort I think he misses:

Nietzsche reveals the other side of the moralist, not the revolutionary but the lifelong elitist, the individualist who was convinced of the absolute superiority of intelligence over birth and wealth, yet who detested the social trappings of superiority (1992:262).

<sup>33</sup> What I see as Nietzsche's misreading of Chamfort might be an example of Bloom's point that "strong poets make poetic history by misreading one another, so as to clear imaginative space for themselves" (1973:5). However the fact that Nietzsche's notion of a spiritual aristocracy is never fully articulated nor powerfully distinguished from the aristocracy of birth model means that he fails to take possession or occupation of the vacancy created by his misreading of Chamfort.

<sup>34</sup> As Donnellan notes:

the character M ... incorporates many of the features of Nietzsche's aristocratic immoralism, such as scorn for the mass of humanity, solipsistic contentment with "the exercise of one's intelligence", and cultivation of one's own powers of reason and energy. (1982:112.cf. Dagen in Chamfort 1968:31.Arnaud 1992:264).

However how Donnellan can hold that 'M' is Chamfort's mouthpiece

Nietzsche after, Chamfort separates small from great (1968:64#68.311#1195) and weak from strong souls (1968:78#133.84#175.127#340.298#1115) and holds that "Il y a plus de fous que de sages" (1968:81#149). Pace Nietzsche's reading of Chamfort's egalitarianism, his observation that the modern era has produced few great figures (1968:57-8#30) is not intended as praise and he finds it hard to understand how even this small number were formed. That the greats "y semble comme déplacés" (1968:58#30) suggests the very sort of attack on mediocrity that Nietzsche mounts. However even in a society as corrupt and decadent as his own, Chamfort recognises noble characters. Such types have stronger characters, broader intelligence and greater prudence than most and their capacities "les élève au-dessus du chagrin qu'inspire la perversité des hommes (1968:77#127).

Although it has been argued throughout this dissertation that the presence of a positive morality does not make itself as powerfully felt in the work of Chamfort as in that of La Rochefoucauld and Nietzsche, this is not to imply that Chamfort's thought is only critical. As the recognition of superior types escaping the general perversity indicates, Chamfort muses on the forces that constitute and facilitate greatness and in so doing builds a profile of the noble personality. Some of its characteristics have been touched on as, for example, when Chapter Two shows that if Chamfort's higher types please others it is by default not design and that their ability to please reveals as much about the calibre of their companions as it does their own superiority.

As his point about exceptions to the general perversity also indicates, Chamfort's is not some ideal portrait of greatness but takes some inspiration from living examples.<sup>35</sup> In addition to the qualities suggested above, the great

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(Chapter Two), that 'M' scorns the mass of humanity and that Chamfort has "a sense of solidarity with the mass of humanity (however critically tempered this attitude may be) "that distinguishes his thought from Nietzsche's (1982: 113) is nowhere explained.

<sup>35</sup> Dagen disagrees:

Chamfort dress l'image de l'homme nouveau. Il nous tend le portrait de l'être exemplaire, mythe opposé au mythe/ de Richelieu-Don Juan; les anecdotes ne sont pour rien dans la composition de cette épure (in

individual must have a touch of the romantic in their head or heart. Without this they can be intelligent and worthy but not great (1968:74#107). Intelligence must also be combined with energy of character (1968:112#277). A living example of such mobility of spirit is 'M'. With his soul open to all impressions he can be moved to tears at the tale of a beautiful action and to laughter by fools who ridicule him (1968:281#1054). Higher types are also capable of self-sacrifice (1968:80#147) and their greatness of spirit is accompanied by melancholy (1968:178#556). Greatness must also be mixed with folly (1968:63#59.81#149) - a belief in which Chamfort again follows La Rochefoucauld and precedes Nietzsche. That superior types effortlessly combine seemingly contradictory qualities is evident in Chamfort's portrait of 'M. L...' whose "esprit est plaisant et profond; son coeur est fier et calme; son imagination est douce, vive et même passionnée" (1968:273#1010). And while fortune might find some of them, those with great souls are tempted by but resist worldly rewards (1968:185#583), suggesting that their secular unsuccess is to some extent chosen rather than simply the result of society's inability to appreciate them.

One reason superior types avoid the seduction of success is that, as 'M' notes, it would force them to neglect their mind and soul (1968:209#701); indeed he rejects a lucrative but unattractive post because one lives by, not for, money (1968:286#1077). In good aristocratic fashion, Chamfort dismisses devotion to money-making for this is not where the good life is at (1968:74#106).<sup>36</sup> Another reason superior types eschew entanglement with and rewards

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Chamfort 1968:29/30).

<sup>36</sup> This view is echoed in another of Chamfort's letters to the Abbé Roman: La fortune fera ce qu'elle voudra, jamais je ne lui accorderai, dans l'ordre de biens de l'humanité, que la quatrième ou cinquième place. Si elle exige la première, qu'elle aille d'un autre côté, elle ne manquera pas d'asile. (4.4. 1784 in Chamfort 1968:378)

of the wider social world is that this compromises their independence. This holds not just for independence of spirit, but also material independence, which is of central importance to Chamfort who sees the great bearing it has on autonomy of the spirit:

La gloire met souvent un honnête homme aux mêmes épreuves que la fortune ... l'une et l'autre l'obligent, avant de le laisser parvenir jusqu'à elles, à faire ou souffrir des choses indignes de son caractère. L'homme intrépidement vertueux les repousse alors également l'une à l'autre, et s'enveloppe ou dans l'obscurité ou dans l'infortune, et quelquefois dans l'une et dans l'autre (1968:73#102).

This does not mean that Chamfort glorifies poverty, for this brings a servitude of its own. Poverty is also an impediment to virtue for "Il n'est vertu que pauvreté ne gêne. Ce n'est pas la faute du chat quand il prend le dîner de la servante" (1968:179#561). Although it might simply be a witticism, Chamfort also predicts that were rich and poor people of equal intelligence, the poor person would have a deeper understanding of society and the human heart because "dans le moment où l'autre plaçait une jouissance, le second se consolait par une réflexion" (1968:100#230).

Ultimately Chamfort combines an aristocratic dismissal of money as an end in itself with an awareness of the necessity of some wealth for personal independence:

L'homme le plus modeste, en vivant dans le monde, doit, s'il est pauvre, avoir un maintien très assuré et une certaine aisance, qui empêche qu'on ne prenne quelque avantage sur lui. Il faut dans ce cas parer sa modestie de sa fierté (1968:111#269.cf.107#266.111#268) <sup>37</sup>

Moderate wealth makes indifference to money possible, whereas insouciance is impossible at either extreme. Thus while scoffing at wealth brings a certain

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<sup>37</sup> This is echoed in his advice to a friend:

Je ne vous dis pas de mettre au prix à l'argent, mais de regarder l'économie comme un moyen d'être toujours indépendant des hommes, condition plus nécessaire qu'on ne croit pour conserver son honnêteté (Letter to A... 20.8.1765 in Chamfort 1968:367).

joy (1968:79#142), real freedom means indifference to it (1968:82#164)<sup>38</sup> and this only comes with some financial security. And consistent with Chamfort's wider tenet that nature is a source of the good, he portrays the possession of moderate wealth and the independence it facilitates as obeying nature's command (1968:113#281). There is also the Rousseauian suggestion that wealth induces artificial needs (1968:266#963) and causes civilization's neglect of nature's dicta of simplicity and austerity.<sup>39</sup> Thus worldly goods like wealth and fame implicate and constrain and Chamfort insists that optimal wealth is moderate (1968:76#121), affording its holder a degree of independence and freedom without the cosmetics and complications of greater wealth (1968:72 #94.107#266).<sup>40</sup> From this it is clear that Nietzsche's insistence on moderate wealth, independence and the free spirit's meagre needs as well as his acute awareness of how difficult it is for those born into the lower social ranks to achieve independence have considerable precedent in Chamfort's thought, even if Nietzsche betrays no awareness of this. By contrast, none of these issues trouble La Rochefoucauld, at least obviously, for he perpetuates the aristocratic disdain for money making without any awareness that some wealth is a

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<sup>38</sup> According to Arnaud, Chamfort:

was not jealous of upper-class wealth - although he did experience that insidious jealousy toward riches scorned, which this same upper class delighted in arousing (1992:101).

<sup>39</sup> As Mauzi puts it:

Selon Rousseau, les richesses constituent l'une de ces monstreuses proliférations qui se greffent sur la simple existence, étendent artificiellement l'être morale, et augmentant sa vulnérabilité. L'homme riche ne coïncide plus avec lui-même. (1965:161)

<sup>40</sup> Pellisson suggests that Chamfort's view accords with the general view of eighteenth century people of letters, for they:

n'étaient pas riches et ne disposaient guère ... des moyens de le devenir ... ils ne se souciaient pas, pour la plupart, de la fortune. A la pratique des lettres s'attache, comme un lien naturel, le désintéressement des biens positifs (1970:189).

He goes on to note that:

dans l'opinion courante, la richesse chez un homme de lettres paraissait plus qu'une anomalie, semblait presque un désordre social (Pellisson 1970:190).



condition of independence.<sup>41</sup>

Yet despite all the sympathy Nietzsche could have felt for Chamfort, he reads him only as a partisan of the Revolution, an egalitarian hostile to any form of social distinction. This also overlooks the fact that in a general sense, Chamfort's political aspirations were similar to Nietzsche's, for the moralist's ambition was to see society reconstructed on a more rational basis. He likens himself to Francis Bacon, insisting that "Il faut recommencer la société humaine" just as Bacon envisaged the reconstruction of human knowledge (1968:168#522). A key element in this reconstruction would be that those who ruled had some legitimate, defensible claim to power rather than the current domination of monarch and aristocrats of birth (1968:171#533). Chamfort looks to England and especially the United States as models for a more rational social order for the former has limited monarchical power (1968:165 #504) and the latter protects human rights and liberty against tyranny and exploitation (1968:166-7#514), forming "le plus beau gouvernement qui fut jamais" (1968:167#515).<sup>42</sup> In both cases he admires the rationality and

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<sup>41</sup> In this regard La Rochefoucauld's personal circumstances are dramatically at odds with his writing for the Duc was in serious financial straits. As Lough notes:

Monsieur le Duc de La Rochefoucauld, the author of the Maximes, had to have recourse to this bourgeois expert [Gourville] in order to straighten out his affairs in 1661. (1954:77)

He then puts this in wider perspective, observing that:

one of the outstanding features of the social history of the seventeenth century [was]: the impoverishment of the nobility as a class. Nothing stands out more clearly in the letters and memoirs of the age than the simple fact that the French aristocracy ... were in dire financial straits. (Lough 1954:77)

<sup>42</sup> Cassirer identifies the doctrine of human and civil rights as a central plank of enlightenment politics:

It forms the spiritual centre at which all the various tendencies toward a moral renewal and toward a political and social reform meet and in which they find their ideal unity. (1951:248).

A little later on he explains that:

On all sides it is now asserted that the first step toward freedom, that the real intellectual constitution of the new order of the state, can only consist in a declaration of inalienable rights, the right of personal security, of free enjoyment of property, of equality before the law, and

liberty of the polity more than its egalitarianism. Nonetheless, the egalitarian bases of the doctrine of human rights would obviously offend Nietzsche (Chapter Four) and could help to explain why Nietzsche found Chamfort's politics so repugnant. Indeed this must have so alienated Nietzsche as to overshadow any appreciation of Chamfort's other political views which, it is argued here, were akin to many of his own.

To be sure, Chamfort does advocate educating the masses and ending their exploitation by the government and the aristocracy (1968:171#533)<sup>43</sup> but again the accent is on destroying illegitimate authority rather than equalising citizens. Moreover, while convinced of the need to reorganise society along more rational lines, Chamfort at times evinces scepticism about this. At one point misanthropy overwhelms his hope for reform:

Les hommes sont si pervers que le seul espoir et même le seul désir de les corriger, de les voir raisonnables et honnêtes, est une absurdité, une idée romanesque qui ne se pardonne qu'à la simplicité de la première jeunesse (1968:187#598).

Doubt about the Revolution is voiced by 'M.R', a person "plein d'esprit et de talents" (1968:271#996). Asked why he did not participate in the events of 1789, he replies that:

depuis 30 ans, j'ai trouvé les hommes si méchants, en particulier et pris un à un, que je n'ai osé espérer rien de bon d'eux, en public et collectivement (1968:271#996).

Both passages suggest that Chamfort's political views were not exempt from

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of the participation of every citizen in the government (1951:253).

<sup>43</sup> As Pellisson notes:

Chamfort ouvre les yeux sur la misérable condition des classes populaires, que l'on s'était trop habitué à considérer que dans un lointain fort reculé (1895:244.cf.253).

Given that such concerns play little role in Nietzsche's middle period, Donnellan is partly correct to claim that he "ignore[s] the concern for social justice which pervades Chamfort's work" (1982:114). However because Chamfort's plea for meritocracy is also an argument for social justice, Nietzsche can be read as sharing this concern.

the variety Nietzsche celebrates in his personality<sup>44</sup> and this review of Chamfort's politics suggests that again Nietzsche's interpretation of him as drawn to the Revolution by the politics of envy is far too simplistic.

One thing the Greek 'aristocracy of birth' model captures which Nietzsche wants to preserve is the importance of embodiment to spiritual qualities, the close connection between the psyche and the physical, the material and the cultural (1982:100 #163, 119-20#201, 1974:106-7#39, 186#134). Thus a noble birth seems necessary not just for the life of leisure and freedom it affords but also for the inheritance of a strong and beautiful physique. However it is possible to incorporate the importance of embodiment without buying into the 'aristocracy of birth' model via what can, following Michel Foucault, be called an 'ethic of care of the self' (1984) for such an ethic is available in the works of Nietzsche's middle period.<sup>45</sup> Reading Nietzsche as

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<sup>44</sup> As Arnaud writes, Chamfort's "revolutionary personality was as shifting as his literary identity" (1992:183).

<sup>45</sup> As far as I can detect, Foucault does not nominate Nietzsche as a source for this ethic, focusing instead almost exclusively on writers of antiquity (who also of course influenced Nietzsche). Foucault describes care of the self as:  
a phenomenon which I believe to be very important in our societies since Greek and Roman times, even though it has hardly been studied (1974:2).

It seems that for Foucault Nietzsche's major legacies are epistemological and methodological, concerning issues like perspectivism, genealogy and the connection between knowledge and power. ("Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" in Rabinow.1984:76-100). However Foucault's neglect of Nietzsche as a theorist of care of the self is surprising given that in the middle period Nietzsche's evolution from philologist to genealogist is occurring, so it is not as if a consideration of him as genealogist could be carried out independently of him as a theorist of care of the self. Of the 54 foot-notes that refer to Nietzsche's texts in Foucault's 'Nietzsche' essay, 20 contain titles from the middle period. The essay also highlights the importance of embodiment to Nietzsche (Rabinow 1984:62-3) and at one point the question of care of the self is almost touched on:

The body is moulded by a great many distinct regimes; it is broken down by the rhythms of work, rest, holidays: it is poisoned by food or values, through eating habits or moral laws ... (Rabinow 1984:87)  
but not developed. Perhaps this is because here Foucault's brief is to describe genealogy per se, rather than conduct a genealogy of the ethic of care of the

a theorist of 'care of the self' can displace or dispel the centrality of birth while still respecting the entwinement of body and soul.

In his attempt to retrieve and articulate a theory of care of the self, Foucault notes that "in Antiquity, ethics, as a deliberate practice of liberty has turned about this basic imperative: "Care for yourself" (1984:5). He describes care of the self as a form of self-making; it is:

an ascetical practice ... an exercise of self upon self by which one tries to work out, to transform one's self and to attain a certain mode of being" (1984:2).

It also pays close attention to the details of quotidian life. For the Greeks:

Ethos was the deportment and the way to behave. It was the subject's mode of being and a certain manner of acting visible to others. One's ethos was seen by his dress, by his bearing, by his gait, by the poise with which he reacts to events, etc. (1984:6).

Analogous concerns with caring for the self can be detected throughout the works of Nietzsche's middle period. An interest in self-making and self-overcoming pervades them (1986:248#152,322#45,323#53,386-7#305.1982:135-6#218,169#370,186-7#437,203-4#500,220#548,225#560.1974:232-3#290)<sup>46</sup>

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self. When Foucault is engaged in a genealogy of the ethic of care of the self, Nietzsche might not qualify as such a theorist because of his association of ascetic practices with Christianity. Against this, Foucault shows that they were present in antiquity and, indeed, played a part in the ethic of care of the self (Rabinow 1984:361,366). Rather than Christianity inaugurating these ascetic practices, it adopted and adapted them from antiquity:

between paganism and Christianity, the opposition is not between tolerance and austerity, but between a form of austerity which is linked to an aesthetics of existence and other forms of austerity which are linked to the necessity of renouncing the self and deciphering its truth (Rabinow 1984:366).

<sup>46</sup> As the middle period's first depiction of self-overcoming is as a religious practice (1986:41#55) Foucault is right to suggest that what becomes such an important component of Nietzsche's aesthetics of the self has its roots in the acts of ascetics (cf.1986:73-4#137). However as Nietzsche's ethic of care of the self harks back to the antique one and contains elements of self-mastery and self-overcoming, it can be inferred that for him this sort of ascetic practice also has its roots in antiquity. This idea remains latent in his work however - asceticism is more usually and more explicitly associated with Christianity, which perhaps explains Foucault's view.

Nietzsche later suggests that illness can be a prompt to self-overcoming

and they also repeatedly draw attention to the small, daily needs of the self and to the interdependence of body and spirit.<sup>47</sup> The passage "Manners" in Human, for example, reveals an interest in deportment and public behaviour which are characteristic concerns of the ethic of care of the self. Nietzsche contends that good manners have eroded with the decline of courtly life but envisages their improvement once society emerges from its present interregnum to grow "more certain of its objectives and principles" (1986:118 #250). A more self-confident society will also see:

An improvement in the division of time and work, gymnastic exercise transformed into an accompaniment to leisure, a power of reflection augmented and grown more rigorous that /bestows prudence and flexibility even upon the body ... (1986:118/19#250).

One of Nietzsche's criticisms of contemporary life is that, officially at least, the significance of the small, daily practices of care of the self are neglected or undervalued. This is clear in "The Wanderer and His Shadow":

There exists a feigned disrespect for all the things which men in fact take most seriously, **for all the things closest to them**. One says, for example, 'one eats only in order to live' - which is a damned **lie** ... (1986:303#5.FN's emphasis).

This insists that people do care about these small, worldly matters and are forced into hypocrisy when pretending them to be trivial. In so devaluing them, the Christian and post-Christian sensibility puts people at war with themselves and also forbids a close study of which forms of care of the self would be most conducive. Nietzsche outlines the consequences of this dismissal:

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(1982:70#115). It also makes sense that the fact of embodiment and the importance of care of the self would be of more obvious and pressing concern to those who, like Nietzsche, suffered chronic illness. However Donnellan's claim about Nietzsche and Montaigne's views about embodiment seems overstated: "These opinions are obviously related to the hypochondriac interest which both thinkers show in their own bodily health and regime" (1982:26) for healthy, non-hypochondriacs could also attain to an awareness of the importance of embodiment.

<sup>47</sup> Kaufmann is slow to pick up on Nietzsche's interest in these matters, noting that he "goes out of his way in his last book to emphasize the importance of diet and climate" (1950:264).

the closest things, for example eating, housing, clothing, social intercourse, are not made the object of constant impartial and **general** reflection and reform: because these things are accounted degrading, they are deprived of serious intellectual and artistic consideration ... our continual offenses against the most elementary laws of the body and the spirit reduce us all, young and old, to a disgraceful dependence and bondage ... (1986:303#5.FN's emphasis).

This theme is pursued in the next passage "Earthly frailty and its chief cause" which asserts that:

**almost all the physical and psychical frailties** of the individual derive from this lack: not knowing what is beneficial to us and what harmful in the institution of our mode of life, in the division of the day, in for how long and with whom we should enjoy social intercourse, in profession and leisure, commanding and obeying, feeling for art and nature, eating, sleeping and reflecting; being **unknowledgeable in the smallest and most everyday things** and failing to keep an eye on them - this it is that transforms the earth for so many into a 'vale of tears'. (1986:303#6.FN's emphasis)

For Nietzsche, as for Foucault, devaluing the body and its needs is partially a legacy of the Christian ethos which subordinates corporeal and quotidian matters to those of the eternal soul.<sup>48</sup> Nietzsche points out that it also has secular manifestations with people inveighed to devote themselves to science, the state or money-making and to despise or ignore "the requirements of the individual, his great and small needs within the twenty-four hours of the day" (1986:304#6). However he detects a trend toward such subordination of quotidian, material life in Ancient Greece and identifies Socrates as one of his forerunners in criticising it (1986:304#6).

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Caring for self was, at a certain moment, gladly denounced as being a kind of self-love, a kind of egoism or individual interest in contradiction to the care one must show others or to the necessary sacrifice of the self. All that happened during the Christian era, but I would not say that it is exclusively due to Christianity (Foucault 1984: 4/5).

Daybreak also laments people's inability to care for themselves (1982:91#143) and its criticism of society's general ignorance of and inattention to such questions (1982:120-2#202,122-3#203) is repeated in Science (1974:81-2#7,240#299). Daybreak's injunction "Do not perish unnoticed" points to how enervating and corrosive of the spirit such neglect of what are labelled trifles can be:

it is these which ruin what is great in us - the everyday, hourly pitiableness of our environment which we constantly overlook, the thousand tendrils of this or that little, fainthearted sensation which grows up out of our neighbourhood, out of our job, our social life, out of the way we divide up the day. (1982:186#435)

The point is revisited in "Slow cures" which declares that "he who wishes to cure his soul must also consider making changes to the very pettiest of his habits" (1982:193#462). In all this we witness the revenge of the repressed for Nietzsche argues that when concern with higher matters prohibits attention to small, corporeal, quotidian ones, these neglected facets of life jeopardise the ability to focus on putatively more elevated ones.

While "Manners" connects changing social attitudes with a change in attention to the self, a key aspect of Nietzsche's theory of care of the self is that it must be just that - care of the self in its specificity - each individual must discover what is most propitious to their particular well-being. Echoing the moralists' emphasis on specificity, Nietzsche insists that general prescriptions about how to live well are useless (1986:133#286) and even harmful when they discourage each from finding their most commodious manner of living (1986:303#5). This point is made forcefully in Science in a passage that also reiterates the tight interaction between body and spirit:

**your** virtue is the health of **your** soul. For there is no health as such .../Even the determination of what is healthy for your **body** depends on your goal, your horizon, your energies, your impulses, your errors, and above all on the ideals and phantasms of your soul. Thus there are innumerable healths of the body; and the more we abjure the dogma of the "equality of men", the more must the concept of a **normal** health, along with a normal diet and the normal course of illness, be abandoned by medical men. (1974:176-77#120.FN's emphasis.cf.83#8,

This suggests that self-knowledge is a pre-condition of care of the self for Nietzsche, for a knowledge of the self in its specificity is essential if it is to be cared for in a proper, individualised way. However as the Nietzschean self is protean, both in its raw materials and its transformation through self-overcoming, the quest for self-knowledge must be continuous. Thus it is probably more accurate to conceive of the two processes of knowing and caring for the self as concurrent, complementary projects.<sup>50</sup> Foucault also insists on the importance of self-knowledge for practices of care of the self and argues that there has traditionally been a close connection between knowledge of and care for the self (1984:5).

As shown, Nietzsche incorporates the Greek emphasis on the citizen developing the ability to command and to obey into his aristocracy of the spirit model. A passage from Human above shows this concern also emerging in his discussion of care of the self (1986:303#6) which highlights a further parallel between Nietzsche's ethic and Foucault's retrieval of the classical one. Foucault argues that for the Greeks, care of the self was vital to the correct conduct of political relations. The capacity for good citizenship was grounded in proper care of the self for such care avoided both slavery to one's passions and the impulse to tyrannize over others which was usually seen as a function of uncontrolled 'passion' (1984:5-8,13.Rabinow 1984.354).<sup>51</sup> While an

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<sup>49</sup> This attack on a hegemonic notion of normalcy and Nietzsche's earlier reference to the "wholly unnecessary dependence on physicians, teachers and curers of the soul who still lie like a burden on the whole of society" (1986:303#5) resemble Foucault's discussion of Christianity's pastoral care, which displaced the antique ethic of care of the self and evolved into modern 'bio-power'.

<sup>50</sup> This argument is thus a self-reflexive variant of Berkowitz's larger point that for Nietzsche right making must be predicated on right knowing (1993:25).

<sup>51</sup> Hutter shows the importance of self-mastery for friendship which, as we have seen, forms the model for political relations in the Greek polis:

Unchecked passion, by involving its subject in relations of dependency ... destroyed that equality between people which is essential for the



analogous interest in self-mastery is evident in the Nietzschean notion of self-overcoming, at one point Human makes the importance of such self-mastery explicit and points to the connection between its exercise in small and in grand matters. "The most needful gymnastic" declares that:

A lack of self-mastery in small things brings about a crumbling of the capacity for it in great ones. Every day is ill/employed, and a danger for the next day, in which one has not denied oneself some small thing at least once: this gymnastic is indispensable if one wants to preserve in oneself the joy of being one's own master (1986:386/7#305).

Although Nietzsche detects such neglect of material, quotidian concerns of the self even in Antiquity, he suggests that the need for an ethic of care of the self is especially urgent in the modern era, where the tempo of life is so rapid and the accent is on working to the detriment of all other pursuits and pleasures. As illustrated in a passage on "Leisure and idleness" from Science, even when people practise some care for the self, it is only to make themselves more efficient:

Living in a constant chase after gain compels people to expend their spirit to the point of exhaustion in continual pretence and overreaching and anticipating others. Virtue has come to consist of doing something in less time than someone else. Hours in which honesty is **permitted** have become rare, and when they arrive one is tired ... the desire for joy already calls itself a "need to recuperate" and is beginning to be ashamed of itself. "One owes it to one's health" - that is what people say/when they are caught on an excursion into the country (1974:259/60#329.FN's emphasis.cf.94#21.1986:132-3#285.1982:105#173,107#178).

And just as the need to care for the self is becoming more urgent, so Nietzsche suggests that the erosion of large-scale moral schemas is making its practice more possible. Chapter Two shows that he interprets most moral doctrines as a form of collective dominance cramping individuality. This also holds for care of the self:

Originally all education and care of health, marriage, cure of sickness, agriculture, war, speech and silence, traffic with one another and with the gods belonged within the domain of morality: they demanded one

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maintenance of friendship. Only sublimated eros is compatible with friendship, equality, and communal living based on understanding. (1978:90)

observe prescriptions **without thinking of oneself** as an individual. Originally, therefore, everything was custom ... (1982:11#9.FN's emphasis).

According to Nietzsche, as scepticism grows and the grip of custom and collective dominance weaken, the space for attention to the self in its uniqueness enlarges. However as intimated in the reference to Socrates, there have always been critics of this subordination of the individual to the community and its concomitant neglect of the self and the tradition represented by these critics can now flower as collective moral schemas wane:

Those moralists ... who, following in the footsteps of Socrates, offer the **individual** a morality of self-control and temperance as a means to his own **advantage**, as his personal key to happiness, **are the exceptions** - and if it seems otherwise to us that is because we have been brought up in their after-effect: they all take a new path under the highest disapprobation of all advocates of morality of custom ... (1982:11#9.FN's emphasis).

A passage toward the end of Daybreak summarises and states quite explicitly the centrality of an ethic of care of the self in Nietzsche's philosophy. Drawing together several of the salient points of an ethic of care of the self - concern for quotidian 'minutiae', for individualized goods and the close connection between psyche and physique - "By circuitous paths" asks:

Whither does this whole philosophy, with all its circuitous paths, want to go? Does it do more than translate as it were into reason a strong and constant drive, a drive for gentle sunlight, bright and buoyant air, southerly vegetation, the breath of the sea, fleeting meals of flesh, fruit and eggs, hot water to drink, daylong/silent wanderings, little talking, infrequent and cautious reading, dwelling alone, clean, simple and almost soldierly habits, in short for all those things which taste best and are most endurable precisely to me? A philosophy which is at bottom the instinct for a personal diet? An instinct which seeks my own air, my own heights, my own kind of health and weather, by the circuitous path of my head? (1982:223/4#553) <sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Pletsch's description of Schopenhauer's view of genius, and of the genius' incapacity for quotidian detail and care of the self suggests that Nietzsche might also have been debating his erstwhile educator in insisting on the centrality of care of the self in the philosophical life. Pletsch writes that Schopenhauer's explanation of genius:

lay precisely in the excess of intellect. The genius is less competent than the ordinary person in the practical affairs of life because his will

Whither indeed? The major purpose of tracing the lineaments of a Nietzschean ethic of care of the self is to demonstrate that embodiment can be incorporated into his concern with aristocracy without recurring to the 'aristocracy of birth''s insistence on ancestry. No matter what lineage one inherits, neglecting the self and its small, everyday needs can enfeeble the body just as, conversely, practising care of the self can ennoble it.

As Human's "Origin of the 'pessimists'" shows, care of the self is not just a supplement or alternative to good inheritance - rather it is its precondition. This passage attributes good inheritance to well nourished forebears and poor inheritance to hungry ones, showing that wealth and the care of the self it makes possible are the primary issues here rather than genes:

The culture of the Greeks is a culture of the wealthy, and of the wealthy from old moreover: for a couple of centuries they lived **better** than we (better in every sense, especially on much ~~simpler~~ food and drink): as a result their brains at length became at once so full and delicate, the blood flowed so rapidly through them like a joyful and sparkling wine, that the good and best things they could do emerged from them ... (1986:354/5#184.FN's emphasis).

This elaborates a point captured in the title of one of Human's earlier passages: "Wealth as the origin of a nobility of birth" (1986:177#479). Thus in a society where wealth is more widely distributed, even non-aristocrats can afford care of the self for, as Nietzsche continually suggests, the needs of spiritual aristocrats are modest. What matters is their sensitive administration.

Concomitant with his attention to the qualities that make an individual great, La Rochefoucauld attaches considerable significance to embodiment and in this general stance Nietzsche is his legatee. As for Chamfort, while there is some suggestion that he also is aware of the close interaction of body and psyche in his claim that "l'habitude de nos pensées peut déterminer quelques traits de notre physionomie" (1968:98#220), this is only a suggestion. The passage continues with an attack on the sycophancy of courtiers but its more

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is deficient or overwhelmed by his intellect. Schopenhauer understood this balance to be physiological, and similar to the balance that produces madness. Furthermore, the objective knowledge that the genius has ... is not directly relevant to his daily life. (1991:88-9)

general point about embodiment is nowhere pursued.

La Rochefoucauld's acceptance of the humours' role in the constitution is one aspect of the significance he attaches to embodiment (1977:49#47,71 #292,82#435). Their impact on personality is strong for they contribute to individuals' changeability (1977:49#45), their faults (1977:71#290) and their will (1977:72#297). So powerful are the humours that they exert:

un empire secret en nous: de sorte qu'elles ont une part considérable à toutes nos actions, sans que nous le puissions connaître (1977:72#297. cf. Truchet in La Rochefoucauld 1977:21)

However the importance of the humours is only part of La Rochefoucauld's wider view of embodiment:

La force et la faiblesse de l'esprit sont mal nommées; elles ne sont en effet que la bonne ou la mauvaise disposition des organes du corps (1977:49#44) .

The power of embodiment is echoed in a suppressed maxim depicting the passions as different temperatures of the blood (1977:93#2).<sup>53</sup> But this should not be taken as evidence of a one-sided materialism for the reflexion "De l'origine des maladies" explores the spiritual sources of physical suffering. The tedium of marriage, for example, produces fever and lovers weary of their affair suffer from vapours (1977:125#XII).<sup>54</sup> Embodiment is also implicit in the analogies the moralist draws between body and spirit (1977:51#67,61#193, #194).

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<sup>53</sup> According to Thweatt such a view is typical of the moralist's generation: Their interest in the passions was psychological as well as physiological, but they did not necessarily see the difference between the/two (1980:227/8).

<sup>54</sup> I disagree with Bishop's claim that La Rochefoucauld "came close to a kind of materialism, alleging that body is supreme over mind and soul" (1951: 234). Moore also understates their reciprocal effects when he writes that: Another dark power which he revealed was the physical framework of all conduct. We do ... what our bodies and our physical humours allow us to ... Was La Rochefoucauld not the first to call attention to the constant unseen influence of physical constitution upon behaviour? (1969:38).

The implication is that calling attention to the unseen influence amounts to physical determinism. While La Rochefoucauld clearly did the first, it does not follow that he held the second position (Chapter Two).

Nietzsche's theory of care of the self, which both arises from his attunement to embodiment and offers a way of ennobling such embodiment, has, by contrast, no real counterpart in either of the moralists' work.<sup>55</sup> The closest La Rochefoucauld comes to this is his insistence on the specificity of the natural - each must find what is natural to them and act in accordance therewith (Chapter Two) but no discussion of everyday questions of care for the self accompany this. However La Rochefoucauld's picture of the great spirit who can accommodate large and small concerns suggests that the ethic of care for the self would not be incompatible with this ethos. Indeed, one maxim makes such a point:

Le calme ou l'agitation de notre humeur ne dépend pas tant de ce qui nous arrive de plus considérable dans la vie, que d'un arrangement commode ou désagréable de petites choses qui arrivent tous les jours (1977:86#488).

But this is not developed. Another facet of Nietzsche's theory hinted at but not developed is the capacity to command and obey when La Rochefoucauld notes that "Il est plus difficile de s'empêcher d'être gouverné que de gouverner les autres" (1977:58#151). In the case of Chamfort, a skerrick of evidence suggests his appreciation of the need for individualised care of the self,<sup>56</sup> but this is even less of a theme in his work than it is in La Rochefoucauld's. So while Nietzsche's emphasis on embodiment has some precedent in the work of La Rochefoucauld, his ethic of care of the self has no serious background in the thought of either of the moralists, except insofar as both emphasise the centrality of individual specificity.

This chapter has shown that friendship serves as a model for relations

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<sup>55</sup> In the case of La Rochefoucauld, a possible explanation for this comes from Foucault's claim that the ethic of care of the self was eclipsed "when love of self [became] suspect and ... seen as one of the possible roots of diverse moral faults" (1984:8). As Chapter Four argues, there are Jansenist undertones to La Rochefoucauld's portrayal of self-love which make such love morally suspect.

<sup>56</sup> A letter to Mme. Saurin shows that Chamfort, like Nietzsche, followed Epicurus in such matters. He writes that "Epicurus was right. A sick man's diet is not that of a convalescent, etc ..." (in Chamfort 1984:53).

between the future social elite Nietzsche envisages and that this new elite's power is to be grounded in its domination of intellectual and cultural production. Two models of aristocracy have been discerned in the middle period - a traditional, aristocracy of birth model and a new, more inchoate notion of an aristocracy of spirit which fits more comfortably with the intellectual power-base of Nietzsche's new elite. However the existence of and differences between the two models are never made explicit by Nietzsche. It has also emerged that while La Rochefoucauld's claim that superior birth is a necessary but insufficient condition of spiritual superiority could have influenced Nietzsche's thought about the bases of a new aristocracy, Chamfort's work is much closer to Nietzsche's 'spirit' model of aristocracy. But Nietzsche is impervious to the meritocratic strand in Chamfort's thought and reads Chamfort as an egalitarian and enemy to all aristocratic sensibilities. Maybe Chamfort's neglect of embodiment, which is such a crucial concept in Nietzsche's thought, prevents Nietzsche from seeing their similarities although it is more probable that Chamfort's support for 'the rights of man' so repelled Nietzsche that it obscured the other aspects of Chamfort's politics. Nietzsche's insistence on the importance of embodiment makes the attraction of the old model of aristocracy obvious yet it has also been argued here that, via a reconstruction of the 'ethic of care of the self' from the middle period, room can be made for the role of embodiment and its connection with spiritual superiority without falling back on family lineage and genetic inheritance.

Although this chapter has argued that Nietzsche's analysis of friendship holds not only for private relationships but also provides the proto-type for the social elite of the future, there is yet another, meta-theoretical layer to his discussion of friendship. Here friendship becomes a model of readership. Moreover this notion of readership as friendship folds back upon the second level of friendship, for in writing for free-spirited readers, Nietzsche is helping to form the social elite he envisages. When his writings are read like this, as a clarion call to free spirits, there can be no further question as to whether his work is a- or anti-political. The texts aim to proselytize and this adds another

political dimension to them, on top of the conventional political questions they tackle explicitly.<sup>57</sup>

However before discussing the proselytising function of Nietzsche's work, let us briefly consider his interest in these more conventional political matters. While most frequent in Human, illustrations of concern with more conventional political issues abound in the middle period. As we have seen, Nietzsche discusses the speed of modern life and what this means for those who live it (cf. 1986:174#475). Related to this is his interest in the growth of industrial and commercial culture and the power of money. (1986:366#218,366-7#220,378#278,378#279.1982:106#175,109#186,122-3#203,123#204,156#308.1974:92-4#21,102#31,107#40.108-9#42,204-5#188. cf.Bergmann 1987:122-3). Other interests Nietzsche shares with Marx lie in the value and meaning of work and relationships between property owners and workers (1986:378#280,

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<sup>57</sup> My interpretation differs from much of the secondary literature, which follows Kaufmann's view that "The leitmotif of Nietzsche's life and thought [is] the theme of the anti-political individual who seeks self-perfection far from the modern world" (1950:366). Whereas for Schutte Nietzsche's interest in culture need not preclude an interest in politics (1984:163), I assume that cultural hegemony is a form of political power. I also reject Haar's assertion that:

The future "Masters of the Earth" will possess neither political power, nor wealth, nor any effective governing force. Those who actually govern and dominate will ... be of the slave class (in Allison 1985:26). as well as Lingis' that "The power of the noble life should not be confused with social, political, or military power" (in Allison 1985:52.cf.Sadler in Patton 1993:225,227). Compare Honig's view that Nietzsche has no "faith in the transformative power of politics" (1993:75) although a later point suggests that this applies only to modern politics (1993:87).

At least Richard Rorty acknowledges that Nietzsche "was under the illusion that [he] had something useful to say about politics" (1987:579.fn27) even if Rorty concludes that Nietzsche goes awry when he ventures from the philosophical into the political. Bergmann's reading of Nietzsche's transvaluation of the term 'anti-political' accords with the reading offered here for Nietzsche does want to challenge the autonomy of politics and have cultural or ethical considerations 'intrude' on it (1987:2,4.cf.Detwiler 1990:59). Tracy Strong's reading suggests that the Greek model was also anti-political: The Greek state and politics do not exist for themselves. The state is not its own justification. It is rather the arena in which people compete and out of which higher culture and individuals emerge (in Solomon 1980:269).

380#283,382:#286,383#288.1982:104#173,107#178,125-7#206). He reflects on democratisation (1986:376-7#275,377#276,379#281,383#289,383-4#292,384#293) and the growth of mass politics (1986:161#438.1982:107-8#179,110#188.1974:103#31,202#174). Matters pertaining to the evolution of the state and how it has changed social life are often discussed (1986:53#99,75#139,108#224,109#227,112#234,285#320.1982:119#199) - indeed, one of Human's books is entitled "A Glance at the State" (1986:161-78). References to socialism pepper the middle period (1986:112#235,173-4#473,177#480,282-3#304,284#316,381-2#285,383-3#292.1982:126#206) and there is also some attention to questions of jurisprudence (1986:44#66,45#70.1982:13#13.1974:216#250).<sup>58</sup> The works of this period also betray an interest in international relations (1986:380-81#284,384#292.1982:110-11#189) and in particular nationalism and Europeanization (1986:174-5#475,332#87,340-41#125,363-5#215.1974:97#23). Just how architectonic politics is is summed up in "New and old conception of government":

the relationship between people and government is the most pervasive ideal relationship upon which the commerce between teacher and pupil, lord and servants, father and family, general and soldier, master and apprentice have unconsciously been modelled. All these relationships are now, under the influence of the dominant constitutional form of government, altering their shape a little: they are **becoming** compromises. (1986:165#450.FN's emphasis).

However to accept my argument about the more tacit, evangelical

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<sup>58</sup> Nietzsche's discussions of guilt, crime and punishment seem primarily concerned with showing to what extent notions of jurisprudence repose upon Christian beliefs in free will and sin and that when such doctrines are repudiated, these views and practices become obsolete or require new justifications. However two striking passages in Daybreak advance alternative ways of punishing and rehabilitating offenders. "From a possible future" envisages a scenario where the criminal stands in a similar relation to the law they have broken as the Pousseusean citizen's relation to the social contract. The criminal sees that they have violated a law in whose making they participated and in choosing their punishment, their legislator-self reprimands their deviant-self. Nietzsche presents this as an outline for a more elevated and elevating way of handling crime (1982:109-10#187.cf.186-7#437 for a discussion of the same autonomous stance in the non-criminal). "For the promotion of health" gives more detailed and calibrated suggestions for dealing with offenders in a nobler fashion (1982:120-21#202).



dimension of Nietzsche's work, this clarion call to free spirits claim, it must also be conceded that the power base of the social elite he imagines and seeks to shape will be essentially intellectual and cultural. This, in turn, connects with the argument that the major cleavage between the many and the few is the quality of their spirit rather than any other institutionalized form of social power. To deploy Gramsci's term, Nietzsche seems to think that if 'cultural hegemony' be secured, all else will follow and his writings can be read as attempting to contribute to the creation of such cultural hegemony.

Thus Nietzsche's writing is a form of political action because one of the functions of his texts is to entice free spirits 'out of their closets' and embolden them in their strong individuality. The writings aim to give aristocrats of the spirit the confidence to see who they are and act against modern doctrines of universal equality and uniformity and in accordance with their superiority. Although Nietzsche is not as explicit as Marx about this, his writings are a manifesto, exhorting free spirits of the world (or Europe at least) to unite, to throw off their chains and seek social power. He might not say a lot about how this should be done, but if you need to be told how to act, you are not, by definition, a free spirit.<sup>59</sup> Thus the texts take the "Permission to speak!" that Human describes:

from time to time there comes to them [the few who refrain from mainstream politics] ... a moment when they emerge from their silent solitude and again try the power of their lungs: for then they call to one another like those gone astray in a wood in order to locate and encourage one another; whereby much becomes audible, to be sure, that sounds ill/to ears for which it is not intended. (1986:161/2#438)

Furthermore, as suggested, there is some overlap between the notions of friendship and readership in the works of the middle period and the connection between these concepts takes on an added salience when this extra political dimension of the writings is considered. This is because, in constructing his readers as friends, Nietzsche is not just employing a literary device but also

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<sup>59</sup> Compare Detwiler's observation that:

The political structure of his new order is never clearly described, but it would seem that the spiritual goal he proposes is fraught with illiberal social and political implications ... (1990:101).

embracing them/us as potential members of the cultural elite of the future.

The first association between reading and friendship comes in Human's "Writings of acquaintances and foes". Rather than depicting readership as friendship the passage seems to talk literally about empirical friendship and what happens when reading the work of someone we know. Either we scan the text for symptoms of the writer's personality and history or we evaluate the general worth of its argument. Nietzsche suggests that it is hard to do both - "these two kinds of reading and evaluating disturb one another" (1986:94#197). His preference for the first becomes evident when he goes on to say that even a conversation is better when its participants forget their friendship and become absorbed in the matter under discussion.<sup>60</sup> Despite the literal tone of this passage, it could be extended to reading in general, to those who have never met the author they are reading. This suggests that instead of looking for eruptions of the author's identity in a text, readers should focus on the quality of their argument (cf.1986:92#185,243#129).<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> The parallels with Gadamer's Truth and Method are worth drawing. Gadamer shares Nietzsche's point about the similarity between reading and conversing, but makes it more strongly:

it is more than a metaphor, it is a memory of what originally was the case, to describe the work of hermeneutics as a conversation with the text. (1975:331)

He also endorses Nietzsche's idea of partners being consumed by their conversation:

the more fundamental a conversation is, the less its conduct lies within the will of either partner. Thus a fundamental conversation is never one that we want to conduct. Rather ... we fall into conversation, or ... become involved in it ... No one knows what will 'come out' in a conversation. (1975:345)

<sup>61</sup> This view changes dramatically in Nietzsche's later writings where he is often seen to endorse a style of reading that seeks the personality of the writer and reaches judgements on that basis. For example the fifth book of Science notes that:

Once one has trained one's eyes to recognize in a scholarly treatise the scholar's intellectual **idiosyncrasy** - every scholar has one - and to catch it in the act, one will almost always behold behind this the scholar's "prehistory", his family, and especially their occupations and crafts (1974:290#348.cf.322#366.FN's emphasis).

Thus when Nietzsche is invoked to licence such symptomatic readings, it

An obvious connection between friendship and readership is made in the epilogue to the first volume of Human, a poem entitled "Among Friends" (1986:205), depicting first scenes of friendship then addressing readers. No strong separation is apparent between the categories of friend and reader - rather certain similarities between them are implied. Section 1, for example, echoes the idea of friendship as 'rejoicing-with' (Chapter Six) by portraying friends as laughing together while Section 2, urging the reader to "Grant this book, with all its follies/Ear and heart and open door" addresses him or her as "You who laugh and joy in living" (1986:205). Twice in this second section, the text addresses its readers as "friends" and the couplet closing the first section and its depiction of empirical friendship also ends the second one, which is addressed to readers, again drawing a connection between the two groups. The link between friendship and readership is again drawn in "Assorted opinions and maxims" where "Few and without love" declares that "Every good book is written for a definite reader and those like him" (1986:249#158) and contrasts this with books written for the majority. This portrays writing as a process where the author not just expresses himself monologically but anticipates an interchange with real or imagined friends. Readers who are friends can, like the oligarchs of the spirit, recognize their kinship with the writers of good books whereas the majority of readers receive the work inhospitably (1986:249#158). This passage also elucidates the earlier aphorism "Collective spirit" in Human that "A good writer possesses not only his own spirit but also the spirit of his friends" (1986:92#180) which again presents writing as a projected exchange between friends.

These images of writing and reading as a dialogue with friends also complement the wider argument of this dissertation that the works of the middle period can be read as Nietzsche's dialogues with the French moralists for as a passage from Daybreak cited above evidences (1982:227#566), Nietzsche also numbers dead thinkers among his friends. Thus just as

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should be made clear that this was not always his view but belongs to a particular phase of his career.

friendship can be a model for readership, so readership can be a form of friendship for certain books unite free-spirited writers and their readers across the gulfs of time and place.

Yet another way in which notions of friendship and readership dovetail is via self-knowledge. We have seen that for Nietzsche knowing the self in its detail and specificity is an important facet of caring for the self. Chapter Six argues that for Nietzsche friends can play a role in enhancing self-knowledge<sup>62</sup> and because reading has the potential to increase self-knowledge, it resembles friendship. Nietzsche's writings, for example, can promote self-knowledge in two major ways. One is when, through probing the depth and complexity of human motivation, they prompt readers to critical self-reflection and examination of conscience. In this regard his writings function like those of La Rochefoucauld for whom writing is a way of promoting self-knowledge and as such resembles friendship.<sup>63</sup>

The second way Nietzsche's writings can enhance self-knowledge relates to their political function for in outlining the traits of the noble

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<sup>62</sup> This is also the case for Foucault's theory of care of the self, which is intrinsically oriented toward others. As Foucault notes:

the care for the self implies also a relationship to the other to the extent that, in order to really care for self, one must listen to the teachings of a master. One needs a guide, a counsellor, a friend, someone who will tell you the truth. Thus, the problem of relationship with others is present all along this development of care for self (1984:7).

<sup>63</sup> Indeed La Rochefoucauld sees no strong separation between reading and conversation, as his Self-Portrait suggests:

J'aime la lecture en général; celle où il se trouve quelque chose qui peut façonner l'esprit et fortifier l'âme est celle que j'aime la plus. Surtout, j'ai une extrême satisfaction à lire avec une personne d'esprit; car de cette sorte on réfléchit à tous moments sur ce qu'on lit, et des réflexions que l'on fait il se forme une conversation la plus agréable du monde, et la plus utile (1977:167)

And this was typical of his time, as Thweatt notes:

Books were read aloud, and one has only to review the titles of published works to realize the extent to which literary production was thought of as an integral part of social conversation. Discours, Dialogues, Entretiens, and Conversations abound ... (1980:45.cf.Dens 1981:21,72,104. Liebich 1982:287).

personality, Nietzsche's works hold up a mirror to some of their readers, allowing them to see their own superiority and find the reflection pleasing. Thus just as friendship can be a fillip to the greatness of free-spirits, reading can also be such a spur and as such is a form of friendship. And books that are friends to aristocrats of the spirit in this way can also play a political role by emboldening readers to assert their individuality and slough off the constricting doctrines designed for and by the mass.

Whereas La Rochefoucauld's work fits with this readership as friendship thesis, Chamfort consistently attacks book-learning as useless. "Jamais le monde n'est connu par les livres" (1968:89#177.cf.188#604). When this is criticism of contemporary books (1968:147#425), it is continuous with his attack on the feebleness of public opinion. When an attack on books per se, it is sometimes motivated by a belief that the world is too varied to be captured in books (1968:119#293) and that individuals are too specific to apply much of what they learn from books to their own lives. However the converse does not hold, for writing is held to be far from useless. As one character notes, that day is wasted when one has not written anything (1986:287#1086) although writing's value could be purely for the author and writing should not be conflated with publishing, as Chamfort's experience in writing Maximes, Pensées, Caractères could indicate.<sup>64</sup> But in general his attack on the practical consequences of reading, the idea that books leave everything as it was (1986:54-5#15.cf.151#447)<sup>65</sup> would suggest that, to be consistent, his own work could not deliberately be directed at enhancing self-knowledge and

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<sup>64</sup> According to Arnaud, Chamfort:

responded to a vital need to justify himself, writing to extend himself and to transcend the everyday. As opposed to La Rochefoucauld and Vauvenargues, he did not play the wise judge; he wrote in the hope - unfulfilled - of becoming wise, of curbing his passions ... (1992:114).

<sup>65</sup> That reading can comfort, however, is suggested in his advice to a friend:

La lecture des excellents livres l'entretiendra davantage, sans exposer votre âme à ces secousses violentes qui l'accablent, lorsque des noeuds qui nous étaient chers viennent à se briser (Letter to A... 20.8.1765 in Chamfort 1968:365).

as such, in its self-understanding, could offer no model for Nietzsche.<sup>66</sup> Indeed Chamfort's belief in the sharp contrast between readership and friendship, which separates him from La Rochefoucauld and Nietzsche, is explicit when he claims that:

Ce qui est vrai, ce qui est instructif, c'est ce que la conscience d'un honnête homme, qui a beaucoup vu et bien vu, dit à son ami au coin du feu: quelques-unes de ces conversations -là m'ont plus instruit que tous les livres et le commerce ordinaire de la société (1968:90#183. cf. 151#448)

Chapters Six and Seven make it apparent that friendship is a nodal concept in the works of the middle period. Among the strands of Nietzsche's thinking that meet here are an idea of healthy relations between individuals, a vision of how free-spirits of the future will know and assist one another and an image of the interplay between readership and friendship. Friendship is also intimately connected with Nietzsche's vision of a new aristocracy of spirit, a vision which revives certain traditional notions of the higher life and combines them with some more modern ones. That Nietzsche's view of the noble life is a blend of old and new is further explored in the next chapter which reveals the middle period's ambivalence about the cluster of questions surrounding traditional aristocratic goods like glory, honour and recognition.

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<sup>66</sup> Arnaud argues that Chamfort "intended to be an antiwriter who reserved his verbal brilliance for conversation" (1992:xxv).

As Chapter Five notes, Nietzsche is not usually seen as a writer in praise of friendship. The importance the middle period attaches to friendship among higher individuals forces us to question the dominant interpretation of Nietzsche as a radical and usually rabid individualist. A concomitant of the ultra-individualist interpretation has been the belief that Nietzsche's great individuals are utterly autonomous and indifferent to the judgements and opinions of others. Alasdair MacIntyre for example, claims that Nietzsche's great man:

cannot enter into relationships mediated by appeal to shared standards or virtues or goods; he is his own [and] only authority (1984:258).

Samuel Stumpf's assessment that for Nietzsche:

The noble type of man ... does not look outside of himself for any approval of his acts. He passes judgement upon himself.(1966:380)

is typical of this view. Sadler similarly concludes that honour-seeking ranks low in Nietzsche's scheme of things (in Patton 1993:232).

While there is a heavy accent on the noble personality's independence from the opinion of others in Nietzsche's work, once the importance of friendship has been recognised, the belief that Nietzsche demands nothing less than individual autonomy and self-given standards from higher types also requires qualification, for intrinsic to friendship is a concern with the friend's opinion.

As has also emerged, Nietzsche's notion of nobility embraces some of the traditional aristocratic goods and contributes some new ones. Continuing this theme, this chapter reviews of the place of recognition in Nietzsche's thought and extends into an examination of the middle period's attitude to the

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<sup>1</sup> The title of a passage from Science which says that:

A thinker needs no applause and clapping of hands, if only he is assured of his own hand-clapping; without that he cannot do. (1974:260#330)

traditional aristocratic good that can be expressed generally as a concern with honour or standing in the eyes of others. In this connection it considers the values of heroism, willingness to die for a higher cause, bravery, self-effacement, reward through community commemoration and/or the glory of one's memory in future ages. This clutch of questions surrounding status in the eyes of others weaves another thread in Nietzsche's larger tapestry of heteronomy, rivalry, deriving self-worth via comparison with others, autonomy and a sufficiency of self-love.

However the prospect of the noble personality seeking recognition, be this from friends or from some wider audience, brings us to a seemingly irreconcilable tension in the works of the middle period. On the one hand, they perpetuate the modern praise of autonomy and condemnation of concern with standing in the community or among peers. On the other they acknowledge the importance that the quest for honour and recognition had in Antiquity and the Renaissance which are both eras that Nietzsche very much admires and which had many values that he wishes to recover.<sup>2</sup> The views of La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort on the cluster of issues surrounding honour, recognition and glory will also be considered and parallels between their views and Nietzsche's discussed. It will also be shown that La Rochefoucauld is not the wholehearted critic of heroism and glory he is often (mis)taken to be.

One reason Nietzsche criticises honour as a motive for action is the sort of deeds modern society rewards. This critique connects with his attack on morality which embodies the interest of the collective and, as a consequence, denies or denigrates the interests of the individual, especially the superior individual (Chapter Two). As he notes in Human:

Acts of self-love and self-sacrifice for the good of one's neighbour are generally held in honour in whatever circumstances they may be

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<sup>2</sup> Of course the modern/pre-modern dichotomy is a crude rendition of the anti/pro honour positions. Plato and the Stoics attacked the quest for honour (Taylor 1989:20,65,152,214) as did later religious writers like St Augustine, St Thomas Aquinas and Dante (Hirschmann 1977:11). Conversely in the French moralist Luc le Clapier Vauvenargues (1715-1747) the modern era finds a staunch defender of the ethic of gloire.



performed. (1986:46#77)

Instead (as Chapter Two also shows) Nietzsche's ambition is to articulate a morality where the assertion rather than the sacrifice of egoism is glorified.

A further reason for Nietzsche's criticism of concern with one's status in the eyes of others is that, although the others judging are often inferior, their appraisals can corrode even the greatest soul:

Daily to hear what is said of us, let alone to speculate as to what is thought of us - that would annihilate the strongest man ... let us act in a spirit of conciliation, let us not listen when we are spoken of, praised, blamed, when something is desired or hoped of us, let us not even think about it! (1982:208#522.cf.1974:115#52)

As Chapter Four's analysis of vanity indicates, Nietzsche also sometimes interprets an interest in the good opinion of others as vanity and attacks this as symptomatic of a dearth of self-love (1986:48-49#89). However there is a more general critique of the quest for honour and recognition in the works of the middle period. When, for example, Nietzsche discredits glory as a motive for action he is very much a child of modernity. Modernity's marginalisation of honour takes a variety of forms from Hobbes' dismissal of it as vainglory<sup>3</sup> to Rousseau's critique of 'amour-propre', of competing with and comparing oneself to others<sup>4</sup> to Kant's equation of enlightenment with self-given values

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<sup>3</sup> The Leviathan distinguishes between 'glorying' and 'vain-glory' in a manner analogous to Nietzsche's separation of self-love and vanity. Hobbes attributes concern for one's standing in the eyes of others belongs to vainglory: **Joy**, arising from imagination of a man's own power and ability; is that exultation of the mind which is called GLORYING: which if grounded upon the experience of his own former actions, is the same with **confidence**: but if grounded on the flattery of others; or only supposed by himself, for delight in the consequences of it, is called VAINGLORY ... (it) is most indecent to young men, and nourished by the histories, or fictions of gallant persons ... (93.cf.125. TH's emphasis. cf.Hirschmann 1977:11.Taylor 1989:214).

<sup>4</sup> Discoursing on the origins of inequality, Rousseau writes that: People grew used to gathering together in front of their huts or around a large tree; singing and dancing, true progeny of love and leisure, became the amusement, or rather the occupation, of idle men and women thus assembled. Each began to look at the others and to want to be looked at himself; and public esteem came to be prized. He who sang or danced the best; he who was the most handsome, the strongest,

and not looking outward for confirmation of one's moral choices.<sup>5</sup>

Nietzsche's conformity to this general movement is obvious in Human's "Three phases of morality hitherto". Describing the second stage of evolution as one where humans act in accordance with the principle of honour and mould their action according to the opinions of others, he writes that the individual:

accords others respect and wants them to accord respect to him ... he conceives utility as being dependent on what he thinks of others and what they think of him (1986:50#94).

This is contrasted with a third, higher stage, "the final stage of morality **hitherto**", where one:

acts in accordance with **his own** standard with regard to men and things: he himself determines for himself and others what is honourable and useful; he has become the lawgiver of opinion, in accordance with an ever more highly evolving conception of usefulness and honourableness. (1986:50#94.FN's emphasis)

The references to determining 'for others what is honourable and useful' and becoming the 'lawgiver of opinion' also illustrate Chapter Seven's argument about the political role Nietzsche envisages for his new aristocracy. However this passage also illustrates Nietzsche's ambivalence toward honour for its allusion to higher conceptions of honour and utility intimate that going beyond

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the most adroit or the most eloquent became the most highly regarded, and this was the first step towards inequality and at the same time towards vice. From those first preferences there arose, on the one side, vanity and scorn, on the other, shame and envy, and the fermentation produced by these new leavens finally produced compounds fatal to happiness and innocence. (1984:114)

Note that some of Rousseau's vices - vanity, shame and envy - are held in similar esteem in Nietzsche's middle period. Both also share the good of innocence.

<sup>5</sup> Kant's "What is Enlightenment" begins by declaring that:

**Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-imposed immaturity. Immaturity** is the inability to use one's understanding without guidance from another. This immaturity is **self-imposed** when its cause lies ... in lack of resolve and courage to use it without guidance from another. **Sapere Aude!** "Have courage to use your own understanding!" - that is the motto of enlightenment. (1983:41.IK's emphasis)

honour need not mean abandoning it altogether.

Nietzsche's praise of autonomy continues when Science describes noble types as filled with "a courage without any desire for honours: a self-sufficiency that overflows and gives to men and things" (1974:117#55). Similarly Human claims that now "quite different and higher missions than **patria** and **honour** demand to be done" (1986:163#442.FN's emphasis) which implies some dismissal of honour, although this is in the context of what he describes as the squandering of Europe's "men of the highest civilization" (1986:162-3#442) in war. However the very idea that dying for one's country is a life wasted demonstrates Nietzsche's distance from the traditional honour ethic.<sup>6</sup> Further evidence of Nietzsche's prizing of autonomy and distance from the honour ethic comes in Human's definition of "The heroic" where the hero is oblivious to competition and recognition (1986:391-2#337). This stands in direct contrast to Daybreak's depiction of Antiquity where everyone:

was with his virtue in **competition** with the virtue of another or of all others: how should one not have employed every kind of art to bring one's virtue to public attention, above all before oneself... (1982:22 #29.FN's emphasis).

But the fact that Nietzsche offers no obvious criticism of the Greek quest for recognition signals again that there is another view of honour and recognition in his thought. As well as being a child of modernity in some salient respects he is also, as we have seen, a child of antiquity and the works from and about that era (including his) show that honour was then a powerful and legitimate motive-force in human action. An instance of this comes when Human discusses the quest for glory in the polis, contending that while the polis aimed to curb cultural development, its emphasis on honour spilled over into the cultural realm and actually fostered its development:

the individual's thirst for honour was incited to the highest degree in the **polis**, so that, once entered upon the path of spiritual cultivation, he continued along it as far as he could go (1986:174#474.FN's emphasis).

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<sup>6</sup> See Taylor (1989:16,20-21,25,152-5,214) for a discussion of the honour ethic.

Daybreak is clear about the fact that honour is among the drives that were judged differently in the ancient world:

Hesiod counted it [envy] among the effects of the **good**, beneficent Eris, and there was nothing offensive in attributing to the gods something of envy: which is comprehensible under a condition of things the soul of which was contest; contest, however, was evaluated and determined/as good (1982:26/7#38.FN's emphasis.cf.106#175).

Nor does this suggest that, contra most modern views, devaluing honour necessarily amounts to progress. The major point is that different cultures interpret drives differently - they are devoid of intrinsic moral weight. Although at one point Nietzsche exposes "the striving for distinction" as really a struggle for domination (1982:68-9#113.cf.134#212,1986:372#259) this need not be read as a critique but as a typically Nietzschean gesture of showing things for what they really are, lofty self-understandings aside. Alternatively some criticism of honour could be intended here, for Chapter Two argues that one of Nietzsche's aims in disinterring the inglorious origins of values is to loosen their claim to people's loyalty and respect. So again Nietzsche's position seems riddled with ambivalence.

Human also contains passages which depict honour without the criticism that could be expected from one so enamoured of modern autonomy. Honour is discussed with regard to duels and rather than decry this, Nietzsche evinces an awareness of how painful wounded honour can be (1986:43#61). Duels are discussed later in Human and while not endorsing it, Nietzsche does not scorn the belief that honour can be more important than life. Instead he shields it from debate as a legacy of excesses of the past (1986:144#365). "Trick of renouncers" (1986:191#598) suggests that people only devalue honour to make foregoing it easier and speaks of the self-denial and struggle involved in renouncing honour as if it were a perfectly legitimate goal. That wanting recognition is normal and probably inevitable is also apparent in Science's "Applause" which doubts that anyone can dispense with it and "the wisest of men", Tacitus, is invoked to underwrite this conclusion (1974:260 #330).

Honour plays a prominent role in a long section in Human exploring

"Elements of revenge" (1986:316-8#33). This passage exemplifies the larger point about the multifarious quality of moral life (Chapter Two) illustrating how a single term covers (in both senses) an array of emotions, motives and calculations. Nietzsche surveys this variety in the case of revenge and argues that the desire to restore damaged honour is one explanation of it. This is because hurting one who has hurt us reciprocates the absence of fear that their initial strike evinced. (In line with the point about multiple motives though, it can also betray high esteem or lack of love for the other, for not deigning to harm them could come from despising them while not wanting to harm them could emanate from love (1986:318#33)). He shows that honour can be such a powerful motivation that exacting revenge can create more harm to the revenger than the revengee, which takes such action beyond the bounds of rational calculation and duels are referred to again (1986:317#33). Again though Nietzsche does not debunk this - instead it seems to be another instance where acting nobly involves acting in a way termed irrational and therefore incomprehensible by more mediocre, calculating types (cf. 1986:180#493. 1974: 77-8#3, 92#20).

This passage also suggests that some individuals prize not only their personal honour but also society's, for revenge sought via juridical mechanisms satisfies the desire for individual retaliation as well as avenging the criminal for dishonouring society by violating its rules (1986:318#33). It also implies that, contrary to the passage discussed above, honour is not simply a relic of earlier times but can play a role in the modern world, so that its appeal is not always attacked as weakness and other-dependence by Nietzsche. Moreover at one point Daybreak indicates that there is no necessary contradiction between self-respect and honour, claiming that "our respect for ourselves is tied to our being able to practise requital, in good things and bad" (1982:124#205). This challenges the dichotomy inherent in Nietzsche's other claims that seeking honour and recognition betokens a paucity of self-esteem for if self-esteem were immune to the opinion of others, requital would be redundant. Although a further section in Daybreak seems to roundly denounce revenge which, as we have seen, is closely associated with the honour ethic, it turns out that it is

only some revenge, or rather the revenge of some, that is attacked. "Darkening of the sky" condemns the revenge of the shy, the humble, the judgemental, of drunkards, of invalids and other "little people" (1982:160#323). In this it exemplifies Chapter Five's point that Nietzsche does not dismiss or embrace certain actions in themselves but judges them by who performs them, what their motives are and what attitude to themselves and others they betray.

Furthermore Daybreak contains a passage that not only tolerates the instinct for honour but urges its refinement. "We are nobler" compares the aristocracy of Nietzsche's time to the Greeks and finds that his contemporaries attach greater value to honour than did the ancients:

from the viewpoint of our own aristocracy, which is still chivalrous and feudal in nature, the disposition of even the noblest Greeks has to seem of a lower sort ... /The Greeks were far from making as light of life and death on account of an insult as we do under the impress of inherited chivalrous adventurousness and desire for self-sacrifice; or from seeking out opportunities for risking both in a game of honour, as we do in duels; or from valuing a good name (honour) more highly than the acquisition of a bad name if the latter is compatible with fame and the feeling of power (1982:118/19#199).

The passage urges cultivating "this precious inherited drive" but applying it to "new objects" (1982:118#199). Object notwithstanding, that Nietzsche seems something valuable and worthy of preservation in the quest for honour seems at odds with his other more modern position extolling autonomy and self-given standards. Similarly, when he notes that contest was the soul of the Greeks whereas commerce is the soul of the modern European (1982:106#175) he is not implying praise of the latter even though it is not rivalrous or status-oriented.

At one point Human discusses honour in the antique context and seems to attempt some reconciliation of modern and antique views. "Artist's ambition" claims that great Greeks like Aeschylus and Euripides did not seek their peers' good opinion. They produced works that satisfied their own standards and demands, then inculcated in others their assessments of the good and beautiful. Nietzsche explains that "To aspire to honour here means: 'to make oneself superior and to wish this superiority to be publicly acknowledged'" (1986:90#170) which suggests that wanting recognition is not

per se slavish - what matters is at what stage it enters the creative process and who confers it. For the examples endorsed here, recognition is only sought after the fact - something is first created and judged by one's own standards. Even then, however, securing recognition does not amount to submitting to others' tastes; rather they come to accept the creator's standards and thus really only amplify the artist's judgement. But Nietzsche seems to be projecting a modern Romantic notion of honour onto the Greeks here, with the idea that the creator changes the standards by which things are deemed worthy, beautiful, noble and so on.<sup>7</sup>

But even if this passage tries to reconcile ancient and modern approaches toward honour by portraying it as changing the standards of others rather than submitting to them, it does not resolve the tensions outlined above, for even honour of the non-Euripidean stripe can be depicted positively in the middle period. Such ambivalence pervades these works for rather than Nietzsche shifting position between texts he does so within texts and this pattern holds throughout the period. So while the middle period's accent seems to be on autonomy, honour is not utterly subordinated. Nietzsche remains caught between ancient and modern approaches to this value - he is a child of estranged parents, the younger of whom acts as guardian while the older enjoys visiting rights.

Given Nietzsche's ambivalence toward honour and its cognate concepts in the middle period, a predilection for autonomy need not isolate noble types from all communication with others nor sensitivity to their judgements. Instead the relevant variable seems to be how such interaction and approbation are sought. What matters is whether one is driven to seek approbation to fill a rapacious lack in the self, as per the vain personality, or whether power to

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<sup>7</sup> This is suggested by Abrams' discussion of the expressivist theory of aesthetics, which he associates with nineteenth century Romanticism. He notes that this new theory puts the audience in the background and focused on the artist and their powers.(1953:21) The artist thus became "the major element generating the artistic product and the criteria by which it is to be judged" (1953:22). This point parallels Macintyre's claim that Nietzsche projected his view of individualism onto the ancient world (in Berkowitz 1993:88fn13).

judge is freely bestowed in recognition of their discernment, of their authority in the way Gadamer defines this.<sup>8</sup>

Another way of approaching Nietzsche's divergent views on the cluster of issues surrounding honour, recognition and heroism is to see how the middle period displaces the virtues associated with this ethic into the quest for truth.<sup>9</sup> Nietzsche sometimes explicitly associates the quest for truth with heroism, writing of "brave soldiers of knowledge" (1982:227#567) who have:

the quite different and higher task of commanding from a lonely position the whole militia of scientific and learned men and showing them the paths to and goals of culture (1986:132#282).

Science claims that "my way of thinking requires a warlike soul, a desire to hurt, a delight in saying No, a hard skin" (1974:103#32) and welcomes:

all signs that a more virile, warlike age is about to begin, which will restore honour to courage above all ... the age that will carry heroism into the search for knowledge and will **wage wars** for the sake of ideas

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<sup>8</sup> Truth and Method points out that:

the authority of persons is based ultimately, not on subjection and abdication of reason, but on recognition and knowledge - knowledge, namely, that the other is superior to oneself in judgement and insight and that for this reason his judgement takes precedence, ie it has priority over one's own ... authority cannot actually be bestowed, but is acquired and must be acquired, if someone is to lay claim to it. It rests on recognition and hence on an act of reason itself which, aware of its own limitations, accepts that others have better understanding (1975:248).

<sup>9</sup> In this Nietzsche can be read as continuing Descartes' internalisation of heroic ethos as described by Taylor (1989:152-4). As Taylor sees it:

Strength, firmness, resolution, control, these are crucial qualities, a subset of the warrior-aristocratic virtues, but now internalized. They are not deployed in great deeds of military valour in public space, but rather in the inner domination of passion by thought. (1989:153)

Although not discussing the middle period, Berkowitz reaches similar conclusions, albeit by different paths, when he writes that:

Nietzsche marries the Romantic celebration of the heroic individual with the Platonic exaltation of the philosopher by making philosophy the highest form of heroic individualism (1993:291).

However the middle period emphasises heroism rather than individualism in the pursuit of truth for reference is continually made to heroes in the first person plural.



and their consequences (1974:228#283.FN's emphasis.cf.262#333.1986:13#3.57#107).

At other times the heroism of pursuing truth remains tacit (1982:169#370) but either way the pursuit of truth requires heroic virtues like superior merit, courage, strength, stamina, fortitude, deferral of immediate ego and interest.<sup>10</sup> However, things like modesty, humility, industry and anonymity must combine with these older virtues to form the citizens of "the republic of knowledge" (1986:235#98,264#215).<sup>11</sup> The free spirit "has the courage to allow himself and his work to be found boring" (1986:219#25) for:

now what is required is that perseverance in labour that does not weary of heaping stone upon stone, brick upon brick, what is required is the abstemious courage not to be ashamed of such modest labour and to defy every attempt to disparage it (1986:33#37.cf.83#157,125#264,193#609).

As Human in a burst of high positivism explains:

Science requires **nobler** natures than does poetry: they have to be simpler, less ambitious, more abstemious, quieter, less concerned with posthumous fame, and able to lose themselves in contemplation of things few would consider worthy of such a sacrifice of the personality ... they **seem** less gifted because they glitter less, and will be accounted less than they are (1986:262#206.FN's emphasis.cf.1982:28-9#41).

What Nietzsche advocates here is a kind of hyper-heroism because science's practitioners cannot hope for the usual reward of heroism, glory, in this life or posthumously - "the most difficult is demanded and the best is done without praise and decorations" (1974:235#293). Free spirits must practice heroic virtues and then be heroic about forgoing recognition:

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<sup>10</sup> The pursuit of truth's association with such traditionally masculine virtues and the middle period's occasional depiction of truth in traditionally feminine terms, could suggest that this is a gendered pursuit that excludes women. This is discussed in Chapter Nine.

<sup>11</sup> This is not to suggest that the heroic ethos is the only source of Nietzsche's depiction of seekers after truth. Stoicism would seem to be another (1986:30#34) for their disengagement approaches a sort of ataraxia (1986:133#287,#288) and the virtues of moderation (1986:169#464) and caution (1986:200#631) are called for. Donnellan also notes that the free spirit is sometimes described in stoic terms (1982:13). There are also references to sacrificing oneself for the truth, evoking images of religious martyrdom (1986:190-91#595,1982:31#45,92#146,192#459,204#501).

There is in his way of living and thinking a **refined heroism** which disdains to offer itself to the veneration of the great masses ... and tends to go silently through the world and out of the world (1986:134 #291.FN's emphasis).

Immortality might be theirs for their memory can live on through the truths they uncover and the example they set: "Respect, the pleasure of those we wish well or revere, sometimes fame and a modest personal immortality are the achievable rewards" (1986:235#98). However recognition cannot be guaranteed and many seekers after truth work away quietly only to remain in obscurity. Some are resurrected and honoured - Nietzsche's retrieval of the French moralists is a case in point. But such discovery cannot figure among truth-seekers' motivations - they must beaver away in the belief that their enterprise is "the mark of a higher culture" (1986:13#3) even if their efforts be eternally undervalued or ridiculed (1982:28-9#41).

This image of the truly honourable person neither seeking nor receiving glory has been sketched for Nietzsche by Chamfort. The inverse correlation between seeking knowledge and social glory is evident in 'M''s claim that "les érudits sont les pauvres du temple de la gloire" (1968:188#605). Just how suspect glory's attainment is is indicated in a long passage on the value of recognition:

l'homme d'un vrai mérite doit avoir en général peu d'empressement d'être connu. Il sait que peu de gens peuvent l'apprécier, que dans ce petit nombre chacun a ses liaisons, ses intérêts, son amour-propre que l'empêchent d'accorder au mérite l'attention qu'il faut pour le mettre à sa place. Quant aux éloges communs et usés qu'on lui accorde quand on soupçonne son existence, le mérite ne saurait en être flatté (1968:114#287).<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> This is echoed in one of Chamfort's letters, which also suggests that in attacking those who value glory, he is also attacking his former self:

J'ai aimé la gloire, je l'avoue; mais c'était dans un âge où l'expérience ne m'avait point appris la vraie valeur des choses, où je croyais qu'elle pouvait exister pure et/ accompagnée de quelque repos, où je pensais qu'elle était une source de jouissances chères au cœur et non une lutte éternelle de vanité; quand je croyais que, sans être un moyen de fortune, elle n'était pas du moins un titre d'exclusion à cet égard. Le temps et la réflexion m'ont éclairé ... J'ai pris pour la célébrité autant de haine que j'avais eu d'amour pour la gloire ... (to l'Abbé Roman. 4.3.1784 in Chamfort 1968:381/2).

As with Nietzsche, part of the reason for honour's low status derives from Chamfort's critique of his society's values and judgements. His society has a negative and legalistic definition of honour, meaning that anyone who has not been pilloried for some offense is, ipso facto, honourable (1968:73 #100). However a more global disdain for popular acclaim is evident in Chamfort's work too, reiterating the modern emphasis on autonomy and self-given standards. This makes itself felt in the moralist's advice that one should love virtue while being indifferent to public regard and should work with indifference to fame (1968:76#120.cf.279#1045) and his later suggestion that eschewing reward is a sign of genuine heroism (1968:80#146). Another passage suggests that fame hinders merit and talent so that the truly great should not just tolerate obscurity but welcome it (1968:125-6#333). A voice in one of his brief dialogues extols autonomy when it declares that "Celui qui ne peut être honoré que par lui-même, n'est guere humilié par personne" (1968:349#IX).

For Chamfort the person with character has principles they have created for themselves (1968:78#129).<sup>13</sup> While he notes that those who challenge public opinion usually only do so to fall beneath it (1968:95-6#210), there are some superior individuals who break its yoke to rise above it. Indeed those

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<sup>13</sup> This emphasis on autonomy is further evidence of Chamfort's Rousseauian legacy, for just as Rousseau insists on nature's goodness, he also argues that we have access to this goodness by attending to our inner voice, rather than bowing to public opinion. As Taylor explains it "[In Rousseau] Goodness is identified with freedom, with finding the motives for one's action within oneself" (1989:361). He goes on to argue that:

the inner voice of my true sentiments define what is the good: since the élan of nature in me is the good, it is this which has to be consulted to discover it ... We now can know from within us, from the impulses of our own being, what nature marks as significant. And our ultimate happiness is to live in conformity with this voice ... to be entirely ourselves (1989:362).

He also refers to Rousseau's view that:

a recovery of contact with nature was seen more as an escape from calculating other-dependence, from the force of opinion and the ambitions it engendered, through a kind of alignment or fusion of reason and nature ... (1989:359)

unmindful of worldly opinion sometimes win the world's respect. In such moments Chamfort suggests that the world betrays its real opinion of its own worth (1968:93#200). But for the most part, the autonomous person who is:

d'un caractère assez élevé pour vouloir n'être protégé que par ses mœurs, ne s'honorer de rien, ni de personne, se gouverner par des principes, se conseiller par ses lumières, par son caractère, et d'après sa position, qu'il connaît mieux que personne (1968:96#213)

is ostracised and held to be eccentric and peculiar.

However despite this strong emphasis on autonomy, Chamfort does not condemn all sensitivity to the opinion of others. Instead it is the quality of those opinions that matters, so that his attack on public acclaim and praise of autonomy is more an attack on the skewed and distorted opinions of his society than on recognition per se. As with Nietzsche, there is room in Chamfort's thought for valuing the good opinion of select others.<sup>14</sup> Chamfort contends that: "L'estime vaut mieux que la célébrité, la considération vaut mieux que la renommée, et l'honneur vaut mieux que la gloire" (1968:78#131). All of these superior goods could emanate from the estimation of our friends, especially given the moralist's point that true friends do not value one another because they are friends, but are friends because they value one another (1968:54#13).

Another passage suggests that Chamfort is not attacking the notion of glory per se for he distinguishes glory from vanity. Glory is a great passion, vanity a petty one; glory is to vanity what a lover is to a fop (1968:153#460) and again it might be inferred that it is the acclaim of a corrupt society that Chamfort castigates rather than the idea of glory itself. What emerges from all this is how akin Chamfort's position is to Nietzsche's. In both cases the modern praise of autonomy and disregard of the opinion of others receives

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<sup>14</sup> This seems to be overlooked by Ridgway's claim that: barring an unlikely reversal of values the only way for an individual to retain self-respect was to avoid "le monde" as far as possible and to develop his own character, regardless of the opinion of others (1981:337).

He assumes that rejecting 'the world' is tantamount to rejecting all others which is a false conflation (Chapter Six).

considerable praise. However, other claims complicate the picture for the quest for honour and recognition is ~~not~~ condemned in itself. What matters is the way in which and the source from which they are sought. Honour and recognition sought and bestowed among friends and equals are, from such a reading, sometimes deemed legitimate and even desirable by both Chamfort and Nietzsche.

It was argued above that there is another way of considering the role that the traditional honour ethic plays in the works of Nietzsche's middle period, one which sees the internalisation of this ethic in the free thinker's pursuit of truth. This rechannelling of the traditional public, heroic virtues into the quest for knowledge has some precedent in the work of La Rochefoucauld. There is a way, for example, of approaching La Rochefoucauld's portrayal of friendship and the joint venture in self-knowledge that genuine friendship involves which shows it to represent a displacement of the older heroic ethos just as for Nietzsche the pursuit of truth in general requires such a re-channelling.<sup>15</sup> Self-knowledge's requisite virtues - superior merit, courage, humility, honesty, strength, stamina, fortitude and suppression of immediate interest and self-love - mean that La Rochefoucauld's description of Alexander as "un modèle d'élévation et de grandeur et de courage! (1977:128#XIV)" <sup>16</sup> applies to the quest for self-knowledge too. Of course the goals toward which each tend are different and one is between friends, the other public, one strives for immortality and the other is secular. But the requisite personal qualities remain, rendering Hirschmann's claim that "All the heroic virtues were shown to be forms of ... self-love by La Rochefoucauld" (1977:11.cf.Benichou 1948: 101.Krailsheimer 1962:7) exaggerated.<sup>17</sup> Instead the heroic virtues are re-

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<sup>15</sup> Compare Starobinski's claim that the vestige of "la morale héroïque" and the feudal cult of greatness are "reformulé à l'usage des salons" (1966:28).

<sup>16</sup> As Stanton notes, Alexander, along with Caeaser, was a popular 'role model' for honnêtes gens (1980:65).

<sup>17</sup> This seems to unduly assimilate La Rochefoucauld's views with the Port-Royalists' who "attacked 'gloire' by identifying it with 'amour-propre'" (Levi 1964:227).

directed to the quest for self-knowledge so that while the moralist is often seen as puncturing the aristocratic ideal of 'la gloire', traces of it remain in his work.<sup>18</sup>

These traces of the ideal of glory in La Rochefoucauld's work also infuse it with an ambivalence toward the traditional honour ethic that is similar to Nietzsche's. Thus not only does La Rochefoucauld continue to valorise the heroic virtues in a new context but he is not the unequivocal critic of glory and honour he is sometimes taken for (Sutcliffe 1966-67:233. Taylor 1989:214). On the one hand glory is met with characteristic cynicism, for the moralist contends that desire for it can be sustained by strength of ambition rather than of soul (1977:64#221). He also points out that heroes can be as driven by vanity as ordinary actors (1977:47#24). La Rochefoucauld further deflates greatness by claiming that heroes face death in the same manner as ordinary people (1977:89-90#504). But a different view emerges in a long maxim, appearing to laud a traditional notion of the courage and strength of heroism:

L'intrépidité est une force extraordinaire de l'âme qui l'élève au-dessus des troubles, des désordres et des émotions que la vue des grands périls pourrait exciter en elle; et c'est par cette force que les héros se maintiennent en un état paisible, et conservent l'usage libre de leur raison dans les accidents les plus suprenants et les plus terribles (1977: 64#217).

A traditional appraisal of glory is also given in the conclusion to the reflexion "Du Faux" (1977:125-27#XIII) where, among the virtues of a king, love of glory and peace of the state are numbered. The passage's final reference is to "la véritable gloire" (1977:127) to which the king should aspire, so that here what is offered is not an attack on glory but a delineation of its true form.

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<sup>18</sup> As Debu-Bridel says of the wider tradition of 'honnêteté':

En ses debuts, "la véritable honnêteté" telle que la définit si parfaitement Méré, était la perfection du héros. Elle était en quelque sorte l'épanouissement des vertus héroïques au commerce des dames. (1938:208)

My reading of La Rochefoucauld fits too with Liebich's claim that his work contains "un vestige de l'éthique aristocratique, ou la force d'âme et l'héroïsme sont célèbres" (1982:183). It also fits with Levi's depiction of "his picaresque imagination attuned to the age of 'gloire' ... groping still for the values which will justify his aristocratic sensibility." (1964:336)

La Rochefoucauld's other references to heroism are ambiguous rather than straightforward denunciations. The assertion that "Il y a des héros en mal comme en bien" (1977:61#185) not only allows for a form of good heroism but also recalls his wider point about the murkiness of moral discriminations, suggesting that clear distinctions between virtue and vice are actually tenuous. This also seems to hold for his observation that "Il y a des crimes qui deviennent innocents et même glorieux par leur éclat, leur nombre et leur excès" (1977:99#68). The moralist's insistence that judgements of greatness be tempered by assessments of means (1977:58#157) also calls for heightened awareness of the complexity of moral evaluations rather than dismissing the possibility of greatness altogether. And while his claim that only great men have great faults (1977:61#190) shows that the great have faults, it can also be read as a celebration of great as opposed to petty personalities.<sup>19</sup>

Thus while Nietzsche channels the traditional virtues into the pursuit of knowledge and truth in general, La Rochefoucauld gives this a more reflexive focus, enabling the heroism of *honnêtes gens* to manifest itself in

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<sup>19</sup> In a footnote Benichou concedes that La Rochefoucauld is not the staunch opponent of the heroic tradition that he is painted, even by Benichou, to be. In supposedly discrediting glory, the moralist invokes:

le fait qu'elle peut être attaché au vice comme à la vertu ... Mais cela non plus, le héros ne le nierait pas; ... Corneille définit des grands criminels presque dans le mêmes termes (1948:fn7.102/3).

Sutcliffe also backpedals on this question. While he claims that La Rochefoucauld destroys glory (1966-67:233) he ends up conceding that:

the hero remains possible, remains present in the maxims, the hero whose energy, whose virtue gives the lie to determinism and breaks the mechanisms of chance. It is a moral rather than an intellectual force (1966-67:241)

As Lewis discerns:

Beneath the Maximes and the Réflexions Diverses some readers sense an uneasy ambivalence with respect to the hero, who appears as the object of both exaltation and demystification. (1977:104, cf. Thweatt 1980:10,17,150,199)

Clark's claim might shed some light on the moralist's ambivalence for he contends that La Rochefoucauld's cynicism toward virtues derives partly from his initial attachment to them. In the moralist's critique of traditional aristocratic goods there is "as much disillusionment as renunciation on his part" (1987:73).

struggle against the self. Conventional portrayals of the moralist as an iconoclast of glory, honour and heroism are thus too one-sided to do justice to the ambivalence of his thought, to its mixture of cynicism and admiration for the old aristocratic ethos.<sup>20</sup> And ambivalence toward these same issues resonates in the work of Nietzsche, an oscillation that could have been nurtured by his reading of La Rochefoucauld. Both displace the heroic virtues into new pursuits and Nietzsche also continues the moralist's ambivalence about honour, now praising, now condemning it.

This chapter has considered Nietzsche's attitude toward one of the traditional aristocratic goods - honour - and shown that he is caught between an ancient esteem of it and a modern critique of it. It has also demonstrated that the free spirit's quest for truth requires an internalisation and redirection of the virtues traditionally associated with heroism along with an indifference toward heroism's traditional rewards. In this regard the work of Chamfort offers some precedent with its portrait of the meagre public rewards that accompany the pursuit of truth. Like Nietzsche's, Chamfort's work offers a specific and a general attack on honour but also indicates that honour and recognition sought and bestowed among friends and equals can be legitimate and even desirable. However even if Nietzsche is not knowingly replicating

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<sup>20</sup> For the most part Starobinski offers a quite different account of the role of glory and heroism in La Rochefoucauld's thought. Rather than detecting ambivalence, for Starobinski "la grandeur et l'heroïsme" are signs of supreme merit (1966:26.cf.28). He argues that the new criterion determining the worth of action is its intensity, the quality of energy it discharges (1966:27). Although he does not suggest that the moralist advocates unbridled use of force, force is admirable because it wears no mask, its being coincides with its appearance, in stark contrast to moral life (1966:27). Starobinski also detects an amorality in La Rochefoucauld's ethic of force, arguing that the great triumph because they are infused with impersonal energies (1966:32). All of this brings La Rochefoucauld's position very close to Nietzsche's views about the innocence of egoism, the pleasure of self-assertion and so on. In a position closer to my own, however, James finds no sign of amorality in La Rochefoucauld's concept of greatness; for him the great soul is not beyond moral evaluation (1969:353-4). Again then, as was the case with La Rochefoucauld's aestheticism, Starobinski seems to be overstating it when he offers the ethic of force as a 'moral substitutive', for traditional ethics and the ethic of force exist side by side in the moralist's thought.



either moralist's stance toward this cluster of issues, he can still be read as reiterating some of their positions.

Chapter Nine "One cannot be too kind" considers Nietzsche's stance toward another of the old questions of aristocratic politics - what role might women occupy in such an elite. This chapter shows that although Nietzsche's views on women are often read as neo-Aristotelian for they seem to cast women in an inherently inferior role and as incapable of the higher goods, another reading is available in the works of the middle period which brings Nietzsche closer to Plato on the gender issue, for he seems to allow that some women can become part of the truth-seeking elite. To such matters we now turn.

Chapter Nine  
One cannot be too kind:  
Nietzsche on women<sup>1</sup>

One of the things occupying Nietzsche in the middle period is the possibility of a new aristocracy - who it would comprise, what their characteristics would be and what the conditions propitious to its creation and health might be. An issue related to this is gender, for Nietzsche can be read as considering whether women could be part of this new aristocracy. Do women have or can they acquire the spiritual characteristics that its membership demands? This chapter examines therefore the middle period's depiction of women, revealing that, contrary to the common classification of Nietzsche as a misogynist, its works do not entirely denigrate or dismiss women. Nor is the middle period unequivocal in disqualifying women from free spirithood for there is a way of reading certain of its ideas to befit some women of the future for this honour.

I therefore reject Donnellan's claim that Nietzsche holds women to be inferior to men (1982:84) as too gross an account of the middle period. Of course Donnellan is not alone in this view. Bertrand Russell comments on Nietzsche's contempt for women in his History of Western Philosophy (1946: 731-2). In his ubiquitous commentary on Science, Kaufmann notes that "Nietzsche's comments on women generally do him little credit" (1974:126.fn 5.cf.317fn93) and his commentary on Nietzsche's oeuvre refers to his "prejudices about women" which, he assures us, "need not greatly concern the philosopher" (1950:63).<sup>2</sup> To Detwiler "Nietzsche appears to have been an

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<sup>1</sup> Science's sensitive discussion of female chastity concludes that "In sum, one cannot be too kind to women" (1974:128#71), disclosing a Nietzsche far removed from the usual image of him demeaning or dismissing women. However, isolated from its context, this claim acquires an ambiguity that can lend it a compassionate or a critical edge. This chapter focuses on its critical side, the next its compassionate.

<sup>2</sup> If Kaufmann's philosophers are not interested in what sometimes looks like the arbitrary exclusion of half the population from the attainment of higher goods, one wonders what sort of distinctions and propositions do command

unabashed misogynist" (1990:15.cf.193), Shklar finds in him "misogyny and sexual disgust" (1984:222) and Nehamas confesses that "Nietzsche's views of women still disturb me after all these many years" (1985:viii.cf.Lange in Clark & Lange 1979:41). 'Feminism' is advised by Keith Ansell-Pearson that it "must certainly attack Nietzsche's views on women." (in Patton 1993:31). Nor is attention to Nietzsche's putative misogyny new. Explaining "Nietzsche's attacks on the female sex", Brandes, a contemporary and correspondent of Nietzsche's, writes that "He does not seem to have known many women, but those he did know, he evidently loved and hated, but above all despised" (1909:53/4).<sup>3</sup>

In response to this some interpreters, most notably Sarah Kofman (1979) and Jacques Derrida (1979) have argued that Nietzsche's remarks about women be read metaphorically so that, for example, the role of woman is analogous to that of truth in Nietzsche's writing (Kofman 1979:285-304. Shapiro 1989:95, Ansell-Pearson in Patton 1993:37,39, Diprose in Patton 1993:1-26).<sup>4</sup> When Nietzsche's works are read metaphorically, it is also possible to use his positive female imagery to deconstruct his overt denigrations of women.<sup>5</sup>

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their interest.

<sup>3</sup> Russell offers a similar explanation of Nietzsche's attitudes towards women, suggesting that he was afraid of women "and soothed his wounded vanity with unkind remarks" (1946:734).

<sup>4</sup> The best known instance of Nietzsche's equation of women with truth comes in Beyond's Preface which begins "Supposing truth to be a woman ..." (1973:13).

<sup>5</sup> As Ansell-Pearson notes:

If we read Nietzsche's texts carefully we discover, not simply that they are littered with misogynist remarks, but that they also deconstruct their own phallogocentric pretensions, largely through a celebration of woman as a metaphor representing the creative forces of life ... (in Patton 1993:37)

It is curious that Schutte who is so alive to the role of metaphor in Nietzsche's thought (1984:ix,35,100,125 and passim) and cautions against reading his metaphors uncritically (1984:100) automatically excludes his discussions of women from metaphorical interpretation (1984:188). She offers no

However while metaphorical readings might alleviate the charge of misogyny, they risk depoliticising Nietzsche's work, whereas it has been demonstrated here that there is a powerful political component to this. Nietzsche was, for example, greatly concerned about the future of European civilization, fearing that the spread of the doctrine of universal equality, which according to him began with Christianity and was furthered by its modern offshoots - liberalism, democracy and socialism - would create conditions propitious to mediocrity and hostile to greatness. Against this, he hoped that via a transvaluation of values, free spirits would seize the cultural initiative and create a new aristocracy of spirit.

Nietzsche saw feminism as extending the equality doctrine to women and, as such, the implications it bore for female identity, for what femaleness was and how malleable it might be, were of interest to him. So there are good reasons for reading Nietzsche's comments on women not just as metaphors but as his part of his wider reflection on the developments of his time and what they augured for European civilisation. As Ansell-Pearson writes:

It is important that the question of woman is not reduced to being a mere figure or metaphor, possessing only the status of a rhetorical trope. To overlook, or to disregard in so confident a manner as Derrida does, Nietzsche's sexist remarks is not simply naive, but politically dangerous ... [Derrida] ... simply refuses to take seriously that Nietzsche meant what he said and that he believed that women should have neither political power nor social influence (in Patton 1993:35-36).

One of the things Nietzsche is questioning during his middle period is whether women can be part of the aristocracy of spirit he envisages and

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justification for this, no criteria for determining which aspects of his writing are amenable to metaphorical reading and which not. Schutte also overlooks the opportunity her discussion provides for a positive reading of feminine imagery in Nietzsche. She acknowledges that what she (accurately) calls 'sexual' imagery - terms like procreation, begetting etc - usually have positive connotations for Nietzsche (1984:177). However she fails to note that for him these are also gendered terms and their gender is female. A prime example of comes in Daybreak's "Ideal selfishness" which begins "Is there a more holy condition than that of pregnancy?" (1982:223#552.cf.1986:264#216.1974:129 #72). However as Lloyd's discussion of Plato's Symposium indicates (1984:21) using images from physical reproduction to express creativity has a long history.

encourages. However I reject Ansell-Pearson's conclusion that Nietzsche denies women political power and social influence. While Ansell-Pearson is correct to note that "Certain passages in his work show quite unequivocally that he regarded the whole issue of women's emancipation as a misguided one" (in Patton 1993:30) certain others show quite the reverse, indicating that Christine Garside Allen's claim that "women are excluded from the higher ranks of existence" (in Clark & Lange 1979:124) and Carole Diethe's that Nietzsche's "höhere Menschen are men" (1989:867) are not adequate summaries of the middle period either.<sup>6</sup>

All this suggests that there is a third way of reading Nietzsche's remarks on women, one that goes beyond misogyny and metaphor. Reading the middle period's remarks on women literally but comprehensively makes it possible to set Nietzsche's different statements against one another, subverting his essentialist claims with his own historicist ones. For such an approach some of Nietzsche's "overt pronouncements on women" are, pace Ansell-Pearson, very "helpful" (in Patton 1993:28-9). Taking the depiction of women in the works of the middle period at face value shows that these works do not entirely demean women nor exclude them from the higher life. Although Nietzsche's free spirit is usually taken to be male,<sup>7</sup> the works of the middle period repeatedly measure women by the values constitutive of free-spirithood, such as autonomy and the capacity to seek truth, which suggests that women can be considered as candidates for free spirithood, even if Nietzsche assumes or asserts that most females fail to meet its requirements.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> All of the evidence for Diethe's conclusions is taken from books outside the middle period. Her work illustrates yet again critics' propensity to construct a single, static Nietzsche.

<sup>7</sup> Many of Nietzsche's explicit and implicit claims sponsor such a reading. Some of the former are examined below. Instances of the latter come when women are made the object and "we free spirits" the subject of some action, indicating that women do not belong to this category.

<sup>8</sup> As Kofman notes of Nietzsche's work in general:

D'un point du vue généalogique, une femme affirmative est plus proche d'un homme affirmative plus d'une femme dégenérée. Et il y a des

Moreover those who read Nietzsche's work as misogynist sometimes trace this to the influence of the French moralists on his thought, for it is often charged that they also denigrate or discredit women.<sup>9</sup> Donnellan claims, for example, that:

This male prejudice is well preceded in practically all the French moralists, from Montaigne to Chamfort ... Nietzsche's incisive, but blatantly biased, contributions to female psychology are particularly reminiscent of La Rochefoucauld's presentation of feminine variety and frivolity and Chamfort's misogyny (1982:84).

Elsewhere he argues that "In La Rochefoucauld Nietzsche found ... reinforcement of his negative attitudes towards ... the female sex" (1982b:600).

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femmes plus affirmatives que ne le sont certains hommes. (1979:289)  
I agree with Kofman against Diethe's claim that "even the most forceful, most intelligent woman would rank below a resentment man" (1989:871).

<sup>9</sup> Thweatt for example, says that when analyzing women, La Rochefoucauld goes for the jugular (1980:199). She notes that:

Although disabused observations on ... women were common currency in the seventeenth century, the ... more cynical of La Rochefoucauld's statements ... have a certain affinity with Charron's ... rabid and inimitable anti-feminism (1980:20).

Morgues is also critical of the moralist's depiction of women:

there is no discovery, no probing beyond the traditional motivations given for their attitudes. They are implicitly considered as a group of beings belonging to another species, and I very much doubt whether they are included in the anonymous 'on', 'nous', 'les hommes', or the maxims which do not specifically refer to them. They stand apart, reduced to a few conventional traits; coquetterie and intellectual inferiority. They are required to be young, beautiful and chaste. Love is ... the only passion which can be tolerated in them, but even so, most of ... their love is ... another form of coquetterie. This oversimplification of female psychology indicates that La Rochefoucauld remains on the level of social conventions (1978:43).

Of Chamfort, Arnaud writes that:

the intensity of his misogyny soon matched that of his misanthropy. Women became the symbol of everything false, of ubiquitous role playing, of the civilization of the mask (1992:43.cf.74,264-65).

Vier declares that "Bien sur, les traits agréablement misogynes abondent" (1966:799) in Chamfort's work. Pellisson says that "il n'avait de mépris ni pour les femmes, ni pour l'amour" (1895:41) but elsewhere there are echoes of Brandes' and Russell's view of Nietzsche, for Pellisson says that:

Dans les paroles/de Chamfort sur les femmes, on distingue aisement l'accent d'une souffrance et d'une rancune personnelles (1895:99).

fn20) and again Donnellan is not alone in this view (cf. Kaufmann 1950:63. fn 13. Arnaud 1992:264). However this view is also too simplistic and the belief that in maligning women Nietzsche is simply absorbing the moralists' beliefs will be contested here.<sup>10</sup>

An obvious and sometimes warranted complaint about Nietzsche's depiction of women is the essentialist way in which he presents them, denying females the possibility of self-making enjoyed by (some) men and so celebrated by Nietzsche.<sup>11</sup> In this Nietzsche, who typically prides himself on being a critic of the western philosophical tradition, simply perpetuates its treatment of women.<sup>12</sup> However in his middle period, Nietzsche's stance

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<sup>10</sup> Benedetta Craveri contends that:

French aristocratic society of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is a rich field for studies of the changing position of women (1993:40) As such La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort can, like Nietzsche, be read as writing against a background in which women's role and identity were being debated.

<sup>11</sup> Rosalyn Diprose refers to "Nietzsche's explicit exclusion of women from the possibility of self-creation" (1989:31 cited in Patton 1993:32) but, as will emerge, this is an incomplete account of his position. As the last chapter notes, when Nietzsche does write like this, as if self-making were the prerogative of some men, the neo-Aristotelian strand in his work becomes manifest. Aristotle reserved the capacity to rule and be ruled in turn, which requires a certain personal flexibility and versatility, to the citizens of the polis. Women and slaves could only be ruled and as such their nature was frozen and unchanging, making them capable of only one role. Nietzsche's portrayal of the herd, which sometimes seems to include all women, treats its members in the same way, as incapable of flexibility, versatility and self-overcoming. However, there are times when Nietzsche's position is closer to Plato's in allowing women to be part of the social elite.

<sup>12</sup> See Lloyd (1984) for an overview of this. Very early on Lloyd cites a passage from a fragment by Nietzsche on 'the Greek woman' to illustrate how woman has been depicted as close to nature in the western intellectual tradition (1984:1) but she never mentions Nietzsche again. Compare Carole Pateman and Mary Lyndon Shanley on political philosophy:

Notwithstanding all the differences between theorists from Plato to Habermas, the tradition of Western political thought rests on a conception of the "political" that is constructed through the exclusion of women and all that is represented by femininity and women's bodies ... the different attributes, capacities and characteristics ascribed to men and women by political theorists are central to the way in which each

toward women and their essence vacillates, indicating that he cannot be charged with simply continuing essentialism. Sometimes he does reproduce this, imputing characteristics such as sentiment, embodiedness, intuition and tradition to women and making these inferior to male traits like reason, mind, calculation, prescience and change. At others he essentialises the genders but reverses the hierarchy, so that typically female characteristics are valorized. At yet others he imputes different essential characteristics to women and men but continues to hold male ones superior. However there are also occasions when Nietzsche rejects essentialism, adopting an historicist and aesthetic approach to identity - male and female.

Moreover on those occasions when Nietzsche does hypostatize identity, women are not his only targets. That whole slice of humanity constituting the class of fettered spirits is also essentialised and denied the capacity for change and self-overcoming. Thus while Nietzsche might essentialise women, the majority of men are also sometimes treated in this way, indicating that essentialism is not tied exclusively to gender. And as indicated, Nietzsche does not always essentialise all women. The works of the middle period sometimes allow that women have become what they are via historical rather than ontological forces and that this can be changed.<sup>13</sup> Nietzsche's essentialising gestures are not, therefore, directed only at, nor at all, women. Rather the middle period sometimes treats women in the same way as men - the superior are distinguished from the inferior and this latter group tends to be hypostatized. The corollary of this is that the key issue in his depiction of women is not whether there are essentialist accounts of them but whether the goods Nietzsche values are within women's reach. In short, can some women

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has defined the "political". Manhood and politics go hand in hand, and everything that stands in contrast to and opposed to political life and the political virtues has been represented by women, their capacities and the tasks seen as natural to their sex, especially motherhood. (1991: 3)

<sup>13</sup> This brings his analysis into line with some feminist analyses of identity. As Ansell-Pearson notes, albeit in an overly general way, "feminists repeatedly emphasize [that] what we are is not 'nature' but 'history'" (in Patton 1993:44).



become part of the new 'aristocracy of spirit' he imagines and seeks to bring about?

In the middle period Nietzsche's interest in gender is most obvious in, but not confined to, the brief seventh book of Human, "Woman and Child" (1986:150-160). A pot pourri, this book typifies the conflicting perspectives on gender that pervade the middle period. Its opening aphorism "The perfect woman" declares her to be "a higher type of human being than the perfect man: also something much rarer" (1986:150#377).<sup>14</sup> Nietzsche's rare, higher types are usually interpreted to be male. This statement that women can be higher types of humans adds that their struggle for ascendancy is greater than men's and "[N]atural science" is invoked to demonstrate "the truth of this proposition" (1986:150#377), which is suggestive of an essentialist position but this is not developed. However a different sort of explanation of the difficulties women face in becoming higher beings can be reconstructed from the middle period's various remarks about women. And on the basis of the reconstruction suggested here, the charge that women are innately ineligible for the Nietzschean higher life demands qualification.

This seemingly obvious distinction between superior and inferior manifestations of a thing, which also operates in Nietzsche's discussions of friendship and pity, is vital for understanding his views on the issues surrounding gender. Failure to grasp this difference generates the sort of misunderstandings that plague so much commentary in this domain. The opening aphorism about superior women and their rarity indicates that even when the middle period criticises 'women' unmodified, not all women are

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<sup>14</sup> Thus Allen's observation that:

It is true to Nietzsche's style not to make distinctions between some women who are weak and some who are strong (in Clark & Lange 1979:119)

is inappropriate here, as it is for several of his sections on women in the middle period that will be examined below. However she also cites this passage, calling it an "interesting claim" and speculating that Nietzsche was "reflecting his admiration for Cosima Wagner". Nonetheless she does concede that "the possibility for full human development of woman is here" (in Clark & Lange 1979:126).

thereby condemned but only those that fail to meet Nietzsche's delineation of the higher form. And this is to be expected of one who makes such discriminations in every other aspect of life. Indeed were Nietzsche not to apply such tests to gender questions but exempt them from the critical scrutiny cast across everything else, this would be his real criticism of women, not the fact that some or many do not meet his standards. This puts another spin on his dictum that "one cannot be too kind about women" (1974:128#71) for being too kind would patronise, shielding women from the standards by which all else is measured.

Some clue to why superior women are fewer than men comes in the next aphorism devoted to women qua women, rather than as partners or parents. "Error of noble women" suggests that over-refinement and delicacy hamper their quest for truth, leading them to "think that a thing does not exist if it is not possible to speak about it in company" (1986:150#383). As any examination of the contours of the classical French ethos and its emphasis on 'l'art de plaire' reveals, all nobles were constrained by rules about acceptable conversation matter but Nietzsche suggests that women were more limited by this than men were. This points to a social constraint on women's pursuit of fuller knowledge, a pursuit which is a central facet of Nietzsche's higher human being.

Women's constriction by society is evident in the next aphorism to address them qua women. "Boredom" argues that women are most likely to suffer this, having "never learned to work properly" (1986:151#391). Again there is no suggestion that incompetence or indolence are intrinsic to the female nature, but society discourages women's industry, subjecting them to easy boredom. A similar idea emerges in Daybreak's warning against "clever women ... whom fate has confined to a petty, dull environment and who grow old there" (1982:138#227). That women's characters are formed by their circumstances rather than anatomy or essential spirit is also apparent in "Echoes of primal conditions in speech" from an earlier book of Human. Here Nietzsche writes that women "speak like creatures who have for millennia sat at the loom, or plied the needle, or been childish with children" (1986:141

#342) but makes no suggestion that women's only home is the domestic realm.

The passage also analyses male speech, explaining this as a relic of past, more martial eras, so that modern men wield ideas with the aggression of weapons. The tacit critique of their conversational style also illustrates that while fond of military metaphors in portraying intellectual debates, Nietzsche does not ipso facto endorse an assertive, combative approach to conversation. Typically female passivity and typically male pugnacity are both chastised but attributing them to mutable social functions implies that both can be overcome. As we shall see, something like La Rochefoucauld's ideal of conversation seems to inform Nietzsche's critique of contemporary manners and represents the ideal to be striven for.<sup>15</sup> The interest Nietzsche shows in conversation in his middle period also brings the dialogical to the fore once more, complementing its presence in the 'dialogue with the dead' trope and its importance among elite friends. And as the next chapter shows, dialogue is also an important dimension of gender relations in the middle period.

That this passive mode of speaking is typically but not ineluctably female becomes apparent later in a passage from Human adducing Nietzsche's conversational ideal:

The dialogue is the perfect conversation, because everything one of the parties says acquires its particular colour, its sound, its accompanying gestures **strictly with reference to the other** to whom he is speaking ... In a dialogue there is only a single refraction of thought: this is produced by the partner in the dialogue, as the mirror in which we

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<sup>15</sup> Similar criticism of conversational style appears in "The Wanderer and his Shadow":

people do not know how to make use of a conversation; they pay much too much attention to what they themselves intend to say in response, whereas the true **listener** often contents himself with a brief answer, plus a little for politeness' sake, by way of **speech**, while on the other hand bearing away in his retentive memory all the other has said ... In the normal conversation each thinks he is leading the way, as if two ships sailing side by side and now and then gently bumping into one another each faithfully believed the neighbouring ship was following or even being pulled along by it (1986:370#241.FN's emphasis).

Nietzsche's interest in the dynamics of conversation is evident throughout the middle period (1986:139#333,140#334,145-6#369,369-70#236). It also appears in the later works (1973:82#136).

desire to see our thoughts reflected as perfectly as possible (1986:147 #374.FN's emphasis)

When several people converse this harmony, subtlety and sensitivity are lost. Whether women or men, the interlocutors become bellicose and shrill (1986: 147-8#374). Only when the conversation returns to a 'tête-à-tête' does it become "one of the pleasantest things in the world" (1986:147#374) and only in such intimacy can the charm and intelligence of another be known, be they male or female. This passage further indicates that some of the virtues Nietzsche endorses are androgynous - either gender can acquire them.

Not only does Nietzsche sometimes present women's condition as socially rather than biologically conditioned but on occasion he accords women agency in this. Rather than their role being shaped entirely by men, "A judgement of Hesiod's confirmed" (1986:154#412) argues that women have contrived a life free of labour for themselves. This passage contends that their shrewdness has led to social arrangements making men responsible for them. Reversing essentialism, it suspects that women carved out a niche for themselves rearing children so as to avoid "work as much as possible" (1986: 154#412). That Nietzsche feels no compulsion to provide evidence of this process illustrates Chapter Three's point about his handwaving history.<sup>16</sup> Nonetheless the passage's general point is that "women have known how through subordination to secure for themselves the preponderant advantage, even indeed the dominion" (1986:154#412). Its belief that they wilfully turn weakness to their advantage is reiterated in Science (1974:125#66).

While this claim about women's contrived dependence might be

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<sup>16</sup> Nietzsche might have been influenced here by the work of J.J. Bachofen, a scholar of Roman law at Basel. As Pletsch points out Bachofen's Das Mutterrecht (1861) argued that a primitive matriarchy was the predecessor of all human societies (1991:113/4). This contention derived from the vestigial mother rights he discovered in ancient Roman law (1991:230fn14). (Pletsch's claim that Bachofen's contemporaries did not appreciate his work is a little curious though, given that Frederick Engels cites him several times in On the Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State). Bergmann also mentions Bachofen in connection with Nietzsche but not his views on women. Instead he says that Bachofen's thinking on the struggle between Apollo and Dionysus was similar to Nietzsche's. (1987:75-6)

empirically ungrounded and oblivious to or ignorant of the many sites of women's labour, and while its overt devaluation of housekeeping and childrearing betokens a bias in favour of waged, public labour, its rejection of essentialism is unmistakable.<sup>17</sup> And its attribution of agency to women in shaping their situation, even though this is deemed a pyrrhic victory, presents them as actors rather than ornaments in social life. This issue of female agency is further debated in Science. In "Will and willingness" a sage says that women do not corrupt but are corrupted by men - man wills and woman responds willingly (1974:126#68), leading him to ask "Who could have oil and kindness enough for them?" (1974:126#68). However the next passage "Capacity for revenge" implicitly rebuts this, claiming that woman could not enthrall men so were they so malleable, willing and will-less. To really intrigue, the passage asserts that women must be capable of revenge and cruelty - toward others or themselves (1974:126#69). As Chapter Five's analysis of pity shows, the ability to act cruelly and eschew pity is valued by Nietzsche, suggestive again of female potential to realize his higher values.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Nietzsche's view contrasts with the western philosophical tradition's typical approach to gender and parenting as Clark and Lange depict it:

Since women are the only sex biologically capable of bearing and breast-feeding children, they have been regarded as suffering from a natural liability which creates a natural dependence on males (1979:ix) In the history of political theory, the almost universal response to this question of reproduction is to designate ... females in general as the ones who ought rightly to perform this task (Lange in Clark & Lange 1979:8)

Their general observation that:

because the differing sexual relation to reproductive labour was regarded as 'natural' ... it was believed to be unnecessary to explain how ... women were essentially reproductive rather than productive labourers ... (Clark & Lange 1979:xi)

does not apply to the Nietzsche of the middle period.

<sup>18</sup> My reading of, and conclusions from, this passage again vary from Diprose's, who takes it as evidence of men's dependence for their identity on women conforming to their image of the feminine. Female failure to so conform "effectively wields a dagger against his notion of the self" (in Patton 1993:20). That women can turn the dagger self-ward is taken as suggesting "the possibility of non-conformity ... of artistry" (in Patton 1993:20).

That women's apparent achievement of dependency on men is a pyrrhic victory is evident in an earlier passage, "The parasite", which argues that:

It indicates a complete lack of nobility of disposition when someone prefers to live in dependency, at the expense of others, merely so as not to have to work and usually with a secret animosity towards those he is dependent on. Such a disposition is much more frequent among women than men, also much more excusable (for historical reasons) (1986:143#356).

While reaching similar conclusions to 'Hesiod', this section offers them more sympathetically and does not attribute this outcome to feminine wile. The historical factors explaining it are left unspecified - although it could be that cunning is the cause that is not elaborated until the later Hesiod passage. But the fact that the cause lies in history indicates that Nietzsche does not see the outcome as irrevocable. A further feature of this argument is the way it assesses women's position by the criterion of autonomy which is central to the Nietzschean notion of nobility. He values autonomy in thought, action and care of the self, for:

To satisfy one's necessary requirements as completely as possible oneself, even if imperfectly, is the road to **freedom of spirit and person**. To let others satisfy many of one's requirements, even superfluous ones ... is a training in **unfreedom** (1986:389#318.FN's emphasis).

This again suggests some gender-neutrality in application (if not constitution) of the virtues advocated by the middle period for if independence were a male prerogative, women's lack would be unnoteworthy or insurmountable.

Further evidence that women can realise some of the same values as men comes in one of Nietzsche's discussions of the power of ruling and being ruled in turn. As Chapter Seven indicates, this is an important quality of spiritual aristocrat he envisages and it is a facet of caring for the self. Although it has traditionally been seen as a male virtue, especially in the Greek context, Nietzsche allows it to be gender neutral:

That in which men and women of the nobility excel others and which gives them an undoubted right to be rated higher consists in two arts ever more enhanced through inheritance: the art of commanding and the art of proud obedience ... (1986:162#440).

This stands in marked contrast to the traditional essentialist view, which

Nietzsche sometimes espouses, that the excellence of male virtue is to command and female to obey.<sup>19</sup>

That females are contained by social conditioning rather than inherent limitations is also illustrated forcefully in Nietzsche's reflection on girls' education. He advocates that they not go to grammar-school, not because they are unequal to it but because this would subject them to a procrustean training. Unschooled girls are "spirited, knowledge-thirsty, passionate young people" (1986:153#409) and Nietzsche fears that giving them a conventional education will sap their spirit and strength, reducing them to "images of their teachers!" (1986:153#409). Daybreak's reference to "the supreme principle of all education, that one should offer food only to him **who hungers for it!**" (1982: 115#195.FN's emphasis) further suggests that the quality of the education rather than its female consumers, is deficient here. That Nietzsche is not critical of females being educated is again evident when Human notes that "with us all higher education was for a long time introduced to women only through love-affairs and marriage" (1986:121#259) but does not advocate a return to this form of male control of female education. These reflections on female education provide further evidence for the thesis that the middle period sees Nietzsche thinking about the possibility of women becoming part of the new aristocracy.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> This is the sort of possibility Ansell-Pearson overlooks when he writes that:

Nietzsche's thought is 'sexist' in that, like most traditional aristocratic thinking (Plato being the obvious exception), it excludes women from engaging in the public agon, and restricts her role to the private or domestic sphere (in Patton 1993:31).

While it could be that women are confined to commanding and obeying in the private sphere, the classical association of ruling and being ruled in turn with the public realm suggests not.

<sup>20</sup> Contrast this with Beyond's point that women should not be educated, for:

the world's most powerful and influential women (most recently the mother of Napoleon) owed their power and ascendancy over men precisely to the force of their will - and not to schoolmasters! (1973:149#239)

As I read it, the middle period's position on women's education is also

However this description of unschooled girls longing for knowledge seems to clash with that shortly after of the female aversion to disengaged, impartial knowledge. Preferring to personalise issues and things, women are ill suited to pursuits like politics or sciences like history in "On the emancipation of women" (1986:154-5#416). Rare is she who really knows what science is, and even then she is likely to harbour "a secret contempt for it" (1986:155#416). Indeed women's hostility to the scientific approach to knowledge resounds throughout these writings, and in this they resemble youths, artists and the religious - all criticised in Nietzsche's positivist period (1986:221#30.1982:217#544.1974:235#293). And because the middle period so lauds science's free and impartial pursuit of truth, women's constitutional incapacity for it would be a serious obstacle in their ascent to freespirtdom.

However Nietzsche's favourable depiction of knowledge-thirsty girls suggests that women's incapacity for science is not inborn but caused by their education, which is consonant with his other suggestions about social conditioning. Two further considerations prevent the 'emancipation' passage from mounting a determinist reading of women as inherently inferior to men

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different from the one Allen imputes to Nietzsche. She suggests that he attacks feminists seeking access for women to education (in Clark & Lange 1979:123). One reason is that "education will inevitably turn women into men" (1979:129. cf.130), although how this can be reconciled with her claim that Nietzsche assumes the necessity of "a false sex-polarity" (1979:123.cf.128) is unclear. As Allen portrays it, the polarised view of gender assumes that males and females are born with certain innate qualities, and that men are endowed with reason and other Apollonian virtues while women are more Dionysian, specialising in sentiment and passion (Allen in Clark & Lange 1979:122,129). It must also assume that these traits are either insurmountable or resistant to change - otherwise their being inherent is not so important. But if Nietzsche believes that a social process like education can transform women into men, then the sex-polarity Allen attributes to him must be of secondary relevance compared with the power of socialisation. Allen never formulates let alone tackles this dilemma - maybe we are to infer that it is an illustration of the ambivalence she discerns in Nietzsche's ideas about women. However the only ambivalence she identifies in this regard is the tension between his simultaneous attraction to cultured, educated women like Cosima Wagner or Lou Salomé and his "fear that woman's emancipation will destroy women's instincts ... based on the false supposition that if women enter into education and public life they will become like men" (in Clark & Lange 1979:130).



when it comes to a pursuit Nietzsche values. The first is its implication that women, or at least those in a position to, freely reject the scientific approach to knowledge, feeling superior to it. (This is later undercut though when Human explains women's dislike of science as a mixture of "envy and sentimentality" (1986:276#265) for Nietzsche usually attributes envy to incapacity and inferiority). The second point that frees this position from determinism, and which is presumably a corollary of the idea of choice, is the concession that this might not be permanent: "all this may change" (1986:155 #416).

Human's next passage, "Inspiration in female judgement" (1986:155 #417) picks up on this point about women forming quick and partial assessments. Instead of going on to criticise them, it attacks the men who praise their perspicacity and intuition.<sup>21</sup> Even then though, his criticism stems not from the fact that women are wrong to think like this - instead the error lies in taking this to be the sole or highest form of knowledge. Because anything can be approached from several perspectives, such rapid judgements are bound to contain some truth but only some, so women's knowledge should know itself to be partial in both senses of the term. Thus what begins as an apparent condemnation of a typically female approach to knowledge ends as a qualified endorsement of it by becoming a statement about perspectivism.

Something similar transpires two passages later in the depiction of women's ability to sustain contradictory ideas (1986:155#419). Although their approach to knowledge is attacked, when read after the endorsement of perspectivism, the capacity to entertain contradictory ideas becomes a strength and a prerequisite of a higher form of consciousness. Moreover when this section is read self-referentially, Nietzsche's text becomes a woman's head, for

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<sup>21</sup> Compare Human's "The female intellect" (1986:153-4#411) which explains such admiration as reflecting men's own deep, essential nature. Although trading in essentialist notions of gender, this position essentialises men as well as women, levelling Nietzsche's treatment of the genders to some extent. It also reverses the traditional view of men as intrinsically cool and detached reasoners and as such illustrates one of the several stances Nietzsche takes toward the essentialist tradition.

myriad contradictory ideas co-exist there. No attempt is made to purge tensions and paradoxes - instead acknowledging these is given as one of the rationales for adopting the aphoristic form, which is held to provide a better reflection of the variegated, contradictory character of the world (Chapter Three). As such, women's way of thinking can again be read as superior to linear, rigorous thought. To further confuse this issue though, and show what a really 'female head' his text is, Nietzsche later writes that women cannot manage contradiction and complexity:

reverence on ten points and silent disapprobation on ten others seems to them impossible at the same time, because they possess wholesale souls (1986:279#284).

The possibility that women's way of knowing is socially constructed rather than endemic and therefore can be overcome is developed a little later in "Storm-and-stress period of women" which predicts that:

In the three of four civilized countries of Europe women can through a few centuries of education be made into anything, even into men: not in the sexual sense, to be sure, but in every other sense. Under such a regimen they will one day have acquired all the male strengths and virtues, though they will also of course have had to accept all their weaknesses and vices into the bargain ... (1986:157#425).

Not only does this furnish further evidence of the middle period's historicist readings of gender but it indicates female potential for spiritual aristocracy, for an important component of this is intellectual strength and daring. Providing a microcosm of my argument about the aristocracy of spirit versus the aristocracy of birth model (Chapter Seven), this passage depicts a struggle within women between their "primeval properties" and their "newly learned and acquired" ones (1986:157#425) but is confident that the latter will triumph. Although it goes on to lament "the intermediate stage" when this struggle plays itself out and women's involvement in social affairs increases babble in philosophy, partisanship in politics and dilettantism in the arts (1986:157#425), interregnum is a leitmotif of the middle period (1986:117#248,118#250.1982:104#171,190-91#453) so this picture is consistent with Nietzsche's wider view rather than a swingeing critique of women.

'Storm and stress''s image of women acquiring male traits suggests that

Human's earlier portrayal of them as "custodians of the ancient" (1986:44#64) does not capture the insuperable female self. That women can and should be tutored in scientific thinking is reiterated in Human (1986:202#635), although "Disgust at truth" declares that "Women are so constituted" that they loathe the truth and resent attempts to impose it on them (1986:279#286). While the forces so constituting women are not spelled out, this does gesture toward an essentialist notion of female nature. However in Daybreak, as part of a litany of sins against the truth, Nietzsche denounces talking "of compliments to women who are later to become mothers and not of the truth" (1982:117#196), implying that women are insufficiently exposed to truth.<sup>22</sup> This could explain how they come to abhor it, again intimating criticism of their education and socialisation rather than intrinsic nature, for were women inherently unequal to the truth, their insulation from it could not be condemned.<sup>23</sup>

Another indictment of women's approach to knowledge comes in "Employment of novelties" which claims that they use new knowledge to adorn themselves - women do not value learning in itself, but only in so far as it beautifies them. While men also have an instrumental view of knowledge, they use it for practical rather than aesthetic ends: "as a ploughshare, perhaps also as a weapon" (1986:280#290). However this impression of women as preoccupied with, if not exhausted by, appearance and embellishment does not dominate the middle period. Human's observation that "Generally speaking, the more beautiful a woman is the more modest she is" (1986:152#398) seems to

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<sup>22</sup> This exclamation also suggests that Allen's comment that Nietzsche: did not consider the **psychological** or spiritual dimension of child-rearing by the mother to be significant (in Clark & Lange 1979:120. CA's emphasis)

is not wholly accurate, at least in the middle period.

<sup>23</sup> Again I reject Diethe's conclusions that rationality is "directly harmful" to women (1989:865), that "Nietzsche believes that women should not try to deepen their knowledge, but should remain on the level of instinctive sexual proclivity" (1989:868) and her claim about "the particularly strong abhorrence Nietzsche felt towards any kind of scholarly pursuit in a woman" (1989:869.c.f. 870). These comments neglect the full picture of women drawn in the middle period and so cannot be imputed to 'Nietzsche' unqualified.

be offered without irony and suggests that most beautiful women do not exploit this power. That woman's highest virtue is beauty is rejected when Human dismisses "the beautiful face of a mindless woman" as "mask-like" (1986:101#218) and worth little. This idea returns in Book Seven, where obsession with appearance makes some women all surface and no substance, "almost spectral, necessarily unsatisfied beings" (1986:152#405). While Nietzsche appreciates the appeal of such women and the endless search for their soul, men desiring them are "commiserated with" (1986:152#405). Book Seven also offers a powerful criticism of women beautifying themselves to attract a husband for this is only a refined form of courtesanly behaviour (1986:152#404).

A related point about women and appearance is made in "The Wanderer and His Shadow" as part of a wider argument about fashion. The spread of modernity and Europeanisation replaces national costume with fashionable clothes (1986:363#215) but within this trend, interest in clothes that make a statement varies with maturity, autonomy and gender. While women wear clothes to mark them as part of a certain social echelon or cohort (1986:364#215), Nietzsche does not present this as evincing their necessary interest in appearance; rather it wanes as they wax:

**The more** women grow inwardly, however, and cease among themselves to give precedence to the immature as they have done hitherto, the smaller these variations in their costume and the simpler their adornment will become ... (1986:364#215. FN's emphasis).

But much separates this prediction from the portrait of "The female mind in contemporary society" (1986:375-6#270) which observes that women present themselves to attract men (cf. 1974:126#68). The assumption behind their self-making is that intelligence deters suitors, so sensuality is accentuated and intellect downplayed. Nietzsche's critique of beauty as a substitute for intellect is amplified in an aphorism warning of the "Danger in beauty":

This woman is beautiful and clever, but how much cleverer she would have become if she were not beautiful! (1982:151#282)

This again evidences Nietzsche's attack on the prizing of female beauty to the detriment of self-development for were this acceptable or natural, beauty would

pose women no danger. Thus Ansell-Pearson's conclusion that "Woman's primary role for Nietzsche is one of adornment" (in Patton 1993:31) does not apply to the middle period.<sup>24</sup>

Nonetheless the argument that Nietzsche's middle period offers a non-essentialist, sympathetic reading of the female condition captures only one of its dimensions. As indicated, there are also arguments to challenge and contradict many of those set out above. In particular the idea that the highest virtues are accessible to women is refuted by claims about the impossibility of female free spirits. "Disharmony of concords" exemplifies this:

Women want to serve and in that they discover their happiness:  
and the free spirit wants not to be served and in that he  
discovers his happiness (1986:159#432).

As this indicates, not only are women ineligible for free spirithood but Nietzsche sometimes contends that even consorting with them is hazardous, a threat which is even more explicit in "Pleasing adversary":

The natural tendency of women towards a quiet, calm, happy, harmonious existence, the way they pour soothing oil on the sea of life, unwittingly works against the heroic impulse in the heart of the free spirit. Without realizing it, women behave as one would do who removed the stones from the path of the wandering mineralogist so that his foot should not strike against them - whereas he has gone forth so that his foot **shall** strike against them (1986:159#431.FN's emphasis).

The reference to women's "natural tendency" defies the previous argument about Nietzsche's non-essentialist reading of gender. However ambiguity increases when Human later detects this supposedly natural female longing for happiness and contentment only in "women who lack a soul-fulfilling/occupation" (1986:254/5#173). This taps into the earlier point about society discouraging female occupation and self-development. Moreover Science dismisses this image of women as harmonious, peace-loving and soothing as idealised (1974:124#60) leaving unclear exactly what, if any, is 'woman's

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<sup>24</sup> It might be more appropriate for the later works where Nietzsche argues, for example, that "self-adornment pertains to the eternal-womanly, does it not?" and that woman's "supreme concern is appearance and beauty" (1973:145#232).

natural tendency'.<sup>25</sup>

Nietzsche's vacillation on female admission to free spiritdom is captured in microcosm in Science's "Women who master the masters" (1974:127#70). He describes the way voices in the theatre can evoke new possibilities:

All at once we believe that somewhere in the world there could be women with lofty, heroic, and royal souls, capable of and ready for grandiose responses, resolutions, and sacrifices, capable of and ready for rule over men because in them the best elements of man apart from his sex have become an incarnate ideal (1974:127#70).

However the passage ends by undermining the possibility it so vividly scripts so that what it gives to the cause of female nobility with one hand, it takes away with the other.<sup>26</sup> Its attunement to voice is, however, echoed in Human's "Laughter as treason" (1986:278#276) which claims that how and when a woman laughs discloses her culture, while the sound of her laugh betrays her nature. In highly refined women laughter may reveal "the last inextinguishable remnants of her nature" (1986:278#276). That women are here singled out for vocal analysis picks up two of the above points - their tendency to be more heavily socialised than men and, related to this, that their

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<sup>25</sup> Again I interpret this passage differently from Diprose who makes it part of her wider argument about male identity constructing femaleness in a way that shores up its maleness (in Patton 1993:15-16). She argues that "The metaphor of noise suggests that women exceed the concept 'woman' which man posits" (in Patton 1993:21). My reading is more literal and, as such, closer to Deutscher's (in Patton 1993:170).

<sup>26</sup> Allen discusses this "extremely innovative" section, remarking that: In this extraordinary passage we find Nietzsche raising the curtain on 'possibilities in which we do not usually believe'. He is clearly/excited by these possibilities, open to them, and willing to consider women as capable of the fullest philosophical development (in Clark & Lange 1979:126/7).

However she curiously fails to note that the passage ends by talking about the theatre as "unconvincing: such voices always retain some motherly and housewifely coloration" (1974:127#70). As such Allen could have cited it as an illustration of the ambivalence she discerns in Nietzsche.

appearance need not be a window to their soul.<sup>27</sup>

Despite its convolutions, one certain thing to come out of this survey of the middle period's views on women is just what a *mélange* of rival ideas it represents. Laying out Nietzsche's different views might create some sense of where their burden lies or it could be that in the final analysis no resolution nor even summation of his position is possible. However even if the latter holds, the mere recognition of their contradictory nature, of just what 'a woman's head' his ideas on gender are, is a gain for as mentioned, when read literally, Nietzsche is too readily dismissed as a misogynist. As per the above passage on perspectivism, while such a 'womanly', quick and partial assessment of his work might convey some of the truth, it is only some.<sup>28</sup>

Although this does not automatically absolve Nietzsche from misogyny, Daybreak identifies and tries to explain hatred of women. "Misogynists" contends that demonising women is born of "an immoderate drive" which hates itself "but its means of satisfaction of well" (1982:165#346). Illustrating La Rochefoucauld's claim that criticism can be projection (Chapter Six), Nietzsche

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<sup>27</sup> Contrast Beyond's claim that women are more natural than men (1973: 149#234).

<sup>28</sup> Thus there is some overlap between my approach and Allen's. She explains "Nietzsche's ambivalence about women" as "part of a general ambivalence he felt towards anything he loved and hated at the same time" (in Clark & Lange 1979:128). This implies that we need to consider Nietzsche's treatment of women in the same way that we would treat his depiction of any other issue, a stance akin to mine. Allen concludes that Nietzsche's ambivalence toward women is of the static type, showing no evidence of growth but being trapped in conflicting hopes, desires, ideas (1979:119) which could again be compatible with the suggestion here - that there may be no way of ultimately reconciling the middle period's divergent views on women. She reaches this conclusion via a "careful comparison of the entire corpus of his works" (in Clark & Lange 1979:131), claiming that her method was to take:  
each remark Nietzsche made about women ... consider it within the context of the book within which it was found, to compare it with remarks in other books, to compare it with his personal correspondence of the same period, and to consider the opinions of others towards his life (Allen in Clark & Lange 1979:131).

However her article shows little evidence of such thorough combing of Nietzsche's corpus, for even within the middle period there is much more ambivalence towards women than Allen allows for.

argues that men who proclaim hatred of women are actually overwhelmed with desire for them but detest the desire and the women who could satisfy it. Misogyny thus projects self-loathing and the middle period's accent on the nobility of self-love would make such a drive to preserve of lower beings. Moreover Daybreak calls Aeschylus an "ancient misogynist" with no hint that this is a term of endearment (1982:114#193).

Invoking La Rochefoucauld in discussing Nietzsche and misogyny is a propos, for as noted, it is sometimes argued that Nietzsche's supposed hatred of women is a legacy from the French moralists. One problem this sort of explanation should, but does not, address is lag time in influence, for although Nietzsche read the moralists most intently in his middle period, at this time his views on women are more nuanced and less vitriolic than they later become.<sup>29</sup> However a bigger obstacle to this interpretation is its attribution of misogyny

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<sup>29</sup> Allen also notes that Nietzsche is more receptive to women's possibilities in the middle period, and attributes this to his friendship with Lou Salomé:

His writing about women before and during their relationship opens the door to new possibilities in woman's identity; immediately after the break the door is slammed shut (in Clark & Lange 1979:126).

She concludes that "Lou's 'betrayal', among other things, brought this curtain crashing down and "Nietzsche never again considers women in the same way" (in Clark & Lange 1979:127). However there are problems with this thesis. Although Allen concedes above that Nietzsche could be positive towards women before meeting Salomé, her later reference to "a short interim period of one or two years during his relationship with Lou Salomé when he seemed to open the possibility for growth but then closed it" (1979:131) makes their friendship the independent variable in his attitude toward women. If this is so, how do we account for some of the positive things he said about women before meeting Salomé? As Allen notes (1979:126) they met in the year that Science was published, so how can the many positive references to women in Human and Daybreak be accounted for? Similarly, while it may be that Nietzsche's schism with Salomé so embittered him that he became more thoroughly vituperative towards women, an explanation for the insulting and demeaning things he wrote about women before the rupture must be found. However such an explanation might also account for those written after.

Such problems aside, one irritating thing about Allen's discussion of the Nietzsche-Salomé connection is the way Salomé is sometimes referred to as 'Lou' (1979:127,128) despite her intellectual credentials (1979:127) and the fact that men of comparable status are never called Friedrich (Nietzsche), Rainer (Rilke), Sigmund (Freud) or Heinrich (Ibsen).



to the moralists. A more accurate account would point out that La Rochefoucauld, Chamfort and Nietzsche depict women in an ambiguous way, rendering it too crude to charge the French moralists or Nietzsche with misogyny unmodified.

La Rochefoucauld typically portrays women in scenes of love and romance which is unsurprising given that "La coquetterie est le fond de l'humeur des femmes" (1977:67#241). This seems to establish an essentialist and determinist approach to gender, and the analysis of women's actions and intentions that flow from this premise is usually critical.<sup>30</sup> Such criticism is summarised in the claim that "La moindre défaut des femmes qui se sont abandonnées à faire l'amour, c'est de faire l'amour" (1977:56#131). From the details of this critique, a picture emerges of women in 'love' as either conniving, self-interested, ambitious and envious or weak and pliable. Romance distorts female judgement, letting them "pardonnent plus aisément les grandes indiscretions que les petites infidélités" (1977:82#429). The hollowness of their love comes in the fact that while women fall in love with a particular man, they soon prefer being in love to their lover (1977:85#466). Although the moralist claims that women are driven to love by passion (1977:85#471), elsewhere he attributes it to attrition - women succumb to the persistence of relentless men, yielding to their own weakness rather than desire (1977:98#56). Whatever their motives for beginning affairs, women continue for many reasons other than love - intrigue, desire to please, reluctance to refuse, belief that they are in love and so on (1977:70#277). And when a woman has had one affair, it is rarely the last:

On peut trouver des femmes qui n'ont jamais eu de galanterie;  
mais il est rare d'en trouver qui n'en aient jamais eu qu'une  
(1977:51#73.cf.87#499).

As this testifies, not all females are coquettes but La Rochefoucauld frequently presents the 'virtuous' as making a virtue of necessity, as not enamoured of their condition, at least not for moral reasons. "Les femmes

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<sup>30</sup> As Thweatt observes "Most personifications of feminine role in the Maximes are related to love, and the view is not a flattering one" (1980:195).

n'ont point de sévérité complète sans aversion" (1977:74#333) and "Il y a peu des honnêtes femmes qui ne soient lasses de leur métier" (1977:77#367). Although this latter observation allows that there are some genuinely honest women, its general thrust is that most 'honnêtes femmes' are not really - their behaviour, not their inclination, is honest. And while weakness allows some women to have affairs, it 'prompts' others to respectability. It is inertia's love of repose, rather than virtue, or their desire to maintain their reputation that dissuades them from coquetry (1977:62#205) rather than any principled disdain.

However when this portrayal of women and their seemingly gender-specific shortcomings is set against La Rochefoucauld's wider discussion of psychology and the moral life, it emerges that these are typically human, rather than uniquely female, vices and peccadilloes. All that is specific to women is the context of romantic love and even then men in love behave in similar ways (Chapter Ten). As has been shown, for La Rochefoucauld it is all too human to act (or do nothing) from weakness or habit rather than virtue and this often generates the appearance of merit. Being driven by passion or self-interest rather than reason and making faulty moral judgements are also typical. Feigning displays of emotion and using the love of others to inflate one's status, as most women do when mourning their lover's death (1977:76#362), are not confined to women either (1977:65-6#233). Ignorance of the mixture of motives contributing to outcomes is widespread, as is trusting appearances. That women's falsehood is general rather than peculiar to them is captured in one of the suppressed maxims:

On peut dire de toutes nos vertus ce qu'un poete italien a dit de l'honnêteté des femmes, que ce n'est souvent autre chose qu'un art de paraître honnête (1977:95#33).

Indeed if these were not the conditions of existence for most, La Rochefoucauld's work would be largely redundant for, as we have seen, one of its aims is to make readers aware of their hidden selves.

Another feature of La Rochefoucauld's wider discussion of morality that must be borne in mind if his analysis of women is to be more fully appreciated is the distinction between the many and the few. As we have seen,

his work features a sharp division between the ordinary and the elite human, with the ideals he advances being available only to an elevated minority. The moralist does not exclude women wholesale from the realisation of the good life but allows that a minority of superior ones do or can achieve what most cannot. Thus women who have had only one love affair are rare but exist, truly honest women are in the minority but not impossible, there are honest women who are not bored with their station and, as most women shed crocodile tears, there must be those who do not. If "Il y a peu de femmes dont le mérite dure plus que la beauté" (1977:85#474) there must be some. Most but not all use their minds to strengthen folly rather than reason (1977:75#340) and the claim that "Il ne peut y avoir de règle dans l'esprit ni dans le coeur de femmes, si le tempérament n'en est d'accord" (1977:75#346) applies the wider point about the centrality of the natural to women. The idea is that effecting qualities, no matter how laudable, is offensive if it does not accord with something in the individual's constitution. This is not a claim that women are incapable of reason - instead, that some are (as are some men) is conceded throughout by La Rochefoucauld.<sup>31</sup>

However if the moralist's assertion that coquetry is the basis of the female humour holds, this means that such superior women are not free of coquettish impulses but husband them. Indeed the remainder of the maxim indicates this, with its qualification that:

toutes [femmes] ne la [la coquetterie] mettent pas en pratique, parce que la coquetterie de quelques-unes est retenue par la crainte ou par la raison (1977:67#242).

As this shows, La Rochefoucauld's later claim that "Les femmes peuvent moins surmonter leur coquetterie que leur passion" (1977:74#334) does not mean that women are incapable of controlling this impulse - even if it is

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<sup>31</sup> In reading the moralist's virtues as androgynous, I depart from Krailsheimer's claim that La Rochefoucauld's virtuous women seem to be denied either moral or social approbation and are subject to quite different criteria than men (1962:93). Moore is closer to the mark when he argues that: The ideal ... is that of the honnête homme, but ... this expression stressed neither honesty nor masculinity, but rather considerate behaviour, and applied to women as well (1969:58).

stronger than their passions, they need not remain its victim. And presumably this applies to the forces of self-love, interest, inertia and so forth that spoil or defeat most women - what is decisive is not their presence or absence but their mastery.

This points to the need to distinguish between essentialism and determinism in La Rochefoucauld's work. That women might be something in essence does not mean that they must submit to this - there is some margin for self-fashioning. One reason for this is that, as shown in Chapter Two, La Rochefoucauld depicts the human psyche as an arena of competing forces and individuals have some power to set their virtues against their vices, one vice against another, one passion against others or against interests and so forth. Thus the self is not determined by its humour - other forces come or can be brought into play to mitigate or reconfigure this. This reading of women is therefore continuous with my interpretation of the moralist's analysis of moral life and the claim that an important part of La Rochefoucauld's work is elucidating the play of these forces in human action and to enhance readers' self-awareness.

Evidence of the need to foster women's self-awareness comes in the maxim above where "Les femmes croient souvent aimer encore qu'elles n'aiment pas" for many factors conspire "leur persuadent qu'elles ont de la passion lorsqu'elles n'ont que de la coquetterie" (1977:70#277). Thus women's quest for self-knowledge must pierce their own and society's image of them as primarily coquettes and lovers. It may be that one of the reasons the moralist focuses on this domain of female activity and identity is that women are so immersed in their role as coquettes that they cannot see it: "Les femmes ne connaissent pas toute leur coquetterie" (1977:74#332) and those who deny their coquetry are, in so doing, playing the coquette (1977:54#107). Thus if women's self-knowledge is to be heightened, the extent of their coquetry must be made as plain as possible.

Nor should it be inferred that because La Rochefoucauld repeatedly situates women in the realm of romance, this is the only place he thinks they belong. A hint that this is socially conditioned emerges in a long maxim,

which is really more of a reflexion, discussing suffering and hypocrisy.<sup>32</sup> One form of hypocrisy is the extended mourning engaged in by "certaines personnes qui aspirent à la gloire d'une belle et immortelle douleur" (1977:65 #233). This is pronounced among ambitious women because:

Comme leur sexe leur ferme tous les chemins qui mènent à la gloire, elles s'efforcent de se rendre célèbres par la montre d'une inconsolable affliction (1977:66#233).

Some women long for the immortality of glory but because the social avenues affording this to men are closed to women, they redirect this drive to a more feminine outlet.<sup>33</sup> That women's capacities are not exhausted by romance is also apparent in the moralist's acknowledgement that "Une femme peut aimer les sciences" even if "toutes les sciences ne lui conviennent pas toujours" (1977:127#XIII).<sup>34</sup>

La Rochefoucauld outlines a range of authentic virtues that women, or

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<sup>32</sup> This claim that the moralist's work contains some sense that women are socialised into certain roles rather than playing them because of their nature is not wholly anachronistic. As Lougee reveals there was in seventeenth century France a view that social conditioning influenced gender behaviour (1976:16) Later on she writes that "Feminists recognized the importance of custom in restraining women's endeavours ... [and] used this insight as a call for change ..." (1976:64). Similarly Craveri reports that:

Poullain, a follower of Descartes and a "militant feminist" argued in his De l'égalité des deux sexes (1673) that the supposed inferiority of women was not natural but cultural, the result of biased education; women, he thought, could receive immense benefits from academic learning (1993:40).

<sup>33</sup> Lougee's survey of 'feminist' views on women in seventeenth century France notes that "In heroic terms women possessed equally the qualities requisite for grace and gloire" (1976:15).

<sup>34</sup> That other roles for women are only hinted at by the moralist is curious though, as Thweatt notes when discussing:

the signal absence of the femme forte ... The Amazons of the Fronde leave little trace in La Rochefoucauld's presentations of love and few visible signs of their undeniable influence on La Rochefoucauld's life and on their own time (1980: 193).

Compare Bordeaux:

Jusqu'au milieu du siècle les grandes dames gardent encore des allures belliqueuses, ce sont des amazones; sous la Fronde elles commandent des troupes en campagne, soulèvent la populace des villes (1895:9).

the superior among them, can pursue for the virtues to be discovered and practised in the community of 'honnêtes gens' are effectively androgynous. A good example of this comes in the significance accorded to the well-tuned conversation,<sup>35</sup> an ideal which it was suggested informs Nietzsche's image of dialogue and its delights.<sup>36</sup> This also offers further illustration of the prescriptive aspect of the moralist's writing for in several places he specifies the norms of a good conversation.<sup>37</sup> It also exemplifies one of Chapter Three's points about style in La Rochefoucauld, for when he makes a surgical strike attacking current conversational practices, he uses conventional aphorisms (1977:73#314,77#364). However when he wants to elaborate on and explain the ingredients of a good conversation, he moves to a reflexion (1977:115-16#IV) or lengthier maxim (1977:57#139).<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> As he declares in his Self-Portrait:

Les conversations des honnêtes gens est un des plaisirs qui me touchent le plus. J'aime qu'elle soit sérieuse et que la morale en fasse la plus grande partie ... (1977:166).

<sup>36</sup> Chamfort also wrote in praise of conversation and so could have had some effect on Nietzsche in this regard too. He writes, for example, that:

Les conversations ressemblent aux voyages qu'on fait sur l'eau: on s'écarte de la terre sans presque le sentir, et l'on ne s'aperçoit qu'on a quitté le bord que quand on est déjà bien loin (1968:106#265).

However, consistent with my wider argument about Chamfort's work not espousing a positive morality as forcefully as La Rochefoucauld and Nietzsche's do, this is not developed by Chamfort.

<sup>37</sup> According to Starobinski, conversation plays such a central role in La Rochefoucauld's thought because it is a realm of mastery where humans can, albeit temporarily, overcome their helplessness to create a second nature for themselves and an artificial, meaningful world (1966:214.cf.218,225).

<sup>38</sup> On the question of style and conversation, Donnellan notes that "the French aphorists consciously modelled their language on the fluency and simplicity of refined speech". (1982:158) Of La Rochefoucauld in particular, Liebich notes that:

S'il n'y a pas de véritable dialogue dans les Maximes, les blancs entre elles sont une sorte d'invite au lecteur à réagir. En se taisant, La Rochefoucauld encourage la participation, même factice, du lecteur, et évite ainsi l'emphase d'un monologue ... (1982:312/3.cf.315-6)

and

Les Maximes étant surtout un travail d'honnête homme, les mêmes

One of the moralist's major criticisms of current conversational practice is a point Nietzsche echoes - that people treat what should be exchanges as chances to discourse about themselves:

On sait assez qu'il ne faut pas guère parler de sa femme; mais on ne sait pas assez qu'on devrait encore moins parler de soi (1977:77#364. cf.115-116#IV).

(This reference to one's wife could suggest that this is more of a male than a female indulgence). The moralist indicates the insensitivity of this, challenging the monologist's perception that what pleases them automatically pleases another:

L'extrême plaisir que nous prenons à parler de nous-mêmes nous doit faire craindre de n'en donner guère à ceux qui nous écoutent (1977:73 #314).

As this implies, conversations consisting of one or alternate monologues ignore the imperatives of the 'art de plaire' which counsel consideration for the other's enjoyment. As Dens notes "Le "secret" de l'art de plaire consiste alors à s'accommoder à la personnalité et aux tendances d'autrui" (1981:57). One way of achieving this is not to dominate the conversation in time, tone or content (1977:115-116#IV). Another is to listen, rather than plan one's imminent contribution while the other is speaking. Attending to the other also guarantees a genuine response, rendering the exchange more rational as well as more agreeable:

bien écouter et bien répondre est une des plus grandes perfections

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principes de la sociabilité qui regissent l'entretien s'appliquent au genre mondain comme La Rochefoucauld l'a conçu. Dans son recueil, le moraliste cultivait le même plaisir intellectuel parfois délicat de la conversation ... (1982:316/7.cf.Thweatt 1980:43)

However when the moralist wants to talk about, rather than imitate, conversation, he often reverts to a longer form. It is interesting to note here "The Wanderer and His Shadow's" reflection on this whole ambition to replicate a conversation. In a dialogue with the Shadow, the Wanderer says:

A conversation that gives delight in reality is, if transformed into writing and read, a painting with nothing but false perspectives: everything is too long or too short (1986:302).

Shortly after this their conversation breaks off. It is replaced by aphorisms and reflexions until the final page where the dialogue form resumes.

qu'on puisse avoir dans la conversation (1977:57#139).

As "De la conversation" insists, the norm of reciprocity also operates here for we want others to listen to us. All this assumes that conversation is fundamentally about sharing but by La Rochefoucauld's own account, this seemingly basic hypothesis is violated in much intercourse. Much so-called conversation comprises people expounding views for their own edification, to flatter their self-image or manufacture an image for popular consumption rather than really convey some of themselves to another. Against this, a good conversation aims to enter the spirit and taste of the other, to follow what they are saying, even if this sometimes seems trivial, useless or boring (1977:115 #IV).

The good conversationalist is also versatile, knowing that different audiences appreciate different sorts of conversation (1977:116#IV). The content, as well as the manner, of one's contribution should be sensitive to the interlocutors, tailoring itself to their humour and inclination and never pressing them to respond. Subjects should be left open for this means both that one will not discourse too long on any one thing and that the other always has some entrée to the discussion.

Throughout a fine line must be tread between hospitality to the other and effacement or misrepresentation of the self. Despite the imperatives of the art of pleasing, La Rochefoucauld does not suggest that one should deceive in order to please. What matters is how one conveys views:

On peut conserver ses opinions, si elles sont raisonnables; mais en les conservant, il ne faut jamais blesser les sentiments des autres, ni paraître choqué de ce qu'ils ont dit (1977:116#IV).

How views are withheld is also crucial - as he notes, the pauses and silences of a conversation can be just as eloquent as its vocals. Silence is thus a form of communicating as well as of listening and is polyvocal, signifying approval, condemnation, mockery or respect (1977:116#IV). The good conversationalist employs silences as artfully, expressively and considerately as words.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> As Stanton puts it "La Rochefoucauld confirms that listening has a semiology of its own and represents a vital form of activity". (1980:144)



The care with which La Rochefoucauld outlines the components of a good conversation show it to be a core element of his art of pleasing. But nothing in his prescription makes this good inaccessible to women - if anything, men must refine themselves more to become agreeable interlocutors.<sup>40</sup> Indeed the move to the salon as the most valued milieu of social life<sup>41</sup> and the art of pleasing in general with its emphasis on sensitivity, self-effacement, grace, gentleness, subtlety, delicacy and consideration for others is a feminisation of virtue, displacing the typically aggressive, competitive, virtu-driven and masculine heroic ethos. As such it could be read as the triumph of feminine over masculine values.<sup>42</sup> However this holds only

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<sup>40</sup> The moralist says as much in his Self-Portrait:

Quand elles ont l'esp rit bien fait, j'aime mieux leur conversation que celle des hommes: on y trouve une certaine douceur qui ne se rencontre point parmi nous, et il me semble outre cela qu'elles s'expliquent avec plus de netteté et qu'elles donnent un tour plus agréable aux choses qu'elles disent (1977:168).

<sup>41</sup> The power of women in the salons is made plain by Lougee's claim that what set salons apart from:

other cultural institutions such as the all-male literary circles and the society of the cabarets and coffee houses, was precisely the dominance of women ... Salons were always run by a woman; the tone and aim of the gatherings were set by the presence of ladies as much as by the intermingling of writers and patrons (1976:5),

Lough argues that:

From the emergence of the salons dates the predominance of women in French social life, and their emancipation from a semi-feudal subjection to a position, not merely of equality, but even of supremacy over men. (1957:225.cf.235.cf.Craveri 1993:40,42)

<sup>42</sup> As Bordeau puts it:

Les femmes ont joué dans cette transformation un rôle essentiel. Ce sont elles qui fondent au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle la société polie ... avec la tendance des mœurs à s'adoucir, elles ont déjà trouvé dans la vie de salon un nouveau théâtre pour les exploits. Partout ailleurs l'homme est le maître; là c'est la femme qui reçoit les hommages; elle inaugure son règne (1895:9.cf.15.),

Deschanel notes that this is reflected in writing:

La France est peut être le pays où la conversation des femmes a le plus d'influence, particulièrement sur la littérature. C'est dans la conversation que naquirent ou se développerent deux genres fort à la mode alors, les Portraits et les Maximes. (1885:18.cf.70.cf.Stanton

at the metaphorical level, for no specific vice or virtue preponderates in either gender. While women are encouraged by society to present themselves as embodiments of the feminine graces, the moralist's exposé shows that this is largely a hoax.<sup>43</sup> Similarly, despite its sublimation of the older heroic ethos, there is nothing in the quest for self-knowledge that excludes women for, as we have seen, La Rochefoucauld acknowledges the thirst for heroism and glory some harbour. Therefore the major difference between men and women is the realm in which they express, expose or reshape the forces driving them.

However with La Rochefoucauld's focus on salon life, what was henceforth women's domain becomes the dominant one for the practice by both genders of a range of androgynous virtues. The moralist does not segregate women to practise gender-neutral virtues in their own domain. Instead with the decline of the honour ethic, the salon world of women becomes home to the good life for them and men. Again the crucial social cleavage for La Rochefoucauld comes not from gender but the many/few distinction.<sup>44</sup> This also applies to Nietzsche, or to those parts of his work that do not present women as a subset of the inferior many.

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1980:81.Dens 1981:15)

<sup>43</sup> As such some of the moralist's criticisms of women can be read as contre 'la préciosité' rather than women per se. As Bordeau describes *l'Astrée*: "La femme/ y est l'objet du culte que l'on doit à un être supérieur" (1895:13/4.cf.Strowski 1925:194). For a general discussion of the moralist's background in préciosité, see Debu-Bridel (1938:200,206). This suggests that some of the moralist's disabusing remarks about women and love (Chapter Ten) are directed against himself, or his former self as well and thus offers another illustration of Clark's point, noted in Chapter Eight, about much of the moralist's cynicism deriving from disillusionment (1987:73).

<sup>44</sup> This cleavage resembles the view of one of the moralist's contemporaries - Marie de Gournay. For de Gournay:  
the most important dividing line is not sexual but the social identity of individuals. Humans are determined by their social environment - men and women in same milieu are most similar, while members of either sex from different milieux have far less in common (Lougee 1976:17). However La Rochefoucauld does not impute as much power to socialisation, and for him spiritual qualities are a further distinction within social strata that unite and separate individuals (Chapter Seven).

Similar sorts of observations can be made about Chamfort's depiction of women, although he does not stress the many/few cleavage as heavily as La Rochefoucauld and Nietzsche do. While Chamfort makes some very critical claims about women, in many cases these too need to be situated against the wider background of his thought to be fully appreciated. As with Nietzsche, many of Chamfort's attacks on women are challenged by remarks made elsewhere, so that focusing on his misogynist strand offers a uni dimensional reading of his work.

One way Chamfort suggests that women are inferior to men is by depicting them as objects at men's disposal. Succeeding with women is analogous to making money and in both cases knowing how to be bored is the key to success (1968:74#106). 'M.N--' no longer goes into society because he no longer likes women (1968:267#974) so has no need to consume or consort with them. This objectification of women is more overt in a longer passage rendering them inferior to men in terms of virtues and capacities. Women are "faites pour commercer avec nos faiblesses, avec notre folie, mais non avec notre raison" (1968:132#355), indicating both their status as objects and their exclusion from Chamfort's addressees; "nous" are not women (cf.1968:134#365).

One of Chamfort's strongest statements against women comes in a claim whose obverse side is, as we have seen, raised by Nietzsche, for the French moralist gestures toward an essentialist reading of women:

Les naturalistes disent que, dans toutes les espèces animales, la dégénération commence par les femelles. Les philosophes peuvent appliquer au morale cette observation, dans la société civilisée (1968: 136#381).

In another section, Voltaire tells a young boy that "toutes les femmes sont fausses et catins", defending this on the principle that children should not be deceived (1968:259#929). The corollary of this comes in a later passage - that it is impossible to both really know and really love women (1968:276#1027), implying that those who love women are deceived. Another description overturns the traditional image of women as essentially loyal, communal creatures by saying that they are not 'made' for attachment (1968:132#355).

Elsewhere Chamfort suggests men only overcome their contempt for women through vice and lust (1968:137#387). He reiterates La Rochefoucauld's warning that she who proclaims her virtue must be suspected of coquetry (1968:280#1050) although, again following La Rochefoucauld, Chamfort later concedes that while some coquettes set out to deceive others, others deceive themselves about their coquetry (1968:283#1061). But women are in a double bind when even the respectable among them are criticised. 'M', for example, dislikes "ces femmes impeccables, au-dessus de toute faiblesse" (1968:310#1190) because their suitors must abandon hope.

In Chamfort's work women exhibit many of the flaws that society at large possesses, for they value status and material goods instead of merit (1968:278#1037) and make judgements on trivial bases, especially about love (1968:132#350). Women also mirror society at large in dispensing their favours on grounds other than merit or sentiment (1968:134#362). To attract women men must feign dishonesty (1968:211#709) implying that, like that of society in general, female judgement is not just flimsy but corrupt and corrupting. Consistent with women's crassness and superficiality is Chamfort's observation that even cultivated women have no real taste for the arts, especially poetry (1968:234#817). Such similarities between society and women could be parallels or they could be illustrations of the above claim that women are responsible for the degeneration of civilised society. However even if this is so, it at least indicates that Chamfort is according women some agency and power and that Nietzsche's imputation of agency to women has some precedent in the moralist's thought.

Intensifying this imputation of agency to women, a certain fear of female power can be detected in some of Chamfort's analyses.<sup>45</sup> In a reversal

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<sup>45</sup> Echoing the work of the Goncourt brothers (1981), Arnaud outlines the extensive power women wielded in Chamfort's society:

Women effectively if unofficially reigned over society, like Mme de Pompadour over Louis XV. They could make or break ministers and academicians, with pillow talk or in the convenient intimacy of carriages ... Women brought writers and patrons together in their salons ... Women not only had a decisive impact on Chamfort's career, they

of the conventional view, men are sometimes cast as the playthings or showpieces of women and one passage links this explicitly with women's desire to exercise power over them (1968:132#352.cf.107#266). This image of man as woman's object also comes across in 'V's self-description, and 'V' is recommended, by Chamfort as one who lives without illusions. 'V' says that:

J'ai été dans mon temps ... l'amant d'une femme galante, le jouet d'une coquette, le passe-temps d'un femme frivole, l'instrument d'une intrigante. Que peut-on être de plus? (1968:266#962)

This impression is reinforced by the description of women choosing their lovers to impress other women (1968:135#373), which makes men marginal to the main game of females striving among themselves for recognition.

That gender relations involve power struggles is obvious in Chamfort's claim that "Les femmes font avec les hommes une guerre" (1968:134#366.cf. 135#371) although, as this aphorism goes on to note, the battle-lines are not co-extensive with gender, for 'les filles' are on the side of men. That there is no immediate or durable sympathy between men and women (1968:132#355) explains why nature generates lust, for without it there would be no coupling nor preservation of the species (1968:137#387). However the differences between men and women can also spice their interaction, for:

Ce qui rend le commerce des femmes si piquant, c'est qu'il y a toujours une foule de sous-entendus, et que les sous-entendus qui, entre hommes, sont gênants, ou du moins insipides, sont agréables d'un homme à une femme (1968:136#382)

The dislike Chamfort discerns between men and women is however, replicated if not heightened in intra-gender relations: "Quelque mal qu'un homme puisse penser des femmes, il n'y a pas de femme qui n'en pense encore plus mal à lui" (1968:141#413). This also suggests that the cohesion among women in the battle of the sexes is based more on their common struggles with men than any allegiance or sympathy with one another - a point born out in another of Chamfort's claims that women are like kings in not

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made their mark everywhere, whether as socialites, the demi-monde, or the favourites of a king with a particularly large sexual appetite. Men reportedly became their puppets. (1992:32)

having friends. This criticism is accentuated by the claim that the vanity preventing them from friendship also prevents their missing it (1968:134#363). Chamfort also suggests that women only want to be friends when they cannot succeed at love (1968:139#403) and the idea of a genuine friendship with a woman is fictional (1968:266#962). Given the high regard in which he holds friendship, these are severe criticisms of women indeed.<sup>46</sup>

'M', so often the mouthpiece for views Chamfort endorses, recommends the following code of conduct in dealing with women:

Parler toujours du sexe en général; louer celles qui sont aimables; se taire sur les autres; les voir peu; ne s'y fier jamais; et ne jamais laisser dépendre son bonheur d'une femme, quelle qu'elle soit (1968:272 #1002),

However Chamfort does not heed all of 'M's advice; although his work praises likeable women, it is not silent about the others. Nor does the belief that one should always speak about women in general go unchallenged for although Chamfort often generalises about gender, his work contains, as is the case with his misanthropy, the elements of a critique of such generalisations. And in some cases Chamfort's attack on women is simply a particular expression of his wider social critique rather than an implication that women have corrupted society. For instance (like Hamlet) 'M N--' no longer likes men or women, and so keeps away from society (1968:267#974). The pretensions of beautiful young women find their equivalent in young men's gallantry and illustrate Chamfort's wider point about pretensions as a source of distress (1968:60#42). The claim that when women reveal themselves it is rarely to an 'honnête homme' also evidences his general view that individuals only violate public opinion or normal practice in order to stoop beneath it (1968:95-6#210).

Moreover that some women are worthy of praise surfaces repeatedly throughout Chamfort's work. Although sometimes identified as the source of

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<sup>46</sup> But they contrast markedly with Chamfort's description of his friendship with Marie Buffon where:

il y avait plus et mieux que de l'amour, puisqu'il existait une réunion complète de tous les rapports d'idées, de sentiments et de positions (Letter to l'Abbé Roman. 4.3.1784 in Chamfort 1968:383).

social decay, women are also among the higher of the human species, who can measure properly their dignity and that of others as well as the world's folly and vanity (1968:55#19).<sup>47</sup> One passage divides women into two categories "femmes de qualité, ou filles" (1968:100#232) but this is presented as an historical rather than ontological classification, produced by the simultaneous progress of philosophy and growth of foolishness. Elsewhere honest women are distinguished from courtesans (1986:153#458) and some women are capable of deep feeling, courage and violating social norms, even if these strengths are mitigated by other weaknesses (1968:132#350). 'M' is mostly indifferent to women because "il y en a peu" (1968:283#1064) of the sort he admires, but 'peu' is not 'ne pas' meaning that there are some, which may also be said of the men he admires. 'M' also values and even needs the company of women "pour tempérer la sévérité de ses pensées, et occuper la sensibilité de son âme" (1968:286#1083), which echoes La Rochefoucauld's association of women with the gentle virtues he values. Moreover Chamfort's use of the anecdote and caractère allows female figures to speak, instead of only being spoken about in his work (1968:135#373,222#760) which again makes them agents rather than objects. And sometimes the opinions women express enjoy the moralist's concord (1968:312#1201).<sup>48</sup>

All of this illustrates that Chamfort cannot be accused of unadulterated misogyny nor essentialism and as intimated, rudiments of a critique of essentialism exist in his work. This is again partly apparent in his style, for his frequent use of anecdotes and caractères suggests that he is trading in quite specific characters, rather than portraits of 'everyperson'. His anti-essentialism is, however, most evident in his attack on moralists who overgeneralise. Against Tacitus' claim about fallen women being irredeemable, Chamfort cites "l'exemple de tant de femmes qu'une faiblesse n'a pas empêchées de pratiquer

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<sup>47</sup> Perhaps like reason, woman is also pharmakon in Chamfort's thought, suggesting that it might also be amenable to a metaphorical reading of woman.

<sup>48</sup> It could be relevant here that, as Merwin notes, some of Chamfort's caractères and anecdotes derive from stories told him by his friend and collaborator, Mme Buffon (in Chamfort 1984:63.cf.Dousset 1943:118).

plusieurs vertus" (1968:119#293). The passage ends with a caution against being duped by "la charlatanerie des moralistes" (1968:119#293). While this must also serve as a caveat against Chamfort's own charlatantry and propensity to generalise, it also shows that one side of Chamfort can be invoked against his essentialising, generalising self. Moreover Chamfort's dialogue between Damon and Clitandre has *Chitandre*, an astute observer of women, deferring conclusions about them; she will give her opinion of them in "encore quelques années. C'est le parti le plus prudent" (1968:351#XX).

The historicist Chamfort can also be invoked against the naturalist Chamfort for, the above reference to the evidence from nature notwithstanding, Chamfort does not always contend that women's faults are inborn nor insurmountable. His work contains an argument that women's shortcomings derive from their socialisation and, as is the case with Nietzsche, these can be overcome. Nietzsche's suggestion that women are more heavily influenced and constrained by their socialisation also has some precedent in Chamfort's thought. This strand of thinking is most obvious in his claim that "La société, qui rapetisse beaucoup les hommes, réduit les femmes à rien" (1968:132#354) which undercuts his above suggestions that women are the cause of social decline. That women are limited by their socialisation is echoed in his observation that they marry before their identity has developed, so forming their character becomes the work of their husband (1968:138#395).<sup>49</sup>

Reflections like this also put a particular slant on Chamfort's later claim that:

Une femme n'est rien par elle-même; elle est ce qu'elle paraît à l'homme qui s'en occupe: voilà pourquoi elle est/ si furieuse contre ceux à qui elle ne paraît pas ce qu'elle voudrait paraître. Elle y perd son existence. L'homme est moins blessé parce qu'il rest ce qu'il est (1968:184/5#582),

This argument could be read as an ontological truth claim or as historicist observation and social criticism. On its own it is unclear which way it should be read, and there are precedents for both approaches in Chamfort's writing.

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<sup>49</sup> Compare Arnaud who, although accusing Chamfort of misogyny, says that his portrayal of gender "also underlined society's/wrongs and the privileges of males" (1992:42/3).



Thus while I am not claiming that it should unequivocally be taken as criticising current social arrangements, there are good grounds for such an interpretation so that it cannot be used as obvious evidence of Chamfort's misogyny.

Nietzsche's critique of the female preoccupation with appearance could also have some background in Chamfort's views. While the standard view is that as a woman's youth and beauty decline, she grows miserable and bitter, Chamfort suggests that women can actually achieve greater calm and tranquillity through ageing, for this frees them from pretensions (1968:60#42). But older women are not portrayed as entirely unattractive either for 'M's knowledge of the world has been increased by sleeping with women of forty and listening to men of eighty (1968:209#700) - both groups of people usually marginalised in the society Chamfort knew, loved and loathed. Chamfort is also critical of the fact that so much of women's sense of themselves is bound up in their appearance (1968:133#361). The tendency to take their beauty 'at face value' is also condemned for in an observation that reverberates in Nietzsche's description of beautiful women as 'spectral beings', Chamfort notes that rather than beautiful women giving all they have in their appearance, their beholders imagine themselves receiving things. It is their imagination that determines the worth of these illusory goods (1968:136#383). Later Chamfort holds women who value their soul or mind more than their appearance superior to their sex, for typical women put greater emphasis on their looks than their intellect or spirit (1968:139-40#405). And the men who prize women's beauty above their brains are chastised when Mme de Talmont retorts that "vous n'êtes point aveugle, mais je vous crois un peu sourd" (1968:312 #1201).

Thus while Nietzsche does continue some of the French moralists' attitudes toward women, this is not a legacy of unabated misogyny. In all cases the claims about women must be set against the thinker's wider position if they are to be fully appreciated. Each writer gestures toward an essentialist reading of women but this is always complicated by other factors and should not be extracted from their writing as expressing their definitive position. At

times Nietzsche follows Chamfort who sometimes advances an historicist reading of women's condition, making their situation and characteristics mutable. Both accord women a degree of agency even if they do not always approve of the way women have exercised this.

Nietzsche also follows La Rochefoucauld when judging women by the standards men are measured by, and in finding most wanting. Both however outline a range of virtues that the elite of either gender can practise and strive to perfect, and thus Nietzsche sometimes allows some women to be candidates for free-spirithood. Outlining common criteria by which to judge both genders is less evident in Chamfort but this is consistent with my more general view of his failure to delineate a positive morality as forcefully as do La Rochefoucauld and Nietzsche. For the latter two, men and women are able to attain the higher virtues even though they have hitherto been the province of one gender, be it the heroic virtues or those of politeness, grace and good conversation. Indeed in the case of Nietzsche, to insist that these virtues were intrinsically gendered would run afoul of the fact that "Everything has its day":

When man gave all things a sex he thought, not that he was playing, but that he had gained a profound insight: it was only very late that he confessed to himself what an enormous error this was, and perhaps now he has not confessed it completely (1982:9#3).

One way in which Nietzsche's depiction of women differs from the moralists' is through his weaving reflections on justice in with those on gender. He attributes women's disposition to injustice to their being "so accustomed to loving" (1988:155#416) which, as with friendship, implies love's incompatibility with clear vision. If love is not blind it is short-sighted, and its stigma irritates justice's perspicacity.<sup>50</sup> However Human later contends that the best way to get to know something quickly, to penetrate "to the heart of a new thing" (1986:196#621) is to adopt a loving myopia, turning a blind eye to its blemishes. Such knowledge is, though, only partial and temporary and the love that affords it only strategic, for once an immediate assessment

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<sup>50</sup> The obverse of this proposition that love obscures judgement is expressed in Chamfort's claim that "plus on juge, moins on aime" (1968:79 #140).

is achieved, reason takes over and "make[s] its reservations" (1986:196#621) allowing a more just appraisal to emerge. Knowing might be spurred by loving but its fulfilment requires leaving "at least for a while" (1986:387#307).<sup>51</sup>

As the coming chapter shows, Nietzsche implies that the female dislike of seeing things clearly and fairly begins in the family with their partial views of spouses and children. That it reaches into the public sphere is evident in the above point about women's quick and partial assessments and consequent incapacity for pursuits like history and politics (1986:154-55#416). However as also shown, partiality issues judgements that contain some truth and therefore some justice (1986:155#417). But in order to see why the family is the source of women's injustice, let us move to a discussion of the middle period's views on love, marriage and reproduction.

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<sup>51</sup> In this idea that knowledge begins with love but must proceed by taking some distance from the thing loved, there is some similarity with the view of knowledge Plato advances in the Symposium. As Lloyd notes:

Plato saw passionate love and desire as the beginning of the soul's process of liberation through knowledge; although it must first transcend its preoccupation with mere bodily beauty, moving through a succession of stages to love of the eternal forms ... It is through being a form of love that knowledge is connected with immortality (1984:21).

## Chapter Ten

The soul-friendship of two people of differing sex:<sup>1</sup>

Love, marriage and reproduction.

Chapter Six argued that while Nietzsche presents himself as resurrecting the Greek habit of reflecting on friendship, the work of La Rochefoucauld and of Chamfort is also significant here. As Hutter indicates, a concomitant of the Greek celebration of male friendship was the devaluation of marriage and male-female relations generally (1978:83). Nietzsche was aware of Greek men's relative indifference and instrumental attitude toward women (1986:121-2#259,157#424,1982:204-5#503) but leaves the Greeks to follow the French by accepting that friendship is possible between the genders.<sup>2</sup> This chapter shows how Nietzsche deviates from the Greeks' devaluation of male-female relationships for the middle period has many positive things to say about love, marriage and gender relations generally.

This dimension of Nietzsche's thought is also neglected or denied in the secondary literature, with Schutte claiming that he excludes "the possibility of love between the sexes and among human beings in general" (1984:180) and Berkowitz that Nietzsche's philosophers have no room for romantic love (1993:110,217).<sup>3</sup> Donnellan declares that Nietzsche regards romantic love with "consistent ironic detachment" (1982:83) and that he:

has little good to say about the personal emotion of sexual love, the significance of which as a dimension of human experience he apparently denies (1982:118).

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<sup>1</sup> From Human's "From the future of marriage" (1986:157#424).

<sup>2</sup> Hutter writes that:

when Greek poets and thinkers discourse on friendship, they primarily mean friendship between members of the same sex. There was little friendship or even friendliness across sexual lines: there seems to have been a good deal of hostility (1978:58.cf.25).

<sup>3</sup> Berkowitz argues though that for Zarathustra, romantic love, like friendship, occupies a vital though instrumental role for it contributes to the creation of the superman (1993:214).

Examining the middle period's views on love and marriage shows the inadequacy of such assessments for they are too one-sided to do justice to Nietzsche's positive reflections on marriage and related issues. Nietzsche does say some damning things about love and marriage, but as is the case with women, his critical comments must be considered along with his more positive ones for a clearer, albeit more complex, appreciation of his stance.

In examining the middle period's views on gender relations, love and marriage, this chapter also elicits their connections with Nietzsche's ideas about self-love, care of the self and aristocracy of the spirit.<sup>4</sup> His depiction of love, marriage and parenthood is then considered in the light of the French moralists' views on such matters. As Donnellan understands it "In La Rochefoucauld Nietzsche found ... reinforcement of his negative attitudes towards love [and] marriage" (1982b:600.fn20). However here the comparison between Nietzsche's views and the moralists' shows how he continues some of their ideas but also how innovative and pro-feminist some of his views on gender relations were. This point in turn requires that the typical depiction of Nietzsche as implacably anti-feminist (Allen in Clark & Lange 1979:118-19, 124. Berkowitz 1993:1. Ansell-Pearson:29/30, Diprose:32, Deutscher:163,176 in Patton 1993) must be modified. The chapter concludes by considering what part justice and equality play in Nietzsche's portrayal of love and family relations.

Human's seventh book "Woman and child", central to the middle period's reflections on gender, is also an important source for Nietzsche's views about love relationships. Its second aphorism addresses marriage and

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<sup>4</sup> From this it will emerge that Lougee's finding in her study of attitudes to women in seventeenth century France that there are "close and direct correlations between attitudes toward women and visions of social organization" (1976:6.cf.5,169,174) applies to Nietzsche's work. She concludes that:

To an important extent conceptions of woman's place and her proper role in society result from something other than the writer's personal relationship with women or some abstract notion of woman's nature: [they derive] from a concrete assessment of social values, social needs and desirable social organization. (1976:209)

links it with friendship by predicting that "The best friend will probably acquire the best wife, because a good marriage is founded on the talent for friendship" (1986:150#378). Not only does Nietzsche see friendship as possible between the genders but he views marriage or some marriages, as elaborations of friendship.<sup>5</sup> This connection reappears in Science's question: "Has the dialectic of marriage and friendship ever been explicated?" (1974:82#7) and makes Donnellan's claim that friendship takes precedence over marriage (1982: 84-85) a false account of the middle period. As the sort of marriages Nietzsche discusses are heterosexual,<sup>6</sup> his wedding of marriage to friendship disproves Donnellan's other claim that Nietzsche praises only male friendship (1982:84). Moreover Nietzsche holds friendship to be possible between men and women who are not married (1986:151#390), so that even extra-marital friendships can obtain between men and women, although these are more stable when untroubled by physical attraction.

When Nietzsche's wedding of marriage with friendship is set against

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<sup>5</sup> In allowing that marriage can be a form of friendship, Nietzsche deviates from Hutter's definition of friendship which:

unlike ... the relationship between a husband and a wife, does not involve a complementary role-pair ... friendship is a relationship between persons paired in the same role ... (1978:4)

Nietzsche is closer to Little's view that some marriages embody Communicating friendship. Contra Hutter, Little concludes that "All 'modern' marriage must be in part a form of friendship" (1993:162).

<sup>6</sup> There is however, a homosexual dynamic in one of Nietzsche's descriptions of marriage:

Women often secretly wonder at the great respect men pay to the female temperament. If, in the choice of their marriage partner, men seek above all a deep nature full of feeling, while women seek a shrewd, lively minded and brilliant nature ... at bottom the man is seeking an idealized man, the woman an idealized woman - what they are seeking/... is not a complement but a perfecting of their own best qualities (1986:153/4#411).

Again we see that when Nietzsche essentialises gender, he sometimes deviates from the traditional practice of associating emotion with woman and life of the mind with man. In light of this reversal, claims like those from Sandra Frisby and Allen that Nietzsche associates women with passion and instinct and men with reflection and seriousness (in Clark & Lange 1979:122,129) demand qualification.

the wider background of his thought, it becomes apparent that this describes a superior class of relationship, because, as Chapter Six revealed, the capacity for friendship is a mark of higher humans. The 'talent for friendship' aphorism thus implies a discrimination between higher and lower types of gender relations, suggesting that this distinction is again vital for appreciating Nietzsche's approach to gender relations, marriage and reproduction too. Reproduction is raised in the third aphorism of Book Seven, "Continuance of the parents" (1986:150#379) which claims that disharmony between parents manifests itself in their child's "inner sufferings" (1986:150#379). This suggests a falling away from the superior form of relationship for the divided child is the outcome of parents with "unresolved dissonances", symptomatic of a marriage not between friends and/or equally noble men and women. (But as Chapter Six shows, this is a distinction without a difference, for true friendship only unites equals).

Reference to "the third greatest banality" in the tragi-comedy of human life (1986:324#58) notwithstanding, Nietzsche is not relentlessly critical of marriage. That marriage can offer some of friendship's mutual understanding has been indicated in Chapter Six when "Presumptuousness" declares that "one can be quite sure one will not be misunderstood ... in the presence of friends and wives" (1986:147#373). Further indication of how fruitful marriage can be comes in Book Seven's counsel that spouses be selected not on the basis of wealth, appearance or social station but conversation, because marriage is ultimately an ongoing dialogue. The importance Nietzsche attaches to conversation has been shown in Chapter Nine, so characterising marriage as "a long conversation" (1986:152#406) suggests great regard for this relationship, at least when properly founded<sup>7</sup> and illustrates anew the middle period's dialogical dimension.

The importance of solid foundations also explains Nietzsche's condemnation of "Love-matches" (1986:151#389) and his contention that

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<sup>7</sup> The centrality of conversation to higher friendship is emphasised by Little for whom "talk is the oxygen of friendship" (1993:251).

"Sometimes it requires only a stronger pair of spectacles to cure the lover" (1986:154#413), which echoes Chapter Nine's criticism of defining women by their appearance. "The shortsighted are in love"'s further point that those who could imagine their lover's face in twenty years might be less in love contrasts with the importance of conversation in marriage, for the latter leads one to ponder "if you are going to enjoy talking with this woman up into your old age" (1986:152#406).<sup>8</sup>

Relationships based on something substantial like the capacity for continuing conversation are also less likely to face the problem of constancy. Although "What one can promise" (1986:42#58) does not mention marriage, it speaks of the difficulty of vowing eternal love, for emotions are "involuntary" and not easily controlled by will or obligation (cf. 1986:198-99 #629). What those "without self-deception" really promise in continuing affection is action compatible with affection. But it is easier to act in accordance with affection when one has an interesting interlocutor, as Daybreak's "How often! How unforeseen" illustrates:

How many married men there are who have experienced the morning when it has dawned on them that their young wife is tedious and believes the opposite (1982:150#276).

Although he can write sympathetically about love,<sup>9</sup> Nietzsche sees it as necessarily ephemeral. However Daybreak puts an interesting twist on founding marriage on something as evanescent as romantic love, arguing that

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<sup>8</sup> Of course this can only be a thought experiment, for in Nietzsche's psychology one cannot know how another will change, just as one cannot know how the self will. The protean self could go in any one of several directions and predicting which with precision is impossible.

<sup>9</sup> This can be highly clichéd (1986:376#271) or Nietzsche can write about love in an interesting, original, way, as "The source of great love" attests:

Whence is the origin of the sudden passion - the passion of the profound and inward kind - that a man feels for a woman? Least of all from sensuality alone: but when a man encounters weakness and need of assistance and at the same time high spirits together in the same being, then something takes place in him like the sensation of his soul wanting to gush over: he is at the same moment moved and offended. At this point there arises the source of great love (1986:279#287).



by institutionalising love and, ipso facto, creating the expectation of its durability, marriage anoints this passion with a certain dignity, "a higher nobility" (1982:21#27). Even though its premise might be flawed, ushering "a very great deal of hypocrisy and lying into the world" (1982:21#27), romancing marriage also forges "a new **suprahuman** concept which elevates mankind" (1982:22#27.FN's emphasis).

When founded on romantic love, marriage has adverse consequences because this is too flimsy and irrational a basis for life-long union (1982:98 #151). As with domestic labour, Human presents romantic love as fabricated by females to exercise power over men (1986:154#415) although no evidence is offered to support this assertion either. This victory has also proven pyrrhic, for women are now more entangled in and deceived by love than men. But at least this history 'in nuce' of romantic love accords women a role in shaping history and, as marriage has ennobled the passions, their achievement is not entirely destructive, contributing as it has to human ennoblement.

Marriage is often presented as driven by mutual need, illusion, ambition or vanity - or some combination of these. It allows women to realize their "Sacrificial disposition" (1986:376#272) and wives of famous men become public scapegoats (1986:158-9#430). However developing Human's description of such martyrdom satisfying some women's "ambition" (1986:159 #430), Science insists that this is not altruistic - a woman fulfils some function for her husband to meet her own needs, rather than through egoless love (1974:176#119). Nietzsche acknowledges that other female ambitions can be met through marriage too, for women feed their interest in glory or power via their spouses (1986:152#402,153#410). Nor are such trade offs always condemned as "Marriage with stability" argues:

A marriage in which each of the parties seeks to achieve an individual goal through the other will stand up well: for example when the wife seeks to become famous through the husband, the husband liked through the wife (1986:152#399).

This encapsulates two important themes in Nietzsche's analysis of marriage; that it is not based on self-denial and egoless devotion to the other and that it can be a vehicle for female power. The first clearly connects with

his wider argument about egoism's ubiquity (Chapter Four) and, as with his analysis of pity (Chapter Five), allows him to unmask seemingly self-denying action as self-seeking (cf.1982:91-2#145.1974:88-9#14). The second theme relates to women's socialisation and could suggest that because they cannot find legitimate social outlets for the drives to power, they must satisfy this via their spouses. This indicates that women are not devoid of such appetites and that a Nietzschean critique of marriage could be its institutionalisation of female dependence, for a truly autonomous agent would not rely on another to satisfy their desire for self-assertion. Whether female essence or social arrangements are criticised depends on how Nietzsche presents marriage - as fulfilling a quintessential feminine need or reflecting society's restriction of women.

However Human's "Of the spirit of women" indicates a third option, suggesting some emancipatory potential in marriage. In allowing a woman to participate in masculine virtue, it opens new possibilities, spurring her to self-overcoming (1986:277#272). This again shows the fluidity of seemingly gender-specific traits, suggesting that women's characters are shaped by opportunities and experiences rather than essence. Daybreak delineates a similar dynamic when discussing the different ways men and women react to love:

women, who normally feel themselves the weak and devoted sex, acquire in the **exceptional** state of passion their pride and their feeling of power - which asks: who is worthy of **me**? (1982:174#403. FN's emphasis)

The specification that this applies to "whole women, whole men" (1982:174 #403) bears out the above distinction between higher and lower types of humans and relationships and Chapter Nine's distinction between superior and inferior women. These passages intimate that marriage can enhance some women's self-worth in ways other than simply providing a social role - it can strengthen and educate their spirit. And although Human's "Usual consequences of marriage" suggests that women gain and men lose from union (1986:151#394), an earlier passage shows that women can also nourish men's spirits: "For the male sickness of self-contempt the surest cure is to be loved

by a clever woman" (1986:150#384).<sup>10</sup>

More evidence that Nietzsche does not deliver a root and branch attack on marriage comes in "Test of a good marriage" (1986:152#402). Its measure is the ability to endure "an occasional 'exception'" but what this consists in is unclear and, as it appears in an aphorism, not elaborated on. Exceptions could be extra-marital relationships or, at a more general level, it could mean that, like friendship, marriage should be able to sustain difference between its partners. But the suspicion that the 'exceptions' to be survived are sexual infidelities is strengthened by Human's later observations. "From the future of marriage" (1986:157#424) argues that "the higher conception of marriage as the soul-friendship of two people of differing sex" advocated by certain "noble, free-thinking women" who aim to educate and elevate the female sex<sup>11</sup> overlooks one thing - male sexuality. Their ideal assumes that sex is only for

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<sup>10</sup> However this could be meant to demean women, for seeing how base even a clever woman is might make any man feel better about himself. Given Nietzsche's other arguments about the link between love and self-love (below), I am reading this aphorism straight. As my reading indicates, Donnellan's claim that "Nietzsche considers women intellectually and spiritually inferior to man, and a dangerous drain on his creative endeavour" (1982:84) captures but one side of the story. Nietzsche's suggestion that love and marriage can educate men and women brings him into line with Jane Austen's view. As Trilling describes it, Austen:

was committed to the ideal of 'intelligent love', according to which the deepest and truest relationship that can exist between human beings is pedagogic. This relationship consists in the giving and receiving of knowledge about right conduct, in the formation of one person's character by another, the acceptance of another's guidance in one's own growth (1972:82).

<sup>11</sup> As its context gives no reason for reading this as anything but a sincere description, this passage illustrates that Nietzsche did not always castigate feminism. Those hoping to reform marriage are chided for being too idealistic but this is gentle criticism and not laboured. Instead it prompts the more general observation that "All human institutions ... permit only a moderate degree of practical idealization" (1986:157#424) which could be Nietzsche's reminder to himself as much as to the female reformers. Thus the typical depiction of Nietzsche as anti-feminist is not entirely accurate and further evidences one of the wider points of this dissertation - that it is incorrect to use the term 'Nietzsche' as if it stood for a single thing or unchanging position.

procreation but Nietzsche fears that this will not satisfy men's needs, that "the health of the husband" (1986:157#424) requires more frequent sex. He suggests that monogamy cannot accommodate this new, higher ideal of marriage while also sating men's sexual appetites, for this would place excessive burdens on women:

A good wife who is supposed to be a friend, assistant, mother, family head and housekeeper, and may indeed have to run her own business or job quite apart from that of her husband - such a wife cannot at the same time be a concubine: it would be too much to demand of her (1986:157#424).<sup>12</sup>

An obvious solution to this is for women to limit their activities outside the home and leave more time to satisfy their husbands' needs. Nietzsche's failure to suggest this reveals something about his positive, relatively pro-feminist attitudes toward women and marriage.<sup>13</sup> His proposal does presuppose two classes of women - wives and concubines - but such distinctions are Nietzsche's terms of trade and need not be any more or less offensive in his depictions of women than on any other social question.

Nietzsche's solution also self-consciously reverses the Greek model, proposing that marriage remain a friendship and men take concubines to satisfy their sexual drives. This further testifies to the fact that the middle period does not totally devalue marriage. Were this its brief, it could advocate restoring ancient Greek arrangements, where the "head and heart-satisfying companionship such as only the charm and intellectual flexibility of women can create" (1986:157#424) was sought outside marriage, while marriage remained primarily a forum for reproduction.<sup>14</sup> Nietzsche's retention of

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<sup>12</sup> A century before its coming into common currency in the western world, Nietzsche saw the problem of the superwoman.

<sup>13</sup> It is interesting to contrast here Lougee's argument that in seventeenth century France, proponents of marriage where the wife was both friend and lover to the husband were conservatives on the 'woman' question. They endorsed exactly what Nietzsche is rejecting - that a woman's life be consumed by domestic duties (1976:66).

<sup>14</sup> Again my reading departs from Allen's. She notes Nietzsche's admiration of Greek reproductive arrangements (in Clark & Lange 1979:121)

marriage as the site of companionship between men and women also rejects a more recent version of the Greek option, for twice Chamfort mentions Diderot's view that a man needs two sorts of woman - a wife to minister to his daily needs and a lover to stimulate his mind (1968:185#587,279#1043).

The middle period's favourable reflections on marriage indicate that Human's inclusion of it among the institutions based on faith not reason is, by Nietzsche's own account, exaggerated - marriage can be built on reason even if most are not.<sup>15</sup> This passage makes explicit the distinction established at this chapter's outset for "fettered spirits" (1986:109#227) do not require reasons for social orderings whereas free ones do (1986:108#225,108-9#226. 1982:167#359). That free, rational, friendly marriages are possible makes claims that free spirits should not marry (1986:156#421,158#426,160#436. 1982:142#246) anomalous, especially given that several of the arguments marshalled against their marriage rely on assumptions Nietzsche challenges elsewhere. One of the first reasons proffered for free spirits' unsuitability for "A happy marriage" is that "all habituation and rules, everything enduring and definitive" is anathema to them (1986:158#427) and they must constantly rend themselves from the lure of comfort and security. However if a good marriage is like a good friendship and a good conversation, there is no reason for it to be static and inflexible. Although "love dreads change more than it does destruction" (1986:279#280) its attempts to stall it are vain, for "there is no standstill in any kind of love" (1986:152#397).

Another argument against marriage for free spirits is that too much proximity to another corrodes the soul (1986:158#428.cf.151#393). However if we again follow Nietzsche's lead and liken marriage to friendship, there is

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and leaves us to infer that he favours a return to these. However my reading is somewhat mitigated by the fact that Daybreak's "Friendship" speculates about the losses from the modern preference for sexual love over same-sex friendship. It wonders if "Perhaps our trees fail to grow as high on account of the ivy and the vines that cling to them" (1982:205#503).

<sup>15</sup> My argument shows that Allen's claim that Nietzsche advocated the "forced repression of women in marriage" (in Clark & Lange 1979:130) is also exaggerated - it does not apply to the middle period.

no reason why marrieds cannot maintain that distance that simultaneously holds friends together and keeps them respectfully apart, for Nietzsche's depiction of friendship illustrates that not all intimacy is tyranny. Nor is there any reason why love cannot emulate friendship and avoid the confusion of 'I' and 'Thou' warned against in "Love makes the same" (1982:210-11#532). Indeed "Love and duality" defines love as loving difference:

What is love but understanding and rejoicing at the fact/ that another lives, feels and acts in a way different from and opposite to ours? If love is to bridge these antitheses through joy it may not deny or seek to abolish them. - Even self-love presupposes an unblendable duality (or multiplicity) in one person (1986:229-30#75),

A further reason for the free spirit to renounce women is their tendency to mother and smother men (1986:151#392,158#429). Women's conservatism, their preference for comfort over adventure and inquiry (1986:159#434) and respect for custom and established power (1986:159-60#435.cf.1982:20#25) also interfere with men meeting the demands of freedom. However Chapter Nine shows that in certain moods Nietzsche accepts that women can overcome this. His acknowledgement that the reproductive role of some women need not determine the personality and potential of all<sup>16</sup> and his roving accounts of the female love of stability have been documented.

Moreover Human's depiction of marriage as offering "the unfreedom of the golden cradle" where man "is waited on and spoiled like an infant" (1986:158#429) is undercut five passages later by the account of Socrates' marriage. Rather than being coddled and domesticated by Xantippe, Socrates was driven into the street and forced further into freedom. Juxtaposing Nietzsche's arguments in this way suggests that his claims that free spirits are

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<sup>16</sup> Again I depart from Allen's view that Nietzsche "closely define[s] women's identity with the biological function of motherhood" (in Clark & Lange 1979:125). I also disagree with Diethe's claim that he "regard[s] woman as completely defined by the reproductive urge" (1989:867), for in the middle period Nietzsche's view of women is broader than this.

marred by marriage are sometimes caught in their own cross fire.<sup>17</sup> The fragility of his arguments against marriage for free spirits, combined with his sometime recognition that its renunciation entails significant loss (1986:158 #427) and Human's argument that, although resisting it, "Men who are too intellectual have great need of marriage" (1986:151#394), makes one suspect that there is something of the "Trick of renouncers" at play here: "He who protests against marriage, in the way Catholic priests do, will try to think of it in its lowest and most vulgar form" (1986:191#598).

This is not to suggest that Nietzsche only criticises marriage to persuade himself against it.<sup>18</sup> As argued throughout this chapter, he believes that many marriages warrant much criticism (1982:98#151). However these criticisms need not apply to marriage per se, but to the individuals contracting it and the society it reflects. Indeed it can be concluded that although sometimes flippant about marriage (1986:151#388.1982:172#387), Nietzsche deems this a very important institution, which explains his harsh criticism of its corrupt forms as well as his praise of the rationality of Jewish "marriages

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<sup>17</sup> As Ida von Miaskowski, who knew Nietzsche at Basel, observes: there are so many beautiful, indeed sublime words about women and marriage in his works, with which the philosopher, as it were, refutes himself (in Gilman 1987:52).

<sup>18</sup> Another possible explanation comes from Pletsch's observation that the nineteenth century image of genius ruled out marriage and family life (1991: 212).

That Nietzsche had become more receptive to Greek ideas for his personal arrangements is suggested in a letter to Karl von Gersdorff, written two years after the one to von Meysenbug:

on the whole, I hate the limitations and obligations of the whole civilised order of things so very much that it would be difficult to find a woman free-spirited enough to follow my lead. The Greek philosophers seem to me ever more and more to represent the paragon of what one should aim at in our mode of life (26.5.1876 in Levy 1921:110).

Although here he presumably has bachelorhood, rather than marriage for reproduction, in mind.

and marriage customs" (1982:124#205).<sup>19</sup>

One reason for the significance of love and marriage is as "A male sickness" (1986:150#384) and "Love and duality" (1986:229-30#75) indicate, Nietzsche at least in his middle period, links loving others with self-love.<sup>20</sup> This occurs despite his attack on pity's concern with the other to the detriment of the self. In his delineation of the connection between love and self-love among higher individuals, we see again that egoism can be transcended in a healthy way for Nietzsche and that his emphasis on the individual does not require isolation. An aphorism in Daybreak argues that if we lose the ability to love others, we lose it for ourselves (1982:174#401), indicating again a symbiotic relation rather than inverse correlation between love and self-love. The obverse comes in a later aphorism arguing that self-knowledge is a prerequisite for loving others (1982:163#335) and such knowledge reflects and enhances love of the self. Although loving others is called "philanthropic dissimulation" (1982:163#335), the fact that the passage's title is "That love may be felt as love" suggests that such dissimulation is not under attack. Instead it could echo the point about friendship requiring some ignorance of the other's faults or imply that before we can embrace others and their flaws we must become acquainted with our own. Conversely those who cannot love others spontaneously have to make them over in their own image and likeness first, a process described as "ingenious" but "limited" (1982:175#412) and because ultimately self-deceiving, it impairs the search for self-knowledge Nietzsche so admires (cf. 1986:224#37. 1982:150#279). This critical portrait of narcissistic lovers also underscores the above claim about real love loving

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<sup>19</sup> My reading differs considerably from Berkowitz's discussion of the role of marriage in Zarathustra. There it is argued that because Zarathustra "understands marriage as a sacred undertaking for the rearing of the superman, Zarathustra denounces as desecrations the vast majority of actual marriages" (1993:216). While I read the middle period as also condemning the vast majority of marriages, the grounds for this are, as indicated, different.

<sup>20</sup> My argument that the middle period suggests a symbiotic relation rather than inverse correlation between love and self-love also differs from what Berkowitz finds in Zarathustra where "self-love is exercised at the expense of all others" (1993:221).



difference.<sup>21</sup>

Thus for Nietzsche love of all things must be learned - of the self, of others, of music, and education in one thing affects love and knowledge of others (1986:192#601.1974:262#334). Of course romance is not love's only possible school - indeed it is probably the least pedagogically sound. The love of friendship is clearly superior but Nietzsche follows the feminist reformers in holding that marriage can embody friendship. Thus marriage can be an important school for love and the sort of love known in marriage can affect self-love, which provides further reason for Nietzsche's condemnation of bad marriages. From this it can be inferred that making and maintaining a good, friendly marriage is a way of caring for the self. In this context it is noteworthy that Nietzsche poses his query about the dialectic between marriage and friendship in a passage about care of the self (1974:81-2#7). And an example of the connection between self-control and correct treatment of others, which is an important ingredient of care of the self, is given in the negative in the realm of romantic love for "Bad reasoning, bad shot" predicts that:

He cannot control himself, and from that a poor woman infers that it will be easy to control him and casts her net for him. Soon she will be his slave (1974:211#227).

Human's speculations about rational marriage arrangements further reflect the educative function Nietzsche thinks good marriages can have. Ideally a young man:

would marry a girl older than him who is intellectually and morally his superior and who can lead him through the perils of the twenties (ambition, hatred, self-contempt, passions of all kinds) ... (1986:156#421).

A decade later the recipient of education becomes its donor, marrying and educating a young woman. Although it is unclear how seriously this should be

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<sup>21</sup> The symbiotic relationship between love for others and self-love also appears in Nietzsche's later correspondence. He writes to Gast that:

One ceases to love oneself **properly** when one **ceases** to exercise one's capacity for love towards other people; which means that the latter (ceasing to love) is highly inadvisable. (18.7.1888 in Hayman 1980: 227).

taken, the general point remains that marriage can be construed as a form of care of the self, for at different times one has different needs and the principle behind this argument for polygamy or serial monogamy seems to be that marriage should accommodate this.

Another reason Nietzsche takes marriage so seriously is its role in producing future generations and its potential to promote a spiritual aristocracy. However as his caveat to the feminist reformers about male desire indicates, he is also alive to the role of sexuality in marriage and, moreover, considers this from a female, as well as male, viewpoint. Such perspectivism on sexuality suggests that Nietzsche is working with the assumption that sexuality varies with gender. His addendum to the marriage reform evidences this, presuming that women's libido is intrinsically weaker than men's (1986:157 #424).<sup>22</sup> This is developed in Human's argument about "Sexual elevation and degradation" (1986:277-8#273) which reverses the book's earlier claim that marriage raises women but lowers men (1986:151#394). Echoing Plato's Symposium with its upward movement and refinement of love,<sup>23</sup> this passage

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<sup>22</sup> As the middle period's portrayal of female sexuality indicates, Frisby's account of Nietzsche's view of women is inadequate. According to Allen, Frisby's Nietzsche:

sees the role of women as being clearly that of preserving the Dionysian element ... of unrefined passion. He suggests that this role is of a preconscious nature; that woman is formed of passions, of instincts, of sexual response as though she had received these from some primordial font, and was now their guardian ... (cited by Allen in Clark & Lange 1979:122).

Nietzsche's attunement to the way women are socialised into sexuality further reinforces the last chapter's argument that there is an historicist dimension to his depiction of women.

<sup>23</sup> Berkowitz detects a similar argument in Zarathustra (1993:215). Kaufmann discusses "the profound impression which the Symposium made on him; ... Nietzsche's entire thought was deeply influenced by this Platonic dialogue" but Kaufmann presents this as a source for Nietzsche's notion of the will to power rather than love (1950:135). A similar view of physical love as ennobling its participants was identified in the eighteenth century by Mauzi who writes that:

L'amour vertueux ... doit s'accompagner d'une elevation de l'âme et d'un enrichissement du coeur, qui transforment l'expérience amoureuse en un progrès moral. Le point délicat consiste à accorder les exigences

claims that men can sometimes transcend sexual desire to reach "a height where all desire ceases" (1986:277#273) and love rather than will reigns. For women the opposite occurs. Dwelling more permanently on the plane of love, they must "descend from true love down to desire" (1986:278#273). Women see this as entailing some self-degradation, but their willingness to do so "is among the most heart-moving things that can accompany the idea of a good marriage" (1986:278#273), reinforcing my argument that Nietzsche is not utterly dismissive of marriage.<sup>24</sup>

Science's "On female chastity" (1974:127-8#71) also examines female sexuality and points to the conflicting demands marriage makes on women, especially upper-class ones. Because they are kept ignorant about sex and educated to believe that it is evil, such women see sex as degrading. With marriage they are inducted into this iniquity by their husband, the person they are supposed to love, honour and respect:

Thus a psychic knot has been tied that may have no equal ...  
Afterward, the same deep silence as before. Often a silence directed at  
herself, too. She closes her eyes to herself (1974:128#71).

The incredible sympathy Nietzsche evinces here is accompanied by recognition of the limits of empathy, for he acknowledges the difficulty of imagining how each woman comes to terms with this dilemma "and what dreadful, far-reaching suspicions must stir in her poor, unhinged soul" (1974:128#71). Against this background, women see child-bearing as an "apology or atonement" (1974:128#71) for their fall, an argument connecting with one of Nietzsche's earlier criticisms of Schopenhauer who detects pride in pregnancy. Unlike his erstwhile educator, Nietzsche discerns discomfort in pregnant women, especially young ones, because it implicates them in what they had

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de la nature et celles de la vertu (1965:477).

<sup>24</sup> Nietzsche's claim in Genealogy that:

There is no inherent contradiction between chastity and sensual  
pleasure: every good marriage, every real love affair transcends these  
opposites (1956:232#II)

could be related to this image. As his reference to good marriages indicates, his faith in such a possibility does not entirely disappear in the later works.

believed was depredation (1986:309#17). The conclusion of Science's sensitive discussion of female chastity supplies the title for Chapter Nine and illuminates the other side of the claim that "one cannot be too kind about women" (1974:128#71), disclosing a Nietzsche far removed from the usual one who is taken to demean or dismiss women.<sup>25</sup>

Despite this passage's acknowledgement that women are taught to see sex as evil, it conveys no sense that they could be reschooled to celebrate their sexuality, reinforcing the impression that Nietzsche holds women to be inherently less sexual than men. This can be accounted for by his living in the nineteenth century, since it is anachronistic to expect awareness of the dimensions of female sexuality that really only became widely known a century later. Moreover he seems to have had little intimate knowledge of women, so lacked any experience from which to challenge the regnant view of female sexuality. However by this logic, innovation in thought is impossible, and it is especially tenuous when applied to Nietzsche who was usually so concerned to challenge the dominant intellectual and cultural notions. As he notes in Human:

He is called a free spirit who thinks differently from what, on the basis of his origin, environment, his class and profession, or on the basis of the dominant views of his age, would have been expected of him (1986:108#225.cf.110#230),<sup>26</sup>

Nietzsche's apparent acceptance of women's limited sexual appetite is also striking in light of the fact that one of the aims of his work is to rehabilitate the body, sensuality and the passions from their debasement by Christianity. As Daybreak exclaims:

Is it not dreadful to make necessary and regularly recurring sensations into a source of inner misery, and in this way to make inner misery a necessary and regularly recurring phenomenon **in every human being!** (1982:45#76.FN's emphasis.cf.77#141.1974:236#294)

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<sup>25</sup> Again my reading deviates from Diprose's which interprets this passage to mean that men impose contradictory requirements on women - they must conform to a "double image of virtue and shame" (in Patton 1993:20).

<sup>26</sup> Although as Diethe notes, the fact that Nietzsche does not see female sexuality as bad in itself is unusual for his time (1989:865).

In a proto-Freudian argument, he notes that when demonised, sexuality becomes immensely interesting, acquiring a fascination far beyond its desert. This echoes Human's point that:

It is well known that sensual fantasy is moderated, indeed almost suppressed, by regularity in sexual intercourse, while it is ... unfettered and dissolute when such intercourse is disorderly or does not take place at all. (1986:76#141)

Nietzsche argues not just that sexuality is natural and innocent, which is consistent with his wider position on the original innocence of action (Chapter Four) but that sexual relations represent one of those benevolent, harmonious arrangements so rare in nature, where one's pursuit of pleasure brings pleasure to another (1982:45#76). However most of the evidence of the middle period suggests that he expects the emancipation of sexuality to release and legitimate the drives of men more than of women. But because of his belief that demonising sex exaggerates desire, a freer attitude should induce a more balanced approach, rather than continual outbursts of lust. Such a view is evident in the injunction that "it is up to us, to **take from** the passions their terrible character and thus prevent their becoming devastating torrents" (1986: 319#37.FN's emphasis).

A striking exception to Nietzsche's assumption that female sexual desire is inherently more limited than male appears however in Daybreak's "Danger in innocence" where, to illustrate such danger, he writes of:

innocent, that is to say ignorant young wives [who] become accustomed to the frequent enjoyment of sex and miss it very greatly if their husbands become ill or prematurely feeble; it is precisely this innocent and credulous idea that frequent intercourse is thoroughly right and proper that produces in them a need which later exposes them to the most violent temptations and worse (1982:159#321).

This portrays women who have escaped, rather than overcome, their socialisation and can approach sex naively, with unconstrained appetite. That Nietzsche paints such a grim scenario for their sexual liberation need not be interpreted as chastising it - rather it is part of a larger attack on Christianity's promotion of ignorance, for female ignorance of sex exemplifies this. His point is that being kept ignorant on any subject renders people incapable of measure, moderation and "keeping themselves in check in good time" (1982:159#321),

but that young women can have vigorous sexual drives to regulate goes against the middle period's general portrayal of female sexuality.<sup>27</sup>

One unforeseen outcome of the general tenet that women are less sexually driven than men is that, by the logic of Nietzsche's own position, women are better equipped for freespíritohood! Males on the ascent to this presumably have a more powerful sexual drive to moderate than do women, for although not much is said about the sexual activity of freespírito, the signs suggest that it will not be robust. As shown, several passages recommend their bachelorhood but no outlet for their sexual drive is mooted. Nietzsche's admiration of the man who transcends sexual desire has been raised (1986:277 #273) and "The Wanderer and his Shadow" describes:

The meagre fruitfulness of the highest and most cultivated spirits and the classes that pertain to them ... they are frequently unmarried and are sexually cool in general ... (1986:359#197)

The Nietzschean man of knowledge neither condemns nor submits to carnal desire but accepts it with effortless detachment, disengaging not because it demeans but because knowledge is his dominant passion:

He will no longer want to decry the desires as heretical and to exterminate them; but the only goal which completely dominates him, at all times **to know** as fully as possible, will make him cool and soothe everything savage in his disposition (1986:41#56.FN's emphasis).

As Human later notes:

The man who has overcome his passions has entered into the possession of the most fertile ground ... To **sow** the seeds of good spiritual works in the soil of the subdued passions is then the most immediate urgent task (1986:323#53.FN's emphasis.cf.326#65,332-3 #88)

This however mitigates my hypothesis that female's moderate sexuality befits

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<sup>27</sup> Another possible exception is Daybreak's depiction of "those women whose flesh is willing but whose spirit is weak!" (1982:150#276) but some criticism of them is implied. If, however, as some commentators claim, Nietzsche reduces women to sexuality, no criticism of such women would be necessary. Compare Diethe's claim that he endorses view that female sexuality is passive and male sexuality active (1989:868).

them for free spirithood before men, for it could imply that the more passion one has to subdue, the more fruitful one will be. In this depiction of the fecundity of sublimated passions, Nietzsche is reiterating Chamfort's maxim that:

C'est après l'âge des passions que les grands hommes ont produit leurs chefs-d'oeuvre, comme c'est après les éruptions des volcans que la terre est plus fertile (1968:152#455).

Whatever its etiology, the free spirit's sexual coolness and concern with spiritual fertility is also more compatible with the 'spirit' model of aristocracy, because if an aristocracy of birth is to survive, transmission of noble genes and therefore marriage and reproduction, are imperative. In an aristocracy of spirit, by contrast, physical inheritance matters less than acquired strengths. The salience of marriage in this becomes abundantly clear in Daybreak:

If I were ... a benevolent god, the **marriages** of mankind would make me far more impatient than anything else. The individual can go far ... But when ... he takes the legacy and inheritance of this struggle and victory ... and hangs it up at the first decent place where a little woman can get at it and pluck it to pieces ... he gives no thought to the fact, indeed, that through procreation he could prepare the way for an even more victorious life: then ... one grows impatient and says to oneself: 'nothing can come of mankind in the long run, its individuals are squandered, chance in marriage makes a grand rational progress of mankind impossible ...' (1982:97#150.FN's emphasis)

A couple of things suggest that Nietzsche could have an aristocracy of spirit rather than birth in mind here. Talk of the individual's "struggle and victory" is more compatible with a meritocratic than a traditional reading of social rank. The spectre of an unsound match looms less in a traditional model of aristocracy, for there coupling tends to be tightly controlled. An unsound marriage is threatening in a nascent aristocracy of spirit for as Human's reflections on the reform of marriage indicate, parents educate and form a child's spirit as well as passing on genes (cf.1982:117#196). And when determined by chance rather than reason, marriage produces children with a "remote" likelihood of "being properly educated" (1986:157#424).

Although Human's Book Seven is entitled "Woman and child", this whole issue of reproduction and parenthood in general is further explored there. An early illustration of its significance is the assertion that one's mother

provides the template for all images of women (1986:150#380). The obverse of seeing one's mother in all women comes in a later claim that there is something motherly in all women's love (1986:151#392). Since a mother's love is typically held as the paradigm of selflessness, Nietzsche's belief in the ubiquity of egoism requires him to show that, as per wifely love, maternal love is egoistic, and this he does in a brace of aphorisms evincing women's interest in seeing themselves in their children (1986:150#385,151#387).<sup>28</sup>

Human's depiction of the mother as template for women is immediately followed by a declaration of the importance of fatherhood, real or symbolic: "If one does not have a good father one should furnish oneself with one" (1986:150#382). But this highlights an interesting difference between the middle period's depiction of maternity and paternity which could help to explain why Book Seven is called "Women and child" rather than "Man and child" or "Parent and child". Throughout fatherhood is associated with absence or negation and motherhood with omni-presence or return.<sup>29</sup> The image of one's mother returns in all women, women see themselves reflected in their children, women become like their mothers when loving men and so on. Paternity's association with absence or negation is hinted in the claim that "Fathers have much to do to make amends for having sons" (1986:150#382) indicating that fathers would be better had they not been. This is reiterated four aphorisms later: "In the maturity of his life and understanding a man is overcome by the feeling that his father was wrong to beget him" (1986:150#386) but there is no obvious reason why the mother was not also wrong to beget her child. Fathers are missing when needed (1986:192#600) and Science suggests that paternity is not natural, but a social construct (1974:128-9#72).<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Again Nietzsche is challenging Rée who believed in genuinely disinterested maternal love (Donnellan 1982b:602).

<sup>29</sup> The temptation to read this autobiographically is strong: Nietzsche's father died when he was five, and he grew up in a family dominated by women.

<sup>30</sup> The absent father also puts a slightly different twist on Peter Sloterdijk's reading of Nietzsche:



To the process of reproduction women contribute reason and men will, temperament and passion (1986:153 #411), which again shows Nietzsche upsetting the traditional essentialism of western philosophy by attributing traditionally feminine characteristics to men and masculine ones to women. While this seems paradoxical in the light of some of his depictions of women as emotional, partial and so forth, Nietzsche explains that although men possess less reason than women, they deploy it better because it is transported by their deeper passions and will (1986:153#411). Here then he only reverses the traditional view by seeing women as having more reason than men in order to subordinate women more effectively, for the powers he valorises - will and passion - are available to men without any deficit in their reason.<sup>31</sup>

Overall though, the emphasis on inheritance that would be expected from an 'aristocracy of birth' position is largely missing in Nietzsche's reflections on reproduction. Human's "A masculine culture" illustrates this, pointing out that in Greek culture:

The women had no other task than to bring forth handsome, powerful bodies in which the character of the father lived on as uninterruptedly as possible ... (1986:122#259)

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which argues that the conception of autonomy, of self-creation through self-birth (the autogenesis of the subject) ... is a 'masculine' one ... in the sense that the subject ... must stand its own ground, independent, beautiful and proud, and suppress what it regards as the horror and ugliness of its own birth: a birth in which it was in a relationship of dependency (cited in Patton 1993:42).

Although Chapter One argues that images of autogenesis are not as common in the middle period as in the later works, in so far as they do appear, it is the father from whom freedom is sought, rather than the mother. However the ambition to give oneself a father is ambiguous in this context, for it can represent either the ultimate in or the failure of self-creation.

<sup>31</sup> The parallel between Nietzsche's view of the division of procreative labour and the Greeks' comes in the fact that both see the male as the prime mover. As Lloyd notes:

the traditional Greek understanding of sexual reproduction, ... saw the father as providing the formative principle, the real causal force of generation, whilst the mother provided only the matter which received form or determination, and nourished what had been produced by the father (1984:3).

If the middle period's vision of the future reposed on such a model of aristocracy, it would counsel a return to its social arrangements which it does not. Nor would it advocate, as it sometimes does, female education and self-development.<sup>32</sup> Moreover "Tragedy of childhood" attests that "noble-minded and aspiring people" can be born to "low-minded" fathers and "childish and irritable" mothers (1986:156#422) and such parents are obstacles to, not pre-conditions of, nobility.

I have argued that Nietzsche's depiction of marriage and love between the genders owes nothing to the Greeks, to whom he so often turns for inspiration in other domains. A consideration of La Rochefoucauld's and Chamfort's views on these matters reveals that Nietzsche's vision of higher marriage owes nothing to them either.<sup>33</sup> La Rochefoucauld says little about marriage - effacing it as a topic even as he raises it "On sait assez qu'il ne faut guère parler de sa femme" (1977:77#364). However there seems to be more than discretion at work in his silence, for his observations frequently transgress the bounds of polite conversation. For La Rochefoucauld marriage seems to be a perfunctory relationship, an institution assumed away as part of the background, unworthy of close scrutiny, noiselessly fulfilling its role of reproduction.<sup>34</sup> "Il y a de bons mariages, mais il n'y en a point de délicieux"

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<sup>32</sup> As mentioned Chapter Nine, Allen's view that Nietzsche was uninterested in the **psychological** or spiritual dimension of child-rearing by the mother (in Clark & Lange 1979:120) does not apply to the middle period. She also refers to this passage about women's function in Greek reproduction (1979:121) but in contrast to me, assumes that Nietzsche adopts it as his model.

<sup>33</sup> Montaigne could have been a source for Nietzsche's notion of marriage as friendship for he writes that:

Ung bon mariage ... refuse la compagnie et conditions de l'amour. Il tache à représenter celles de l'amitié" (*Oeuvres*:289.cited in Lougee 1976:37.fn 21).

However love and friendship do not fuse in Montaigne's view of marriage as they do in Nietzsche's. Montaigne separates the friendship of marriage from love and love continues to be found outside marriage (Lougee 1976:37).

<sup>34</sup> Clark is struck by the fact that La Rochefoucauld's work is characterised by:

(1977:55#113).<sup>35</sup> As another reference to marriage intimates: "Il est quelquefois agréable à un mari d'avoir une femme jalouse; il entend toujours parler de ce qu'il aime" (1977:106#48), the major site of romantic love for the moralist is extra-marital.<sup>36</sup> However as this maxim also indicates, the extra-can impinge upon the intra-, although the strife that this might generate is not among La Rochefoucauld's topics.

The marked contrast between Nietzsche's interest in marriage and the moralist's can be partly attributed to the different approaches to aristocracy to their work. It would seem that for La Rochefoucauld, social aristocracy is primarily a question of birth and can be assumed to reproduce itself through marriage, for what matters most is the transmission of noble genes and property. When marriage fulfils this function, it is of little other moment.<sup>37</sup>

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the almost complete lack of any consideration of ... the integrative relationships that sustain aristocratic social life - family, household, corps or fidelité in general (1987:68).

He explains this by the decline of the aristocratic ethic, to which he sees the moralist's work contributing. However another possible explanation is that La Rochefoucauld's focus was the salon and, as Lougee notes "there was no family in the salon, which by design negated the family" (1976:90).

<sup>35</sup> Lough's description of aristocratic marriages of the time helps to explain this. He reports that for aristocrats, marriage:

was seldom based on mutual affection, but much more frequently on family interests of rank and money, and was therefore arranged, not by the individuals concerned, but by their parents and other relatives. (1954:240)

<sup>36</sup> And this is typical of seventeenth century views, for as Lougee notes: both Neo-Platonists and précieuses viewed marriage as a convenience outside of which true affections found their fulfilment (1976:37.cf.66). As noted, she associates the fusion of love and marriage with the period's conservative writers who opposed the public role of salon women, and sought to make the domestic realm more attractive to females (1976:66). Here again we see how Nietzsche's depiction of marriage as friendship differs from theirs, for, in the middle period at least, he shows no desire to confine women to this realm.

<sup>37</sup> However Lougee's observations about the frequency of 'misalliance' in salon society challenges this image of marriages between born aristocrats simply rolling on without interruption. She reports that:

marriages between men of sword nobility and women of newly noble

For Nietzsche an aristocracy of spirit is far more problematic and something whose transmission needs to be worked at, because not simply a matter of genetic inheritance or wealth. Spiritual aristocracy requires marriages between psychological equals and these are not as easily identified, by others or themselves, as are social equals. As such marriage is of comparable importance in Nietzsche's spirit model of aristocracy as it is in the traditional birth model but its success cannot be assumed away as part of the background of normal social functions. And because marriage can also be a mode of caring for the self, it cannot be cordoned off from other aspects of the higher life nor left in the background to do its work. As this suggests, Nietzsche's thought is influenced by the idea of companionate marriage but more than this is required to explain his interest in this institution, and the notion of spiritual aristocracy adumbrated in the middle period is relevant here.

In contrast to La Rochefoucauld, Chamfort has much to say about marriage, but as most of it is critical he offers no real inspiration for Nietzsche's image of higher marriages either. Chamfort's work is littered with criticisms of marriage (cf. Arnaud 1992:42). Some attack marriages that are contracted on flawed bases and are echoed in Nietzsche's remarks on ill-founded marriages. Chamfort advises that marriage only follow long acquaintance (1968:287#1084) although an anecdote tells of a pair that will not marry precisely because they know one another well (1968:284#1069). Love matches are "La pire de toutes les mésalliances" (1968:139#401), the marriages of the aristocracy are "une indécence convenue" (1968:138#396) and, as is the

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or nonnoble, non-military families had long been accepted in practice, and indeed this type of misalliance had become increasingly important as a vehicle through which the old nobility could cope with economic change and the venal system of officeholding (1976:157.cf.168).

She goes on to argue that "the salon ... functioned to integrate old families and new through common participation in cultural activity" (1976:158). Lough also comments on these misalliances and attributes them to the "embarrassed financial position" in which many aristocrats found themselves. One way out: was for the nobleman to marry a wealthy heiress who would one day inherit the fortune of her nouveau riche father, and whose dowry/might pay off the more pressing debts of the family. (1954:79/80.cf.85,87)

case with La Rochefoucauld, young women marrying old men for their money is condemned, as is the society that countenances this (1968:138#397).

However much of Chamfort's (often amusing) scorn is heaped upon marriage per se (1968:138#393.268-9#981.269#985.271#994.279#1043.353 #XXXII). The impression is that marriage is intrinsically unsatisfactory and that no matter how much its partners like one another beforehand, the institution generates boredom, indifference (1968:269#984.301#1136), dislike and infidelity.<sup>38</sup> Hence:

L'état de mari a cela de facheux que le mari qui a le plus d'esprit peut être de trop partout, même chez lui, ennuyeux sans ouvrir la bouche, et ridicule en disant la chose la plus simple (1968:138#398).

That marriage sours relationships is also evident in the following anecdote:

Un homme allait, depuis trente ans, passer toutes les soirées chez Mme de ...; il perdit sa femme; on crut qu'il épouserait l'autre, et l'on y encouragerait. Il refusa: "Je ne saurais plus, dit-il, ou aller passer mes soirées" (1968:193#621.cf.349#XI).

Most marriages are plagued by infidelity (1968:140#411.206#684.260#933.275 #1023.277#1033) and this is almost inevitable, as B's explanation to A of why he will not marry illustrates:

B.- ... je serais cocu.

A.- Qui vous a dit que vous seriez cocu?

B.- Je serais cocu, parce que je le mériterais.

A.- Et pourquoi le mériteriez-vous?

B.- Parce que je me serais marié. (1968:348#V)

However such infidelity hurts the partner's pride more than anything else,<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> The fact that, as Merwin notes, infidelity was the norm in the world Chamfort knew (in Chamfort 1984:34) does not prevent Chamfort from criticising it.

<sup>39</sup> As Pellisson notes "Les maris ne font plus à leurs femmes l'honneur d'être jaloux, si elles ont des aventures" (1895:177). The Goncourt brothers explain that for the aristocracy of the eighteenth century, marriage:

appears no longer as an institution or a sacrament, but merely as a contract toward the continuation of a name and the preservation of a breed, a contract involving neither the constancy of the man nor the fidelity of the woman. It ... elicits in the man and the woman none of the feelings aroused by the conviction that the tie contracted springs from the heart (1981:148).

for Chamfort portrays most marriages as devoid of genuine affection (1968:185 #586). Should some fondness animate a marriage, it is unlikely to be mutual (1986:353-4#XXXVI). Marriage degrades because it exposes a man to his wife's petty passions (1968:134#368.141#414). 'M' compares being a husband to being a king in politics but this is to ridicule rather than extol this rank (1968:283#1065). While these arguments against marriage for men look like thinly veiled misogyny, Chamfort also suggests that remaining unmarried can be better for women too. 'M de L...', for example, advises a widow not to remarry, for "c'est une bien belle chose de porter le nom d'un homme qui ne peut plus faire de sottises!" (1968:309#1182).

However while the overwhelming emphasis in Chamfort's work is against marriage, there are one or two points that illustrate La Rochefoucauld's claim that there are some good marriages, even if none are delicious. One of Chamfort's maxims claims that for a marriage to be happy its partners must not merely charm but love one another, although happiness can also be had if they are suited to one another's faults (1968:137#390). The passage above describing the unhappy state of being a husband goes on to suggest that this can be partly alleviated by the wife's love (1968:138#398). However these are lean pickings, forcing the conclusion that while there is little in Chamfort's work to inspire Nietzsche's praise for higher marriage, there is much to fuel his many attacks on marriage.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Pellisson points out that this condemnation of marriage, or at least a preference for bachelorhood, was part of an older trend: "parmi les écrivains qui se firent connaître avant 1750, le célibat avait été fort en faveur" (1970: 179). However Chamfort's minimal praise of marriage and family life is one of the things that separates him from Rousseau and the wider eighteenth century view that:

Le bonheur domestique est à la vie de l'âme ... un état d'épanouissement et de calme, qui conduit à la vraie plénitude. La famille apparaît ainsi comme l'une des harmoniques les plus larges et les plus riches du repos. (Mauzi 1965:355.cf.356)

Chamfort shares this movement's criticism of romantic intrigues, adultery and so forth but offers no idyllic vision of family life as an alternative. Mauzi adds that:

Le bonheur domestique et l'amitié constituent le décor humain du repos. Mais le repos n'est complet que s'il possède aussi un décor

As the reference to companionate marriage signals, another way of approaching Nietzsche's interest in marriage is to consider it in the light of what Taylor calls 'the affirmation of ordinary life' (1989:211,215,226-7,232). Taylor traces this to the Reformation and sees it as giving new status to marriage, reproduction and family life. Nietzsche's interest in companionate marriage, reproduction and wider issues of care of the self mean that he can be seen as a legatee of some of this tradition. However he repudiates the levelling that Taylor sees accompanying this (1989:214,217), establishing instead a new hierarchy although this is between higher and lower individuals rather than sacred and profane activities. Thus Nietzsche's thought affirms the everyday life of the superior few and holds that the attentive, individualised administration of quotidian life can nurture spiritual superiority. He thereby synthesises aspects of this modern movement with a quasi-classical hierarchy.

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La Rochefoucauld is untouched by the affirmation of everyday life for he sees love and marriage as discrete realms. He both castigates and continues aspects of the older courtly view of love<sup>42</sup> while adding love's consummation

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naturel: la vie champêtre ou les jardins. (1965:362)

In his writing Chamfort buys parts of the package - friendship and withdrawal to the country - but not domestic happiness. However as his letters show, his life with Mme Buffon combined all three.

<sup>41</sup> As Chapter Seven and Eight show, however, he rejects the celebration of commerce that Taylor says is part of the affirmation of everyday life (1989: 214).

<sup>42</sup> As Stanton notes:

The honnête homme was undeniably indebted to the chivalrous and courtly ideal, at the very least for providing an indigenous antecedent text of the aristocratic self (1980:18).

As was the case with women, it is possible that some of La Rochefoucauld's disabused reflections on love are directed at its idealisation by the précieux. As Strowski observes:

C'est surtout dans les maximes sur l'amour qu'on voit combien La Rochefoucauld est l'ennemi des précieux. Pour les précieux, l'amour était la vertu des vertus et la source de tous les héroïsmes. Il était fondé sur l'admiration et sur la fidélité, sur le respect et sur le dévouement (1925:195).

to the picture.<sup>43</sup> In the tradition of courtly love, love was not the preserve of women but was also a reputable pursuit for men. Thus while Chapter Nine showed that women nearly always appear against a backdrop of romantic love in La Rochefoucauld's work, this should not suggest that the moralist is unconcerned with men as romantic actors. Some of his reflections deal specifically with men as lovers, contending that their fidelity increases if they are badly treated (1977:74#331) and that their love is not really love for their mistress but self-love (1977:77#374). Other comments are gender-neutral, criticising male lovers by implication for these general remarks about the effects of love allow for men to behave in the same manner as women. Thus love impairs prudence (1977:106#47), is based on self-love and appeals by virtue of its trappings (1977:88#501). The Maxime's analyses of jealousy apply to people in love too (1977:48#32,74#324,76#361,88#503), so that this is not denounced as a peculiarly female vice. One maxim also allows that the movement from love to ambition is not unique to women (1977:86#490), all of which reinforces the previous chapter's claim that gender-specific virtues and vices are minimal in the moralist's work.

As this point about love and ambition signals, although Nietzsche's interest in marriage is not stimulated by reading La Rochefoucauld, his depiction of love retains certain of the moralist's themes. Another of his problems taken up by Nietzsche is constancy for Nietzsche shares the moralist's belief in the protean nature of the self and its emotions (1977:118 #VI,120-21#IX) and in the corollary of this, that one cannot always be held accountable for shifts in the affections (1977:98#59,#62,121#IX,136#XVII). La Rochefoucauld sees the difficulty this poses for love's duration for remaining loyal in the face of change can demand restraining of the shifting self (1977:78#381).

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<sup>43</sup> This incorporation of physical love continues into the eighteenth century, as Mauzi notes:

L'amour vertueux, tel qu'on le comprend au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, n'a donc rien de commun avec l'amour platonique. Il peut fort bien être charnel. (1965:477)



However the moralist suggests not just that love is threatened by perpetual movement but that it needs it (1977:51#75), indicating a way out of the apparent impasse between love and change. La Rochefoucauld identifies two sorts of constancy - one is restless and alive and this contrasts with a static variety that makes a virtue of remaining constant (1977:60#176.cf.136 #XVII). The former can be inferred to be superior, being concerned with the substance of the other and incessantly finding new things to love in them, while the latter concentrates on the appearance of fidelity and is echoed in Nietzsche's point that in promising love we can really only promise its continued practices. However as shown, Nietzsche also accepts the moralist's belief that love's mobility can be accommodated in some relationships, although he discusses this with less brio than the moralist. Several times La Rochefoucauld suggests that love can endure when its partners are both complex and changing, for they go on finding things in the other to entice and delight them. He resolves the question of constancy thus:

La constance en amour est une inconstance perpétuelle, qui fait que notre coeur s'attache successivement à toutes les qualités de la personne que nous aimons, donnant tantôt la préférence à l'une, tantôt à l'autre; de sorte que cette constance n'est qu'une inconstance arrêtée et renfermée dans un même sujet (1977:60#175)<sup>44</sup>

La Rochefoucauld requires this variety at the physical as well as the spiritual level for his definition of love includes a carnal component, "une envie cachée et délicate de posséder ce que l'on aime après beaucoup de mystères (1977:51#68). So constancy is only a problem for those who cannot change or who are threatened by change or difference in the other. Similarly we have seen that for Nietzsche a good marriage can be like a good friendship in celebrating difference in and between its partners.

As this intimates, another way Nietzsche follows La Rochefoucauld is by distinguishing between superior, robust love and its more common

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<sup>44</sup> As Lewis says:

In addition to the force of passionate desire, steadfastness in love demands a capacity for renewal, for the regeneration of passion ... (1977:119).

manifestations. As the moralist notes "Il n'y a que d'une sorte d'amour, mais il y en a mille différentes copies" (1977:51#74)<sup>45</sup> and "L'amour prête son nom à un nombre infini de commerces qu'on lui attribue" (1977:52#77). Therefore in the case of love as in that of friendship, Nietzsche continues the moralist's attempt to discriminate its higher from lower forms.<sup>46</sup> The rarity of superior love comes through repeatedly in the Maximes, either through statements to this effect (1977:51#76,85#473) or the continued exposure of things that masquerade as love (1977:51#76.70#277.74#335). At one point La Rochefoucauld contends that if pure love exists it is hidden at the bottom of our hearts and unknown to us (1977:51#69) but this need not condemn love's other manifestations.<sup>47</sup> Among the forms of love that are revealed and recognisable, some are superior. Love may be difficult to define (1977:51#68) and best depicted through similes (1977:94#13) but there are sufficient hints throughout La Rochefoucauld's work to distinguish love's elite from its inferior types.<sup>48</sup> True love can prevent jealousy (1977:75#336) and conquer

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<sup>45</sup> This maxim is taken by Truchet as evidence that the moralist:  
s'en [l'amour] faisait une idée si haute que la véritable amour ... [est]  
une essence dont la perfection ne saurait tolérer aucune altération ... (in  
La Rochefoucauld 1977:25)

However given my above argument about the love's accommodation of change, I do not share this view.

<sup>46</sup> As Lewis notes:  
La Rochefoucauld fails to maintain a uniformly sceptical view of love,  
allowing a certain ambivalence to creep into it by admitting the  
possibility of "le véritable amour" (1977:119)

However I see this a little differently and do not read his reflections on true love as lapses.

<sup>47</sup> In conflict with my reading is Fine's, which sees this as a:  
form of Platonism, which seemed to consist of relegating admirable  
traits in man, such as a higher form of love, to an ethereal realm of  
rarity which condemned nearly all commonly felt forms of love to a  
degraded status (1974:50)

<sup>48</sup> One comes in his Self-Portrait:  
Moi qui connais tout ce qu'il y a de délicat et de fort dans les grands  
sentiments de l'amour, si jamais je viens à aimer, ce sera assurément  
de cette sorte (1977:168).

coquetry (1977:75#349,78#376,80#402), reinforcing Chapter Nine's point that the moralist's essentialism is not determinism. That only some forms of love are attacked is apparent in the fact that the embodiment of La Rochefoucauld's ethical ideal, the 'honnête homme' can love and can even be mad with love, although he cannot be made stupid or foolish by it (1977:76#353).<sup>49</sup> Indeed the moralist summarises love as producing the worst ills and the greatest goods in life; "on doit le craindre et le respecter toujours" (1977:125#XII).

Despite Chamfort's assertion that "En amour, tout est vrai, tout est faux; et c'est la seule chose sur laquelle on ne puisse par dire un absurdité" (1968:140#408), three approaches to love are discernible in his work. One ridicules love in general, another criticises love in society but the third follows La Rochefoucauld by evincing faith in a higher form of love. This suggests that Chamfort also follows La Rochefoucauld in unhooking love from marriage, for, as we have seen, there is scant evidence of higher love in Chamfort's depiction of marriage.<sup>50</sup>

Chamfort's cynical, disabused approach to love in general comes through in claims that love is folly, albeit agreeable folly (1968:82#158) and is based on illusions (1968:140#409). Echoing Chapter Nine's claim about lovers of beautiful women merely projecting the things they think they receive from them, here the lover loves the image they create of the other rather than the other's reality (1968:136#380). This also explains why, contrary to traditional views, love eschews perfection for perfection offers no scope for love's imagination (1968:360-61#LXX). This criticism of love feeds into Nietzsche's critique of narcissistic lovers who only love that which resembles

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<sup>49</sup> As Dens notes, this is compatible with the 'honnête homme' tradition: Si l'un des buts de l'honnête homme est de plaire aux femmes, il se distingue néanmoins du galant homme, dont la seule préoccupation est la conquête amoureuse. Le donjuanisme est un état passager qui ne dépasse guère le sensualisme ... L'honnêteté n'exclut pourtant pas la galanterie encore qu'elle ne puisse s'y réduire (1981:16).

<sup>50</sup> According to Furbank Chamfort believes in and writes eloquent aphorisms about love (1992:6) and Pellisson's view that he "n'avait de mépris ni pour les femmes, ni pour l'amour" (1895:41) was noted in the previous chapter.

them. As Chamfort sees it, love's longevity is always threatened for the infidelity plaguing marriage haunts love too (1968:134-5#369). In short, love is doomed to failure. Again the imagery of economics devalues, for Chamfort describes love as "un commerce orageux qui finit toujours par une banqueroute" (1968:140#410). Another passage damns gender relations doubly for describing them as "un commerce guerrier" (1968:135#371) it combines commercial and martial imagery - neither bearing positive connotations.<sup>51</sup>

There is however, another dimension to Chamfort's portrayal of love which makes it part of his wider social critique, rather than an attack on love itself. As with friendship, genuine love is virtually unknown in society and this world is inhospitable to love's growth. Because "Les idées du public ne sauraient manquer d'être presque toujours viles et basses" (1968: 113#280), the public cannot recognise genuine affection in interaction of any sort, so that even in the love of "une femme honnête et d'un homme digne d'être aimé, il ne voit que catinisme ou du libertinage" (1968:113#280). Society at large is like a lover, projecting onto the other, incapable of recognising the other's distinction in both senses of this term. What society calls love "n'est que l'échange de deux fantasmes et le contact de deux épidermes" (1968:133#359.cf. 202#667.282#1057). Anyone showing sincere regard for another is mocked (1968:196#638), signalling just how inhospitable this world is to genuine affection. Society's hostility to such affection has a corrupting as well as an inhibiting effect for in one anecdote 'M' explains that disappointment drove him to behave in love like everyone else: "C'est faute de pouvoir placer un sentiment vrai" (1968:198#648).

But as this reference to 'un sentiment vrai' intimates, there is a more elevated view of love in Chamfort's work and it is from this vantage point that

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<sup>51</sup> The Goncourt brothers also liken gender relations to war, comparing the eighteenth century view of love to the earlier, courtly one:

Into the relations of the sexes there enters something like a pitiless game of policy, a deliberate plan of destruction. Seduction becomes an art equivalent in treachery, faithlessness and cruelty, to that of tyranny. A genuine Machiavelism invades love-making, dominates and directs it. (1981:125)

he condemns much of what passes for love in society. This other view emerges in the delicate account of the way lovers' "idée de la jouissance s'enveloppe et s'anoblit dans le charme de l'amour qui l'a fait naître" (1968:120#298). Delicacy resonates in 'M's claim that "L'amour ... devrait nêtre le plaisir que des âmes délicates" (1968:199#651), contrasting markedly with Chamfort's depictions of the vulgarity of love in society. While there love consists mainly of corporeal encounters, the possibility of "la liaison d'une femme et d'un homme" being "d'âme à âme" is mooted, and the difference between these types of love underlined (1968:274#1015). Love's capacity to transcend worldly concerns is further apparent in the words of a young man who is marrying not because his wife will be "une riche héritère" but in the anticipation that she will be "un riche héritage" (1968:352#XXVII). Such higher love is unadulterated, composed of and subsisting on itself (1968:131#345). Although sceptical about infatuation (1968:131#346), Chamfort respects love when it is grand passion, seeing such violent love as inviolate (1968:133#357) although he acknowledges that the suffering caused by real love can be intense (1968:123#315). At one point he praises glory by likening it to a lover (1968:153#460). And just as marriage and what society calls love debase, this more elevated love elevates, making it impossible for those who have known it to return to galant ways (1968:132#351). All of this suggests that Nietzsche's vision of higher love finds some precedent in the work of Chamfort as well as that of La Rochefoucauld.

However a notable way in which Nietzsche dissents from both the French moralists' portrayal of love comes in its relation to self-love. La Rochefoucauld typically sets up love and self-love as antagonists, and in most struggles self-love is victor (1977:68#262,73#312,87-8#500) although he does allow that love's superior manifestations can overwhelm self-love.<sup>52</sup> Chamfort claims that most love appeals to self-love and implies that this adulterates true

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<sup>52</sup> This possibility is overlooked in Lewis' claim, cited in Chapter Six, that: friendship differs from love in one crucial respect - it does entail a real preference for the friend, whereas in love the lover continues to prefer himself. (1977:122)

love (1968:133#356,#358) for 'l'amour' and 'l'égoïsme' make a "singulier mélange" (1968:264#954). Nietzsche by contrast, calls the competition between love and self-love to an end, again elaborating upon what was merely a suggestion in the work of La Rochefoucauld. Nietzsche allows that love and egoism can and should co-operate, for superior love relations nurture and develop the self as well as the other. As we have seen, he also allows that love from another can enhance self-love. This departure from the moralists' example illustrates the point made in Chapter Four - that self-love is a traditional value that is transvalued rather than just set in a different context or given a different rationale, by Nietzsche. And although there is some precedent in Chamfort's work for affirming self-love, associating this with love for another is again Nietzsche's innovation.

Another way Nietzsche deviates from the moralists is by following the feminists and likening good marriage to good friendship. Although La Rochefoucauld sometimes compares or parallels love and friendship (1977:78 #376,83#441,85#473,136#XVII), this can serve to underscore their differences (1977:51#72,83#440). The idea of love and friendship dovetailing in marriage is alien to the moralist and even the idea that a romantic relationship could replicate friendship is not something he seriously entertains. Perhaps one reason for this is La Rochefoucauld's sense of the power of sex in love and its absence in friendship. For Nietzsche by contrast, despite his emphasis on embodiment and sexual liberation, sexual relations are a less important component of superior love and marriage.

That sex impairs friendship between men and women could also be suggested by Chamfort's aphorism that "L'amitié extrême et délicate est souvent blessé du repli d'une rose" (1968:123#317), although this might just express the general fragility of superior friendships. Elsewhere Chamfort suggests that having loved might be a pre-requisite for appreciating friendship (1968:135#370), although this is far from Nietzsche's notion that friendship can be a model for marital relations. If anything Chamfort's claim devalues love against friendship rather than conflating the two. As Chapter Nine mentioned, 'V' dismisses the idea of friendship with a sensitive woman as

fictional (1968:266#962), rather than making it the basis for higher marriages, as Nietzsche does.<sup>53</sup>

Nietzsche's downplaying of sexual love also suggests that genetic transmission is not of prime importance in the creation and reproduction of higher humans, which fits with my argument that the middle period adumbrates a notion of spiritual, rather than just social, aristocracy. Given that, as Chapter Seven argued, Chamfort is also a critic of the aristocracy of birth, his work might be expected to reflect on the importance of reproducing higher spiritual types. However his scattered remarks about reproduction offer little that could have stimulated Nietzsche's thinking on this, even though Chamfort goes further in problematising reproduction than does La Rochefoucauld.

At one point Chamfort queries why people go on reproducing in adverse political conditions but concludes that a baby's smile warms its mother's heart no matter who rules (1968:165#505). While this intimates that women have stronger proclivities to parenthood than men, Chamfort's later explanations of motherhood both confirm and deny this. He suggests that nature has equipped women for maternity by subtracting from their reason and supplementing their emotion for "Il fallait une organisation particulière, pour les rendre capables de supporter, soigner, caresser des enfants" (1968:140

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<sup>53</sup> As such Nietzsche resolves the traditional tension between marriage and friendship noted by Mauzi. He writes that while many thinkers draw parallels between love and friendship, the latter usually comes out on top because:

L'amour n'est qu'égarément, désordre, violence et fureur. Il consume l'âme qu'il ne l'assouvit, et rend indisponible pour toutes sortes d'engagements, de curiosités ou de devoirs. Instrument du malheur, il est en outre l'ennemi de la conscience, car il peut fort bien subsister sans la vertu. L'amitié au contraire est un sentiment dont l'excès n'est pas concevable ou, du moins, pas dangereux. La moderation s'inscrit en elle, qui demeure toujours égale et n'a presque jamais de crise à affronter. D'autre part, elle est liée par nature à la vertu: plus morale que l'amour, elle n'entame pas l'intégrité de l'âme. Sans doute est-elle moins vive que lui, moins capable de susciter des émotions extrêmes, dont certaines sont chargées de délices. Mais elle compense cette relative tiédeur par le calme profonde qu'elle apporte, le rayonnement discret qui l'accompagne. C'est donc à l'amitié qu'est attaché le plus grand bonheur. (1965:360)

#406). Nature has also mixed the sufferings of maternity with pleasures to reward women for being the guardians of the species (1968:140#407). However women's innate love of children is further questioned in an anecdote where a young woman has five children to a much older husband. Proof of the children's legitimacy comes in her dislike of them (1968:352#XXIX): evidence that nature's handiwork is imperfect.<sup>54</sup>

In defiance of this general tendency to procreate regardless, one of the reasons 'M' rejects marriage is its corollary of fatherhood. Although an 'honnête homme', he does not want a son who resembles him for if poor, honest and incapable of flattery and grovelling, the son will suffer as much as his father has (1968:280#1049). While this furthers Chamfort's critique of society rather than questioning reproduction per se, the fact that reason prevents a man from reproducing reinforces his essentialist view of women's greater inclination for family. However Chamfort's puzzle about reproducing in oppressive political conditions also invokes 'les lois impérieuses de la nature' (1968:165#505) to explain species continuity, and this idea that nature compels both genders to procreate, even against their reason, returns in another discussion of reproduction (1968:281#1053). This is the closest Chamfort comes to the sort of concern that occupies Nietzsche. The passage contends that if reason governed reproduction, men would not become fathers nor women mothers. Therefore nature impels people to procreate, giving reason no say in whether or with whom. Species preservation is indifferent to the quality of coupling, for its goal is realised whether a man has instant sex with a barmaid or spends years pursuing 'Clarisse' (1968:281#1053).<sup>55</sup> While this passage does not explicitly associate the problem of reproduction with that of creating and maintaining a spiritual aristocracy, it holds out the possibility, if not the likelihood, of careful, rational reproduction between equals which, as shown, is one of the middle period's concerns. It also threatens the harmony

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<sup>54</sup> Compare Chamfort's (self-referential?) claim that:

Les ouvrages qu'un auteur fait avec plaisir sont souvent les meilleurs, comme les enfants de l'amour sont les plus beaux (1968:153#463).

<sup>55</sup> I infer that this is an allusion to Richardson's Clarissa.



between reason and nature that Chamfort elsewhere suggests is attainable (Chapter Two). All of this indicates then that, unlike La Rochefoucauld, Chamfort raises reproduction as an issue although he does not go so far as Nietzsche in reflecting on this nor in considering what role the family might play in nurturing an aristocracy of spirit.

As indicated above, in the aristocracy of spirit envisaged by Nietzsche it is possible for there to be a gulf in nobility between parents and children, which is not the case in an aristocracy of birth. Nietzsche's awareness of this potential gap between the nobility of parents and children raises the issue of justice and equality and their spatial conceptualisation in love and gender and family relations. The passage following 'Tragedy' develops the problem of this gulf, arguing that parents are often the least equipped to 'assess the quality' of their children because they are so physically, if not spiritually, near them (1986:156 #423). This manifests once more the inverse correlation between justice and propinquity. That proximity brings a certain myopia is reiterated in "Near-sighted"'s suggestion that mothers only see the most obvious and "visible" sufferings of their children (1986:159#434) - again, being physically close need not bring greater insight but can impede understanding of another. However distance does not always afford lucidity. That it can eclipse the truth is born out in Science's suggestion that women can only have their "magic" and "powerful" effect when seen at a distance (1974:124#60). Viewing them close up reveals what they really are, shattering the impression of them as soothing, serene, tranquil creatures.<sup>56</sup>

The argument about mothers being impervious to children's true natures also applies to them as wives but here Nietzsche suggests a certain wilful blindness rather than just the obscurity proximity brings. Women's unwillingness to see their spouses "suffering, in want or despised" (1986:159 #434) underlines the idea that marriage fetters freespirts, for their quest

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<sup>56</sup> Equating distance with false seeing is also apparent when, discussing hero-worship, Daybreak points out that excessive idealization of another, placing them at too distant a height, hampers clear vision (1982:154#298).

necessarily brings the suffering that women strive to minimize. That love prefers to shroud its loved one is reiterated in Human's "A testimony to love" (1986:386#301) and Daybreak's "Danger in innocence" (1982:159#321) and "Love and truthfulness" (1982:197-8#479). That this is deliberate and involves self-deception is emphasised in Daybreak's "Wherein we become artists" (1982:150#279) and "Fear and love" (1982:156-7#309).<sup>57</sup> Obversely Science argues that, wanting to render themselves worthy of their lover and shield them from disappointment, the loved one seeks to conceal their defects (1974:218 #263). The implication is that, as with some friendships, love is incompatible with just vision.

In Chapter Six love's injustice derived from its impartiality, its failure to discriminate among individuals. Here its injustice emanates from its excessive partiality and inability to see the loved one's flaws.<sup>58</sup> By repeatedly presenting love (and not just romance) as antagonistic to truth and honesty, Nietzsche makes it ultimately incompatible with free spirithood's commitment to justice, to seeing all things as they are and giving them what is theirs, so at this level, there is something in the argument that love is anathema to free spirits. And in his emphasis on love's myopia, Nietzsche follows La Rochefoucauld, who writes that love is blind until it is over (1977:106#46) and can prefer illusion to truth (1977:79#395,83#441).

However paralleling Chapter Five's point about the occasional access of pity being a tonic to the pitiless, Daybreak suggests that an exceptional

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<sup>57</sup> This difference between fear and love is congruent with that in Chapter Six's comparison of enmity and friendship. Fear wants knowledge of the other to protect the self and gain advantage over the enemy and thus so self-deception and promotes lucidity (1982:156-7#309).

<sup>58</sup> In one of his letters Nietzsche explores the reverse of this, the idea that loving people, or having loved them, makes one too harsh to be just to them. In a letter to his sister he writes that:

Je ne suis pas toujours d'humeur à être "juste". Malwida m'a écrit une fois qu'il y a deux personnes pour lesquelles j'étais injuste: Wagner et toi, ma soeur. Pourquoi donc? Peut-être parce que c'est vous deux que j'ai les plus aimés et que je ne puis faire taire la rancune que je vous garde de m'avoir abandonné. (26.12.1887.in Kofman 1979:298)

onrush of love and its unconditional trust delight the "profoundly mistrustful, evil and embittered" (1982:135#216). Again though such intimacy can be tyrannical for love's unconditional trust causes "suffering and oppression" (1982:135#216). Relief comes through music, offering the lover some distance from their love. In a Keatsian merger of sensory images Nietzsche contends that music allows the lover to see their position more justly:

for through music, as though through a coloured mist, they see and hear their love as it were grown **more distant**, more moving and less oppressive; music is the only means they have of **observing** their extraordinary condition and for the first time taking of it a view informed with a kind of alienation and relief (1982:135#216.FN's emphasis).

Thus while Nietzsche usually portrays perspective in ocular images, here it is associated with the aural, for music allows one to take some distance from stifling propinquity.

Although love limits justice, it reposes on equality. This is implicit in the comparison of marriage with friendship for friendship requires equality (Chapter Six). Love's equality is explicit in the contrast between "Love and honour" where love knows no hierarchy, "no power, nothing that separates, contrasts, ranks above and below" (1986:192#603). This clashes with honour's acknowledgement of difference and distance which explains why "one cannot be loved and honoured by one and the same person" (1986:192#603). In arguing thus Nietzsche continues Chamfort's point that love requires equality for we can only be appreciated by those akin to us. Love cannot exist or at least not last "entre des êtres dont l'un est trop inférieur à l'autre" (1968:139#402). Love's link with equality is illustrated in the negative in Daybreak's "Where the noblest go wrong" (1982:188#445) which recounts a case where one loves to their utmost but the partner's superiority prevents them from recognising this as supreme affection. Thus the mutual misperception and misunderstanding that dog interaction between higher and lower human types (Chapter Six) also afflicts love when it passes between unequals.

Further evidence that love should be equal and reciprocal comes in "Letting oneself be loved" which points to:

the belief [that] has arisen that in every love affair there exists a fixed

quantity of love: the more one party seizes for himself the less is left for the other (1986:155#418).

Nietzsche's implicit criticism of this zero-sum approach to love is consonant with his critique of it in friendship (Chapter Six) and when such love degenerates into a struggle over who will give and who take its fixed shares, "many a half-comic, half-absurd situation" (1986:155#418) results. His assertion that "The cure for love is still in most cases that ancient radical medicine: love in return" (1982:176#415) also captures the failure of love's reciprocity but his qualification of this as holding "in most cases" suggests that this is not inevitable and that ideally love can be reciprocal. The obverse of this comes in one of La Rochefoucauld's suppressed maxims: "N'aimer guère en amour est un moyen assuré pour être aimé" (1977:98#57). However as shown, this does not exhaust the moralist's view of love - Nietzsche follows him in holding that love between superior types can be mutual. And just as it was shown that love is protean, so the equality it establishes or recognises is temporary. Indeed love itself can create inequality and distance its partners from one another for when people are loved:

the more they know they are loved the more inconsiderate they usually become, until in the end they are no longer worthy of love and a rupture occurs ... (1986:369#232)

This same dynamic is depicted by Chamfort although his explanation differs. In a situation where a woman loves a man too much, he comes to love her less, ungrateful for what he cannot repay (1968:139#404).

All of this indicates how Nietzsche's discussion of even interpersonal relationships like love, marriage and family life are permeated by his concerns with justice and equality. This illustrates the way his concern with justice operates at the micro as well as the macro level. However his new notion of aristocracy also endows things like love, marriage and family life with a wider, political significance. Moreover the fact that equality is a pre-requisite for higher love relations indicates that this joins friendship as a forum in which Nietzsche believes equality between individuals is not just possible but necessary. However while the way Nietzsche infuses his thinking with reflections on justice is usually something that distinguishes his work from the

moralists, in the case of love's link with justice and equality, there is some precedent in the thought of the moralists.

This chapter has also shown that, despite his many flippant remarks, Nietzsche accords great importance to marriage, and hence is scathing of relationships with unsound foundations. He looks to neither the Greeks nor the French moralists for guidance about good marriages and some of his views on this question are closer to those of his feminist contemporaries than those of his traditional sources. This is evident in the ideal of marriage as a form of friendship providing the vantage point from which he views other marriages. As this suggests, rather than condemn marriage altogether, Nietzsche sometimes discriminates between its higher and lower forms, making his reflections on marriage continuous with his other social commentary.

For Nietzsche marriage is the primary site of romance and love between men and women and in this he departs again from his Greek and French predecessors. His interest in marriage and love relations generally, can also be explained by his absorption of some of the ideas from the affirmation of ordinary life as well as from the new notion of spiritual aristocracy sketched in the middle period. His view of love continues some of La Rochefoucauld's and Chamfort's ideas, especially its discrimination of higher and lower forms and the former's resolution of the apparent tension between love and change. But Nietzsche innovates here too, especially in showing that there is no necessary competition between self-love and love for another. This furnishes yet another explanation for the importance of marriage in his work, for a good, friendly marriage can be a mode and source of caring for the self and such care is a crucial component of his new notion of aristocracy. All of this suggests that the usual reading of Nietzsche rejecting marriage and companionship for free spirits requires qualification.

## Conclusion.

The most general argument to come out my work is that the books of Nietzsche's middle period are unduly neglected. They deserve greater attention because the Nietzsche they disclose is a more careful and less extreme thinker than he becomes. He is also one who in many ways adheres more closely to the values Nietzsche prizes in his oeuvre and with which he is usually associated.

When closer attention is paid to the works of the middle period it becomes apparent that the habit of attributing views to Nietzsche unmodified often involves exaggeration and misrepresentation. Many critics construct a single, unchanging Nietzsche by attributing to him views that are peculiar to one of his periods or even texts. Just some examples of this tendency to use 'Nietzsche' as a collective noun and to do so inappropriately include the claims that he is an ultra-individualist who disavows friendship and glorifies autonomy and solitude, that he condemns women to perpetual inferiority and is implacably anti-feminist, that he is hostile to love and marriage, that he puts the demands of self-development before all other ties, that he condemns pity and benevolence, that he has little to say about conventional political questions because he is uninterested in political power, that he holds science in low esteem, that he abjures moderation and praises excess, that he promotes symptomatic readings of texts, that he delights in hyperbole and extremism and that he is a radical critic of western philosophy from Socrates onward. "[H]ow coarsely does language assault with its one word so polyphonous a being!" (Nietzsche 1982:84#133).

As this point about Nietzsche's supposed radical criticism of western philosophy reminds us, one of the distinctive features of the middle period is the way Nietzsche presents himself as productively engaged with this tradition, as continuing some of its ideas, expanding some of its possibilities and repudiating other of its claims. The Nietzsche of the middle period does not adopt a primarily adversarial stance toward this heritage nor invent himself as a *sui generis* thinker. Rather he portrays himself as one who both descends and

dissents from the western philosophical tradition.

One slice of this tradition that Nietzsche descends and dissents from is the school of French moralism, represented here by La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort. Reading Nietzsche as their legatee, as he invites us to, offers not just a case study of the wider point about his engagement with tradition but also casts new light on the works of the middle period. The most pervasive quality that becomes more visible when Nietzsche is read after La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort is the middle period's attention to detail and its enthrallment with the mystery, complexity and mobility of the psyche. At a more particular level, each chapter of this dissertation has studied a clutch of concepts that both links Nietzsche's thought with and distinguishes it from the moralists'.

Another important thing to emerge from reading Nietzsche in the wake of the moralists is that the aphorism is not always a suitable vehicle for many of his moral analyses. Trying to accommodate these within the aphorism is like getting a camel through the eye of a needle. Yet while the literature is replete with explanations of the appeal of the aphorism to Nietzsche, few critics consider its limitations. It is argued here that the aphorism's unsuitability for many of Nietzsche's aims must be added to the usual list of explanations for his stylistic variety. However it has also been demonstrated that the moralists are models of this variety as well as for use of the aphorism.

My interpretation of Nietzsche's relationship with La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort does not just shed new light on the three works of the middle period but also challenges the interpretations of this relationship advanced by others, principally Brendan Donnellan. Although this dissertation is closest to Donnellan's book in terrain covered, I dissent from my forebear on a host of major issues like Nietzsche's notion of vanity, the place of traditional values in his thought, his supposed reductionism and his views of friendship, women, love and marriage.

My interpretations of the work of La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort also differ from many of those offered by earlier readers of the moralists. In some instances I have taken sides within a debate. Regarding La Rochefoucauld, this

is so on issues like whether he holds moral action or self-knowledge to be possible, what his attitude to the ethic of 'gloire' is, what the role of reason in his thought is and what relationship ethics bears to aesthetics. In Chamfort's case this includes questions about his misanthropy, his view of love and the Rousseauian strands in his thought. In other instances I have suggested new readings of the moralists' work, such as La Rochefoucauld's ambivalence towards masks and the close connection between friendship and self-knowledge in his thought. I contend that Chamfort is essentially a meritocratic rather than an egalitarian thinker and that he has an inclusive notion of solitude. I also reject the view that La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort are irredeemable misogynists. In many ways this dissertation is about three thinkers, not one.

Another crucial thing that reading Nietzsche as the intellectual heir of the French moralists has revealed is the middle period's concern with and favourable reflections on friendship. Indeed friendship evolves as the nodal concept of this dissertation for it overcomes egoism in a way Nietzsche approves of, it incorporates some of the positive features of pity, it provides the model for the political elite of the future that he envisages and seeks to encourage and it provides the basis for the sort of love relations Nietzsche endorses between higher humans beings.

The middle period's accent on friendship also shows that Nietzsche is not the grand advocate of solitude he is usually taken to be. Rather it reveals an interest in the dialogical aspect of life and selfhood. This dissertation has shown that the dialogical resonates throughout the middle period at a number of levels. It is important not just for love, friendship and Nietzsche's new aristocracy but also at a meta-theoretical level. Hence my premise that the works of the middle period can be fruitfully considered as Nietzsche's dialogues with the dead.

But even if Nietzsche is not knowingly developing his thoughts via an engagement with those of La Rochefoucauld and Chamfort, there is a second level of analysis that allows us to situate him as part of the moralist tradition. This form of 'reshelving' does not depend on Nietzsche's knowledge of the earlier writers but identifies a tradition from the outside, on the basis of shared



concerns. This second level of analysis discerns a tradition 'in itself' while the first does so 'for itself'.

Another pervasive feature of the works of Nietzsche's middle period is their concern with justice and equality. This operates at a host of levels - the political, the social, the physical and the psychic. The works of this period offer a sustained and serious, if not systematic, reflection on the relationship between justice and equality at the macro and micro levels. Nietzsche's discussions of key concepts like egoism, pity, friendship, aristocracy, gender and gender relations are interwoven with reflections on justice and this implication of justice in Nietzsche's exploration of them is one of the things distinguishing his approach from the moralists'. Furthermore, a striking feature of Nietzsche's reflections on justice is the way he conceptualises it. Just as he thinks about perspective in terms of justice, so he thinks about justice in perspectival terms. Justice involves relations between bodies in space for it is thought of through metaphors of distance and proximity.

However if the three books of the middle period are as vivid and absorbing as I have painted them, how has this eluded the general attention, as I claim? One possible reason is that once some critics focus on some of Nietzsche's works, those who would respond are forced to discuss the same texts, and so it goes. However this simply relocates, rather than resolves the problem for something has to explain the greater appeal of the early and later works in the first place. Another possible explanation is the more traditional nature of the works of the middle period. Nietzsche's advocacy of a more rational approach to morality, his belief that truth can and should be pursued and his more moderate stance on issues like pity, gender and social decline all seem to make these three works less arresting, less radical and less innovative than those of the early and later periods.

This could also imply that the major value of the works of the middle period is contrastive - they are interesting because they disclose a 'new Nietzsche' rather than being inherently interesting. While I agree that the works of the middle period are useful for their contrastive function, I obviously do not think that this exhausts their appeal. This is again because of the

Nietzsche they reveal. This Nietzsche is more open to possibilities, including the possibility that goodness and love are genuine forces between some people just as envy, malice and vanity are. The energy which drives his inquiry is fuelled not by anger and bitterness but by an indefatigable and infectious desire to know. This Nietzsche unites a poet's command of language with a novelist's attention to detail and a political theorist's interest in who should rule and how the future of European civilisation could best be served. These are all combined with the incisiveness of a great philosophical mind. This Nietzsche is one of La Rochefoucauld's great spirits who can see even the furthest objects as if they were close, who has breadth of vision as well as an eye for detail. He can also make familiar things seem strange, seeing them from distant perspectives: "Rien n'échappe à sa pénétration" (La Rochefoucauld 1977:133#XVI).

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