

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

Daybreak

Thoughts on the prejudices of morality

EDITED BY

MAUDEMARIE CLARK

Colgate University, New York

BRIAN LEITER

University of Texas, Austin

TRANSLATED BY

R. J. HOLLINGDALE



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

when it everywhere erected the crucifix and thereby designated the earth as the place 'where the just man is *tortured* to death'! And when the powerful oratory of great Lenten preachers for once fetched into the light of publicity all the hidden suffering of the individual, the torments of the 'closet'; when a Whitfield, for instance, preached 'like a dying man to the dying', now violently weeping, now stamping loudly, and passionately and unashamedly, in the most abrupt and cutting tones, directed the whole weight of his attack upon some one individual present and in a fearful manner excluded him from the community – then the earth really did seem to want to transform itself into the 'vale of misery'! Whole masses then come together appeared to fall victim to a madness; many were paralysed with fear; others lay unconscious and motionless; some were seized with violent trembling or rent the air for hours with piercing cries. Everywhere a loud breathing, as of people half-choked gasping for air. 'And truly', says one eye-witness of such a sermon, 'almost all the sounds to be heard were those of people *dying in bitter torment*.' – Let us never forget that it was Christianity which made of the *death-bed* a bed of torture, and that with the scenes that have since then been enacted upon it, with the terrifying tones which here seemed to be realised for the first time, the senses and the blood of countless witnesses have been poisoned for the rest of their life and for that of their posterity! Imagine a harmless human being who cannot get over once having heard such words as these: 'Oh eternity! Oh that I had no soul! Oh that I had never been born! I am damned, damned, lost for ever. A week ago you could have helped me. But now it is all over. Now I belong to the Devil. I go with him to Hell. Break, break, poor hearts of stone! Will you not break? What more can be done for hearts of stone? I am damned that you may be saved! There he is! Yes, there he is! Come, kind Devil! Come!' –

78

Justice which punishes. – Misfortune and guilt – Christianity has placed these two things on a balance: so that, when misfortune consequent on guilt is great, even now the greatness of the guilt itself is still involuntarily measured by it. But this is not *antique*, and that is why the Greek tragedy, which speaks so much yet in so different a sense of misfortune and guilt, is a great liberator of the spirit in a way in which the ancients themselves could not feel it. They were still so innocent as not to have established an 'adequate relationship' between guilt and misfortune. The guilt of their tragic heroes is, indeed, the little

stone over which they stumble and perhaps break an arm or put out an eye: antique sensibility commented: ‘Yes, he should have gone his way a little more cautiously and with less haughtiness!’ But it was reserved for Christianity to say: ‘Here is a great misfortune and behind it there *must* lie hidden a great, *equally great* guilt, even though it may not be clearly visible! If you, unfortunate man, do not feel this you are *obdurate* – you will have to suffer worse things!’ – Moreover, in antiquity there still existed actual misfortune, pure innocent misfortune; only in Christendom did everything become punishment, well-deserved punishment: it also makes the sufferer’s imagination suffer, so that with every misfortune he feels himself morally reprehensible and cast out. Poor mankind! – The Greeks have a word for indignation at another’s unhappiness: this affect was inadmissible among Christian peoples and failed to develop, so that they also lack a name for this *more manly* brother of pity.

79

A suggestion. – If, as Pascal and Christianity maintain, our ego is always *hateful*, how could we ever allow and accept that another should love it – whether god or man! It would be contrary to all decency to let oneself be loved while being all the time well aware that one *deserves* only hatred – not to speak of other defensive sensations. – ‘But this precisely is the realm of clemency.’ – Is your love of your neighbour an act of clemency, then? Your pity an act of clemency? Well, if you are capable of this, go a step further: love yourselves as an act of clemency – then you will no longer have any need of your god, and the whole drama of Fall and Redemption will be played out to the end in you yourselves!

80

The compassionate Christian. – The reverse side of Christian compassion for the suffering of one’s neighbour is a profound suspicion of all the joy of one’s neighbour, of his joy in all that he wants to do and can.

81

The saint’s humanity. – A saint had fallen among believers and could no longer endure their unremitting hatred of sin. At last he said: ‘God created all things excepting sin alone: is it any wonder if he is ill-disposed towards it? – But man created sin – and is he to cast out this only child of his merely because it displeases God, the grandfather of sin! Is that humane? Honour to him to whom honour is due! – but

heart and duty ought to speak firstly for the child – and only secondly for the honour of the grandfather!

82

Spiritual assault. – ‘This you have to decide within yourself, for your life is at stake’: with this cry Luther springs at us and thinks we feel the knife at our throat. But we fend him off with the words of one higher and more considerate than he: ‘We are free to refrain from forming an opinion about this thing or that, and thus to spare our soul distress. For things themselves are by their nature incapable of *forcing* us to make judgments.’

83

Poor mankind! – One drop of blood too much or too little in the brain can make our life unspeakably wretched and hard, so that we have to suffer more from this drop of blood than Prometheus suffered from his vulture. But the worst is when one does not even *know* that this drop of blood is the cause. But ‘the Devil! Or ‘sin’! –

84

The philology of Christianity. – How little Christianity educates the sense of honesty and justice can be gauged fairly well from the character of its scholars’ writings: they present their conjectures as boldly as if they were dogmas and are rarely in any honest perplexity over the interpretation of a passage in the Bible. Again and again they say ‘I am right, for it is written –’ and then follows an interpretation of such impudent arbitrariness that a philologist who hears it is caught between rage and laughter and asks himself: is it possible? Is this honourable? Is it even decent? – How much dishonesty in this matter is still practised in Protestant pulpits, how grossly the preacher exploits the advantage that no one is going to interrupt him here, how the Bible is pummelled and punched and the *art of reading badly* is in all due form imparted to the people: only he who never goes to church or never goes anywhere else will underestimate that. But after all, what can one expect from the effects of a religion which in the centuries of its foundation perpetrated that unheard-of philological farce concerning the Old Testament: I mean the attempt to pull the Old Testament from under the feet of the Jews with the assertion it contained nothing but Christian teaching and *belonged* to the Christians as the *true* people of Israel, the Jews being only usurpers. And then there followed a fury of interpretation and

construction that cannot possibly be associated with a good conscience: however much Jewish scholars protested, the Old Testament was supposed to speak of Christ and only of Christ, and especially of his Cross; wherever a piece of wood, a rod, a ladder, a twig, a tree, a willow, a staff is mentioned, it is supposed to be a prophetic allusion to the wood of the Cross; even the erection of the one-horned beast and the brazen serpent, even Moses spreading his arms in prayer, *even* the spits on which the Passover lamb was roasted – all allusions to the Cross and as it were preludes to it! Has anyone who asserted this ever *believed* it? Consider that the church did not shrink from enriching the text of the Septuagint (e.g. in Psalm 96, verse 10) so as afterwards to employ the smuggled-in passage in the sense of Christian prophecy. For they were conducting a *war* and paid more heed to their opponents than to the need to stay honest.

85

Subtle deficiency. – Do not mock the mythology of the Greeks because it so little resembles your profound metaphysics! You ought to admire a people who at precisely this point called its sharp understanding to a halt and for a long time had sufficient tact to avoid the perils of scholasticism and sophistical superstition!

86

Christian interpreters of the body. – Whatever proceeds from the stomach, the intestines, the beating of the heart, the nerves, the bile, the semen – all those distempers, debilitations, excitations, the whole chance operation of the machine of which we still know so little! – had to be seen by a Christian such as Pascal as a moral and religious phenomenon, and he had to ask whether God or Devil, good or evil, salvation or damnation was to be discovered in them! Oh what an unhappy interpreter! How he had to twist and torment his system! How he had to twist and torment himself so as to be in the right!

87

The moral miracle. – In the sphere of morality, Christianity knows only the miracle: the sudden change in all value-judgments, the sudden abandonment of all customary modes of behaviour, the sudden irresistible inclination for new persons and objects. It conceives this phenomenon to be the work of God and calls it a rebirth, it accords it a unique, incomparable value: everything else which calls itself morality but has no reference to this miracle thus becomes a matter

of indifference to the Christian – indeed, inasmuch as it involves a feeling of pride and well-being, it may even become an object of fear to him. In the New Testament, the canon of virtue, of the fulfilled law, is set up: but in such a way that it is the canon of *impossible virtue*: those still *striving* after morality are in the face of such a canon to learn to feel themselves ever *more distant* from their goal, they are to *despair* of virtue, and in the end *throw themselves on the bosom* of the merciful – only if it ended in this way could the Christian's moral effort be regarded as possessing any value, with the presupposition therefore that it always remains an unsuccessful, miserable, melancholy *effort*; only thus could it *serve* to bring about that ecstatic moment when he experiences the 'breakthrough of grace' and the moral miracle: – but this wrestling for morality is not *necessary*, for that miracle not seldom overtakes the sinner when he is as it were leprous with sin: indeed, the leap from the deepest and most all-pervading sinfulness into its opposite even seems to be somewhat easier and, as a more striking *demonstration* of the miracle, also somewhat *more desirable*. – For the rest, *what* such a sudden, irrational and irresistible *reversal*, such an exchange of the profoundest wretchedness for the profoundest well-being, signifies physiologically (whether it is perhaps a masked epilepsy?) – that must be determined by the psychiatrists, who have indeed plenty of occasion to observe similar 'miracles' (in the form of homicidal mania, for example, or suicide mania). The relatively '*more pleasant consequences*' in the case of the Christian make no essential difference.

88

Luther the great benefactor. – Luther's most significant achievement was the mistrust he aroused for the saints and the whole Christian *vita contemplativa*: only since then has the way again become open to an unchristian *vita contemplativa* in Europe and a limit set to contempt for worldly activity and the laity. Luther, who remained an honest miner's son after they had shut him up in a monastery and here, for lack of other depths and 'mineshafts', descended into himself and bored out terrible dark galleries – Luther finally realised that a saintly life of contemplation was impossible to him and that his inborn 'activeness' of soul and body would under these conditions destroy him. For all too long he sought the way to holiness with self-castigations – finally he came to a decision and said to himself: 'there is no real *vita contemplativa*! We have allowed ourselves to be deceived! The saints have not been worth any more than all the rest of us.' –

That, to be sure, was a rustic boorish way of making one's point – but for Germans of that time the right and only way: how it edified them now to read in their Lutheran catechism: 'except for the Ten Commandments there is *no* work that could be *pleasing* to God – the *celebrated* spiritual works of the saints are self-fabrications'.

89

Doubt as sin. – Christianity has done its utmost to close the circle and declared even doubt to be sin. One is supposed to be cast into belief without reason, by a miracle, and from then on to swim in it as in the brightest and least ambiguous of elements: even a glance towards land, even the thought that one perhaps exists for something else as well as swimming, even the slightest impulse of our amphibious nature – is sin! And notice that all this means that the foundation of belief and all reflection on its origin is likewise excluded as sinful. What is wanted are blindness and intoxication and an eternal song over the waves in which reason has drowned!

90

Egoism against egoism. – How many there are who still conclude: 'life could not be endured if there were no God!' (or, as it is put among the idealists: 'life could not be endured if its foundation lacked an ethical significance!') – therefore there *must* be a God (or existence *must* have an ethical significance)! The truth, however, is merely that he who is accustomed to these notions does not desire a life without them: that these notions may therefore be necessary to him and for his preservation – but what presumption it is to decree that whatever is necessary for my preservation must actually *exist!* As if my preservation were something necessary! How if others felt in the opposite way! if those two articles of faith were precisely the conditions under which they did not wish to live and under which they no longer found life worth living! – And that is how things are now!

91

God's honesty. – A god who is all-knowing and all-powerful and who does not even make sure that his creatures understand his intention – could that be a god of goodness? Who allows countless doubts and dubieties to persist, for thousands of years, as though the salvation of mankind were unaffected by them, and who on the other hand holds out the prospect of frightful consequences if any mistake is made as to the nature of the truth? Would he not be a cruel god if he

possessed the truth and could behold mankind miserably tormenting itself over the truth? – But perhaps he is a god of goodness notwithstanding – and merely *could* not express himself more clearly! Did he perhaps lack the intelligence to do so? Or the eloquence? So much the worse! For then he was perhaps also in error as to that which he calls his ‘truth’, and is himself not so very far from being the ‘poor deluded devil’! Must he not then endure almost the torments of Hell to have to see his creatures suffer so, and go on suffering even more through all eternity, for the sake of knowledge of him, and *not* be able to help and counsel them, except in the manner of a deaf-and-dumb man making all kinds of ambiguous signs when the most fearful danger is about to fall on his child or his dog? – A believer who reaches this oppressive conclusion ought truly to be forgiven if he feels more pity for this suffering god than he does for his ‘neighbours’ – for they are no longer his neighbours if that most solitary and most primeval being is also the most suffering being of all and the one most in need of comfort. – All religions exhibit traces of the fact that they owe their origin to an early, immature intellectuality in man – they all take astonishingly *lightly* the duty to tell the truth: they as yet know nothing of a *duty of God* to be truthful towards mankind and clear in the manner of his communications. – On the ‘hidden god’, and on the reasons for keeping himself thus hidden and never emerging more than half-way into the light of speech, no one has been more eloquent than Pascal – a sign that he was never able to calm his mind on this matter: but his voice rings as confidently as if he had at one time sat behind the curtain with this hidden god. He sensed a piece of immorality in the ‘*deus absconditus*’ and was very fearful and ashamed of admitting it to himself: and thus, like one who is afraid, he talked as loudly as he could.

92

At the deathbed of Christianity. – Really active people are now inwardly without Christianity, and the more moderate and reflective people of the intellectual middle class now possess only an adapted, that is to say marvellously *simplified* Christianity. A god who in his love arranges everything in a manner that will in the end be best for us; a god who gives to us and takes from us our virtue and our happiness, so that as a whole all is meet and fit and there is no reason for us to take life sadly, let alone to exclaim against it; in short, resignation and modest demands elevated to godhead – that is the best and most vital thing that still remains of Christianity. But one should notice that

Christianity has thus crossed over into a gentle *moralism*: it is not so much ‘God, freedom and immortality’ that have remained, as benevolence and decency of disposition, and the belief that in the whole universe too benevolence and decency of disposition will prevail: it is the *euthanasia* of Christianity.

93

What is truth? – Who would not acquiesce in the *conclusion* the faithful like to draw: ‘Science cannot be true, for it denies God. Consequently it does not come from God; consequently it is not true – for God is the truth.’ It is not the conclusion but the premise which contains the error: how if God were *not* the truth and it were precisely this which is proved? if he were the vanity, the lust for power, the impatience, the terror, the enraptured and fearful delusion of men?

94

Cure for the depressed. – Paul himself was of the opinion that a sacrifice was needed if God’s profound displeasure at the commission of sins was to be removed: and since then Christians have never ceased to discharge their dissatisfaction with themselves on to a *sacrifice* – whether this sacrifice be the ‘world’ or ‘history’ or ‘reason’ or the joy or peace of other people – something *good* has to die for *their* sin (even if only in effigy)!

95

Historical refutation as the definitive refutation. – In former times, one sought to prove that there is no God – today one indicates how the belief that there is a God could *arise* and how this belief acquired its weight and importance: a counter-proof that there is no God thereby becomes superfluous. – When in former times one had refuted the ‘proofs of the existence of God’ put forward, there always remained the doubt whether better proofs might not be adduced than those just refuted: in those days atheists did not know how to make a clean sweep.

96

In hoc signo vinces. – However much progress Europe may have made in other respects, in religious matters it has not yet attained to the free-minded naivety of the ancient Brahmins: a sign that there was more thinking, and that more pleasure in thinking was customarily inherited, four thousand years ago in India than is the case with us today. For those Brahmins believed, firstly that the priests were more powerful than the gods, and secondly that the power of the priests

resided in the observances: which is why their poets never wearied of celebrating the observances (prayers, ceremonies, sacrifices, hymns, verses) as the real givers of all good things. However much poetising and superstition may have crept in here between the lines, these propositions are *true!* A step further, and one threw the gods aside – which is what Europe will also have to do one day! Another step further, and one no longer had need of the priests and mediators either, and the teacher of the *religion of self-redemption*, the Buddha, appeared: – how distant Europe still is from this level of culture! When, finally, all the observances and customs upon which the power of the gods and of the priests and redeemers depends will have been abolished, when, that is to say, morality in the old sense will have died, then there will come – well, what will come then? But let us not speculate idly: let us first of all see to it that Europe overtakes what was done several thousands of years ago in India, among the nation of thinkers, in accordance with the commandments of reason! There are today among the various nations of Europe perhaps ten to twenty million people who no longer ‘believe in God’ – is it too much to ask that they should *give a sign* to one another? Once they have thus come to *know* one another, they will also have made themselves known to others – they will at once constitute a *power* in Europe and, happily, a power *between* the nations! Between the classes! Between rich and poor! Between rulers and subjects! Between the most unpeaceable and the most peaceable, peace-bringing people!

BOOK II

97

To become moral is not in itself moral. – Subjection to morality can be slavish or vain or self-interested or resigned or gloomily enthusiastic or an act of despair, like subjection to a prince: in itself it is nothing moral.

98

Mutation of morality. – There is a continual moiling and toiling going on in morality – the effect of *successful crimes* (among which, for example, are included all innovations in moral thinking).

99

Wherein we are all irrational. – We still draw the conclusions of judgments we consider false, of teachings in which we no longer believe – our feelings make us do it.

100

Awakening from a dream. – Wise and noble men once believed in the music of the spheres: wise and noble men still believe in the ‘moral significance of existence’. But one day this music of the spheres too will no longer be audible to them! They will awaken and perceive that their ears had been dreaming.

101

Suspicious. – To admit a belief merely because it is a custom – but that means to be dishonest, cowardly, lazy! – And so could dishonesty, cowardice and laziness be the preconditions of morality?

102

The oldest moral judgments. – What really are our reactions to the behaviour of someone in our presence? – First of all, we see what there is in it *for us* – we regard it only from this point of view. We take this effect as the *intention* behind the behaviour – and finally we ascribe the harbouring of such intentions as a *permanent* quality of the person whose behaviour we are observing and thenceforth call him, for instance, ‘a harmful person’. Threefold error! Threefold primeval blunder! Perhaps inherited from the animals and their power of judgment! Is the *origin of all morality* not to be sought in the detestable petty conclusions: ‘what harms me is something *evil* (harmful in itself); what is useful to me is something *good* (beneficent and advantageous in itself); what harms me *once or several times* is the inimical as such and in itself; what is useful to me *once or several times* is the friendly as such and in itself’. *Opudenda origo!* Does that not mean; to imagine that the paltry, occasional, often chance *relationship* of

another with ourself is his *essence* and most essential being, and to assert that with the whole world and with himself he is capable only of those relationships we have experienced with him once or several times? And does there not repose behind this veritable folly the most immodest of all secret thoughts: that, because good and evil are measured according to our reactions, we ourselves must constitute the principle of the good? –

103

There are two kinds of deniers of morality. – ‘To deny morality’ – this can mean, *first*: to deny that the moral motives which men *claim* have inspired their actions really have done so – it is thus the assertion that morality consists of words and is among the coarser or more subtle deceptions (especially self-deceptions) which men practise, and is perhaps so especially in precisely the case of those most famed for virtue. *Then* it can mean: to deny that moral judgments are based on truths. Here it is admitted that they really are motives of action, but that in this way it is *errors* which, as the basis of all moral judgment, impel men to their moral actions. This is *my* point of view: though I should be the last to deny that in *very many cases* there is some ground for suspicion that the other point of view – that is to say, the point of view of La Rochefoucauld and others who think like him – may also be justified and in any event of great general application. – Thus I deny morality as I deny alchemy, that is, I deny their premises: but I do *not* deny that there have been alchemists who believed in these premises and acted in accordance with them. – I also deny immorality: *not* that countless people *feel* themselves to be immoral, but there is any *true* reason so to feel. It goes without saying 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*.

104

Our evaluations. – All actions may be traced back to evaluations, all evaluations are either *original* or *adopted* – the latter being by far the most common. Why do we adopt them? From fear – that is to say, we consider it more advisable to pretend they are our own – and accustom ourself to this pretence, so that at length it becomes our own nature. Original evaluation: that is to say, to assess a thing

according to the extent to which it pleases or displeases us alone and no one else – something excessively rare! – But must our evaluation of another, in which there lies the motive for our generally availing ourselves of *his* evaluation, at least not proceed from *us*, be our *own* determination? Yes, but we arrive at it as *children*, and rarely learn to change our view; most of us are our whole lives long the fools of the way we acquired in childhood of judging our neighbours (their minds, rank, morality, whether they are exemplary or reprehensible) and of finding it necessary to pay homage to their evaluations.

105

Pseudo-egoism. – Whatever they may think and say about their 'egoism', the great majority nonetheless do nothing for their ego their whole life long: what they do is done for the phantom of their ego which has formed itself in the heads of those around them and has been communicated to them; – as a consequence they all of them dwell in a fog of impersonal, semi-personal opinions, and arbitrary, as it were poetical evaluations, the one for ever in the head of someone else, and the head of this someone else again in the heads of others: a strange world of phantasms – which at the same time knows how to put on so sober an appearance! This fog of habits and opinions lives and grows almost independently of the people it envelops; it is in this fog that there lies the tremendous effect of general judgments about 'man' – all these people, unknown to themselves, believe in the bloodless abstraction 'man', that is to say, in a fiction; and every alteration effected to this abstraction by the judgments of individual powerful figures (such as princes and philosophers) produces an extraordinary and grossly disproportionate effect on the great majority – all because no individual among this majority is capable of setting up a real ego, accessible to him and fathomed by him, in opposition to the general pale fiction and thereby annihilating it.

106

Against the definitions of the goal of morality. – Everywhere today the goal of morality is defined in approximately the following way: it is the preservation and advancement of mankind; but this definition is an expression of the desire for a formula, and nothing more. Preservation of *what?* is the question one immediately has to ask. Advancement to *what?* Is the essential thing – the answer to this *of what?* and *to what?* – not precisely what is left out of the formula? So what, then, can it contribute to any teaching of what our duty is that is not already, if

tacitly and thoughtlessly, regarded in advance as fixed? Can one deduce from it with certainty whether what is to be kept in view is the longest possible existence of mankind? Or the greatest possible deanimalisation of mankind? How different the means, that is to say the practical morality, would have to be in these two cases! Suppose one wanted to bestow on mankind the highest degree of rationality possible to it: this would certainly not guarantee it the longest period of duration possible to it! Or suppose one conceived the attainment of mankind's 'highest happiness' as being the *to what* and *of what* of morality: would one mean the highest degree of happiness that individual men could gradually attain to? Or a – necessarily incalculable – average-happiness which could finally be attained to by all? And why should the way to that have to be morality? Has morality not, broadly speaking, opened up such an abundance of sources of displeasure that one could say, rather, that with every refinement of morals mankind has hitherto become *more discontented* with himself, his neighbour and the lot of his existence? Did the hitherto most moral man not entertain the belief that the only justified condition of mankind in the face of morality was the *profoundest misery*?

107

Our right to our folly. – How is one to act? To what end is one to act? – In the case of the individual's most immediate and crudest wants these questions are easy enough to answer, but the more subtle, comprehensive and weighty the realms of action are into which one rises, the more uncertain, consequently more arbitrary, will the answer be. But it is precisely here that arbitrariness of decision is to be excluded! – thus commands the authority of morality: an obscure fear and awe are at once to direct mankind in the case of precisely those actions the aims and means of which are least *immediately* obvious! This authority of morality paralyses thinking in the case of things about which it might be dangerous to think *falsely* – : this is how it is accustomed to justify itself before its accusers. *Falsely:* here that means 'dangerously' – but dangerously for whom? Usually it is not really the danger to the performer of the action which the wielders of authoritative morality have in view, but the danger to *themselves*, the possibility that their power and influence may be diminished if the right to act arbitrarily and foolishly according to the light, bright or dim, of one's own reason is accorded to everybody: they themselves,

of course, unhesitatingly exercise the right to arbitrariness and folly – they issue *commands* even where the questions ‘how am I to act? to what end am I to act?’ are hardly possible or at least extremely difficult to answer. – And if the *reason* of mankind is of such extraordinarily slow growth that it has often been denied that it has grown at all during the whole course of mankind’s existence, what is more to blame than this solemn presence, indeed omnipresence, of moral commands which absolutely prohibit the utterance of *individual* questions as to How? and To what end? Have we not been brought up to *feel pathetically* and to flee into the dark precisely when reason ought to be taking as clear and cold a view as possible! That is to say, in the case of all our higher and weightier affairs.

108

A few theses. – *Insofar* as the individual is seeking happiness, one ought not to tender him any prescriptions as to the path to happiness: for individual happiness springs from one’s own unknown laws, and prescriptions from without can only obstruct and hinder it. – The prescriptions called ‘moral’ are in truth directed against individuals and are in no way aimed at promoting their happiness. They have just as little to do with the ‘happiness and welfare of mankind’ – a phrase to which is it in any case impossible to attach any distinct concepts, let alone employ them as guiding stars on the dark ocean of moral aspirations. – It is not true, as prejudice would have it, that morality is more favourable to the evolution of reason than immorality is. – It is not true that the *unconscious goal* in the evolution of every conscious being (animal, man, mankind, etc) is its ‘highest happiness’: the case, on the contrary, is that every stage of evolution possesses a special and incomparable happiness neither higher nor lower but simply its own. Evolution does not have happiness in view, but evolution and nothing else. – Only if mankind possessed a universally recognised *goal* would it be possible to propose ‘thus and thus is the *right* course of action’: for the present there exists no such goal. It is thus irrational and trivial to impose the demands of morality upon mankind. – To *recommend* a goal to mankind is something quite different: the goal is then thought of as something which *lies in our own discretion*; supposing the recommendation appealed to mankind, it could in pursuit of it also *impose* upon itself a moral law, likewise at its own discretion. But up to now the moral law has been supposed to stand *above* our own likes and dislikes: one did

not want actually to *impose* this law upon oneself, one wanted to *take* it from somewhere or *discover* it somewhere or *have it commanded to one* from somewhere.

109

Self-mastery and moderation and their ultimate motive. — I find no more than six essentially different methods of combating the vehemence of a drive. First, one can avoid opportunities for gratification of the drive, and through long and ever longer periods of non-gratification weaken it and make it wither away. Then, one can impose upon oneself strict regularity in its gratification: by thus imposing a rule upon the drive itself and enclosing its ebb and flood within firm time-boundaries, one has then gained intervals during which one is no longer troubled by it — and from there one can perhaps go over to the first method. Thirdly, one can deliberately give oneself over to the wild and unrestrained gratification of a drive in order to generate disgust with it and with disgust to acquire a power over the drive: always supposing one does not do like the rider who rode his horse to death and broke his own neck in the process — which, unfortunately, is the rule when this method is attempted. Fourthly, there is the intellectual artifice of associating its gratification in general so firmly with some very painful thought that, after a little practice, the thought of its gratification is itself at once felt as very painful (as, for example, when the Christian accustoms himself to associating the proximity and mockery of the Devil with sexual enjoyment or everlasting punishment in Hell with a murder for revenge, or even when he thinks merely of the contempt which those he most respects would feel for him if he, for example, stole money; or, as many have done a hundred times, a person sets against a violent desire to commit suicide a vision of the grief and self-reproach of his friends and relations and therewith keeps himself suspended in life: — henceforth these ideas within him succeed one another as cause and effect). The same method is also being employed when a man's pride, as for example in the case of Lord Byron or Napoleon, rises up and feels the domination of his whole bearing and the ordering of his reason by a single affect as an affront: from where there then arises the habit and desire to tyrannise over the drive and make it as it were gnash its teeth. ('I refuse to be the slave of any appetite', Byron wrote in his diary.) Fifthly, one brings about a dislocation of one's quanta of strength by imposing on oneself a particularly difficult and strenuous labour, or by deliberately subjecting oneself to a new

stimulus and pleasure and thus directing one's thoughts and plays of physical forces into other channels. It comes to the same thing if one for the time being favours another drive, gives it ample opportunity for gratification and thus makes it squander that energy otherwise available to the drive which through its vehemence has grown burdensome. Some few will no doubt also understand how to keep in check the individual drive that wanted to play the master by giving all the other drives he knows of a temporary encouragement and festival and letting them eat up all the food the tyrant wants to have for himself alone. Finally, sixth: he who can endure it and finds it reasonable to weaken and depress his *entire* bodily and physical organisation will naturally thereby also attain the goal of weakening an individual violent drive: as he does, for example, who, like the ascetic, starves his sensuality and thereby also starves and ruins his vigour and not seldom his reason as well. – Thus: avoiding opportunities, implanting regularity into the drive, engendering satiety and disgust with it and associating it with a painful idea (such as that of disgrace, evil consequences or offended pride), then dislocation of forces and finally a general weakening and exhaustion – these are the six methods: *that one desires* to combat the vehemence of a drive at all, however, does not stand within our own power; nor does the choice of any particular method; nor does the success or failure of this method. What is clearly the case is that in this entire procedure our intellect is only the blind instrument of *another drive* which is a *rival* of the drive whose vehemence is tormenting us: whether it be the drive to restfulness, or the fear of disgrace and other evil consequences, or love. While 'we' believe we are complaining about the vehemence of a drive, at bottom it is one drive *which is complaining about another*; that is to say: for us to become aware that we are suffering from the *vehemence* of a drive presupposes the existence of another equally vehement or even more vehement drive, and that a *struggle* is in prospect in which our intellect is going to have to take sides.

110

That which sets itself up in opposition. – One can observe the following process in oneself, and I wish it might often be observed and confirmed. There arises in us the scent of a kind of *pleasure* we have not known before, and as a consequence there arises a new *desire*. The question now is: *what* is it that *sets itself up in opposition* to this desire. If it is things and considerations of the common sort, or

people for whom we feel little respect – then the goal of the new desire dresses itself in the sensation ‘noble, good, praiseworthy, worthy of sacrifice’, the entire moral disposition we have inherited thenceforth takes it into itself, adds it to the goals it already possesses which it feels to be moral – and now we believe we are striving, not after a pleasure, but after something moral: which belief greatly enhances the confidence with which we strive.

111

To the admirers of objectivity. – He who as a child was aware of the existence of manifold and strong feelings, but of little subtle judgment and pleasure in intellectual justice, in the relatives and acquaintances among whom he grew up, and who thus used up the best of his energy and time in the imitation of feelings: he will as an adult remark in himself that every new thing, every new person, at once arouses in him liking or dislike or envy or contempt; under the pressure of this experience, towards which he feels himself powerless, he admires *neutrality of sentiment*, or ‘objectivity’, as a matter of genius or of the rarest morality, and refuses to believe that this too is only *the child of habit and discipline*.

112

On the natural history of rights and duties. – Our duties – are the rights of others over us. How have they acquired such rights? By taking us to be capable of contracting and of requiting, by positing us as similar and equal to them, and as a consequence entrusting us with something, educating, reproofing, supporting us. We fulfil our duty – that is to say: we justify the idea of our power on the basis of which all these things were bestowed upon us, we give back in the measure in which we have been given to. It is thus our pride which bids us do our duty – when we do something for others in return for something they have done for us, what we are doing is restoring our self-regard – for in doing something for us, these others have impinged upon our sphere of power, and would have continued to have a hand in it if we did not with the performance of our ‘duty’ practise a requital, that is to say impinge upon their power. The rights of others can relate only to that which lies within our power; it would be unreasonable if they wanted of us something we did not possess. Expressed more precisely: only to that which they believe lies within our power, provided it is the same thing we believe lies within our power. The same error could easily be made on either side: the feeling of duty depends upon our having the same *belief* in regard to

the extent of our power as others have: that is to say, that we *are able* to promise certain things and bind ourselves to perform them ('freedom of will'). — My rights — are that part of my power which others have not merely conceded me, but which they wish me to preserve. How do these others arrive at that? First: through their prudence and fear and caution: whether in that they expect something similar from us in return (protection of their own rights); or in that they consider that a struggle with us would be perilous or to no purpose; or in that they see in any diminution of our force a disadvantage to themselves, since we would then be unsuited to forming an alliance with them in opposition to a hostile third power. *Then:* by donation and cession. In this case, others have enough and more than enough power to be able to dispose of some of it and to guarantee to him they have given it to the portion of it they have given: in doing so they presuppose a feeble sense of power in him who lets himself be thus donated to. That is how rights originate: recognised and guaranteed degrees of power. If power-relationships undergo any material alteration, rights disappear and new ones are created — as is demonstrated in the continual disappearance and reformation of rights between nations. If our power is materially diminished, the feeling of those who have hitherto guaranteed our rights changes: they consider whether they can restore us to the full possession we formerly enjoyed — if they feel unable to do so, they henceforth deny our 'rights'. Likewise, if our power is materially increased, the feeling of those who have hitherto recognised it but whose recognition is no longer needed changes: they no doubt attempt to suppress it to its former level, they will try to intervene and in doing so will allude to their 'duty' — but this is only a useless playing with words. 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. — 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 but will usually be rising or sinking: — being fair is consequently difficult and demands much practice and good will, and very much very good *sense.* —

113

The striving for distinction. — The striving for distinction keeps a constant eye on the next man and wants to know what his feelings are: but the empathy which this drive requires for its gratification is far from being harmless or sympathetic or kind. We want, rather, to perceive or divine how the next man outwardly or inwardly *suffers* from us, how he loses control over himself and surrenders to the impressions our hand or even merely the sight of us makes upon him; and even when he who strives after distinction makes and wants to make a joyful, elevating or cheering impression, he nonetheless enjoys this success not inasmuch as he has given joy to the next man or elevated or cheered him, but inasmuch as he has *impressed* himself on the soul of the other, changed its shape and ruled over it at his own sweet will. The striving for distinction is the striving for domination over the next man, though it be a very indirect domination and only felt or even dreamed. There is a long scale of degrees of this secretly desired domination, and a complete catalogue of them would be almost the same thing as a history of culture, from the earliest, still grotesque barbarism up to the grotesqueries of over-refinement and morbid idealism. The striving for distinction brings with it *for the next man* — to name only a few steps on the ladder: torment, then blows, then terror, then fearful astonishment, then wonderment, then envy, then admiration, then elevation, then joy, then cheerfulness, then laughter, then derision, then mockery, then ridicule, then giving blows, then imposing torment: — here at the end of the ladder stands the *ascetic* and martyr, who feels the highest enjoyment by himself enduring, as a consequence of his drive for distinction, precisely that which, on the first step of the ladder, his counterpart the *barbarian* imposes on others on whom and before whom he wants to distinguish himself. The triumph of the ascetic over himself, his glance turned inwards which beholds man split asunder into a sufferer and a spectator, and henceforth gazes out into the outer world only in order to gather as it were wood for his own pyre, this final tragedy of the drive for distinction in which there is only one character burning and consuming himself — this is a worthy conclusion and one appropriate to the commencement: in both cases an unspeakable happiness at the *sight of torment!* Indeed, happiness, conceived of as the liveliest feeling of power, has perhaps been nowhere greater on earth than in the souls of superstitious ascetics. The Brahmins give expression to this in the story of King Visvamitra, who derived such strength from *practising penance* for a

thousand years that he undertook to construct a new *Heaven*. I believe that in this whole species of inner experience we are now incompetent novices groping after the solution of riddles: they knew more about these infamous refinements of self-enjoyment 4,000 years ago. The creation of the world: perhaps it was then thought of by some Indian dreamer as an ascetic operation on the part of a god! Perhaps the god wanted to banish himself into active and moving nature as into an instrument of torture, in order thereby to feel his bliss and power doubled! And supposing it was a god of love: what enjoyment for such a god to create *suffering* men, to suffer divinely and superhumanly from the ceaseless torment of the sight of them, and thus to tyrannise over himself! And even supposing it was not only a god of love, but also a god of holiness and sinlessness: what deliriums of the divine ascetic can be imagined when he creates sin and sinners and eternal damnation and a vast abode of eternal affliction and eternal groaning and sighing! – It is not altogether impossible that the souls of Dante, Paul, Calvin and their like may also once have penetrated the gruesome secrets of such voluptuousness of power – and in face of such souls one can ask: is the circle of striving for distinction really at an end with the ascetic? Could this circle not be run through again from the beginning, holding fast to the basic disposition of the ascetic and at the same time that of the pitying god? That is to say, 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! – Excuse these extravagant reflections on all that may have been possible on earth through the psychical extravagance of the lust for power!

114

On the knowledge acquired through suffering. – The condition of sick people who suffer dreadful and protracted torment from their suffering and whose minds nonetheless remain undisturbed is not without value for the acquisition of knowledge – quite apart from the intellectual benefit which accompanies any profound solitude, any unexpected and permitted liberation from duties. He who suffers intensely looks *out* at things with a terrible coldness: all those little lying charms with which things are usually surrounded when the eye of the healthy regards them do not exist for him; indeed, he himself lies there before himself stripped of all colour and plumage. If until then he has been living in some perilous world of fantasy, this supreme sobering-up through pain is the means of extricating him

from it: and perhaps the only means. (It is possible that this is what happened to the founder of Christianity on the cross: for the bitterest of all exclamations 'my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' contains, in its ultimate significance, evidence of a general disappointment and enlightenment over the delusion of his life; at the moment of supreme agony he acquired an insight into himself of the kind told by the poet of the poor dying Don Quixote.) The tremendous tension imparted to the intellect by its desire to oppose and counter pain makes him see everything he now beholds in a new light: and the unspeakable stimulus which any new light imparts to things is often sufficiently powerful to defy all temptation to self-destruction and to make continuing to live seem to the sufferer extremely desirable. He thinks with contempt of the warm, comfortable misty world in which the healthy man thoughtlessly wanders; he thinks with contempt of the noblest and most beloved of the illusions in which he himself formerly indulged; he takes pleasure in conjuring up this contempt as though out of the deepest depths of Hell and thus subjecting his soul to the bitterest pain: for it is through this counterweight that he holds his own against the physical pain – he feels that this counterweight is precisely what is now needed! With dreadful clear-sightedness as to the nature of his being, he cries to himself: 'for once be your own accuser and executioner, for once take your suffering as the punishment inflicted by yourself upon yourself! Enjoy your superiority as judge; more, enjoy your wilful pleasure, your tyrannical arbitrariness! Raise yourself above your life as above your suffering, look down into the deep and the unfathomable depths!' Our pride towers up as never before: it discovers an incomparable stimulus in opposing such a tyrant as pain is, and in answer to all the insinuations it makes to us that we should bear witness against life in becoming precisely the *advocate of life* in the face of this tyrant. In this condition one defends oneself desperately against all pessimism, that it may not appear to be a *consequence* of our condition and humiliate us in defeat. The stimulus to justness of judgment has likewise never been greater than it is now, for now it represents a triumph over oneself, over a condition which, of all conditions, would make unjustness of judgment excusable – but we do not want to be excused, it is precisely now that we want to show that we can be 'without need of excuse'. We experience downright convulsions of arrogance. – And then there comes the first glimmering of relief, of convalescence – and almost the first effect is that we fend off the dominance of this arrogance: we

call ourselves vain and foolish to have felt it – as though we had experienced something out of the ordinary! We humiliate our almighty pride, which has enabled us to endure our pain, without gratitude, and vehemently desire an antidote to it: we want to become estranged from ourself and depersonalised, after pain has for too long and too forcibly made us *personal*. ‘Away, away with this pride!’ we cry, ‘it was only one more sickness and convulsion!’ We gaze again at man and nature – now with a more desiring eye: we recall with a sorrowful smile that we now know something new and different about them, that a veil has fallen – but we find it so *refreshing* again to see *life in a subdued light* and to emerge out of the terrible sobering brightness in which as sufferers we formerly saw things and saw through things. We are not annoyed when the charms of health resume their game – we look on as if transformed, gentle and still wearied. In this condition one cannot hear music without weeping. –

115

The so-called ‘ego’. – Language and the prejudices upon which language is based are a manifold hindrance to us when we want to explain inner processes and drives: because of the fact, for example, that 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; indeed, in earlier times one involuntarily concluded that where the realm of words ceased the realm of existence ceased also. Anger, hatred, love, pity, desire, knowledge, joy, pain – all are names for *extreme* states: the milder, middle degrees, not to speak of the lower degrees which are continually in play, elude us, and yet it is they which weave the web of our character and our destiny. These extreme outbursts – and even the most moderate *conscious* pleasure or displeasure, while eating food or hearing a note, is perhaps, rightly understood, an extreme outburst – very often rend the web apart, and then they constitute violent exceptions, no doubt usually consequent on built-up congestions: – and, as such, how easy it is for them to mislead the observer! No less easy than it is for them to mislead the person in whom they occur. *We are none of us* that which we appear to be in accordance with the states for which alone we have consciousness and words, and consequently praise and blame; those cruder outbursts of which alone we are aware make us *misunderstand* ourselves, we draw a conclusion on the basis of data in which the exceptions outweigh the rule, we misread ourselves in this apparently

most intelligible of handwriting on the nature of our self. *Our opinion of ourselves*, however, which we have arrived at by this erroneous path, the so-called 'ego', is thenceforth a fellow worker in the construction of our character and our destiny. –

116

The unknown world of the 'subject'. – That which, from the earliest times to the present moment, men have found so hard to understand is their ignorance of themselves! Not only in regard to good and evil, but in regard to what is much more essential! The primeval delusion still lives on that one knows, and knows quite precisely in every case, *how human action is brought about*. Not only 'God, who sees into the heart', not only the doer who premeditates his deed – no, everyone else too is in no doubt that he understands what is essentially involved in the process of action in every other person. 'I know what I want, what I have done, I am free and responsible for it, I hold others responsible, I can call by its name every moral possibility and every inner motion which precedes action; you may act as you will – in this matter I understand myself and understand you all!' – that is how everyone formerly thought, that is how almost everyone still thinks. Socrates and Plato, in this regard great doubters and admirable innovators, were nonetheless innocently credulous in regard to that most fateful of prejudices, that profoundest of errors, that 'right knowledge must be followed by right action' – in this principle they were still the heirs of the universal madness and presumption that there exists knowledge as to the essential nature of an action. 'For it would be *terrible* if insight into the nature of right action were not followed by right action' – this is the only kind of proof these great men deemed necessary for demonstrating the truth of this idea, the opposite seemed to them crazy and unthinkable – and yet this opposite is precisely the naked reality demonstrated daily and hourly from time immemorial! Is the 'terrible' truth not that no amount of knowledge about an act *ever* suffices to ensure its performance, that the space between knowledge and action has never yet been bridged even in one single instance? 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. The opposite was and is the universal belief: we have the oldest realism against us; up to now

mankind has thought: 'an action is what it appears to us to be'. (In re-reading these words a very express passage of Schopenhauer occurs to me which I shall here adduce as evidence that he too remained an adherent of this moral realism, and did so without the slightest compunction: 'Each one of us is truly a competent and perfectly moral judge, with an exact knowledge of good and evil, holy in loving good and abhorring evil – each of us is all this insofar as it is not our actions but those of others which are under investigation and we have merely to approve or disapprove, while the burden of performance rests on others' shoulders. Consequently, everyone can, as a confessor, wholly and completely deputise for God.'

117

In prison. – My eyes, however strong or weak they may be, can see only a certain distance, and it is within the space encompassed by this distance that I live and move, the line of this horizon constitutes my immediate fate, in great things and small, from which I cannot escape. Around every being there is described a similar concentric circle, which has a mid-point and is peculiar to him. Our ears enclose us within a comparable circle, and so does our sense of touch. Now, it is by these horizons, within which each of us encloses his senses as if behind prison walls, that we *measure* the world, we say that this is near and that far, this is big and that small, this is hard and that soft: this measuring we call sensation – and it is all of it an error! According to the average quantity of experiences and excitations possible to us at any particular point of time one measures one's life as being short or long, poor or rich, full or empty: and according to the average human life one measures that of all other creatures – all of it an error! If our eyes were a hundredfold sharper, man would appear to us tremendously tall; it is possible, indeed, to imagine organs by virtue of which he would be felt as immeasurable. On the other hand, organs could be so constituted that whole solar systems were viewed contracted and packed together like a single cell: and to beings of an opposite constitution a cell of the human body could present itself, in motion, construction and harmony, as a solar system. The habits of our senses have woven us into lies and deception of sensation: these again are the basis of all our judgments and 'knowledge' – there is absolutely no escape, no backway or bypath into the *real world!* We sit within our net, we spiders, and whatever we may catch in it, we can catch nothing at all except that which allows itself to be caught in precisely *our* net.

118

What is our neighbour! – What do we understand to be the boundaries of our neighbour: I mean that with which he as it were engraves and impresses himself into and upon us? We understand nothing of him except the *change in us* of which he is the cause – our knowledge of him is like hollow space *which has been shaped*. We attribute to him the sensations his actions evoke in us, and thus bestow upon him a false, inverted positivity. According to our knowledge of ourselves 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, yet dreamed of as *full* and *upright!*

119

Experience and invention. – However far a man may go in self-knowledge, nothing however can be more incomplete than his image of the totality of *drives* which constitute his being. He can scarcely name even the cruder ones: their number and strength, their ebb and flood, their play and counterplay among one another, and above all the laws of their *nutriment* remain wholly unknown to him. This nutriment is therefore a work of chance: our daily experiences throw some prey in the way of now this, now that drive, and the drive seizes it eagerly; but the coming and going of these events as a whole stands in no rational relationship to the nutritional requirements of the totality of the drives: so that the outcome will always be twofold – the starvation and stunting of some and the overfeeding of others. Every moment of our lives sees some of the polyp-arms of our being grow and others of them wither, all according to the nutriment which the moment does or does not bear with it. Our experiences are, as already said, all in this sense means of nourishment, but the nourishment is scattered indiscriminately without distinguishing between the hungry and those already possessing a superfluity. And as a consequence of this chance nourishment of the parts, the whole, fully grown polyp will be something just as accidental as its growth has been. To express it more clearly: suppose a drive finds itself at the point at which it desires gratification – or exercise of its strength, or discharge of its strength, or the saturation of an emptiness – these are all metaphors: it then regards every event of the day with a view to seeing how it can employ it for the attainment of its goal; whether a man is moving, or

resting or angry or reading or speaking or fighting or rejoicing, the drive will in its thirst as it were taste every condition into which the man may enter, and as a rule will discover nothing for itself there and will have to wait and go on thirsting: in a little while it will grow faint, and after a couple of days or months of non-gratification it will wither away like a plant without rain. Perhaps this cruelty perpetrated by chance would be more vividly evident if all the drives were as much in earnest as is *hunger*, which is not content with *dream food*; but most of the drives, especially the so-called moral ones, *do precisely this* – if my supposition is allowed that the meaning and value of our *dreams* is precisely to *compensate* to some extent for the chance absence of ‘nourishment’ during the day. Why was the dream of yesterday full of tenderness and tears, that of the day before yesterday humorous and exuberant, an earlier dream adventurous and involved in a continuous gloomy searching? Why do I in this dream enjoy indescribable beauties of music, why do I in another soar and fly with the joy of an eagle up to distant mountain peaks? These inventions, which give scope and discharge to our drives to tenderness or humorousness or adventurousness or to our desire for music and mountains – and everyone will have his own more striking examples to hand – are interpretations of nervous stimuli we receive while we are asleep, *very free*, very arbitrary interpretations of the motions of the blood and intestines, of the pressure of the arm and the bedclothes, of the sounds made by church bells, weather-cocks, night-revellers and other things of the kind. That this text, which is in general much the same on one night as on another, is commented on in such varying ways, that the inventive reasoning faculty *imagines* today a *cause* for the nervous stimuli so very different from the cause it imagined yesterday, though the stimuli are the same: the explanation of this is that today’s prompter of the reasoning faculty was different from yesterday’s – a different *drive* wanted to gratify itself, to be active, to exercise itself, to refresh itself, to discharge itself – today this drive was at high flood, yesterday it was a different drive that was in that condition. – Waking life does not have this *freedom* of interpretation possessed by the life of dreams, it is less inventive and unbridled – but do I have to add that when we are awake our drives likewise do nothing but interpret nervous stimuli and, according to their requirements, posit their ‘causes’? that there is no *essential* difference between waking and dreaming? that when we compare very different stages of culture we even find that freedom of waking interpretation in the one is in no way inferior to

the freedom exercised in the other while dreaming? that our moral judgments and evaluations too are only images and fantasies based on a physiological process unknown to us, a kind of acquired language for designating certain nervous stimuli? that all our so-called consciousness is a more or less fantastic commentary on an unknown, perhaps unknowable, but felt text? – Take some trifling experience. Suppose we were in the market place one day and we noticed someone laughing at us as we went by: this event will signify this or that to us according to whether this or that drive happens at that moment to be at its height in us – and it will be a quite different event according to the kind of person we are. One person will absorb it like a drop of rain, another will shake it from him like an insect, another will try to pick a quarrel, another will examine his clothing to see if there is anything about it that might give rise to laughter, another will be led to reflect on the nature of laughter as such, another will be glad to have involuntarily augmented the amount of cheerfulness and sunshine in the world – and in each case a drive has gratified itself, whether it be the drive to annoyance or to combativeness or to reflection or to benevolence. This drive seized the event as its prey: why precisely this one? Because, thirsty and hungry, it was lying in wait. – One day recently at eleven o'clock in the morning a man suddenly collapsed right in front of me as if struck by lightning, and all the women in the vicinity screamed aloud; I myself raised him to his feet and attended to him until he had recovered his speech – during this time not a muscle of my face moved and I felt nothing, neither fear nor sympathy, but I did what needed doing and went coolly on my way. Suppose someone had told me the day before that tomorrow at eleven o'clock in the morning a man would fall down beside me in this fashion – I would have suffered every kind of anticipatory torment, would have spent a sleepless night, and at the decisive moment instead of helping the man would perhaps have done what he did. For in the meantime all possible drives would have *had time* to imagine the experience and to comment on it. – What then are our experiences? Much *more* than which we put into them than that which they already contain! Or must we go so far as to say: in themselves they contain nothing? To experience is to invent? –

upon! at every moment! Mankind has in all ages confused the active and the passive: it is their everlasting grammatical blunder.

121

'Cause and effect'. – In this mirror – and our intellect is a mirror – something is taking place that exhibits regularity, a certain thing always succeeds another certain thing – this we *call*, when we perceive it and want to call it something, cause and effect – we fools! As though we had here understood something or other, or could understand it! For we have seen nothing but *pictures* of 'causes and effects'! And it is precisely this *pictorialness* that makes impossible an insight into a more essential connection than that of mere succession.

122

Purposes in nature. – The impartial investigator who pursues the history of the eye and the forms it has assumed among the lowest creatures, who demonstrates the whole step-by-step evolution of the eye, must arrive at the great conclusion that vision was *not* the intention behind the creation of the eye, but that vision appeared, rather, after *chance* had put the apparatus together. A single instance of this kind – and 'purposes' fall away like scales from the eyes!

123

Rationality. – How did rationality arrive in the world? Irrationally, as might be expected: by a chance accident. If we want to know what that chance accident was we shall have to guess it, as one guesses the answer to a riddle.

124

What is willing! – We laugh at him who steps out of his room at the moment when the sun steps out of its room, and then says: '*I will* that the sun shall rise'; and at him who cannot stop a wheel, and says: '*I will* that it shall roll'; and at him who is thrown down in wrestling, and says: 'here I lie, but *I will* lie here!' But, all laughter aside, are we ourselves ever acting any differently whenever we employ the expression: '*I will*'?

125

On the 'realm of freedom'. – We can think many, many more things than we can do or experience – that is to say, our thinking is superficial and content with the surface; indeed, it does not notice that it is the surface. If our intellect had *evolved* strictly in step with our strength