PENGUIN CLASSICS

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

On the Genealogy of Morals

Friedrich Nietzsche

ON THE GENEALOGY OF MORALS

A Polemic

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With an introduction and notes by

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FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE was born near Leipzig in 1844, the son of a Lutheran clergyman who died when Nietzsche was four. He attended the famous Pforta School, then went to university at Bonn and at Leipzig, where he studied philology and first became acquainted with Richard Wagner. When he was only twenty-four he was appointed to the chair of classical philology at Basel University; he stayed there until his health forced him into retirement in 1879. While in Basel, he participated as an ambulance orderly in the Franco-Prussian War and published *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872), *Untimely Meditations* (1873–6) and the first part of *Human, All Too Human* (1878). From 1880 until his final collapse in 1889, except for brief interludes, he divorced himself from everyday life and, supported by his university pension, lived mainly in France, Italy and Switzerland. Works published in the 1880s included *The Dawn, The Gay Science, Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Beyond Good and Evil, On the Genealogy of Morals* and *The Case of Wagner*. In January 1889, Nietzsche collapsed on a street in Turin and was subsequently institutionalized in Basel and Jena. He spent the remaining years of his life in a condition of mental and physical paralysis, cared for by his mother and later his sister Elisabeth. The last works published during his lifetime were *Twilight of the Idols* (1889), *The Antichrist* (1895) and *Nietzsche contra Wagner* (1895). After Nietzsche's death in 1900, Elisabeth assembled *Will to Power*, based on her brother's notebooks, and published it the following year; a greatly expanded edition appeared in 1906. *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche's autobiography, was published in 1908.

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Note on the Text and Translation

This translation of *On the Genealogy of Morals* is based on the edition of *Zur Genealogie der Moral: Eine Streitschrift* (Leipzig:C. G. Naumann, 1887).

My object in this edition of *On the Genealogy of Morals* was to produce a translation of this work that is idiomatic, historically accurate, elegant, natural and intelligible. I believe that there has long been a need for an English edition that is faithful and complete, yet suitable for the general reader and for those coming to this text for the first time.

In preparing this translation I have attempted to adhere closely to the *English* style and idiom of the period of its composition, rather than to imitate or mimic the German syntax, which leads to unnatural, stiff translations; I have not followed Nietzsche's often eccentric punctuation, as doing so serves no useful purpose for the English reader; nor have I used a special 'vocabulary' just for Nietzsche, as some others have done.

For the present translation, considerable effort has been expended to identify and establish the most plausible meaning of the text, and furthermore to express that meaning in idiomatic English. Since the meanings of words can gradually change over time, in some cases radically, German and English reference materials from the time Nietzsche wrote have proved immensely useful.

Written barely a year and a half before his collapse in January 1889 in Turin, Nietzsche's style in *The Genealogy of Morals*, in common with some of his other late writings, is often heated and confrontational, rather than cool and analytical; he not infrequently says things that are contradictory, obscure or deliberately shocking and offensive. After all, he calls this work a 'polemic'. Nietzsche wants to 'bite and scratch' us; the translator should not try to suppress that, but certain passages do call for special handling.

The choices I have made in this translation emphasize what is characteristically Nietzschean: irony, vivid imagery, brevity, exaggeration, wit, sarcasm. Typically the polemicist, Nietzsche often essays – by means of his brilliant insights and dramatic language – to startle and perhaps even overwhelm the reader.

I wish to acknowledge, with gratitude, the generous assistance of Susann Möller, Catalin Anghelina, Robert Holub and Mark Roche. A special note of appreciation must go to Felix Flügel, whose splendid reference work has proved so useful.

Michael A. Scarpitti, 2013

Preface

1

We are unknown to ourselves,[1] we men of science, and for good reason. Since we have never searched for ourselves, how should we ever *find* ourselves? Truly has it been said: ‘Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.’[2] *Our* treasure consists in the hives of our knowledge. It is to those hives that we, creatures of the air, are always returning, laden with the honey of the intellect; in our hearts we care for but one thing – to bring something ‘home to the hive!’ As far as the rest of life with its so-called ‘experiences’ is concerned, which of us has sufficient interest, or sufficient time, to devote to them? In our dealings with such affairs, we were, I fear, never entirely committed; our heart is simply not there, and certainly not our attention! Rather, we are like someone whose divine distractions and reveries are shattered when the clock strikes twelve; suddenly awakened, the chimes still resounding in his ears, he asks himself: ‘What hour now has just struck?’ Sometimes we too, *afterwards*, rub our ears, as it were, and, in complete astonishment and embarrassment, ask: ‘What is it that we have just experienced?’ Further: ‘Who *are* we, really?’ and count, after they have struck, all the twelve strokes of the clock of our experience, of our life, of our *being*, and – alas! – lose count. We must remain foreign and unknown to ourselves; we do not understand ourselves; we are *bound* to

be mistaken about our nature, for us the motto, ‘Each one is the furthest away from himself’[3] holds good to all eternity – as far as our selves are concerned, we are unknown.

2

My opinions concerning the *origins and history* of our moral prejudices – for they constitute the subject matter of this polemic – were expressed in a cursory and provisional way in that collection of aphorisms entitled *Human, All Too Human, a Book for Free Spirits*, begun in Sorrento during a winter which allowed me to pause and look back upon the vast and perilous tracts through which my thoughts, up to that time, had wandered.[4] This took place in the winter of 1876–7; the opinions themselves, however, were formed during an earlier period of my life. In substance they were the same opinions which I take up again in the following essays; let us hope that they have improved with the passing of so much time, becoming clearer, more mature, more compelling and more complete! The fact, however, that I *still* cling to them, that in the meanwhile they have become more coherent, organized and systematic, strengthens my confidence that they must have occurred to me not in an isolated, capricious or sporadic fashion, but have sprung from a common root, from a *fundamental* demand for knowledge calling from my innermost depths with a voice which has grown increasingly clearer and more insistent. That is the only state of affairs that is proper for a philosopher. We have no right to act ‘*individually*’; we must neither err ‘individually’ nor hit upon the truth ‘individually’. Rather just as a tree is bound to bear its fruit, so do our thoughts, our values, our affirmations, denials, stipulations spring from us, all dependent upon and related to one

another, the testimony of *one* will, *one* health, *one* kingdom, *one* sun. Are they to *your* taste, these fruits of ours? But what does this matter to the trees? What does that matter to *us*, the philosophers?

3

Owing to an instinctive scepticism, which I confess reluctantly, concerning *morality,* or rather everything that has been extolled as such – a persistent scepticism which manifested itself early in my life, quite spontaneously and without precedent, and which was so out of character with my circumstances, my age and my family ancestry, that I should have been almost entitled to style it my 'a priori' – my curiosity and my suspicion were eventually bound to lead me to the question of what was the *true origin* of our 'Good' and of our 'Evil'. Indeed, at the tender age of thirteen the problem of the origin of Evil already vexed me; at an age 'when games and God divide one's heart',[5] I devoted to that problem my first childish attempt at the literary game, my first philosophic essay – and as regards my juvenile solution of the problem, well, I quite properly gave the honour to God, and made him the *father* of Evil. Was *this* the solution my own 'a priori' demanded of me? That new, immoral, or at least 'amoral' 'a priori' and that 'categorical imperative'[6] which was its voice (but, oh! how contrary to the Kantian article, and how pregnant with problems!) to which since then I have given more and more attention, and indeed not merely attention. Fortunately, I soon had learned to distinguish theological from moral prejudice, and I gave up the search for a *supernatural* origin of Evil. A modicum of historical and philological education, to say nothing of an instinctive appreciation for the subtleties of psychological

questions, succeeded, almost immediately, in transforming my original problem into the following one: under what conditions did man invent for himself those judgements of value, Good and Evil? *And what intrinsic value do they possess in themselves?* Have they up to the present advanced human welfare, or rather have they harmed our race? Are they a symptom of distress, impoverishment and degeneration of life? Or, conversely, do we find in them an expression of the abundant vitality and vigour of life, its courage, its self-confidence, its future? On this point I found and ventured for myself the most diverse answers; I classified eras, nations and individuals according to their position in a hierarchy; I became a specialist in my problem, and from my answers grew new questions, new investigations, new conjectures, new probabilities; until at last I had my own little realm, a whole secret world growing and flourishing, like a secret garden which no one must even suspect exists – oh, how *fortunate* are we, we men of science, provided that we know how to remain silent until the time is ripe!

4

I owe my first impulse to publish some of my hypotheses concerning the origin of morality to a clear, well-written and even precocious little book, in which I encountered for the first time the most perverse and absurd sorts of genealogical hypotheses (these hypotheses were actually *English* in origin); and this fascinated me in the peculiar way that ideas diametrically opposed and antithetical to one's own always do. The title of the book was *The Origin of Moral Sentiments*; its author, Dr Paul Rée;[7] the year of its appearance, 1877. I believe that I have never read anything

in which every single proposition and conclusion has elicited so emphatic a denial on my part as did that book, though that denial was untainted by either pique or impatience. In the work previously mentioned, with which I was then occupied, I accordingly referred, more or less at random, to the arguments of his book, not so as to refute them – for what have I to do with mere refutations! – but to offer, in a constructive spirit (as is only proper), a more probable theory for one which is improbable, and occasionally, no doubt, exchanging one philosophic error for another. It was in that early period that I gave, as I have said, the first public expression to those hypotheses regarding the origin of morality to which the present essays are devoted, but I did so clumsily and hesitantly, as I myself would be the first to admit, for I was still unsure of myself, lacking any sufficiently precise terminology of my own for these special subjects; I was likewise often liable to relapse and to vacillation. One should compare, in particular, what I say in *Human, All Too Human*, section 45, about the parallel early history of Good and Evil (namely, their origin from the castes of the aristocrats and the slaves); similarly, section 136 concerning the origins and value of moral asceticism; likewise, sections 96 and 99, and volume II, section 89, concerning the 'Morality of Custom', that far older and more original kind of morality which is *toto cælo* different from the altruistic ethics (in which Dr Rée, like all the English moral historians, sees the ethical '*Thing-in-itself*'); likewise section 92; *The Wanderer and His Shadow*, section 26, and *The Dawn*, section 112, concerning the origin of justice as a balance between persons of approximately equal power (equilibrium as the prerequisite of all contracts, consequently of all law); similarly, concerning the origin of punishment in *The Wanderer and His Shadow*, sections 22

and 33, which cannot be for the purpose of deterrence, as Dr Rée asserts, for that is neither essential nor inherent; rather, it is introduced only under certain particular circumstances, and is always something incidental, something added on.

5

Just at that time, though, I was occupied with something much more important than the nature of the theories (whether mine or others') concerning the origin of morality (or, more precisely, the origin of morality concerned me only as one means, among many, to an end). The issue for me was the *value* of morality, and on that point I had to confront, almost alone, my great teacher Schopenhauer,[8] to whom my book was addressed as though he were still alive; for that book, with all its passion and veiled contradiction, was also a polemic. It concerned, in particular, the value of the 'altruistic' instincts, the instincts of pity, self-denial and self-sacrifice which Schopenhauer had so persistently painted in golden hues, deified and etherealized, that eventually they appeared to him, as it were, as 'values in themselves', on the strength of which he uttered both to Life and to himself his own '*no*'. Regarding *these* 'altruistic' instincts, however, there spoke from within me a growing mistrust, a scepticism which reached deeper and deeper. In these instincts I began to see the *great* danger to mankind, its most sublime enticement and temptation – to what? to oblivion? – in these instincts I began to see the beginning of the end, the halting, the weary glance back, the will turning *against* Life, the onset of the final stages of disease meekly announcing itself; I realized that the morality of pity[9] – which spread wider and wider, engulfing and infecting even

philosophers – was the most sinister symptom of our European culture which had already become sinister; I realized that it was the devious route along which that culture wended its way to – a new Buddhism? – a European Buddhism?[10] – *Nihilism*?[11] This exaggerated esteem in which modern philosophers have held pity is quite without precedent; for in the past philosophers were absolutely unanimous as to the *worthlessness* of pity. I need only mention Plato,[12] Spinoza,[13] La Rochefoucauld[14] and Kant[15] – four minds as different as can be, but united on one point: their contempt for pity.

6

This problem of the *value* of pity and of the morality of pity (I am an opponent of our modern, effeminate ways, our 'delicacy of feeling') seems at the first blush to be a mere isolated problem, a solitary question; but whoever pauses and ponders this problem, and *learns* to ask questions, will experience what I experienced – a new and immense vista unfolds before him; its vast prospect staggers him; all sorts of doubt, mistrust and fear well up within him; the belief in morality, indeed, in all morality, totters – finally a new demand announces itself. Let us express this *new demand*: we need a *critique* of moral values; *the value of these values is for the first time to be called into question* – and for this purpose it is necessary to know the conditions and circumstances under which these values grew, evolved and changed (we need to investigate morality as a result, as a symptom, as a mask, as Tartuffery,[16] as disease, as a misunderstanding; but also morality as a cause, as a remedy, as a stimulant, as a hindrance, as a poison), especially since up to the present time we have neither

known nor even desired to know these things. The *value* of these ‘values’ was taken for granted as a simple fact, and as indisputable. No one has, up to the present, expressed the slightest doubt or hesitation in judging the ‘good man’ to be of a higher value than the ‘evil man’, of a higher value with regard specifically to human progress, welfare and prosperity in general (not to mention the future). But! What if we suppose the reverse were the truth? What then? Suppose there lurked in the ‘good man’ a regressive trait, likewise a danger, a lure, a poison, a narcotic, by means of which the present *lived at the expense of the future*! Perhaps in greater comfort and less danger, but also as pettier, meaner? So that morality would really be blamed, if the human species were never to attain to its *ultimate potential and magnificence*? So that would really be the danger of dangers?

7

Suffice it to say, that after this vista opened up before me, I had reason to search for learned, bold and industrious colleagues (for whom I am still searching). The work involves exploring the immense, distant and hidden realm of morality – a morality which has actually existed and has actually been practised – examining it with fresh eyes, asking wholly new questions: and is this not tantamount to *discovering* that realm? If in this connection I thought of employing Dr Rée, amongst others, as an assistant, I did so because I was convinced that from the very nature of his enquiries he would have inevitably struck upon a superior approach to his investigation. Have I deceived myself in this? I wished at all events to point his eyes, so keen and impartial, in the right direction. I wished to direct him to the

real *history of morality*, and to warn him, while there was yet time, against *speculation* in the English style.[17] It is quite obvious which colour is a hundred times more important than blue for a genealogist of morals, and of course what rises immediately to one's mind is the colour *grey*, by which I mean documentary evidence, that which is capable of definite proof, that which has actually existed, or, to put it briefly, the whole of that long hieroglyphic script (so hard to decipher) in which is inscribed the past history of human morals. Dr Rée was *quite* unacquainted with this script; but he *had* read Darwin,[18] and so in his philosophy the Darwinian beast shakes hands politely with the demure moral weakling and dilettante (all-too-modern), who 'is tamed'; thus they greet one another, in a fashion that is at least instructive, the latter exhibiting an expression of refined and good-humoured indolence, tinged with a touch of pessimism and exhaustion; as if one could hardly be expected to take all these things – I mean moral problems – so seriously, as doing so offers no reward. On the other hand, I think that there are no subjects which offer *more reward* if taken seriously; part of that reward is that perhaps eventually they can even bring *enjoyment*. This enjoyment, indeed, or, to use my own language, this *gay science*,[19] is a reward; a reward for a protracted, brave, laborious and profound earnestness, which, it goes without saying, is a trait that few possess. But on that day on which we say from the fullness of our hearts, 'Forward! Even our old morality is fit material *for comedy*,' we shall have discovered a new plot, and a new possibility for the Dionysian drama[20] entitled *The Soul's Fate* – and he will soon make good use of it, one can safely wager, he, the great ancient eternal author of the comedy of our existence.

8

If anyone finds what is written here obscure or unintelligible, I do not think that the blame should lie upon me. The meaning should be clear enough to any reader who has first read my previous writings carefully, without sparing himself the effort needed to understand them, for that is not, indeed, a simple matter. Take, for instance, my *Zarathustra*. I cannot acknowledge that anyone really knows that book well unless he has been either deeply wounded by it or deeply delighted by it at every point; then and only then can he enjoy the privilege of participating, with all due reverence, in the halcyon element from which that work is born, and in its sunny brilliance, its grand scope, its composed assurance. In less capable hands the aphoristic form may prove difficult, but this is only because this form is treated *too casually* today. An aphorism, if properly coined and cast into its final form, is far from being ‘deciphered’ as soon as it has been read; on the contrary, it is only after this prelude that *interpretation,* properly speaking, begins – and of course for that purpose an art of interpretation is necessary. The third essay in this book furnishes an example of what in such cases I call ‘interpretation’; an aphorism is prefixed to that essay, whereas that which follows it is commentary. There is certainly something which is essential in order to practise reading as an *art*, something which has nowadays been forgotten – that is why it will take quite some time for my writings to become ‘readable’, and for this it is necessary to become almost a cow, and *under no circumstances* a ‘modern man’! – *rumination*.

Sils-Maria, Upper Engadin, July 1887.

Introduction

When *On the Genealogy of Morals* appeared in late 1887, it occupied an unusual place in Nietzsche's writings. Although its themes are a continuation and radicalization of topics Nietzsche had broached since the late 1870s, it marks the first time in almost a decade that he had utilized the essay form. Nietzsche had begun his writing career with more traditional presentations; his initial forays into philosophical and cultural theory were essayistic prose. In *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872) Nietzsche argued in a straightforward fashion that Greek tragedy arose from the amalgamation of the Dionysian and the Apollonian,[1] and declined when rationalism, embodied in the figure of Socrates, became dominant in Athens. In the four *Untimely Meditations* (1873–6) he used a traditional form of exposition to confront various tendencies of his era: from the latest book by the Hegelian critic David Strauss and observations on education in the newly formed Second Reich to encomia for the popular philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer and the renowned composer Richard Wagner. But in his work of the next ten years Nietzsche opted for different formal vehicles to convey his philosophical message. Most important were his collections of aphorisms, starting with *Human, All Too Human* in 1878 and ending with *Beyond Good and Evil* in 1886. Nietzsche's aphorisms often differed from previous examples of the genre in their length and breadth of subject matter, and he frequently grouped together aphorisms with

similar content, thus giving his works the appearance of focal points. Similarly the four-part book *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1883–5) eschewed linear exposition, containing instead symbolic and parabolic passages that parodied biblical style. Only with the *Genealogy* does Nietzsche return to the essay form, presenting the reader with three coherent and complex discussions of topics related to the history of moral sentiments.

Nietzsche may have had several reasons for this reversion to the essay form. In letters written during the composition and production of the *Genealogy*, he insists that his essays are meant as a 'continuation' of points made in *Beyond Good and Evil*, and he obviously conceived of the two works as companion pieces, emphasizing to his publisher, Georg Naumann, that there must be 'absolute likeness' in outward appearance, including the quality of the paper, the typesetting and the number of lines on a page. 'The two books must be so similar that they can be mistaken for each other,' he maintains (SB 116).[2] But Nietzsche also indicates that he wrote the *Genealogy* to call attention to *Beyond Good and Evil* and his previous writings. From his correspondence we can ascertain that Nietzsche was terribly disappointed that his philosophy was virtually unknown in Germany. To Heinrich Köselitz he laments that he is forty-three years old and has written fifteen volumes, but no German publisher wants to promulgate his works. 'Maybe this short polemic will lead to the purchase of a few copies of my older writings,' he tells his friend (SB 113). Indeed, starting with the last book of *Zarathustra*, Nietzsche had been forced to pay for the publication of his own books. But his efforts at self-promotion met with scant success. He remarks in a letter to his Basler colleague Franz Overbeck that despite distributing sixty review copies, only 102

volumes of *Beyond Good and Evil* were sold, and for that reason he spent a few weeks composing three essays to clarify his previous work and make it more attractive (SB 140). In a letter to his former publisher, Ernst Wilhelm Fritzsch, he asserts, perhaps with a degree of disingenuousness, that he wrote the *Genealogy* to assist Fritzsch with the sales of his earlier writings (SB 132); and in a letter to Naumann he requests that the price of the book be set at two marks to spur on sales because his 'chief desire' is to call attention to his earlier writings, and have people read them and take them seriously (SB 186). Nietzsche did exaggerate the speed with which he composed the *Genealogy*. He claims at one point to Köselitz (SB 123) that he completed the text in a mere three weeks. But it is obvious from his letters that he focused on only the first two essays in July of 1887, and that most of the third essay, as well as some supplementary materials, were the results of later efforts. Nonetheless, the rapidity and urgency of the composition is noteworthy, as well as his feeling that the *Genealogy* was necessary to make his thought more accessible to the reading public.

The title of this work has been given unusual attention by critics over the years. Nietzsche is making a contribution to the history of morality or moral values, but the word 'genealogy' has at times suggested that he is doing something radically different. The French writer Michel Foucault maintained that 'genealogy' was fundamentally different from 'history', and that in the actual text Nietzsche distinguishes between 'origin', a term belonging to traditional historiography, and 'emergence', 'lineage', 'birth' and 'descent'.[3] But even a cursory reading of the text demonstrates that Nietzsche uses terms like 'descent' (*Herkunft*) and 'origin' (*Ursprung*) interchangeably; indeed,

he draws no distinction between history and genealogy, claiming only that those who have previously engaged in the history of morals have done so without an appropriate attention to, and appreciation of, historical phenomena. Nietzsche was conscious of using tools different from those of previous historians of morality, but he considered himself simply a more perspicacious observer of what had occurred in the past. We can only speculate on why Nietzsche used ‘genealogy’ in his title rather than ‘history’, but three reasons seem plausible: (1) Nietzsche was very conscious of giving his books attractive titles: ‘genealogy’ was simply a more appealing, a more unusual and a more striking word to place in his title than the more mundane term ‘history’. (2) Nietzsche had been educated in classical philology, and one of the chief tasks of this discipline was to reconstruct texts by establishing genealogical charts of fragments and versions that allow for the reconstruction of a prototype. Genealogy was thus a method with which Nietzsche was familiar from his studies. (3) Like most of his contemporaries, Nietzsche was fascinated by recent trends in the biological sciences, and particularly interested in topics surrounding inheritance of traits over generations. ‘Genealogy’ was thus a suddenly popular concept among nineteenth-century intellectuals, and Nietzsche was taking advantage of its cachet in selecting it for his investigation of the history of morality.

The historical investigation in which Nietzsche was engaged, however, adopted tools that sometimes diverged from those employed by other historians of morality. Nietzsche makes frequent reference to etymologies, finding in the derivation of words clues to the history of morality. His friend Paul Rée had similarly used etymological evidence in his writings, and in this instance, as in others, Nietzsche

was clearly following Rée's lead. But, unlike Rée, Nietzsche references words from different languages and cultural traditions to demonstrate the existence of two types of moral valuation, one now subaltern and easily forgotten, the other so omnipresent that it appears to be the only valid system of morality. This etymological evidence is supplemented, especially in the second essay, with furtive references to cultural and anthropological studies. For example, Nietzsche advances various claims about the history of penal conventions and cultural practices of law based largely on the work of Albert Hermann Post (1839–95) and Josef Kohler (1849–1919), the two founders of ethnological legal studies in Germany. Their discussions of diverse legal traditions in other countries and in cultures deemed more primitive allowed Nietzsche to speculate about how we have arrived at our present state of affairs and what our current practices conceal. But linguistics and legal research were subordinate to Nietzsche's predominant genealogical tool: his insight into human psychology. Nietzsche's sketch of value systems in the initial essay, his exploration of guilt and bad conscience in the second and his dissection of ascetic ideals in the final essay are largely dependent on his speculation into how human beings act, interact and react to specific social situations. What makes his work so powerful, and what occasionally also calls his method and conclusions into question, is his reliance on suppositions of human behaviour that are drawn primarily from his own observations and sentiments. Nietzsche dared to explore uncomfortable truths about our complex and often contradictory psychology, but whether his genealogy makes sense to his readers depends chiefly on our acceptance of his assumptions about human nature.

Nietzsche's psychological assumptions are foregrounded in the initial essay of the *Genealogy*, in which he distinguishes between two value systems. The first and more original of the two systems is captured in the terms 'good' and 'bad'. Nietzsche rejects the hypothesis, propounded by Paul Rée and by Nietzsche himself in *Human, All Too Human*, that the designation 'good' results from past altruistic actions garnering praise from those who were treated in an altruistic fashion; and that at a later point in human development, even after the reason for their praiseworthiness was forgotten, these actions continued to be considered 'good' by virtue of habit and custom. Nietzsche contends that psychology and etymology – and therefore history – speak against this explanation: he identifies instead the original sense of 'good' with the term 'noble', claiming that 'good' in older societies is the self-designation of an aristocratic caste. 'Bad' is the aristocratic term for the non-noble segments of a given social order, those that are 'common', 'plebeian' or 'low'. In this system of values 'good' and 'bad' are not opposites: the noble class considers itself 'good' out of self-affirmation, and anyone who does not possess the same social status simply belongs to another realm. The individuals who are 'good' do not dislike or resent those who are 'bad'; they designate them with a divergent descriptive term because they exist outside the noble caste. Nietzsche associates the value system of 'good' and 'bad' with the old nobility in ancient Greece, but also with the aristocratic classes of other social orders, as well as with the fair-haired Aryans and warriors among the Germanic tribes. The 'subject race', which eventually comes to dominate Europe, differs 'in complexion and the shortness of the skull, and perhaps in the intellectual and social instincts' (p. 19) from the noble classes. Nietzsche

thus sets up a system of values for what he labels ‘master morality’ that has historical, psychological and etymological clues, but also racial, class and physical ramifications.

The second, more recent and more familiar system of values entails two similar terms – ‘good’ and ‘evil’ – that have quite different origins, meanings and implications. In contrast to ‘noble’ or ‘master’ morality, the morality of ‘good’ and ‘evil’ is associated with the ‘herd’ or ‘slaves’. At various points Nietzsche also claims that the Jews are the chief source of slave morality. But Nietzsche does not mean the Jews of modern Europe; nor is he referring to the Hebrew tribes that populate the first books of the Old Testament. Rather, he is referencing the Jewish people of the prophets, the Jews who were subjected to conquering nations, and who anticipate, he believes, in their mentality and proclivities the advent of Christianity. The issue for Nietzsche is thus really one of the Judaeo-Christian tradition as opposed to the aristocratic and heroic heritage that preceded it.

> It was the Jews who, in opposition to the aristocratic equation (good = aristocratic = beautiful = happy = loved by the gods), ventured, with an awesome consistency, to suggest the contrary equation, and indeed to hold fast to it with the teeth of the most profound hatred (the hatred born of weakness) this contrary equation, namely, ‘the wretched are alone the good; the poor, the weak, the lowly are alone the good; the suffering, the needy, the sick, the loathsome are the only ones who are pious, the only ones who are blessed, salvation is for them alone – but you, on the other hand, you aristocrats, you men of power, you are for all eternity the evil, the horrible, the covetous, the insatiate, the godless; eternally also shall you be the wretched, the cursed, the damned!’ (p. 22)

Nietzsche’s views of the morality of the Judaeo-Christian tradition are clearly deprecatory, and his rhetoric makes it evident that he finds the nobles and their values more vital and estimable. But he does recognize that the advent of

slave morality has brought with it changes that are worthy of positive recognition. Although he bemoans the demise of instinctive behaviour, slave morality achieves the creation of a formerly absent depth in human psychology. In the transformation to herd morality, human beings become reflective animals, rather than creatures superficially reacting to desires and instincts, sometimes in the crudest fashion. And with this psychological depth come introspection, consciousness and a more cunning, calculating, ‘interesting’ individual. Indeed, without the changes that accompany slave morality there would be no philosophy at all, and certainly no Nietzsche reflecting on moral systems and making reasoned arguments about value systems.

Slave morality succeeds aristocratic values, but this succession does not involve progress of the human species, and in some important ways Nietzsche portrays the process as regressive. An important consideration is how this transformation from master to slave morality occurred. What was the mechanism by which an existing and ‘natural’ system of values becomes subverted into valuations that are life-negating and rancorous, and against vitality and health? In Nietzsche’s account the demise of the Aryan, fair-haired, noble system proceeds organically from the ‘good’ and ‘bad’ value system. At one point Nietzsche introduces a new pair of terms for consideration – the ‘clean’ and the ‘unclean’ – and a new character on the stage of his mythologized history: the priest. The priest adheres to a doctrine of purity understood in a non-symbolic fashion: ‘The “clean man” is originally only a man who washes himself, who abstains from certain foods which are conducive to skin diseases, who does not sleep with the unclean women of the lower classes, who has a strong

aversion to blood – not more, not much more!' (p. 20). These priestly aristocrats form a caste alongside, but separate from, the nobility, and in contrast to the aristocratic warriors they advocate for an anti-sensual metaphysics, a denial of pleasure and life that would seem to oppose the class out of which they arose. The priests, Nietzsche writes, are filled with resentment for their noble brothers; they provide a cure for the 'illnesses' that have appeared in human society and they do not hesitate to introduce various regimes, including dietary restrictions, fasting, sexual abstinence and physical isolation to achieve their goals. But, as Nietzsche points out,

> There is from the outset something *unhealthy* in such sacerdotal aristocracies, and in the customs which are prevalent in such societies – averse as they are to action – something which involves a pairing of introspection and explosive emotionalism, bringing about that intestinal discomfort and neurasthenia which has almost without exception afflicted priests throughout the ages; but as regards the treatment which they themselves have devised for this disease – have we any option save to declare that it has proved itself by its effects to be a hundred times more harmful than the disease for which it was supposed to be the remedy? Humanity itself is still reeling from this naive priestly 'cure'. (p. 20)

The values of the priests are thus easily distinguished from those of the warrior-nobles. The 'knightly-aristocrats' are grounded in practices and behaviours 'necessary for maintaining life, on war, adventure, the chase, the dance, the tourney – on everything, in fact, which involves strong, free and joyous action' (p. 21). The priests, on the contrary, promote abnegation and pacifism, self-sacrifice, wretchedness and weakness. Ultimately these priestly values gain hegemony.

For most of the first essay Nietzsche develops the opposition between aristocratic and herd morality on the basis of a mythologized history. It is difficult to locate the

nobles, warriors and knightly caste historically; likewise, priests and slaves are depicted with no historical specificity. At times we suspect that Nietzsche's nobles bear a vague resemblance to Homeric heroes or Vikings or characters that populate ancient epics, but he is clearly using psychological or anthropological types rather than historically verifiable personages. In section 13, however, Nietzsche indicates that these types may be ontological or biologically predetermined as well. At issue here is the notion of free will, which became an important moral weapon in the hands of the impotent. The powerful can be accused of crimes and violations only insofar as they have the choice to do otherwise. But Nietzsche makes it clear that they are acting according to their nature, just as the powerless play a predetermined role:

> To demand of strength that it should *not* express itself as strength, that it should *not* be a wish to overpower, a wish to conquer, a wish to become master, a lust for enemies, resistance and triumphs, is just as absurd as to require of weakness that it should express itself as strength. (p. 32)

Language, by employing subjects and verbs, may deceive us into believing that there are autonomous agents free to perform actions, but in fact, Nietzsche contends, there is no substratum of being that is independent and able to choose one action over another. Indeed, the putative agents are merely accessories to the performed actions. The weak, however, require the belief in a free subject, so that they can pretend they are choosing to be different from their violators, that they prefer not to retaliate and to turn the other cheek. Their choice of the 'virtuous life' is at best a self-deception; for Nietzsche it represents nothing more than the admission of their own inherent weakness, of their

constitutional inability to resist the powerful and to assert themselves in the world.

In the second essay Nietzsche returns to the topic of how psychological interiority or the 'soul' of human beings is created, once again employing psychological types to explain a putatively historical course of events. The first issue he discusses is the 'paradoxical task' humanity imposes on itself of breeding 'an animal that is *free to make promises*' (p. 43). With this topic Nietzsche is continuing a familiar paradigm in his writings that entails an original animal state of happiness, danger and vitality, and the contrasting condition of individuals subjected to consciousness, memory and misery. Here the antithesis is framed with 'forgetfulness' and 'memory'. The former term is essential, since 'active forgetfulness' is the precondition for action. It acts as a sentinel, shutting 'the doors and windows of consciousness', providing us 'relief from the din and struggle accompanying the activity of the organs that serve us, whether working in mutual cooperation or antagonism' (p. 43). In short, forgetfulness eliminates the impediments to action: 'there can exist no joy, no hope, no pride, no real *present*, without forgetfulness' (p. 44). Opposed to forgetfulness is remembering, memory, consciousness of the past. The human being must learn to think causally, to see events as part of a continuity, 'to distinguish between necessary and accidental phenomena' (p. 44). Such a human being not only is capable of calculation and reflection, but becomes '*reliable*, *disciplined*, *predictable*, even for himself and his own conception of himself' (p. 44). The question Nietzsche poses is how human beings are transformed from the natural state of forgetful animals into ones who remember, who bear responsibility, and who feel remorse, pity and compassion. His answer is

that instilling these qualities into our more primitive ancestors, making them ‘sovereign individuals’, involves a long, painful history of punishment and cruelty: there is ‘perhaps nothing more awful, more sinister in the early history of man than his *system of mnemonics*’, whose constituent dimensions are repetition and pain. ‘Something must be burned in so as to remain in his memory,’ Nietzsche maintains, ‘only that which never stops *hurting* will remain in his memory’ (p. 46). At the end of this painful process, human beings acquire an organ that enables them to make promises, their conscience, and they have begun to acquire ‘reason’. The transition of the human being from ‘barbarity’ to ‘civilization’ is accompanied by a regime of repeated cruelty, pain and physical suffering. Only in this manner do we develop those interior qualities of consciousness, conscience, soul, psychology, reason and reflection that we now associate with humankind.

In exploring further our interiority and its relationship to punishment, Nietzsche cites barter and trade as originary for our moral constitution. Compensation and contractual obligation lie at the source of our consciousness of guilt and bad conscience, and he notes the proximity of the German words *Schuld* (guilt) and *schulden* (to be indebted) as linguistic evidence for this view. Punishment, according to Nietzsche, is the result of a compensation for damages done. It originally resembles the contractual relationship between a creditor and a debtor, and at this early stage has nothing to do with guilt or remorse. The essential question Nietzsche poses is how we reach equivalence if the debtor lacks material goods for payment. The equivalence, Nietzsche claims, is established through various forms of punishment, in the infliction of pain and suffering on the debtor.

> Instead of an advantage directly compensatory of his injury (that is, instead of an equalization in money, property or some kind of chattel), the creditor is granted by way of repayment and compensation a certain *pleasure*, a *sense of satisfaction* – the satisfaction of being able to wield, without a scruple, his power over one who is powerless. (p. 50)

The creditor receives pleasure from seeing or inflicting punishment and is thereby compensated for the loss or the failure to satisfy a contractual obligation. Nietzsche's support for this hypothesis stems mainly from historical anecdotes. Executions often accompanied past celebrations; hangings and burnings were frequently moments of communal festivity. Only today, after our 'domestication', do we reject the venerable, powerful, human, all-too-human sentiment: 'To witness suffering does one good, to *inflict* suffering does one more good' (p. 52). We should not assume, however, that the advent of 'civilized' forms of punishment and compensation has been beneficial or a sign of progress in human affairs. Indeed, the very contrary proposition obtains: 'at the time when mankind was not yet ashamed of its cruelty, life in the world was brighter, more cheerful, than it is nowadays, when pessimists abound. The gloom hanging over man has always increased as man has grown more ashamed of his *own race*' (p. 53). Indeed, our very ability to withstand pain and to experience pleasure has changed. Sensual experience has been sublimated and made more subtle, so that we no longer take obvious pleasure in cruelty and inflicting punishment as we did in the past, a sign for Nietzsche of the destruction of instincts by civilization.

Guilt and bad conscience, however, are not instilled as a result of punishment. Violators and criminals experience punishment, according to Nietzsche, as a misfortune, as a part of their fate. The result of punishment is therefore not

remorse and guilt, but ‘a sharpening of intelligence … an improvement of the memory … a determination to proceed with greater caution, wariness and discretion’, as well as ‘the recognition that there are many things which are unquestionably beyond one’s capacity’ and ‘a kind of improvement in self-criticism’ (p. 69). Punishment can control our instincts and behaviour, and domesticate us, but it cannot open up a psychological space in our interiors where remorse and regret reign. In short, punishment alone does not make us moral human beings. The fertile soil in which morality and the attendant feelings of guilt, remorse and bad conscience thrive is cultivated by the internalization of our instincts. When humankind is no longer able to express its aggressive instincts externally, it turns them inwards. We are again dealing with the expansion of an internal psychological space, with the fashioning of the ‘soul’ in the interior of the human being. ‘The whole “inner world”, at first so very minute, unfolded, acquiring dimension, depth, breadth and height, when man’s external outlet became *obstructed*’ (p. 70). The process of internalization marks the transition from ‘savages, perfectly adapted as they were to the wilderness, to war, to a nomadic existence, and to exploration’, from ‘a herd of blond beasts of prey, a master race, a race of conquerors which, aggressive, powerful and organized, pounces with its most horrid claws on an unsuspecting population’ to the human being ‘imprisoned by the strictures imposed upon him by society to establish and preserve peace’ (p. 70). This war against the instincts forces the happy animal man ‘to thinking, inferring, calculating, to connecting cause and effect’; we are reduced to our most fallible, our ‘most poorly developed, least reliable organ’: consciousness; our instinct of freedom is ‘forced back,

repressed, imprisoned within itself and finally only able to vent and relieve itself' (pp. 70–3). Nietzsche conceives of this transition as a violent departure from our animal past, as a forward movement and a fall at the same time, 'a break, a leap, a compulsion, an inevitable fate, against which there was no resistance or even a flicker of resentment' (p. 72). Similar to his discussion of priests and Jews, Nietzsche admits a certain fascination with this transition: it was 'something so unprecedented, profound, extraordinary, bewildering and *momentous* that the whole nature of the world was radically altered' (p. 71). He even concedes that 'bad conscience', 'the true fountainhead of idealism and imagination', has produced 'an abundance of novel and strange beauty and affirmation, and perhaps has really been the first to give birth to beauty at all' (p. 73). On the whole, however, the human species loses more than it gains in the transition from free and instinctual beings to individuals whose aggression is unleashed internally.

The final essay in the *Genealogy*, 'What Do Ascetic Ideals Mean?', differs somewhat from its predecessors. Evidence from Nietzsche's correspondence, as well as the conclusion of the second essay, indicates its composition postdates the first two essays, and it is both longer and more diffuse than the rest of the volume. It is presented as the explication of an aphorism, and the reader may recall that in the last section of his 'Preface' Nietzsche provides instructions on how to interpret his texts: if his meaning is not readily comprehensible, he writes, the fault is not necessarily his. Readers must put in the requisite effort to achieve understanding, and only those who have shared in the identical experiences that produced Nietzsche's aphorisms are capable of genuine knowledge anyway. Nietzsche suggests that rumination is essential for comprehension of

his thoughts; the reader must chew and chew again on his written words, slowly digesting their import. He provides ample evidence of how extensive an interpretation can be in the length of his own commentary on a single aphorism. The question often raised in connection with the third essay is which aphorism is Nietzsche interpreting. Many commentators have assumed he is elucidating the short passage from *Zarathustra* included as an epigraph for the essay. Most readers will find, however, that the intricacies of the discussion of the ascetic ideal and the ascetic priest relate at best tangentially to this excerpted passage, and despite considerable exegetical manoeuvres, no one has been able to demonstrate convincingly how Nietzsche's essay relates to the pithy remarks on wisdom, women and warriors. It is much more likely that the essay is an explication of the aphorism included as the first section,[4] where Nietzsche writes about the multifarious manifestations of the ascetic ideal and its expression of a unique truth: that the human being would 'rather desire *oblivion* than not desire at all' (p. 83).

In the initial sections Nietzsche treats ascetic ideals as they relate to artists and philosophers. Richard Wagner, about whom Nietzsche would write two short works in 1888, is criticized for turning to ascetic ideals in his final opera, *Parsifal*, but in general artists are excused from any responsibility for the propagation of ascetic notions since they are 'forever separated from the "real", from the actual', acting only as a mouthpiece or a 'telephone' for the ideas and ideologies of others (pp. 87–9). The philosopher is more intimately linked with ascetic ideals; indeed, Nietzsche conceives of asceticism as essential for practising the trade of philosophy. In ruthlessly pursuing their own power, philosophers determine that the most effective way to

accomplish their intellectual domination is to adopt ascetic ideals. Poverty, humility and chastity, the three slogans of asceticism cherished by the philosophical guild, should not be conceived as virtues, but as conditions for the strongest philosophical productivity. Philosophers withdraw from the world, place themselves in deserts or atop mountains, travel alone, become hermits, abuse their bodies, negate their spirits, shun, above all, three 'showy and ostentatious things': 'fame, princes and women', and finally place their animal and sexual instincts in the service of their philosophy (as the artist does in the service of his art) (p. 96). If they are attracted by the sensual, they pretend that other aspects of life and art are more important, more crucial. Thus Schopenhauer, Nietzsche's prototypical philosopher, relegates beauty to the arena of pure aesthetic contemplation, claiming that art removes us temporarily from the incessant demands of the will. In embracing and disseminating ascetic ideals, philosophers assist us in our own self-violation, propagating the view of human beings as 'vivisectionists' or 'nutcrackers' of their own souls (p. 99). In short, like the priests of the first essay and in keeping with the internalization process described in the second essay, they help affirm the value system that Nietzsche has designated previously as slave morality.

Nietzsche is conscious of sketching a paradoxical situation. Ascetic ideals oppose vitality and life, and he expounds on the increasing power, ubiquity and almost infinite adaptability of ascetic values, propagated by artists and philosophers, and then by a variety of individuals subsumed under the rubric of 'ascetic priests'. Yet he needs to account for the fact that humankind appears to thrive on this very denial and abnegation. Why is it that we continue to live ascetically, why has earth become 'an *ascetic planet*,

the abode of discontented, arrogant and repulsive creatures who maintained a deep disgust of themselves, of the world, of all life, and who brought upon themselves as much woe as possible for the sheer pleasure derived from doing so' (p. 103). Or, to frame the paradox more precisely, how is it possible that ideals that are life-denying and life-negating have become the centre of a meaningful existence for human beings? The short answer to this question is that ascetic priests and the ascetic ideals they promulgate actually serve the interest of humankind:

> [*T*]*he ascetic ideal springs from the prophylactic and self-preservative instincts which mark a decadent life*, which endeavours by every resource at its disposal to sustain itself, unceasingly struggling to maintain its existence; it points to a partial physiological reluctance and exhaustion, against which the most profound vital instincts, which have remained intact, fight ceaselessly, using new weapons and discoveries. The ascetic ideal is such a weapon; its position is consequently exactly the reverse of that which the worshippers of the ideal imagine – life struggles in it and through it with death and *against* death; the ascetic ideal is a subterfuge or stratagem for the *preservation* of life. (p. 106)

It performs this essential task in many ways. Perhaps the most important is in tending to the sick and separating them from the strong and the healthy, who would be endangered if they were exposed to these unfortunate creatures. Life in its highest form must be protected, and it becomes the function of the ascetic ideal, dispensed from the pharmacy of the ascetic priest, to assist in keeping the sick slaves in line and isolated.

The ascetic priest is thereby thrust into the historical limelight, and we suspect that he is related to the noble priests of the first essay. His function is to protect life and everything that is worthwhile by caring for the sick, the downtrodden, the poor, the less fortunate. The most cunning ways in which the ascetic priest accomplishes his

task are to direct the fault for sickness and weakness back onto those who suffer, to deflect attention from the strong and to make the target of resentment and rancour the weak themselves. Thus the ascetic priest controls the dispensary of ‘ “guilt”, “sin”, “sinfulness”, “corruption”, “damnation” ’ (p. 114), the process of internalization Nietzsche explicated in the second essay. Much of the remainder of the third essay is a spirited discussion of the various forms the ascetic ideal assumes. Since Nietzsche includes as part of the ascetic ideal anything that provides meaning for humankind or that induces us to activity deflecting our alleged resentment, it is a truly protean concept. It consists not only of self-castigation, but also the release of ‘pent-up emotion’, and Nietzsche maintains that any emotion will do equally well. Like mechanical activity or work, the release of any pent-up emotion deflects the resentment in the masses onto paths less detrimental to the strong. Religion is implicated repeatedly, especially the Christian religion with its notions of perdition, sin and suffering, but so is enlightenment and idealism. Idealists who would try to improve humankind are clandestine ascetic priests, since for Nietzsche ‘*reformed*’ ‘conveys to my mind much the same as “tamed”, “weakened”, “discouraged”, “refined”, “pampered”, “emasculated” (and thus it means almost the same as “*injured*”)’ (p. 127). Scholarship and scientific research are also considered ascetic activities, since Nietzsche asserts that they are nothing more than ‘a *refuge* for every kind of cowardice, scepticism, remorse, *despectio sui*, bad conscience’. They are not the reversal of the ascetic ideal, but ‘its *latest and noblest form*’ (p. 132). Even agnostics, those critics of religion, are surreptitious ascetics: they have freed themselves from religion, but not from the notion of truth, whose value has been arbitrarily worshipped

by humankind, and they are thus the most subtle exponents of the ascetic ideal, ‘its most intellectualized offspring, its most front-line troops and scouts, its most insidious, delicate and elusive form of seduction’ (p. 134). In all of these various guises the ascetic ideal supplies us with meaning for our suffering, a sense and a goal for our activities on earth that assuages the less fortunate among us, and in doing so it preserves the will, even if it is a will to oblivion: for, as Nietzsche avers again in closing the essay, ‘Man will desire *oblivion* rather than not desire *at all*’ (p. 145).

The publication of these three provocative essays in the *Genealogy* did not help to accomplish Nietzsche’s expressed aim of boosting the sales of his earlier works. Although it did clarify the meaning of several key aphorisms in *Beyond Good and Evil*, the *Genealogy*, like his other books, had a limited reception during Nietzsche’s lifetime. After two months Naumann reported just over 200 orders, not all of which would translate into sales.[5] Its contents, however, proved to be extremely influential in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The notion of sacrificing instinctual pleasures for an increase in ‘civilization’ is a major theme in the cultural observations of Sigmund Freud, who adds to Nietzsche’s psychological insights a veneer of scientific and medical legitimation. Indeed, *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1929) can be understood as a recounting of Nietzsche’s main theses on guilt and internalization in more sober, clinical language. Freud’s reasoned resignation concerning the renunciation that accompanies the advance of civilization contrasts with Nietzsche’s rhetorical partisanship for instincts and a more vital existence, but the framework and the underlying psychological state of affairs are nearly identical. Despite its occasional excesses and some

inflammatory passages, the *Genealogy* has enjoyed a spirited and committed readership, quite possibly because its essayistic form makes it more readily accessible. Since the turn of the millennium, however, its popularity among scholars appears to have increased. Inspired by Bernard Williams's dealings with Nietzsche,[6] many philosophers who otherwise shunned Continental thought have turned their attention to Nietzsche, especially his writings on morality. The past decade or so has witnessed over a half-dozen new studies or essay collections devoted to the *Genealogy*, as well as several new translations. This preoccupation with the *Genealogy* has in turn resulted in a renewed interest in Nietzsche's thought in general among philosophers and intellectual historians. History can be cruelly ironic. It is fair to say that Nietzsche's ambitious goal for his three explanatory essays, while not realized at their original publication, has now finally been achieved.

Robert C. Holub, 2013

NOTES

1. The Apollonian impulse, derived from the Greek god Apollo, is associated with the dream, form, appearance and representation. The Dionysian, derived from the Greek deity Dionysus, is characterized by intoxication, wine, orgiastic rituals and oblivion.
2. All citations from the correspondence are taken from Friedrich Nietzsche, *Sämtliche Briefe*, Kritische Studienausgabe (Munich, Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter and dtv, 1986), volume 8. Translations are my own.
3. Michel Foucault, 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History', *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), pp. 139–64.
4. See Christopher Janaway, 'Nietzsche's Illustration of the Art of Exegesis', in his *Beyond Selflessness: Reading Nietzsche's* Genealogy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 165–85.
5. See William H. Schaberg, *The Nietzsche Canon: A Publication History and Bibliography* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 153.

6. Williams (1929–2003) was one of the most respected moral philosophers in the twentieth century. His comments on Nietzsche during the last decade of his life helped to legitimize an occupation with Nietzsche by other, younger philosophers interested in ethics.

FIRST ESSAY

‘Good and Evil’, ‘Good and Bad’[1]

1

These English psychologists,[2] to whom we are indebted for having alone endeavoured to provide a historical account of the origin of morality – these men themselves, I say, present to us a bit of a riddle; I must confess that they even have, as living riddles, an advantage over their books – *they themselves are interesting*! These English psychologists – what do they really want? They are always found at work, whether intentionally or unintentionally, pushing the *partie honteuse*[3] of our inner world to the foreground, and looking for the active, governing and decisive principle precisely where our race, so proud of our intellectual advancement, would be most *embarrassed* to find it (for example, in the *vis inertiæ*[4] of habit, or in forgetfulness, or in a blind and accidental mechanism and association of ideas, or in some factor that is purely passive, automatic, reflexive, molecular or fundamentally mindless) – what is it that always drives these psychologists in precisely *this* direction? Is it an instinct for belittling our race – somewhat sinister, vulgar and malignant, or perhaps incomprehensible even to itself? Or perhaps a touch of suspicion born of pessimism, the mistrust of disillusioned idealists who have become gloomy,

poisoned and bitter? Or a petty hidden enmity and rancour against Christianity (and Plato),[5] which may have never crossed the threshold of consciousness? Or just a vicious taste for those elements of life which are bizarre, painfully paradoxical, mystical and illogical? Or, as a final alternative, a dash of each of these motives – a little vulgarity, a little gloominess, a little anti-Christianity, a little craving for the necessary piquancy?

But I am told that it is simply a case of old, cold, boring frogs crawling and hopping into and around men, as if they were in their element: the *swamp*. I am disinclined to listen to this; indeed, I should say I do not believe it; and if I may be permitted to hope, given the impossibility of knowledge, I hope most earnestly that just the reverse is true, and that these analysts with their psychological microscopes should be truly brave, proud and magnanimous animals who know how to keep both their emotions and their pain in check, and have specifically trained themselves to sacrifice what is desirable to what is true, *any* truth in fact, even the simple, bitter, ugly, repulsive, unchristian and immoral truth – for there are such truths.

2

Let us honour, then, the noble sentiments which would dominate these historians of morality! But it is certainly a shame that they lack the *historical sense* itself, that they themselves have been abandoned by all the beneficent spirits of history. In accordance with the long-established custom among philosophers, all of their thought runs on *thoroughly* unhistorical lines; there is no doubt on this point. The gross ineptitude of their genealogy of morals is immediately apparent when they have to explain the origin

and development of the concept and judgement ‘Good’. According to their decree, ‘selfless acts were originally lauded and called good by their beneficiaries – those to whom they were *useful*;[6] subsequently this fact was *forgotten*, and selfless acts, which had for so long been *habitually* praised as good, came also to be *felt* as good – as though they were *intrinsically* good’. The thing is immediately obvious: this initial derivation already contains all the typical and idiosyncratic traits of the English psychologists – we have ‘utility’, ‘forgetting’, ‘habit’ and finally ‘error’, the whole assemblage forming the basis of a system of values, on which the higher man has up to the present prided himself, as though it were a kind of universal human privilege. This feeling of pride *must* be undone, likewise with this system of values; has that been achieved?

What first comes to my mind is that, in this theory, the origin of the concept ‘Good’ was mistakenly identified, and thus sought in vain, for the judgement ‘Good’ did *not* originate among those to whom goodness was shown! Rather it has been the ‘good men’ themselves, that is, the noble, the powerful, those of high degree, the high-minded, who have felt that they themselves were good, and that their actions were good, that is to say of the first order, as opposed to all the low, the low-minded, the vulgar and the plebeian. It was from this *pathos of distance*[7] that they first claimed the right to create values for their own benefit, and to coin the names of such values; what did they have to do with utility?

The standpoint of utility is as alien and as inapplicable as it could possibly be, when we have to deal with such a fierce eruption of supreme values, creating and demarcating as they do a hierarchy within themselves; it is here that one arrives at an appreciation of the contrast to that tepid

temperature which is the presupposition upon which every calculation of prudence or expediency is always based – and not for one occasion, not for one exceptional instance, but for the duration. The pathos of nobility and distance, as I have said, the continuing and dominating collective instinct, and feeling of superiority of a higher race, a master race, in comparison to a subservient race – *this* is the origin of the opposition of ‘Good’ and ‘Bad’. (The master’s right of naming extends so far that it is permissible to look upon language itself as the expression of the power of the masters: they say ‘this *is* that, and that’; they affix a seal to every object and every event with a sound and thus, as it were, take ownership of it.) It is by virtue of this origin that the word ‘good’ is *far from* having any necessary connection with selfless acts, in accordance with the superstitious belief of these moral philosophers. On the contrary, it is only on the occasion of the *decay* of aristocratic values that the opposition between ‘egoistic’ and ‘selfless’ impresses itself more and more intently upon the human conscience – it is, to use my own language, the *herd instinct* which ultimately finds its *expression* in this opposition. And even then it takes a considerable time for this instinct to become sufficiently dominant, so that the value can become inextricably dependent on this opposition (as is the case in contemporary Europe; for today the prejudice which, acting even now with all the intensity of an obsession and mental illness, holds that ‘moral’, ‘selfless’ and ‘*désintéressé*’[8] are concepts of equal value is already prevalent).

3

In the second place, quite apart from the fact that this hypothesis regarding the genesis of the judgement ‘Good’

cannot be considered historically tenable, it suffers from an inherent psychological contradiction. The high regard in which altruistic conduct is held is supposed to lie in its utility, and we are asked to believe that this has been *forgotten* – but in what conceivable way is this forgetting even *possible*? Has the utility of such conduct perhaps ceased all at once? The contrary is the case. This utility is experienced every day, at all times, and is something that is continually confirmed anew; it follows that, rather than vanishing from consciousness and memory, it must be impressed on the consciousness with ever-greater vividness. How much more reasonable, then, is that opposing theory (which, for all that, is not the truer one) which is proposed, for instance, by Herbert Spencer,[9] who maintains that the concept 'Good' is all but identical to the concept 'useful', 'practical'; so that in the judgements 'Good' and 'Bad', man is simply summarizing and sanctioning his *unforgotten* and *unforgettable experiences* concerning the 'useful-practical' and the 'harmful-impractical'. According to this theory, 'Good' is that which has previously demonstrated usefulness; and thus it may claim to be considered 'valuable in the highest degree', 'valuable in itself'. This method of explanation is also, as I have said, wrong, but at any rate the explanation itself is coherent and psychologically tenable.

4

What first put me on the *right track* was this question: what is the true etymological meaning of the various terms for the idea 'Good' which have been coined in various languages? I then found that they all led back to *the same evolution of the same idea* – that everywhere 'aristocrat',

‘noble’ (in the social sense) is the root idea out of which have necessarily developed ‘good’ in the sense of ‘with aristocratic soul’, ‘noble’ in the sense of ‘with a noble soul’, ‘with a privileged soul’ – a development which invariably runs parallel with that other evolution, in which ‘vulgar’, ‘plebeian’, ‘low’ are transformed finally into ‘bad’. The aptest example of this last contention is the German word ‘*schlecht*’ itself: this word is identical with ‘*schlicht*’[10] – (compare ‘*schlechtweg*’ and ‘*schlechterdings*’)[11] – which originally and simply denoted the simple, common man in contrast to the aristocratic man, without any sinister implication. It is at the rather late period of the Thirty Years’ War[12] that this sense changed to the sense now current. From the standpoint of the genealogy of morals this discovery seems to be *substantial*; that it was only recently discovered must be attributed to the suppression of all questions of origin due to democratic prejudice in the modern world. This extends, as will shortly be shown, even to the province of natural science and physiology, which, to all appearances, is the most objective. The extent of the mischief which can be caused by this prejudice (once it grows to the point of hatred), particularly to morality and history, is shown by the notorious case of Buckle;[13] it was in Buckle that that *plebeianism* of the modern spirit, which is of English origin, erupted once again upon its native soil with all the violence of a volcano of mud, and with that salted, stentorian and vulgar eloquence with which up to the present time all volcanoes have spoken.

5

With regard to *our* problem, which for good reasons can be called a *confidential* problem and can be disclosed to only a

select few, it is of not inconsiderable interest that in those words and roots which denote ‘good’ we catch glimpses of that distinctive trait which the noble feel distinguishes them, and which exalts them above their fellows. Indeed, in most instances they simply call themselves ‘the powerful’, ‘the lords’, ‘the commanders’, in accordance with their superior power or with the most obvious sign of their superiority, as for example ‘the rich’, ‘the owners’ (that is the meaning of *arya*;[14] the Iranian and Slav languages have corresponding forms). But the names they adopt also represent some *characteristic idiosyncrasy*; and this is the case which now concerns us. They call themselves, for instance, ‘the truthful’; this is first done by the Greek nobility whose mouthpiece is found in Theognis, the Megarian poet.[15] The word *ἐσυλός*,[16] which is coined for the purpose, signifies etymologically ‘one who *is*’, who has reality, who is real, who is true; and then with a subjective turn, the ‘true’, as the ‘truthful’; at this stage in the evolution of the idea, it becomes the motto and party cry of the nobility, and quite completes the transition to the meaning ‘noble’, so as to exclude the *lying*, vulgar man, as Theognis conceives and portrays him – till finally, after the decay of the nobility, the word was kept alive to designate psychological *noblesse*, and as it were became ripe and sweet. In the word *κακός* as in *δειλός*[17] (the plebeian in contrast to the *ἀγαυός*)[18] cowardice is emphasized. This affords us an indication of where the etymological origin of the very ambiguous *ἀγαυός* is to be investigated. In the Latin *malus*[19] (to which I juxtapose *μέλας*)[20] the vulgar man can be distinguished as the dark-coloured, and above all as the black-haired (‘hic niger est’),[21] as the pre-Aryan inhabitants of the Italian soil, whose complexion distinguished them from the dominant blonds, namely the Aryan conquering race;[22] at any rate

Gaelic[23] has afforded me the exact analogue – *fin* (for instance, in the name *Fin-Gal*),[24] the word designating the nobility, finally – the good, the noble, the pure, but originally blonds in contrast to the swarthy, black-haired aboriginals. The Celts, if I may make a parenthetical statement, were a wholly blond race; and it is wrong to connect, as Virchow[25] still does, those traces of an essentially dark-haired population which are to be seen on the more detailed ethnographical maps of Germany with any Celtic ancestry or with any admixture of Celtic blood; in this connection it is merely the isolated remnants of the *pre-Aryan* population of Germany which appear in these districts. (The same holds true for almost the whole of Europe; in point of fact, the subject race has finally again come to dominate, in complexion and the shortness of the skull,[26] and perhaps in the intellectual and social instincts. Who can guarantee that modern democracy, still more modern anarchy and indeed that predilection for the 'Commune',[27] the most primitive form of society, which is shared by all the Socialists in Europe, does not in its essence represent a monstrous *reversion* – and that the conquering and *master* race, the Aryan race, is not also becoming inferior physiologically?) I believe that I can explain the Latin word *bonus*[28] as the 'warrior'; my hypothesis is that I am right in deriving *bonus* from an older *duonus* (compare *bellum-duellum* = *duen-lum*,[29] in which the word *duonus*[30] appears to me to be contained). *Bonus* accordingly as the man of discord, of division, *Entzweiung* (*duo*), as the warrior, shows one what in ancient Rome 'the Good' meant for a man. Must not our actual German word *gut* mean 'the *godlike*, the man of godlike race'? And be identical with the national name (originally the nobles' name) of the *Goths*?[31] The grounds for this supposition do not appertain to this work.

To begin with, there is no exception (though there are opportunities for exceptions) to this rule, that the concept of political superiority always resolves itself into the concept of psychological superiority when the highest caste is at the same time the *priestly* caste, and, in accordance with its general characteristics, confers upon itself the privilege of a title which alludes specifically to its priestly function. It is in these cases, for instance, that the concepts ‘clean’ and ‘unclean’ are juxtaposed for the first time as distinctive marks of class; then later are developed a ‘Good’ and a ‘Bad’, in a sense which is no longer a reference to social class. Moreover, one should be warned against taking these concepts of ‘clean’ and ‘unclean’ too seriously, too broadly, or even trying to understand them as symbols at all; on the contrary, all the concepts of ancient man must be understood in their initial forms, in a sense which is to us almost inconceivable, as crude, clumsy, superficial, strict, and, above all, essentially *non-symbolic*. The ‘clean man’ is originally only a man who washes himself, who abstains from certain foods which are conducive to skin diseases, who does not sleep with the unclean women of the lower classes, who has a strong aversion to blood – not more, not much more! On the other hand, the very nature of a priestly aristocracy shows the reasons why just at such an early juncture a dangerous sharpening and internalization of opposite values should occur; it is, in fact, through this development that gulfs are cleft in human society, which even a veritable Achilles of free thought would shudder to cross. There is from the outset something *unhealthy* in such sacerdotal aristocracies, and in the customs which are prevalent in such societies – averse as they are to action –

something which involves a pairing of introspection and explosive emotionalism, bringing about that intestinal discomfort and neurasthenia which has almost without exception afflicted priests throughout the ages; but as regards the treatment which they themselves have devised for this disease – have we any option save to declare that it has proved itself by its effects to be a hundred times more harmful than the disease for which it was supposed to be the remedy? Humanity itself is still reeling from this naive priestly ‘cure’. Let us consider, for instance, certain kinds of diet (such as vegetarianism),[32] fasting, sexual abstinence, flight ‘into the desert’ (the Weir-Mitchell isolation cure,[33] though of course without that system of overfeeding and fattening-up which is the most effective antidote to all the hysteria brought about by the ascetic ideal); consider too the whole metaphysic of the priests, which is antagonistic to the senses, induces indolence and fastidiousness; consider its self-hypnotism in the manner of the fakir[34] and Brahman[35] (Brahman used as a crystal ball and *idée fixe*),[36] and that final, all-too-comprehensible general disillusionment with its radical cure, *oblivion* (or God – the demand for a *unio mystica*[37] with God is the demand of the Buddhist for oblivion, Nirvana[38] – and nothing else!). In sacerdotal societies (among priests) *every* element becomes more dangerous, not merely remedies and healing arts, but also pride, revenge, cunning, excess, love, ambition, virtue, illness – further, it can fairly be stated that it is on the soil of this *essentially dangerous* form of human society, the sacerdotal form, that man really becomes for the first time an *interesting animal*, that it is in this form that the soul of man has in a higher sense attained *depth* and become *evil* – and those are the two basic ways in

which man up to the present has exhibited superiority over every other animal.

7

The reader will have already surmised how easily the priestly form of judgement can separate itself from the knightly-aristocratic form, and then develop into the very antithesis of the latter, especially when the priestly castes and the warrior castes confront each other with mutual jealousy, and cannot agree upon the prize. The knightly-aristocratic values rest upon a powerful physical development, a richness and even superabundance of health, together with what is necessary for maintaining life, on war, adventure, the chase, the dance, the tourney – on everything, in fact, which involves strong, free and joyous action. The priestly-aristocratic judgement is – we have seen – based on other grounds; it is bad enough for this class when it comes to war! Yet the priests are, as is known, the *worst enemies* – why? Because they are the least powerful. This weakness causes their hatred to grow into something which is monstrous and sinister, something which is most devious and venomous. The really great haters in the history of the world have always been priests, who are also the most cunning haters – in comparison with the cunning of the priest motivated by revenge, all others pale. Human history would be nothing but a record of stupidity save for the cunning contributions of the weak – let us take at once the most important instance. All the world's efforts against the 'aristocrats', the 'mighty', the 'masters', 'those who hold the reins of power', are negligible by comparison with what has been brought to bear upon those classes by *the Jews*[39] – the Jews, that priestly nation which eventually realized that

the one method of effecting satisfaction on its enemies and tyrants was by means of a radical transformation of values, which was at the same time an act of the most *cunning revenge*. Only this means was fitting for a nation of priests, for a nation in which vengefulness is so deeply ingrained. It was the Jews who, in opposition to the aristocratic equation (good = aristocratic = beautiful = happy = loved by the gods), ventured, with an awesome consistency, to suggest the contrary equation, and indeed to hold fast, with the teeth of the most profound hatred (the hatred born of weakness), to this contrary equation, namely, 'the wretched are alone the good; the poor, the weak, the lowly are alone the good; the suffering, the needy, the sick, the loathsome are the only ones who are pious, the only ones who are blessed, salvation is for them alone – but you, on the other hand, you aristocrats, you men of power, you are for all eternity the evil, the horrible, the covetous, the insatiate, the godless; eternally also shall you be the wretched, the cursed, the damned!' We know who it was who reaped the heritage of this Jewish reversal of values! In the context of the monstrous and incalculably fateful initiative which the Jews have undertaken, in the form of this most fundamental of all declarations of war, I remember the passage which came from my pen on another occasion (*Beyond Good and Evil*, section 195) – that it was, in fact, with the Jews that *the slaves' revolt in morality* begins: that revolt which has behind it a history of two millennia, and which at the present day has been lost from our sight only because – because it has achieved victory …

But you do not understand this? You cannot observe a force which has taken two thousand years to achieve victory? … There is nothing remarkable in this, for all *lengthy* processes are hard to observe and apprehend. But *this* is what took place: from the stem of that tree of revenge and hatred, of Jewish hatred – that most profound and sublime hatred, which creates ideals and changes old values to new ones, the like of which has never been seen before on earth – there grew something which was equally incomparable, *a new love*, the most profound and sublime of all kinds of love – and from what other stem could it have grown? But beware of supposing that this love has developed as a genuine repudiation of that thirst for revenge, as an antithesis to Jewish hatred! No, the contrary is the truth! This love grew out of that hatred, as its crown, as its triumphant crown, growing ever wider in the full brilliance of the sun, the crown which, as it were, in the very kingdom of light and rapture, was pursuing the goals of that hatred, its victory, its spoils, its allure, with the same vigour with which the roots of that hatred dug ever more greedily into everything which was entrenched and evil. This Jesus of Nazareth, the gospel of love incarnate, this ‘Redeemer’ bringing salvation and victory to the poor, the sick, the sinful – was he not precisely temptation in its most sinister and irresistible form, temptation and the devious route to those very *Jewish* values and new ideals? Has not Israel really arrived at its ultimate destination of sublime vengefulness, by the devious route of this ‘Redeemer’, Israel’s apparent adversary and destroyer? Is it not due to the black art of a truly *grand* politics of vengeance, a prescient, subterranean vengeance, calculating and patient, that Israel itself had to denounce the actual instrument of its own vengeance as a mortal enemy before all the world,

and nail him to the cross, so that ‘all the world’[40] – that is, all the enemies of Israel – could nibble unsuspectingly at this very bait? Could, moreover, any human mind, with all its ingenuity, conceive a *more dangerous* bait? Could anything equal its power to seduce, intoxicate, numb, stupefy, corrupt? Could anything be devised to equal the power of that symbol of the ‘holy cross’, that awful paradox of a ‘God on the cross’, that mystery of the unthinkable, supreme and utter horror of the self-crucifixion of a God for the *salvation of man*? It is at least certain that *sub hoc signo*[41] Israel, with its vengeance and reversal of all old values, has triumphed again and again over all other ideals, over all *nobler, more aristocratic* ideals.

9

‘But why do you talk of *nobler ideals*? Let us submit to the facts; that the people have triumphed – or “the slaves”, or “the masses”, or “the herd”, or whatever name you care to give them – if this has happened because of the Jews, so be it! In that case no nation ever had a greater mission in the world’s history. The “masters” have been done away with, and with them their aristocratic morality has vanished; the morality of the low classes has triumphed. This triumph may also be called a blood-poisoning (it has blended the races) – I do not dispute it; but there is no doubt but that this intoxication has *succeeded*. The “redemption” of the human race (that is, from “the masters”) is proceeding quite well; everything is obviously becoming Judaized, or Christianized, or vulgarized (what do the words matter?). It seems impossible to arrest the progress of this poison as it courses through the veins of mankind – but its tempo and pace may now be slower, gentler, quieter, less disturbing – there is

time enough. In view of this context does the Church nowadays have any *essential* purpose? Does it have, in fact, a right to exist? Or is it dispensable? *Quaeritur*.[42] Does it not seem that the Church slows and even halts the passage of the poison, instead of accelerating it? Well, that might be its very utility. The Church certainly is a crude and boorish institution, one that is repugnant to an intelligence with any pretence at refinement, and offensive to the genuinely modern taste. Should not the Church at least try to be somewhat refined? Nowadays it tends to alienate more than to entice. Who amongst us would, indeed, be a freethinker if there were no Church? It is the Church which repulses us, *not* its poison – apart from the Church we like the poison.'

This is the epilogue of a 'freethinker' to my discourse, an honourable animal (as he has abundantly proved), and a democrat to boot; he had listened to me up to that time, and could not endure my silence further. For me, indeed, with regard to this topic there is much on which I need to be silent.

10

The slaves' revolt in morality begins when *resentment*[43] itself becomes creative and gives birth to values – a resentment experienced by those who, deprived as they are of the proper outlet of action, are forced to obtain their satisfaction in imaginary acts of vengeance. While all aristocratic morality springs from a triumphant affirmation of its own demands, the slave morality says 'no' *ab initio*[44] to what is 'outside itself', 'different from itself' and 'not itself'; and *this* 'no' is its creative act. This about-face in the perspective of judgement – this *irresistible* gravitation to the objective instead of back to the subjective – is typical of

resentment; an external and objective world, to employ physiological terminology, is vital to slave-morality; it requires objective stimuli to be capable of action at all – its action is fundamentally a reaction.

The contrary is the case when we come to the aristocrat's system of values; it acts and grows spontaneously, it merely seeks its antithesis in order to utter a more grateful and exultant 'yes' to its own self – its negative concept, 'low', 'vulgar', 'bad', is merely a pale image formed afterwards compared with its positive and fundamental concept (saturated as it is with life and passion), 'we the noble, we the good, we the beautiful, we the happy'. The outrages committed against reality by the aristocratic system of morality are limited to that particular sphere with which it is *not* sufficiently acquainted, and of which it disdains to learn. In some instances, it misjudges the sphere which it despises, the sphere of the vulgar and the lowly; on the other hand, due weight should be given to the consideration that in any case the mood of contempt, of disdain, of superciliousness, even on the supposition that it *falsely* portrays the object of its contempt, will always be far removed from that degree of falsity which will always characterize the attacks – *in effigie*,[45] of course – of the vindictive hatred and vengefulness of the weak in onslaughts on their enemies. In point of fact, there is in contempt too great an admixture of nonchalance, of casualness, of boredom, of impatience, even of a feeling of joy, for it to be capable of distorting its victim into a real caricature or a real monstrosity.

Attention again should be paid to the almost benevolent nuances with which, for instance, the Greek nobility graces all the words by which it distinguishes itself from the common people; note how these words are always imbued

with sympathy, care and consideration, and thus sweetened, until finally almost all the words which refer to the vulgar man survive as expressions for ‘unhappy’, ‘pitiable’ (compare *δειλός*,[46] *δείλαιος*,[47] *πονηρός*,[48] *μοχνηρός*;[49] the latter two truly denoting the common man as slave-labourer and beast of burden) – and how, conversely, ‘bad’, ‘low’, ‘unhappy’ have never failed to resound in the Greek ear with a tone in which ‘unhappy’ is the dominant note: this is a heritage of the old noble aristocratic system of morality, which remains true to itself even in contempt (let philologists remember the sense in which *οϊζυρός*,[50] *ἄνολβος*,[51] *τλήμων*,[52] *δυστυχεῖν*,[53] *ξυμφορά*[54] used to be employed). The ‘well-born’ simply *felt* themselves to be the ‘happy’; they did not have to manufacture their happiness artificially by contemplating their enemies, or convince themselves of their happiness by *lying* to themselves (as all men of resentment are prone to do); and similarly, complete men as they were, full of energy and *of course*, therefore, active, they were too wise to dissociate happiness from action – activity is in their minds an essential part of happiness (that is the etymology of *εὖ πράττειν*)[55] – all in sharp contrast to the ‘happiness’ of the weak and the oppressed, with their festering venom and malignity, among whom happiness manifests itself essentially as a narcotic, an anaesthetic, peace and quiet, a ‘Sabbath’, tranquillity of the mind and relaxation of the body – in short, a purely *passive* phenomenon.

While the aristocratic man lives confidently and is open to himself (*γεννῖος*,[56] ‘noble-born’, emphasizes the nuance ‘sincere’, and perhaps also ‘naive’), the man of resentment, on the other hand, is not sincere or naive, neither honest nor candid with himself. His soul *squints*; his mind loves dark corners, secret passages and hidden doors, everything

covert appeals to him as *his* world, *his* security, *his* comfort; he is a past master of silence, of not forgetting, of patience, of assuming a mode of self-deprecation and humility for a while. A race of such *resentful* men will eventually prove *more cunning* than any aristocratic race; they will respect cunning to a much greater degree, namely as something most vital to existence, whereas cunning among aristocratic men is apt to be redolent of luxury and refinement; so among them it does not play so integral a part as that complete certainty of function of the governing *unconscious* instincts, nor as that certain lack of caution, such as a valiant charge at the enemy, bravery in the face of danger, or as those ecstatic bursts of rage, love, reverence, gratitude, by which at all times noble souls have recognized each other. When the resentment of the aristocratic man manifests itself, it is consumed and exhausted in an immediate reaction, and consequently instils no *venom*; on the other hand, it never manifests itself at all in countless instances when it would be inevitable for the feeble and weak.

The inability to take seriously for any length of time their enemies, their disasters, their *misdeeds* is the sign of the strong, magnificent individuals who possess a superabundance of power which is agile, yielding, but which also heals injuries and allows one to forget; a good example of this in the modern world is Mirabeau,[57] who could never remember others' insults or malice, and who was only incapable of forgiving because he forgot. Such a man shakes off, with a simple shrug, many a worm which would have dug its way into another; it is only in characters such as these that we see the possibility (supposing, of course, that there is such a possibility in the world) of the real '*love* of one's enemies'.[58] What respect for his enemies is found,

indeed, in an aristocratic man! – and such a respect is then a bridge to love … He insists on having his enemy to himself, as his distinction. He will have no enemy but a man in whose character there is nothing to despise and *much* to honour! On the other hand, imagine the ‘enemy’ as the man of resentment conceives him – and it is here exactly that we see his work, his creativeness; he has conceived ‘the evil enemy’, the ‘*Evil One*’, and indeed that is the inspiration from which he now concocts, as a counterpart, the ‘Good One’, himself – his very self!

11

This method is the very reverse of that of the aristocratic man, who conceives the basic concept ‘Good’ first, spontaneously, and from that he then creates a concept of ‘Bad’! Regarding this ‘Bad’ of aristocratic origin and that ‘Evil’ from the cauldron of unabating hatred – the former is an imitation, a supplement, a complementary colour; the latter, on the other hand, is the original, the beginning, the authentic *act* in the conception of a slave-morality – these two words ‘Bad’ and ‘Evil’, how great a difference do these words mark, in spite of the fact that they have an identical contrary in the idea ‘Good’! But the concept ‘Good’ is *not* the same for both contraries; much rather let the question be asked, ‘*Who* is really evil according to the morality of resentment?’ Let it be answered thus: it is *precisely* the ‘good men’ of the other *morality*, the aristocrats, the powerful, the rulers, but who are seen only in a distorted way through the venomous eye of resentment.

This particular point we would be the last to deny: the man who learned to know those ‘good’ men only as enemies, also learned nothing but ‘*evil enemies*’; and the

same men whose conduct was so rigorously governed and controlled by convention, respect, custom and gratitude, though even more by jealousy and vigilant observation of one another *inter pares*[59] – these men who in their relations with each other find so many new ways of manifesting consideration, self-control, delicacy, loyalty, pride, and friendship – these men, in the strange, even *alien* realm outside their own – these men are not much better than beasts of prey that have been loosed. There they enjoy freedom from any social control; in the wilderness they who so long chafed under the strictures imposed by society to ensure tranquillity and order are released from them; they *revert* to the innocent, primal state of the beast of prey, like jubilant monsters without a conscience, who saunter away, with bravado and equanimity, after a rampage of murder, arson, rape and torture, as though they had merely played some wild student's prank, perfectly convinced that the poets will now have something to sing about and celebrate for long after. It is impossible not to recognize at the core of all these aristocratic races the beast of prey; the magnificent, marauding *blond beast*, lusting after victory and spoils; it needs to be released from time to time; the beast must be loosed again, must return into the wilderness – the Roman, Arabic, German, and Japanese nobility, the Homeric heroes, the Scandinavian Vikings, are all alike in this need.

It is the aristocratic races who have left the concept of the 'barbarian' in their wake wherever they have marched; indeed, a consciousness of this very barbarianism, and even a pride in it, manifests itself even in their highest civilization (for example, when Pericles[60] says to his Athenians in that celebrated funeral oration, 'Our boldness has forced a way over every land and sea, everywhere erecting enduring

monuments to itself for good and for *ill*').[61] This 'boldness' of aristocratic races, mad, absurd and spasmodic as it may be; the capricious and fantastic nature of their enterprises – Pericles specially praises the *ῥαθυμία*[62] of the Athenians, their indifference to danger, death and discomfort, their awful joy and intense delight in all destruction, in all the ecstasies of victory and cruelty – all this came together, for those who suffered under them, in the image of the 'barbarian', of the 'evil enemy', perhaps of the 'Goth' and of the 'Vandal'.[63] The deep, icy mistrust which the German provokes when he comes to power – even at the present time – is a still-lingering effect of that inextinguishable horror which for whole centuries Europe experienced at the sight of the wrathful, blond German beast (although between the ancient Germanic tribes and ourselves there exists scarcely any psychological, let alone physical, relationship).

I have already called attention to the quandary faced by Hesiod,[64] when he conceived the series of the cultural ages of man, and endeavoured to express them as gold, silver and bronze. The only way he found to deal with the contradiction represented by the Homeric world, an age magnificent indeed, but at the same time so awful and so violent, was to make two ages out of one, which he placed one after the other. First came the age of heroes and demigods, as that world still remained in the memories of the aristocratic families, who claimed them as their own ancestors; secondly came the Bronze Age, as that corresponding age appeared to the descendants of the oppressed, dispossessed, abused, abducted and enslaved; an age of bronze, as I have said, that was hard, cold, terrible, without feelings and without conscience, crushing everything and splattering everything with blood.

Granted the ‘truth’ of the common presumption that the very *essence of all civilization* is to produce a tame and civilized animal, a *domesticated animal*, from man, the beast of prey, it follows unquestionably that we must regard all instinctive reaction and instinctive resentment by which the aristocratic races, together with their ideals, were finally wrecked and overwhelmed, as the true *instruments of civilization*; though that has not yet come to be synonymous with saying that *those in possession of these instincts* also represented the civilization. It is rather the contrary that is not only probable – no, it is *apparent* today! Those in possession of oppressive, vindictive instincts, these descendants of all European and non-European slavery, especially of the pre-Aryan population – these people, I say, represent the *decline* of humanity! These ‘instruments of civilization’ are a disgrace to humanity; they constitute in reality more of an argument against ‘civilization’, more of a reason to regard civilization with suspicion! We may be perfectly justified in our fear of the blond beast residing at the core of all aristocratic races, and in being always on guard; but who would not, a hundred times over, prefer to be afraid, when one can at the same time admire, than to be immune from fear, at the cost of being unable to be rid of the loathsome spectacle of the unfit, the dwarfed, the stunted, the envenomed? And is that not *our* fate? What produces our repulsion towards ‘man’? – for we *suffer* from ‘man’, there is no doubt about it.

It is *not* fear; it is rather that we have nothing more to fear from men; it is that man is a teeming, writhing mass of worms; it is that the ‘tame man’, the hopelessly mediocre and unpleasant creature, has learned to consider himself as an end and as supreme, as the culmination of history, a ‘higher man’; yes, it is that he has a certain right to feel like

that, in so far as he feels that he is remote from the masses – the unfit, the wretched, the diseased, the exhausted – whose stench is beginning to fill present-day Europe, he at any rate has achieved a relative success, he is capable of life, he at any rate still says ‘yes’ to life.

12

At this juncture I cannot refrain from uttering a sigh and one last hope. What is it precisely which I find intolerable? That which I cannot deal with alone, which makes me choke and faint? Bad air! Bad air! That something foul comes near me; that I must inhale the putrid odour of the entrails of a rotten soul! …

That excepted, what can one not endure in the way of need, privation, bad weather, sickness, toil, solitude? In point of fact, one manages to get over everything, born as one is to a burrowing and battling existence; one always returns once again to the light, one always lives again one’s golden hour of victory – and then one stands as one was born, unbreakable, tense, ready for something more difficult, for something more distant, like a bow stretched but the tauter by every strain.

But from time to time do please grant me – assuming that ‘beyond Good and Evil’[65] there are goddesses who can grant – one glimpse, grant me but one glimpse only, of something perfect, fully realized, happy, mighty, triumphant, one glimpse of something that still gives cause for fear! A glimpse of a man who justifies the existence of man *himself*, a paradigm, a man who atones for and redeems man, for whose sake we may cling to our *faith in man*!

For the situation is this: *our* greatest peril lurks in the European drift towards egalitarianism, for it is this prospect

which wearies us – we see today nothing which wishes to be greater, we surmise that everything is still, retreating, going backwards, regressing towards something more reserved, more inoffensive, more cunning, more comfortable, more mediocre, more indifferent, more Chinese,[66] more Christian – man, there is no doubt about it, grows always 'better' … the destiny of Europe lies precisely in this – that in losing our fear of man, we have also lost the hope in man, respect for man, the will to be man. The sight of man now wearies us – what is present-day nihilism if it is not *that*? … We are tired of *man*.

13

But let us come back to it, the problem of a *different* origin of the 'Good' – the Good as the man of resentment has conceived it – demands a solution.

It is not surprising that the lambs should bear ill will against the great birds of prey, but that is no reason for blaming the great birds of prey for taking the little lambs. And when the lambs say among themselves, 'Those birds of prey are evil, and he who is most unlike a bird of prey, who is most like its opposite, a lamb – is he not good?' then there is nothing to cavil about in the setting-up of this ideal, except perhaps that the birds of prey will regard it with some measure of derision, and say to themselves, '*We* bear no ill will against these fine, goodly lambs, we even like them; nothing is tastier than a tender lamb.'

To demand of strength that it should *not* express itself as strength, that it should *not* be a wish to overpower, a wish to conquer, a wish to become master, a lust for enemies, resistance and triumphs, is just as absurd as to require of weakness that it should express itself as strength. A

measure of force is just such a measure of impetus, will, action – rather, it is nothing but those very phenomena of impelling, willing, acting,[67] and it can appear otherwise only under the sway of language (and the fundamental fallacies which have become petrified within it), which understands, and understands wrongly, all action as dependent upon an agent, a 'subject'. Now just as people distinguish between lightning and its flash, and interpret the latter as the *action* which is performed by a subject which is called lightning, so also does popular morality distinguish strength from the expression of strength, as though behind the strong man there existed some indifferent neutral substratum which enjoyed the *freedom* to express strength or not. But there is no such substratum, there is no 'being' behind the action, the effect, the becoming; 'the agent' is a mere accessory to the action. The action is everything. In point of fact, people duplicate the action, when they make the lightning flash, it is the action of an action; they make the same phenomenon first a cause, and then, secondly, the effect of that cause. The scientists fail to improve matters when they say, 'Force moves, force causes,' and so on. Our science is still, in spite of being cool and calculating, a dupe of the tricks of language, and has never rid itself of that superstitious changeling 'the subject' (the atom, to give another instance, is such a changeling, just as is the Kantian 'Thing-in-Itself').[68] What wonder, then, if the hidden, deep-seated, smouldering passions of vengeance and hatred exploit their belief for their own ends, and indeed hold no belief more firmly than that the *strong are free to be weak*, and the birds of prey are free to be lambs. Thus they acquire the right to *blame* the birds of prey for being birds of prey …

When the oppressed, the downtrodden and the victims of violence say to themselves with the vindictive cunning born

of weakness: ‘Let us be *different* from the evil ones, let us be good! – and he is good who does not violate, who harms no one, who does not attack, who does not retaliate, who leaves vengeance in the hands of God, who stays in hiding, as we do; who avoids evil and demands little from life; who is like ourselves, the patient, the meek, the righteous’ – yet all this, if given an objective, dispassionate interpretation, means nothing more than ‘Once and for all, we the weak are simply weak; it is best if we do nothing *for which we are not strong enough*’ – but this dismal state of affairs, this cunning of the lowest order, possessed even by insects (which when in great danger feign death so as to avoid doing ‘too much’), has, thanks to the counterfeiting and self-deception of weakness, cloaked itself in the finery of an ascetic, mute and patient virtue, just as though the very weakness of the weak – that is, its *essence*, its effect, its whole unique, inevitable, inseparable reality – were a voluntary result, something wished, chosen, an *action*, an *achievement*. This kind of man has a *need* to believe in an indifferent, free ‘subject’; this need arises from an instinct for self-preservation, for self-assertion, in which every lie endeavours to sanctify itself. The subject (or, to use popular language, the *soul*) has perhaps proven itself the best dogma in the world, simply because it made possible, for the multitude of mortal, weak, oppressed individuals of every description, the most sublime self-deception: to interpret weakness as freedom, and their particular situation as an *achievement*.

14

Will anyone look a little into – down into – the mystery of how *ideals are made* on earth? Who is bold enough to do it?

Come forward! Here we have a glimpse into this gloomy workshop. Wait just a moment, dear Mr Inquisitive and Foolhardy; your eyes must first grow accustomed to this eerily shimmering light … Yes! That's quite enough! Now speak! What is happening down there? Speak out! Tell us what you see, as a man with the most dangerous kind of curiosity – for now *I* am the one who is listening.

– 'I see nothing, but I can hear much. I can hear people whispering in every nook and corner. They speak in hushed tones; their guarded, malicious murmurs come to me. It seems to me that they are lying; a sweet softness envelops every sound. Weakness is being praised as *achievement*, there is no doubt about it – it is just as you say.'

– Go on!

– 'And the impotence which wants no part of revenge is turned into "goodness"; craven baseness is turned into "meekness"; submission to those whom one hates is turned into "obedience" (namely, obedience to one who, they say, demands such submission – they call him God). The inoffensive character of the weak, the very cowardice which he possesses in such abundance, his standing at the door, his compulsory waiting, are here given fine names, such as "patience", which is also called *the* "virtue"; not being able to avenge oneself is called not wishing to avenge oneself, perhaps even forgiveness ("for *they* know not what they do[69] – we alone know what *they* do"). They also talk of the "love of one's enemies", and sweat at the same time.'

– Go on!

– 'They are miserable, there is no doubt about it, all these whisperers and schemers, even though they huddle close together to keep themselves warm, but they tell me that their misery is a mark of distinction and of God's favour, just as one beats the dogs one likes best; perhaps this misery is

also a preparation, a probation, a training; perhaps it is something more, something for which they will some day be compensated, and paid back with a tremendous interest, in gold – no! – in happiness. This they call “Bliss”.’

– Go on!

– ‘They now give me to understand that not only are they better men than the mighty, the masters of the earth, whose spittle they must lick (*not* out of fear, not at all out of fear, but because God ordains that one should honour all authority)[70] – not only are they better men, but that they also are “better off”, or at any rate will one day be “better off”. But enough! Enough! I can endure it no longer. Bad air! Bad air! These workshops *where ideals are made* – they simply reek with the crassest lies.’

– No! Just one minute! You have said nothing yet about the masterpieces of these virtuosos of black magic, who can transform black into white, and produce milk and innocence out of thin air; have you not noticed what perfection of refinement is attained in their subtlest, most audacious, ingenious and deceptive trick? Observe! These cellar-rats, full of vengeance and hate – what do they make out of their vengeance and hate? Do you hear these words? Would you suspect, if you trusted only their words, that you are among men of resentment and nothing else?

– ‘I understand, I prick my ears up again (ah! ah! ah! as I hold my nose). Now do I hear for the first time that which they have said so often: “We, the good, *we are the righteous*” – what they demand they call not revenge but “the triumph of *righteousness*”; what they hate is not their enemy, no! they hate “unrighteousness”, “godlessness”; what they believe in and hope for is not the prospect of revenge, the intoxication of sweet revenge (– did not Homer call it “sweeter than honey”?),[71] but rather the victory of

God, of the *righteous God*, over the “godless”; what is left for them to love in this world is not their brothers in hate, but their “brothers in love”,[72] as they say, all the good and righteous on the earth.’

– And what do they call that from which they take solace for all their suffering – the phantasmagoria of their bliss which is to come?

– ‘What? Do I hear right? They call it “the last judgement”,[73] the advent of *their* kingdom, “the kingdom of God” – but *in the meanwhile* they live “in faith”, “in hope”, “in love”.’[74]

– Enough! Enough!

15

Faith in what? Love for what? Hope for what? These weaklings! – *they* also wish to be strong some time; there is no doubt about it, some time *their* kingdom also must come[75] – ‘the kingdom of God’ is their simple name for it, as has been mentioned: they are so meek in everything! Yet in order to live to see *that* kingdom it is necessary to live long, to live beyond death – yes, eternal life is necessary to receive eternal recompense, a reward for that earthly life ‘in faith’, ‘in love’, ‘in hope’. Recompense for what? Recompense by what means?

Dante, as it seems to me, committed an egregious error when, with awe-inspiring naivety, he placed this inscription over the gate of his inferno: ‘Eternal love made me too’;[76] at any rate the following inscription would be much better suited to stand over the gate of the Christian paradise and its ‘eternal bliss’ – ‘Eternal *hate* made me too’ – granted of course that a truth may rightly stand over the gate to a lie! For *what* is the bliss of that paradise?

We could have quickly surmised it; but it is better that we turn to Thomas Aquinas,[77] the great teacher and saint, whose authority in such matters is not to be questioned. 'Beati in regno celesti', says he, as gently as a lamb, 'videbunt paenas damnatorum, *ut beatitudo illis magis complaceat*'.[78] Or, if we should wish to hear a more forceful voice, a declaration from the mouth of a triumphant father of the Church,[79] who warned his disciples against the cruel delights of the public spectacles – But why? Faith offers us much more, – says he, *De Spectaculis*, Chs. 29ff. – *something much stronger*; thanks to the Redemption, joys of quite another kind are ours for the asking; instead of athletes we have our martyrs; we wish for blood, well, we have the blood of Christ – but what then awaits us on the day of his return, of his triumph? This enraptured visionary continues: 'At enim supersunt alia spectacular, ille ultimus et perpetuus judicii dies, ille nationibus insperatus, ille derisus, cum tanta saeculi vetustas et tot ejus nativitates uno igne haurientur. Quae tunc spectaculi latitudo! *Quid admirer! Quid rideam! Ubi gaudeam! Ubi exultem*, spectans tot et tantos reges, qui in coelum recepti nuntiabantur, cum ipso Jove et ipsis suis testibus in imis tenebris congemescentes! Item praesides (the provincial governors) persecutores dominici nominis saevioribus quam ipsi flammis saevierunt insultantibus contra Christianos liquescentes! Quos praeterea sapientes illos philosophos coram discipulis suis una conflagrantibus erubescentes, quibus nihil ad deum pertinere suadebant, quibus animas aut nullas aut non in pristine corpora redituras affirmabant! Etiam poëtàs non ad Rhadamanti nec ad Minois,[80] sed ad inopinati Christi tribunal palpitantes! Tunc magis tragoedi audiendi, magis scilicet vocales (with a better voice, even angry cries) in sua propria calamitate; tunc histriones

cognoscendi, solutiores multo per ignem; tunc spectandus auriga in flammea rota totus rubens, tunc xystici contemplandi non in gymnasiis, sed in igne jaculati, nisi quod ne tunc quidem illos velim vivos,[81] ut qui malim ad eos potius conspectum *insatiabilem* conferre, qui in dominum desaevierunt. “Hic est ille, dicam, fabri aut quaestuariae filis (as is shown by the whole of the following, and in particular by this well-known description of the mother of Jesus from the Talmud,[82] Tertullian is henceforth referring to the Jews), sabbati destructor, Samarites et daemonium habens.[83] Hic est, quem a Juda redemistis,[84] hic est ille arundine et colaphis diverberatus, sputamentis dedecoratus, felle et aceto potatus. Hic est, quem clam discentes subripuerunt, ut resurrexisse dicatur vel hortulanus detraxit, ne lactucae suae frequentia commeantium laederentur.” Ut talia spectes, *ut talibus exultes*, quis tibi praetor aut consul aut quaestor aut sacerdos de sua liberalitate praestabit? Et tamen haec jam habemus quodammodo *per fidem* spiritu imaginante repraesentata. Ceterum qualia illa sunt, quae nec oculus vidit nec auris audivit nec in cor hominis ascenderunt? (1. Cor. 2:9.) Credo circo et utraque cavea (first and fourth rank, or, according to others, the comic and the tragic stage) et omni stadio gratiora.’[85] *Per fidem*:[86] so it is written.

16

Let us come to a conclusion. The two *opposing* values, ‘Good and Bad’, ‘Good and Evil’, have been engaged in a fearsome struggle for thousands of years, and even though the latter value has certainly been in the ascendancy for a long time, there are arenas where the victor remains undetermined. It can be said that, even as the ferocity of

the battle reaches new heights, it grows deeper, more psychological; and so nowadays there is perhaps nothing more clearly indicative of the '*higher man*', of the more intellectual man, than to be in that sense ambivalent, and to serve a battleground for those two opponents.

The emblem of this struggle, inscribed indelibly for time immemorial, is 'Rome against Judaea, Judaea against Rome'. Hitherto there has been no event greater than *this* fight, *this* question, *this* deadly antagonism. Rome found in the Jew the incarnation of the unnatural, the monstrous antithesis of the natural, and in Rome the Jew was regarded as though '*convicted* of hatred of the whole human race';[87] and rightly so, in so far as it is right to connect the well-being and the future of the human race with the absolute supremacy of aristocratic values, of Roman values.

What, conversely, did the Jews feel against Rome? One can surmise the answer – after all there are a thousand signs – but it is sufficient to consider the Apocalypse of John,[88] the vilest of all the written outbursts ever to have had revenge as its motive. (Nor should one underestimate the perfect consistency of the Christian instinct, when upon this very book of hate it inscribed the name of the Disciple of Love, the same disciple to whom it attributed that impassioned and ecstatic Gospel – therein lies a particle of truth, however much literary forgery may have been necessary for this purpose.)[89] The Romans were strong and aristocratic; a nation stronger and more aristocratic has never existed here on earth, has never even been dreamt of; every Roman relic, every Roman inscription enraptures us, so long as we can glean *what* it is that writes the inscription. The Jews, conversely, were a priestly nation of resentment *par excellence*, possessing a unique genius for morality that would prove popular among the peasants; just

compare the nations with analogous gifts, such as the Chinese or the Germans, to the Jews, to realize what is first-rate, and what is fifth-rate.

Which of them has been *victorious* in the end: Rome or Judaea? There is not a shadow of doubt; just consider before whom in Rome itself you now genuflect, as though before the quintessence of all the supreme values – and not only in Rome, but over almost half the world, everywhere where man has been tamed or is willing to be tamed – to *three Jews*, as we know, and *one Jewess* (to Jesus of Nazareth, to Peter the fisherman, to Paul the carpet-weaver, and to the mother of the aforesaid Jesus, named Mary). This is very remarkable: Rome is undoubtedly defeated.

At any rate, there took place in the Renaissance a brilliantly sinister revival of the classical ideal, of the aristocratic judgement of all things: Rome herself stirred, like a man awakened from a trance, under the force of the new Judaic Rome that had been built over her, which presented the appearance of an ecumenical synagogue and was called the ‘Church’; but immediately Judaea triumphed again, thanks to that fundamentally popular (German and English) movement born of resentment that is called the Reformation, and taking also into account its inevitable corollary, the restoration of the Church – the restoration also of the ancient sepulchral silence of classical Rome.

In a sense that was even more crucial and even more profound, Judaea proved yet once more victorious over the classical ideal in the French Revolution; the last political aristocracy that existed in Europe, that of the *French* in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, collapsed in the conflict with the instincts of a resentful populace – never had the world heard greater jubilation or witnessed more unrestrained exuberance! Indeed, the most monstrous and

unexpected phenomenon took place in the midst of it: the ancient ideal itself swept before the eyes and conscience of humanity with all its *life* and with unheard-of splendour, and in opposition to resentment's lying war-cry of *the prerogative of the many*, in opposition to man's desire for baseness, abasement, equality, regression and decline, there rang out once again, stronger, simpler, more penetrating than ever, the terrible and enchanting counter-war-cry of *the prerogative of the few*! Like a final signpost to *another* path, Napoleon[90] appeared, the most singular, the most anachronistic man that ever existed, and in him the incarnate problem of the aristocratic ideal in itself – consider well *what* a problem it is: Napoleon, that synthesis of the *inhuman* and the *superhuman*.

17

Was it over then? Was that greatest of all conflicts of ideals thereby relegated *ad acta*[91] for all time? Or only postponed, postponed for a long time?

Must there not take place at some time or other a much more awful flaring-up of the old conflagration, far longer in preparation? Further! Should not one wish *that* with all one's strength? Even want it? Even demand it?

Whoever at this juncture begins, like my readers, to reflect, to think further, will have difficulty in coming quickly to a conclusion – which is reason enough for me to come to a conclusion myself, taking it for granted that for some time past what I *intend* has been sufficiently clear, what I intend exactly by that dangerous motto which is inscribed on the body of my last book: *Beyond Good and Evil* – at any rate that is *not* the same as 'Beyond Good and Bad'.

Note – I shall avail myself of the opportunity offered by this treatise to express, openly and formally, a wish which up to the present has only been expressed on occasion, in conversations with scholars, namely, that some faculty of philosophy should promote the further study of the *history of morals*, by sponsoring a series of prize essays – perhaps this book may serve to give an impetus in this direction. With regard to such a possibility, the following question deserves consideration. It merits the attention of philologists and historians as well as of those who are professional philosophers. The question is:

'What is revealed, regarding the history of the evolution of moral ideas, by philology, and especially by etymological investigation?'

– On the other hand, it is, of course, equally necessary to arouse the interest of physiologists and doctors in these problems (of the *value* of the judgements which have prevailed up to the present); in this connection the professional philosophers may be trusted to act as the spokesmen and intermediaries in these particular instances, after, of course, they have quite succeeded in transforming the relationship between philosophy and physiology and medicine, which has long been one marked by guarded attitudes and mistrust, into one of cordial and fruitful cooperation. In point of fact, all moral judgements, all the 'thou shalts' known to history and ethnology, need primarily a *physiological*, rather than a psychological, elucidation and interpretation; but none has yet received a critical examination by medical science. The question, 'What is the *value* of this or that moral judgement or system of "morality"?' must be asked from various perspectives. For instance, the question of 'valuable for *what*?' can never be analysed too carefully. That, for instance, which would evidently have value in promoting in a race the greatest possible longevity (or in increasing its adaptability to a specific climate, or in maintaining the greatest number) would have nothing like the same value if it were a question of evolving a stronger species. In gauging values, the good of the majority and the good of the minority are opposed standpoints; we leave it to the naivety of English biologists[92] to regard the former standpoint as *intrinsically* superior. *All* the sciences will now have to pave the way for the future task of the philosopher; this task being understood to mean that he must solve *the problem of value*, that he must determine *the hierarchy of values*.

SECOND ESSAY

‘Guilt’, ‘Bad Conscience’ and Related Matters

1

The breeding of an animal that *is free to make promises* – is not this precisely the paradoxical task which nature has set for itself *in regard to* man? Is not this the essential problem of man?

The fact that this problem has been to a great extent solved, must appear all the more astonishing to one who can fully appreciate the power of *forgetfulness* which works against it. Forgetfulness is no mere *vis inertiæ*,[1] as the superficial intellect believes; it is rather an inhibitory reaction, active and, in the strictest sense of the word, positive – which prevents anything more from entering into our consciousness during the process of digesting that which we have already experienced (which might be called psychological ‘ingestion’) than occurs during the whole extraordinarily complex process through which we are physically nourished, which is known as ‘assimilation’. The temporary shutting of the doors and windows of consciousness, the relief from the din and struggle accompanying the activity of the organs that serve us, whether working in mutual cooperation or antagonism; a little quiet, a little *tabula rasa*[2] of the consciousness, so as to

make room again for the new, and above all for the nobler functions and functionaries, room for government, foresight, predetermination (for our organism is established upon oligarchic principles) – this is the benefit, as I have said, of active forgetfulness, which is a sentinel and nurse of psychological order, tranquillity, etiquette; and this shows at once why it is that there can exist no joy, no hope, no pride, no real *present*, without forgetfulness.[3] The man in whom this inhibitory mechanism is impaired is to be compared to a dyspeptic, and it is something more than a comparison – he cannot 'deal with' anything.

But this very animal who finds it necessary to be forgetful, in whom, in fact, forgetting represents a force and a form of *robust* health, has developed a contrary force – memory – with whose help forgetfulness is, in certain instances, overcome – namely, where promises have to be made; so that it is by no means a mere passive inability to get rid of an impression once it has been made, nor merely the indigestion occasioned by a pledge that one cannot escape, but an *active refusal* to get rid of it, a continuing and a wish to continue what has once been willed, an actual *memory of the will*; so that between the original 'I will', 'I shall do', and the actual discharge of the will, its *act*, we can easily interpose a world of new strange phenomena, circumstances, veritable volitions, without snapping this long chain of the will. But what is the underlying hypothesis of all this? To be able to exert control over the future in this way, man must first learn to distinguish between necessary and accidental phenomena, to think causally, to see the distant future as though it were the present and to anticipate it, to establish with certainty what is the end, and what is the means to that end; above all, to reckon, to have power to calculate – how thoroughly must man have first

become *reliable*, *disciplined*, *predictable*, even for himself and his own conception of himself, so that, like a man making a promise, he could warrant himself *for the future*!

2

This is precisely what constitutes the long history of the origin of *responsibility*. That task of breeding an animal which is free to make promises includes, as we have already grasped, as its condition and preliminary, the more immediate task of first *making* man to a certain extent reliable, uniform, like among his like, regular and consequently predictable. The enormous effort connected with what I have called the 'morality of custom' (see *The Dawn*, sections 9, 14 and 16), the actual work of man on himself during the greatest portion of the duration of the human race, his whole *prehistoric* enterprise, finds its meaning, its great justification (in spite of all its innate harshness, despotism, stupidity and idiocy) in this fact: man, with the help of the morality of customs and of social constraints, was *made genuinely predictable*.

If, however, we imagine ourselves placed at the end of this colossal process, at the point where the tree finally matures its fruits, when society and its morality of custom finally bring to light that to which it was only the *means*, then we find the *sovereign individual* as the ripest fruit on its tree, unique, freed from the morality of custom, the autonomous 'super-moral' individual (for 'autonomous' and 'moral' are mutually exclusive terms) – in short, the man of personal, enduring and independent will, *free to promise* – and we find in him a proud consciousness (pulsing in every fibre), of *what* has been at last achieved and become a vital part of him, a genuine consciousness of power and freedom,

a feeling of human perfection in general. And this man who has now achieved freedom, who is really *free* to promise, this master of the *free* will, this sovereign – how is it possible for him not to know how great is his superiority over everyone who is not free to make promises, or of being his own warrant; how great is the trust, the awe, the respect that he arouses – he '*deserves*' all three – and how can he not know that with this mastery over himself he is necessarily also given the mastery over circumstances, over nature, over all creatures with weaker wills, less reliable characters? The 'free' man, the possessor of unwavering determination, unbreakable will, finds therein his *standard of value*; regarding the others from his perspective, he honours or despises them; and just as he must honour his peers, the strong and the reliable (those who are *free* to make promises) – that is, everyone who promises like a sovereign, with discretion, reluctantly, selectively and cautiously, who is sparing with his trust but confers *honour* to another by the very fact of trusting, who gives his word as something that can be relied on, because he knows himself to be strong enough to keep it even in the event of disaster, even in the 'face of fate' – so must he have the heel of his boot ready for the annoying little pests who make promises when they have no business doing so, and his rod ready for the liar who breaks his word the very moment he utters it. The pride in his extraordinary privilege of *responsibility*, the consciousness of this rare freedom, of this power over himself and over fortune, has penetrated to his innermost depths, and has become an instinct, a dominating instinct – what shall he call it, this dominating instinct, if he needs to have a word for it? But there is no doubt about it – the sovereign man calls it his *conscience* …

His conscience? … It is at once obvious that the notion ‘conscience’, which is here seen in its supreme, almost disquieting, manifestation, should already have behind it a long history and evolution of form. To be responsible for oneself, with all due pride, and thus at the same time *to be free to affirm oneself* – that is, as I have already said, a ripe fruit, but also a *late* fruit! – how long must this fruit have hung sour and bitter on the tree! And for an even longer period there was not a glimpse of such a fruit to be had – no one had ventured to promise it, though everything on the tree was certainly ready for it, and everything was maturing for that very consummation!

‘How is a memory to be made for the savage? How is any lasting impression to be made upon this savage mind, one so primitive, dull and utterly incapable of grasping or retaining anything?’

As one may imagine, there were no easy answers or lenient measures to solve this ancient problem; there is perhaps nothing more awful, more sinister in the early history of man than his *system of mnemonics*. ‘Something must be burned in so as to remain in his memory; only that which never stops *hurting* will remain in his memory.’ This is a principle of the oldest (unfortunately also the most enduring) psychology in the world. It might even be said that wherever solemnity, mysterious rituals and sombre hues are found in the lives of the men and of nations of the world, there is still some *active* remnant of that horror which once invariably accompanied all promises, pledges and obligations. The past, the cruel, hard past, breathes in us and rears up in us again, when we become ‘solemn’. Blood, torment and sacrifice were necessary for man to create

memory in himself; the most dreadful sacrifices and forfeitures (among them the sacrifice of the first-born), the most loathsome mutilations (for instance, castration), the cruellest rituals of all the religious cults (for all religions are in essence nothing but systematic cruelty) – all these things originate from that instinct which found its most potent mnemonic to be the infliction of pain.

In a certain sense the whole of asceticism is to be ascribed to this; a few ideas must be made indelible, inescapable, unforgettable, 'fixed', with the object of hypnotizing the whole nervous system and intellect with these 'fixed ideas' – and the ascetic practices and ways of life are means of freeing those ideas from the competition of all other ideas so as to make them 'unforgettable'. The poorer the memory of man has been, the more dreadful have been his practices and customs; the severity of the penal laws in particular reveals the extent of man's difficulty in conquering forgetfulness, and in keeping a few primitive demands of social intercourse *ever present* in the minds of those who were the slaves of every fleeting emotion and desire.

We Germans certainly do not regard ourselves as especially cruel and hard-hearted, still less as frivolous or irresponsible; but one has only to examine our old penal ordinances to realize what enormous effort it takes to breed a 'nation of thinkers' (I mean: *the* European nation whose members now are so reliable, serious, bland and sober, the nation which has on the strength of these traits a right to breed every kind of European mandarin). These Germans employed the most dreadful methods to create a memory for themselves, to enable them to master their deeply rooted lower instincts and the crude brutality of those instincts; think of the old German punishments, for instance,

stoning (in the sagas, the millstone falls on the head of the guilty man), breaking on the wheel (a most original invention and a splendid example of German ingenuity in devising punishment!), dart-throwing, tearing, or trampling by horses (‘quartering’), boiling the criminal in oil or wine (still prevalent in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries), the highly popular flaying (‘slicing flesh into strips’), cutting the flesh out of the breast; and bathing the miscreant with honey and then leaving him exposed to the flies under a blazing sun. It was by the help of such images and precedents that man eventually kept in his memory five or six ‘I will nots’ about which he has given his *promise*, so as to be able to enjoy the advantages of society – and then look! With the help of this kind of memory man eventually acquired ‘reason’! Ah, reason, solemnity, mastery over the emotions, this whole gloomy, dismal thing which is called reflection, all the privileges and splendour of humanity; how dear the price they have exacted! How much blood and cruelty lies at the foundation of all ‘good things’![4]

4

But how is it that that other ‘dreary business’, the consciousness of guilt, the ‘bad conscience’, came into the world? And it is here that we turn back to our genealogists of morals. For the second time I say – or have I not said it yet? – that they are worth nothing. All they possess is merely their own limited ‘modern’ experience; they have no knowledge of the past, and no wish to know it; still less can they claim an instinct for history, a power of ‘second sight’ (so necessary in this case) – and despite this they endeavour to write the history of morals. It stands to reason that this must inevitably produce results which are removed

from the truth by something more than a respectful distance. Have these genealogists of morals ever allowed themselves to have even the vaguest notion, for instance, that the moral concept of ‘guilt’ originates from the very material concept of ‘obligation’?[5] Or that punishment developed as a *retaliation* absolutely independently of any presumption of the freedom of the will or the lack thereof? – And this to such an extent that attaining a *high* degree of civilization was first necessary before the savage could begin to make those much more primitive distinctions among the concepts such as ‘intentional’, ‘negligent’, ‘accidental’, ‘responsible’ and their contraries, and apply them in the assessing of punishment. That thought – ‘the miscreant deserves punishment *because* he might have acted otherwise’, in spite of the fact that it now seems so trite, obvious, natural and inevitable, and that it has had to serve as an illustration of the way in which the sentiment of justice appeared on earth, is in point of fact an exceedingly recent, even refined form of human judgement and inference; to assign this thought to the beginnings of human cultural development is simply a clumsy violation of the principles of primitive psychology. Throughout the greater part of human history, punishment was *never* based upon the responsibility of the miscreant for his action, and it was *never* presumed that only the guilty should be punished – on the contrary, punishment was inflicted then for the same reason that parents punish their children now, out of anger at an injury that they have suffered, an anger which is directed upon the one who has caused the injury – but this anger is restrained and transformed through the idea that every injury has some sort of *equivalent* price, which can be paid as a form of compensation, even if it be nothing but inflicting *pain* upon the one who has caused the injury. From

what source has this ancient, deep-rooted and now perhaps ineradicable idea drawn its strength, this idea of an equivalence between injury and pain? I have already revealed its origin, in the contractual relationship between *creditor* and *debtor*, which is as old as the existence of 'legal rights', and which in turn refers back to the primary forms of purchase, sale, barter and trade.

5

As might be expected from our previous observations, contemplating these contractual relationships naturally excites a great deal of suspicion and antipathy towards the primitive society which made or sanctioned them. In this very society *promises* will be made; in this very society the object is to *provide the promise-maker with a memory*; in this very society, as we may suspect, there will be full scope for harshness, cruelty and pain. In order to lend credence to his promise of repayment, in order to give a guarantee of the earnestness and sanctity of his promise, in order to impress upon his own conscience the duty, the solemn duty, of repayment, the 'debtor' will pledge something that he still possesses to meet the contingency of his failure to pay his creditor, something that he still has in his power, for instance, his life or his wife, or his freedom, or his body (or, in certain highly religious cultures, his salvation, his soul's welfare or even his peace in the grave, as in Egypt, where the corpse of the debtor found no rest from the creditor even in the grave – of course, from the Egyptian standpoint this peace was a matter of particular importance). But most especially the creditor was entitled to inflict upon the person of the debtor all manner of humiliation and torture – including the privilege of cutting off from his body an

amount of flesh adjudged proportionate to the magnitude of the debt; from an early date there were schedules of values – frequently horrible in their minuteness and detail – *legally* sanctioned schedules of precise values for individual limbs and parts of the body. I regard it as definite progress, as a proof of a freer, less vindictive and *more Roman* conception of law, when the Roman Code of the Twelve Tables[6] decreed that it was immaterial how much or how little the creditors in such a contingency cut off, '*si plus minusve secuerunt, ne fraude esto*'.[7]

Let us try to make the logic of this entire matter of compensation clear; it is strange enough. The equivalence consists in this: instead of an advantage directly compensatory of his injury (that is, instead of an equalization in money, property or some kind of chattel), the creditor is granted by way of repayment and compensation a certain *pleasure*, a *sense of satisfaction* – the satisfaction of being able to wield, without a scruple, his power over one who is powerless, the delight '*de faire le mal pour le plaisir de la faire*',[8] the delight in sheer violation; and the lower, the more abject the creditor is in the social scale, the more this delight will be cherished, and is quite apt to have the effect of the most delicious dainty, even seem the foretaste of a higher social position. In punishing the 'debtor', the creditor shares in the *rights of the masters*. At last he too, for once, enjoys the edifying feeling of being given free rein to despise and ill-treat a creature – as an 'inferior' – or at any rate of *seeing* him being despised and ill-treated, when the actual power of punishment, the administration of punishment, has already been transferred to the 'authorities'. The compensation consequently consists of a claim on cruelty and a right to draw upon it.

It is then in *this* sphere of contracts and legal obligations that we find the crucible of moral concepts such as ‘guilt’, ‘conscience’, ‘duty’, the ‘sacredness of duty’ – their beginnings, like the beginnings of all great things in this world, are drenched with blood, through and through. And should we not add that these moral concepts have never been fully purged of the scent of blood and torture? (Not even in old Kant: the categorical imperative[9] fairly reeks of cruelty …) It was in this sphere likewise that there first was formed that sinister and perhaps now indissoluble association of the ideas of ‘guilt’ and ‘suffering’. To put the question yet again, how can suffering be considered a compensation for ‘debts’? – It is because the *infliction* of suffering produces supreme pleasure, because the injured party will receive in exchange for his loss (including his vexation at his loss) an extraordinary reward: the pleasure of *inflicting* suffering – a real *feast*, something that, as I have said, was all the more appreciated the greater the difference in rank and social status of the creditor. These observations are purely conjectural; for, apart from the painful nature of the task, it is hard to plumb such profound depths; the clumsy introduction of the idea of ‘revenge’ as a connecting link simply hides and obscures the view instead of rendering it clearer (revenge itself simply leads back again to the identical problem: ‘How can the infliction of suffering be a source of satisfaction?’).

The extent to which *cruelty* constituted the great joy and delight of ancient man and was part of all his pleasures, is, it seems to me, something truly repugnant to the delicate sensibility – even more, the Tartuffery – of domestic animals (that is, modern men, ourselves); conversely, how great was

the naivety and innocence with which ancient man manifested his need for cruelty, when he regarded ‘disinterested malice’ (or, to use Spinoza’s expression, the *sympathia malevolens*)[10] as fundamental, as a *normal characteristic* of man – as consequently something to which the conscience says a hearty *yes*. The more observant will perhaps notice numerous remnants of this most ancient and thorough human delight; in *Beyond Good and Evil*, section 229 (and even earlier, in *The Dawn*, sections 18, 77, 113), I have warned of the continually growing sublimation and apotheosis of cruelty, which pervades the whole history of higher civilization (and in the larger sense even constitutes it). At any rate the time is not so long past when it was impossible to conceive of royal weddings and grand public festivals without executions, tortures or perhaps an *auto-da-fé*;[11] and not so long ago there was hardly an aristocratic household without some miserable creature whose lot it was to serve as a butt for cruel and malicious taunting. (The reader will perhaps remember Don Quixote at the court of the Duchess;[12] nowadays *Don Quixote* leaves a bitter taste in the mouth; we almost wince in reading it, a fact which would appear very strange and very incomprehensible to the author and his contemporaries – they relished the book and read it with great amusement, without self-reproach, and almost died laughing at it.) To witness suffering does one good, to *inflict* suffering does one even more good – this is a harsh sentiment, but nonetheless a fundamental one, ancient, strong and human, all-too-human,[13] one, moreover, which perhaps even the apes would share, for it is said that in inventing bizarre cruelties they anticipated man, and, as it were, played the ‘prelude’ to humanity. Without cruelty, no feast: this is what the most ancient and greatest part of

human history teaches – and in punishment too is there so much of the *festive*!

7

Entertaining these thoughts, as I do, let me say in passing that I am deeply opposed to adding new grist to the pessimist's mill of *ennui*. On the contrary, it should be shown specifically that, at the time when mankind was not yet ashamed of its cruelty, life in the world was brighter, more cheerful, than it is nowadays, when pessimists abound. The gloom hanging over man has always increased as man has grown more ashamed of his *own race*. The weary, pessimistic outlook, doubt and worry in the face of life's riddle, the icy 'no' born of disgusted *ennui* – these are not the characteristics of the *most malevolent* age of the human race; rather, they first see the light of day as the swamp-plants which they are, when the swamp in which alone they flourish comes into existence – the swamp of pathological coddling and moralizing which taught the animal 'man' to be ashamed of all his instincts. On the way to becoming an 'angel' (I abstain from using in this connection a harsher word) man has developed that dyspeptic stomach and coated tongue which have made not only the joy and innocence of the animal repugnant to him, but also life itself – so that sometimes he holds his nose, and, like Pope Innocent the Third, makes a blacklist of his own horrors ('impure conception, loathsome manner of nourishment in the womb, vileness of the matter from which man develops, awful stench, secretion of saliva, urine and excrement').[14]

Nowadays, when suffering is always marshalled out as the prime argument *against* life, as its most problematic aspect,

it is well to remember the times when everything was judged on converse principles, because the *infliction* of suffering was something which people regarded as indispensable, and they saw in it magic of the first rank, a veritable enticement *to* life. Perhaps in those days (this is to comfort the squeamish) pain did not hurt so much as it does nowadays; any physician who has treated Negroes (taking them as representative of prehistoric man) suffering from severe internal inflammations which would bring a European, even one of the stoutest constitution, almost to despair, would be in a position to come to this conclusion. Pain does *not* have the same effect with Negroes.[15] (The curve of human susceptibility to pain seems indeed to sink quite suddenly, in a most extraordinary fashion, as soon as we go beyond the first ten thousand or ten million of the cultural *elite*, and I personally have no doubt that, by comparison with *one* painful night experienced by a single hysterical bluestocking, the collective suffering of all the animals which have been put to the knife in the name of scientific experimentation is simply negligible.)[16] We may perhaps be allowed to admit the possibility that the pleasure in cruelty has not necessarily become extinct; all that it needed, in view of our greater sensitivity to pain today, was to undergo a certain sublimation and subtilization; it had to be translated to the imaginative and psychological plane, and be christened anew with euphemisms that would not arouse the suspicion of even the most delicate and hypocritical conscience as to their real nature (‘tragic pity’ is one of these euphemisms; another is ‘*les nostalgies de la croix*’).[17]

What really raises one’s indignation against suffering is not suffering itself, but the *senselessness* of it all. There existed, however, neither in Christianity, which interpreted

suffering as a vast mysterious apparatus for salvation, nor in the beliefs of the naive ancient man, who knew how to interpret suffering only from the standpoint of the spectator or from the one who is the cause of the suffering, any such thing as *senseless* suffering. In order to dispose of the possibility of there being any concealed, undiscovered and unobserved suffering in the world, man was more or less obliged to invent gods and a hierarchy of intermediate beings, beings which can visit hidden places, can see even in the dark and never miss the opportunity to witness an interesting and painful spectacle, if it can be helped. It was by means of such inventions that life got to learn the trick, which has become part of its stock-in-trade, the trick of self-justification, of the justification of its 'evil'; nowadays this would perhaps require resorting to other expedients (for instance, posing life as a riddle, life as a problem of knowledge). 'Any evil is justified if a god finds edification at the sight of it'; so rang the primitive logic of feeling – but was this indeed true of *only* the most primitive period? The gods were believed to look favourably upon *cruel* spectacles – oh, how far has this primeval concept penetrated into our modern European civilized culture! Perhaps Calvin and Luther[18] should be consulted on this matter. It is certain, at any rate, that even the *Greeks* knew no more piquant seasoning for the happiness of their gods than the joys of cruelty. How do you think Homer's gods looked down upon the destinies of men? What is the ultimate meaning of the Trojan War and other such horrible tragedies? It is impossible to entertain any doubt on the point: they were intended as *festivals* for the gods, and as festivals for the poets as well,[19] in so far as the poet is of a more 'divine' breed than other men. It was in just this same way that at a later date the moral philosophers of Greece conceived the

eyes of God as still looking down on the moral struggle, the heroism and the self-torment of the virtuous; the ‘Heracles of duty’ was on a stage, and was conscious of the fact; virtue without witnesses was something quite unthinkable for this nation of actors. Might not that philosophic invention, so audacious and so fateful, which was then absolutely new to Europe, the invention of ‘free will’, of the absolute unpredictability of man in matters of Good and Evil, simply have been made for the specific purpose of justifying the notion that the interest of the gods in humanity and human virtue was *inexhaustible*? There must never be any dearth of really new, really novel and exciting situations, plots, catastrophes on the stage of this world. Events and actions in a world thought out on completely deterministic lines would be easily guessed by the gods, and such a world would consequently soon bore them – sufficient reason for these *friends of the gods*, the philosophers, not to impose such a deterministic world upon their gods! In antiquity we find everywhere tender regard for the ‘spectator’, being that the ancient world is an essentially public, essentially visible world, one which could not conceive of happiness without spectacles and festivals – and as has already been said, even in severe *punishment* there is so much which is festive!

8

The feeling of guilt, of personal obligation (to return to our inquiry), as we saw, has its origin in the oldest and most basic personal relationship that there is, the relationship between buyer and seller, between creditor and debtor; here it was that individuals first met one another and *measured themselves* against one another. There has not

yet been found a grade of civilization so low as not to manifest some form of this relationship. Establishing prices, assessing values, determining equivalents, trading – all this preoccupied the primal thoughts of man to such an extent that in a certain sense it *constituted* thinking itself; it was here that cunning was first bred, it was here in *this* sphere that we can perhaps find the earliest traces of human pride, of man's feeling of superiority over other animals. Perhaps our German word 'Mensch' (manas)[20] still expresses just a little of *this* pride; man denoted himself as the being who measures values, who values and measures, as the 'judging' animal *par excellence*.

Buying and selling, together with their attendant psychological phenomena, are older than the origins of any form of social organization and union; it is rather from the most rudimentary form of individual right that the budding consciousness of exchange, commerce, debt, right, obligation, compensation was first *transferred* to the rudest and most elementary of the social complexes (in their relation to similar complexes), the habit of comparing force with force, together with that of measuring, of calculating. Man cannot view it otherwise; and with that single-minded, rude consistency characteristic of ancient thought, he soon arrived at the gross generalization, 'everything has its price, there is *nothing* that cannot be bought', the oldest and most naive moral canon of *justice*, the beginning of all 'kindness', of all 'equity', of all 'goodwill', of all 'objectivity' in the world. Justice in this initial phase consists in the manifestation of goodwill among people possessing nearly equal power, who come to terms with one another, who come to an 'understanding' once again by means of a settlement – and with regard to the less powerful, justice *compels* them to agree among themselves to a settlement.

Measured by the standard of a primeval culture (one which still exists or could exist again at any time), the community stands to its members in that important relationship of creditor to debtor. Men live in a community, and enjoy its advantages (and what advantages! We occasionally underestimate them nowadays); men live protected, sheltered, in peace and comfort, secure from the many sorts of dangers to which those *outside* the community are susceptible – a German understands the original meaning of 'Elend' (*êlend*)[21] – because they have entered into pledges and obligations to the community out of fear of these very dangers. What happens when *these pledges are no longer observed?* The community (as a dissatisfied creditor), will exact payment in the best way it knows how, of this you can be certain. In this case the question of the direct damage done by the offender is quite subsidiary; quite apart from this, the criminal is above all someone who has broken his word[22] and abrogated his covenant *with the group*, thus forfeiting all the advantages and benefits of communal life in which up to that time he had participated. The criminal is a 'debtor' who not only fails to remunerate his benefactors for the advances and advantages that have been granted to him, but even sets out to attack his benefactor; consequently, as is reasonable, he is henceforth not only deprived of all these advantages and benefits – he is in addition reminded of the *importance of those benefits*. The anger of the disappointed creditor, the community, returns him to the wild and brutish conditions from which he was previously isolated; the community repudiates him – and now he is completely subject to the community's animosity. Punishment on this plane of civilization simply follows the

example of the customary treatment of an enemy, one who is despised, disarmed and conquered, and who is not only deprived of any rights and protection, but is not even granted mercy; so we have the martial law and triumphant festival of the *vae victis* [23] in all its mercilessness and cruelty. This shows why war itself (including the sacrificial cult of war) has produced all the *forms* under which punishment has manifested itself in history.

10

As it grows more powerful, the community tends to take the offences of the individual less seriously, because they are now regarded as being much less radical and threatening to the communal existence than in the past; the offender is no longer assaulted and expelled, the community can no longer vent its unbridled wrath upon him in the accustomed way – on the contrary, from this time forward the miscreant is carefully shielded and protected by the community against popular indignation, and particularly against the indignation of those directly injured. As the penal code develops, the following characteristics become more and more clearly marked: attempts to appease those directly affected by the misdeed through compromise, which serves to localize and contain the disturbance, and thus helps to avert general unrest; attempts to induce the offender to make amends and for all parties to settle the whole matter (*compositio*);[24] above all, the increasingly definite desire to treat every offence as in a certain degree capable of *being discharged or paid off*, and consequently, at any rate up to a certain point, to *isolate* the offender from his act. As the power and the self-knowledge of a community increases, the penal code in turn becomes proportionately more lenient;

conversely, if the community is weakened or feels threatened, then harsher penalties are enacted. The creditor has always become more humane as he has grown richer; ultimately, the extent of injury which he can endure without really suffering becomes the criterion of his *wealth*. It is possible to conceive of a society blessed with so great a *consciousness of its own power* as to indulge in the most aristocratic luxury of letting malefactors act with *impunity*. 'What do my parasites matter to me?' some might say. 'Let them live and flourish! I am strong enough for it' … Justice which began with the maxim, 'Everything can be paid off, everything must be paid off,' ends with connivance at the escape of those who cannot pay to escape – it ends, like every good thing on earth, by *destroying itself*. The self-destruction of Justice: we know the pretty name it calls itself – *Clemency*! It remains, as is obvious, the privilege of the strongest, better still, their way of going beyond the law.[25]

11

Let me here criticize the attempts that have lately been made to seek the origin of justice elsewhere – namely, in resentment. Let me whisper a word in the ear of the psychologists, if we may assume that they would be willing to study resentment itself at close quarters: this plant produces its loveliest blossoms among our anarchists and anti-Semites;[26] it is a hidden flower, as it has always been, like the violet, though with quite a different scent. As like must always come from like, it will not surprise us that it is precisely in these circles that we see the birth of endeavours (it is their old birthplace – compare above, First Essay, Section 14), to dignify *vengeance* by giving it the name of *justice* (as though justice were merely a further

refinement of the sensibility to injury), and thus, together with vengeance, to rehabilitate, *ex post facto*, all of the *reactive emotions*. To this last endeavour, though, I object least of all. It even seems to me to be *meritorious* in relation to the whole problem of biology (for in this, regarded as a *science*, the importance of these emotions has up to the present been underestimated). That to which I wish to call attention is merely that this new nuance of scientific objectivity (which now acknowledges hatred, envy, mistrust, jealousy, suspicion, rancour, revenge) is developing from the spirit of resentment itself. This scientific 'objectivity' yields immediately to prejudice, and assumes a tone of deadly animosity, however, as soon as another group of emotions must be dealt with, emotions which in my opinion are of a much higher biological significance than these reactive emotions, and which consequently have a paramount claim to *scientific* appreciation: I mean the genuinely *active* emotions, such as personal ambition, greed and so forth. (E. Dühring,[27] *Value of Life*; *Course of Philosophy* and *passim*.)

So much against this tendency in general, but as for the particular proposition of Dühring's that the origin of justice is to be found in the domain of reactive emotions, our fondness for truth compels us to propose precisely the reverse: that the *last* domain conquered by the spirit of justice is that of reactive emotion! If the just man remains just (and not merely cold, moderate, reserved, indifferent, for being just is always a *positive* action), even to one who has done something to hurt him; if, in spite of the strong provocation of personal insult, contempt and calumny, the lofty and unclouded objectivity of the just and *critical* eye (whose glance is penetrating, yet gentle) is maintained, why then we have an instance of sheer perfection, of the highest

form of mastery on earth (self-control) – something, in fact, which it would not be wise to expect, and which should not at any rate be too easily *believed*. Speaking generally, there is no doubt but that for even the most reasonable, even-handed individuals it requires only a little hostility, malice or insinuation to make them lose their composure, equanimity and objectivity. The active man, the aggressive, ambitious man is still a hundred paces nearer to justice than the man who merely reacts; he certainly has no need to resort to making false and biased judgements of his object, something which the reactive man must do. It is, in point of fact, for this reason that the aggressive man, being stronger, bolder, more aristocratic, has at all times enjoyed the *freer* outlook, the *clearer* conscience. On the other hand, we can easily surmise who has the invention of the 'bad conscience' on his conscience – it is the resentful man!

Finally, let man look at himself in history. In what sphere up to the present has the whole administration of law, the actual need for law, been found? Perhaps in the sphere of the reactive man? Not at all; rather in that of the active, strong, spontaneous, aggressive man. Surely to the displeasure of the above-mentioned agitator (who himself makes this confession, 'the theory of revenge has run through all my works and endeavours like the red thread of justice'),[28] I say that, judged historically, law in the world represents the very battle *against* the reactive feelings, the very war waged on those feelings by the forces of activity and aggression, which devote some of their strength to damming and keeping within bounds this expression of hysterical reactivity, and to forcing it to some compromise. Wherever justice is practised and maintained, it may be observed that the stronger power, when confronted with the weaker powers which are inferior to it (be they groups or

individuals), searches for weapons to put an end to the senseless rages of resentment, while snatching the object of resentment from the clutches of revenge, or by substituting for revenge a campaign of its own against the enemies of peace and order, or by finding, suggesting and occasionally enforcing settlements, or by standardizing certain payments for damages, to which the element of resentment is henceforth referred. The most drastic and effective measure, however, to be taken by the authorities against the superior strength of animosity and vindictiveness – and they take this measure as soon as they are at all strong enough to do so – is the establishment of *law*, the imperative declaration of what in their eyes is to be regarded as permissible and lawful, and what is prohibited and unlawful; and while, after the establishment of law, the authorities treat the aggressive and arbitrary acts of individuals, or of whole groups, as a violation of law, and as resistance to the authorities themselves, they distract their subjects' attention from the immediate injury inflicted by such a violation, and thus eventually achieve the very opposite result to that always desired by revenge, which sees and recognizes nothing but the standpoint of the injured party. Thereafter the eye becomes trained to an increasingly *impersonal* evaluation of the action, even the eye of the injured party himself (though this is in the final stage of all, as has been previously remarked) – on this principle 'right' and 'wrong' first come to be after the establishment of law (and *not*, as Dühring maintains, after the act is committed). To speak of *intrinsic* right and wrong is absolutely nonsensical; an injurious, oppressive, exploitative or destructive action cannot be *intrinsically* wrong, inasmuch as life is *essentially* (that is, in its cardinal functions) something which functions by injuring,

oppressing, exploiting and destroying, and it is absolutely inconceivable without such a characteristic. It is necessary to face something even more serious, which is that, viewed from the most advanced biological standpoint, conditions of legality can be only *exceptional conditions*, in that they are partial restrictions of the genuine will to live, which is drawn to power, and in that they are subordinated to the general end as individual instruments of the will to live, that is, as means to create *greater* forces. A legal system, conceived of as sovereign and universal, not as a weapon in a fight of complexes of forces, but as a weapon against conflict, generally something after the style of Dühring's communistic model of treating every will as equal with every other will, would be a principle *hostile to life*, intended to destroy man, an attempt on the future of man, a symptom of fatigue, a hidden path to oblivion …

12

A word more on the origin and purpose of punishment – two things which are or ought to be kept distinct, but which unfortunately are usually conflated. And how have our moral genealogists dealt with this matter? With their typical *naivety*. They find some 'purpose' in punishment, such as revenge or deterrence, and then, of course, place this purpose at the beginning, as the *causa fiendi*[29] of the punishment – and they have done the trick. But patching up the history of the origin of law is hardly the use to which the 'purpose in law'[30] ought to be put. Perhaps there is no more important principle for any kind of history than the following, which, though difficult to master, *should* nonetheless be mastered in every detail – that the origin of a thing, as opposed to its ultimate utility, that is, its

practical application and incorporation into a system of ends, are *toto caelo*[31] opposites; that everything, anything, which exists and which has come into being anywhere, will always be interpreted from new perspectives, will be seized upon again, will be transformed and turned to new uses by a force superior to itself; that everything which occurs in the organic world consists of *overpowering* and dominating, which in turn consist of new interpretation and adaptation, within which the old 'meaning' and 'purpose' must necessarily be obscured or absolutely obliterated. The most perfect comprehension of the *utility* of any physiological organ (or of a legal institution, social practice, political custom, form in art or in religious ritual) entails nothing of how it arose, however unpleasant this may sound to older ears – for from time immemorial it has been believed that understanding the demonstrated purpose or the utility of a thing, its form, its organization, means also understanding its *raison d'être*;[32] thus, the eye was made to see, the hand was made to grasp.

Thus was punishment conceived to have been invented with a view to punishing. But all ends and all utilities are only *signs* that a desire for power has overcome a less powerful force and has impressed upon it its own interpretation of a function; and the whole history of a 'thing', an organ, a custom, can on the same principle be regarded as a continuous sequence of signs, of perpetually new interpretations and adaptations, whose causes, far from needing to have even a mutual connection, sometimes follow and alternate with each other in an absolutely haphazard fashion. Similarly, the 'evolution' of a thing, of a custom, of an organ, is anything but its progression towards some end; still less is it a logical progression, attained in the most direct manner and with the minimum expenditure of

energy and cost; it is, rather, the succession of processes of subjugation, more or less profound, more or less mutually independent, which are directed upon the thing itself; it is, further, the resistance encountered in each case, the attempted adaptations and alterations of form for the purpose of defence and reaction, and, further, the results of successful counter-measures. The form is fluid, but the 'function' is even more so.

Inside every individual organism the case is the same; with growth of the whole organism, the 'function' of the individual organs is affected, shifted – in certain cases a partial loss of these organs, a reduction in their number (for instance, through the extinction of transitional members), can be a symptom of growing strength and perfection. What I mean is that even partial *loss of utility*, decay, atrophy and degeneration, loss of function and purpose, in a word, *death*, are numbered among the necessary conditions of genuine progress, which always appears in the form of a desire for, and a way to, *greater power*, and is always realized at the expense of innumerable smaller powers. The extent of 'progress' is gauged by the greatness of the sacrifice that it requires; humanity sacrificed en masse for the benefit of a *stronger* kind of man, one that could *flourish* – that *would be* progress …

I emphasize all the more this primary aspect of the historic method, for the reason that it runs counter to prevailing instincts and taste, which would prefer to have absolute randomness, even to have everything be mechanical and senseless, than accept the theory of a *powerful will*, a will which is acting throughout all phenomena. The democratic idiosyncrasy of opposing everything which rules and wishes to rule, the modern *misarchism*[33] (to coin a bad word for a bad thing), has

gradually but so thoroughly shaped and disguised itself as intellectual – as supremely intellectual – that now it has penetrated and *has been allowed* to penetrate, step by step, the most exact and apparently the most objective sciences; this tendency has, in fact, in my view already dominated the whole of physiology and biology, and to their detriment, as is obvious, by spiriting away from those sciences a fundamental concept, that of genuine *activity*. The oppression of this idiosyncrasy, however, results in the theory of 'adaptation' being pushed forward into the foreground of the argument, exploited; adaptation – that means to say, a second-class activity, a mere capacity for 'reacting'; in fact, life itself has been defined (by Herbert Spencer) as an increasingly effective internal adaptation to external circumstances. This definition, however, fails to realize the real essence of life, its *desire for power*. It fails to appreciate the paramount superiority enjoyed by those plastic forces of spontaneity, aggression and encroachment with their new interpretations and tendencies, to the operation of which adaptation is only a natural corollary; consequently the sovereign office of the highest functionaries in the organism itself (among which the life-will appears as an active and formative principle) is repudiated. It is appropriate here to mention Huxley's[34] reproach to Spencer of his 'administrative nihilism', but this is a case of something rather *more* than merely 'administration'.

13

To return to our subject, namely *punishment*, we must make a double distinction: the first is the relatively *permanent* element, the custom, the act, the 'drama', a certain rigid

sequence of procedures; the other is the *fluid* element, the meaning, the purpose, the expectation which is attached to the carrying-out of such procedures. At this point we immediately assume, *per analogiam*[35] (in accordance with the theory of the historic method, which we have elaborated above), that the procedure itself existed before it was used in punishment, that this use was *introduced* and interpreted into the procedure (which had existed for a long time, but had a different purpose); in short, that the case is *different* from that previously supposed by our naive genealogists of morals and of law, who thought that the procedure was *invented* for the purpose of punishment, just as the hand had been previously believed to have been invented for the purpose of grasping. With regard to the other element in *punishment*, its fluid element, its 'meaning', the concept of 'punishment', in a very late stage of civilization (for instance, contemporary Europe), manifests not merely one meaning, but a whole synthesis of 'meanings'. The general history of punishment up to the present, the history of its employment for the most diverse ends, crystallizes eventually into a kind of unity which is difficult to analyse into its constituent parts, and which, it is necessary to emphasize, absolutely *defies definition*. (It is nowadays impossible to say precisely *why* anyone is punished; all concepts in which an entire process is promiscuously comprehended defy definition; it is only that which has no history which can be defined.) At an earlier stage, on the contrary, that synthesis of 'meanings' appears much less rigid and much more elastic; we can realize how in each individual case the elements of the synthesis change their value and their position, so that now one element and now another stands out and predominates over the others, and

in certain cases one purpose (perhaps that of deterrence) seems to outweigh all the rest.

At any rate, so as to give some idea of how uncertain, improvised and arbitrary the ‘meaning’ of punishment is, and how one identical procedure can be employed and adapted for the most diametrically opposed ends, I will at this point give a scheme that has suggested itself to me, a scheme itself based on a little material collected here and there:

– Punishment as a means of rendering the criminal harmless and incapable of inflicting further injury.
– Punishment as compensation for the injury sustained by the injured party, in any form whatsoever (including that of emotional compensation).
– Punishment as an isolation of that which disturbs the social tranquillity, so as to prevent the further spreading of the disturbance.
– Punishment as a deterrence, by inspiring fear of those who determine and execute the punishment.
– Punishment as a kind of compensation for advantages which the wrong-doer has up to that time enjoyed (for example, using him as a slave in the mines).
– Punishment as the elimination of degenerate elements (sometimes of a whole branch, as according to the Chinese laws, and thus as a means for the preservation of racial purity, or of a social class).
– Punishment as a festival, as the violent oppression and humiliation of an enemy that has at last been subdued.
– Punishment as a mnemonic, whether for him who suffers the punishment – the so-called ‘correction’ – or for those who witness its execution.
– Punishment as the payment of a fee stipulated by the power which protects the miscreant from the excesses of revenge.
– Punishment as a compromise with the natural occurrence of revenge, in so far as revenge is still maintained and claimed as a privilege by the stronger groups.
– Punishment as a declaration of war and a weapon against an enemy of peace, of law, of order, of authority, who is fought by society with the weapons which war provides, as one dangerous to the community, as a breaker of the contract on which the community is based, as a rebel, a traitor, and a breaker of the peace.

This list is by no means complete; it is obvious that punishment is useful in so many ways, for so many different ends, that we have more than sufficient justification to disregard what *passes*, at any rate in the popular mind, as the purpose for which it is most useful, and which provides the strongest support for that faith in punishment which is nowadays, for many reasons, shaken, if not in decline. Punishment is supposed to be useful because it excites in the guilty the *consciousness of guilt*; in punishment is sought the proper instrument to bring about that psychological reaction that is called a ‘bad conscience’, or ‘remorse’. But this way of thinking is a violation of the reality and psychology of the present, and ever so much more when dealing with the longest period of man’s history, his primitive history!

Among criminals and the imprisoned, genuine remorse is certainly extremely rare; prisons and correctional institutions are *not* the soil that this gnawing worm of remorse prefers – this is the unanimous opinion of conscientious observers, who in many cases arrive at such a judgement only with reluctance. Speaking generally, punishment hardens and numbs, it produces concentration, it sharpens the feeling of alienation, it hardens resistance. If through punishment a man’s spirit should be broken, plunging him into wretched prostration and self-abasement, such a result is certainly less edifying than the ordinary result of punishment, which is characteristically grim.

Contemplating those *prehistoric* millennia brings us unhesitatingly to the conclusion that it was simply through punishment that the development of a consciousness of guilt was most effectively *arrested* – at any rate in the

victims of punitive measures. In particular, let us not underestimate the extent to which the very sight of the judicial and executive procedures prevents the criminal from feeling that his act, the nature of his act, is *intrinsically* reprehensible, for he sees that the same kind of acts, when performed in the service of justice, are called good, and performed with a good conscience. I here speak of acts such as espionage, deception, bribery, entrapment, all the cunning and insidious methods used by police and prosecutors – the whole system, in fact, manifested in the different forms of punishment, not excused by heated emotion, of robbery, violence, abuse, imprisoning, torture, murder, none of which is seen by his judges as a depraved and condemned act *as such*, but only in certain respects and instances – all this he sees treated by his judges, not as acts meriting censure and condemnation *in themselves*, but only in a particular context and application.

It was *not* on *this* soil that the ‘bad conscience’, the most sinister and interesting species of terrestrial plant life, grew – in point of fact, for quite a while those whose duty it was to judge and to administer punishment had *no* inkling that they were dealing with ‘the guilty’. Rather, it was imagined that they were dealing with someone irresponsible, someone who caused injury, someone who recklessly tempted fate. And he upon whom the punishment subsequently happened to fall experienced no more ‘inner pain’ than would be caused by something unforeseen, some sudden, terrible natural disaster from which there is no possible escape, such as being crushed under a boulder.

Spinoza[36] became conscious of this truth (to the chagrin of his commentators – Kuno Fischer,[37] for instance – who *endeavoured* to misunderstand him on this point), when one afternoon (as he sat ruminating over something or other) he turned his thoughts to the question of what was really left for him personally of the well-known *morsus conscientiae*[38] – Spinoza, who had regarded 'Good and Evil' as mere fancies, and who had indignantly defended the honour of his 'free' God against those blasphemers who maintained that God accomplishes everything *sub ratione boni*[39] ('but this was tantamount to subordinating God to fate, and would really be the greatest of all absurdities').[40] For Spinoza the world had returned again to that innocence which it possessed before the discovery of bad conscience; what, then, had become of the *morsus conscientiae*?

'The antithesis of *gaudium*,'[41] he said at last to himself, 'a sadness associated with the recollection of past disappointments' (Eth. iii., Propos. xviii. Schol. i. ii.).[42] For thousands of years, wrongdoers have felt *exactly as Spinoza did* regarding their 'offence', when subjugated through punishment; they think: 'something went wrong here, contrary to my expectations', *not* 'I ought not to have done this.' – They resigned themselves to punishment, just as one resigns oneself to sickness, to misfortune, or to death, with that valiant fatalism which gives the Russians, for instance, even nowadays, the advantage over us Westerners, in dealing with life.

If at that time there was a criticism of the act itself, it stemmed from intelligence; unquestionably, the real *effect* of punishment is to be found above all in a sharpening of intelligence, in an improvement of the memory, in a determination to proceed with greater caution, wariness and discretion; in the recognition that there are many things

which are unquestionably beyond one’s capacity; in a kind of improvement in self-criticism. The broad effects which can be obtained by punishment in man and beast, are the increase of fear, the sharpening of the intellect, the mastery of the desires; so it is that punishment *tames* man, but does not make him ‘better’ – it would be more correct even to go so far as to assert the contrary (‘Injury makes a man more intelligent’,[43] says a popular proverb: so far as it makes him intelligent, it makes him also bad. Fortunately, it often enough makes him stupid).

16

At this juncture I suppose that a tentative and provisional expression of my own hypothesis concerning the origin of ‘bad conscience’ must be offered; yet it is not something easily put forward, and it requires prolonged, careful consideration on the part of the reader. I regard bad conscience as a serious illness to which man was bound to succumb under the stress of the most radical change which he has ever experienced – the change which occurred when he found himself finally imprisoned by the strictures imposed upon him by society to establish and preserve peace. Just as it was with marine animals, when they were compelled to become terrestrial animals if they were to survive at all, so must it also have been with these savages, perfectly adapted as they were to the wilderness, to war, to a nomadic existence, and to exploration – suddenly all their instincts were rendered useless. From that time forwards they had to walk on their feet, and were no longer borne by the water; their own weight, which they now had to bear, oppressed them. They felt inept and were unable to perform the simplest tasks; confronted with this new and unknown

world they no longer could rely upon their old guides, the regulative, unconscious instincts which had kept them safe; they were reduced, those miserable creatures, to thinking, inferring, calculating, to connecting cause and effect, and had to resort to using their most poorly developed, least reliable organ, their ‘consciousness’. I do not believe there was ever in the history of the world such a feeling of misery, such an intense discomfort – and furthermore, those old instincts had not suddenly ceased making their demands! Only it was difficult and rarely possible to accede to them; in the main, they were compelled to gratify themselves in new and, as it were, subterranean ways.

All instincts that cannot be given external expression *turn inwards* – this is what I mean by the *internalization* of man, and with this we have the first appearance in man of what subsequently was called his ‘soul’. The whole ‘inner world’, at first so very minute, unfolded, acquiring dimension, depth, breadth and height, when man’s external outlet became *obstructed*. These formidable defences, used by the commonwealth to protect itself against the old instincts of freedom (various forms of punishment being among the primary means of defence), made man – wild, free, untamed man – turn all those instincts *against himself*. Enmity, cruelty, the delight in persecution, in attack, destruction, pillage – the turning of all these instincts against their very owners is the origin of the ‘bad conscience’.

It was man who, lacking external enemies and opposition, and imprisoned as he was in the oppressive confines and monotony of custom, in his own impatience, frustration and rage, lacerated, persecuted, gnawed, frightened and abused himself; it was this animal, which is supposed to be ‘tamed’, which beat itself against the bars of its cage; it was this being who, homesick for that wilderness of which it had

been deprived, was compelled to create, out of its own self, an adventure, a torture-chamber, an unknown and perilous wasteland – it was this fool, this despairing and desperate prisoner, who invented ‘bad conscience’. Along with it, however, he introduced that grave, insidious illness from which mankind has not yet recovered, the suffering of man from the affliction called *man*, as the result of a violent break from his animal past, of being plunged into a new environment and new conditions of existence, of a declaration of war against the old instincts, upon which, up to that time, his power, his joy, his formidability rested.

Let us immediately add that this fact of an animal ego turning against itself, taking part against itself, produced something so unprecedented, profound, extraordinary, bewildering and *momentous* that the whole nature of the world was radically altered. Indeed, only divine spectators could have appreciated the drama that began then, and whose end cannot yet be seen – a drama too subtle, too wonderful, too paradoxical to be performed unseen on some absurdly remote planet! Ever since that event, man is to be *counted* as one of the most unanticipated and sensational lucky shots played by the ‘big baby’ of Heraclitus,[44] whether he be called Zeus or Chance – he awakens on his behalf the interest, excitement, hope, almost the confidence, of his being the harbinger and forerunner of something, of man being no end, but only a stage, an interlude, a bridge, a great promise.

17

The first presupposition of this hypothesis regarding the origin of bad conscience is that the alteration was not gradual and voluntary, and that it did not manifest itself as

an organic adaptation to new conditions, but as a break, a leap, a compulsion, an inevitable fate, against which there was no resistance or even a flicker of resentment. The second presupposition, however, is that the moulding of a hitherto wild and uncultivated population into a uniform one, starting as it had with an act of violence, could be accomplished only by acts of violence – that the oldest 'state' appeared consequently as a dreadful tyranny, a repressive, ruthless piece of machinery, which went on working until this raw material of a savage populace was not only thoroughly manipulated and compliant, but also *shaped*.

I used the word 'state'; my meaning is self-evident, namely, a herd of blond beasts of prey, a master race, a race of conquerors which, aggressive, powerful and organized, pounces with its most horrid claws on an unsuspecting population, one which in numbers may be tremendously superior, but is still undisciplined and nomadic. Such is the origin of the 'state' (I think we have disposed of that notion, one held enthusiastically by many, according to which the 'state' originates with a sort of contract).[45] He who can command, he who is a 'master' by nature, he who is forceful in deed and gesture – what has he to do with contracts! Such beings violate our every assumption: they come unexpectedly, without cause, reason, notice, excuse; they appear as suddenly as lightning, and are too terrible, too sudden, too convincing, too 'different' even to be hated. Their work is the instinctive creation and imposition of forms; of all artists, their work is the most instinctive, unconscious – in connection with appearance there arises something new, a system of governance which is *alive*, in which the functions and parts are defined and related to one another, in which above all

no part finds a place unless it has some ‘function’ in connection with the whole. These instinctive organizers, they know nothing of guilt, responsibility, consideration; they are subject to that terrible artist-egoism which gleams like brass, and which sees itself justified to all eternity, in its work, even as a mother sees in her child. It is not among *them* that ‘bad conscience’ appeared, that is plain enough – but this repulsive thing would not have appeared *without them*; it would not exist unless, due to the pressure of their hammer-strokes and their artists’ violence a tremendous amount of freedom had been driven out of the world, or at any rate out of sight, and made, as it were, *latent*. This *instinct for freedom* forced into latency – it is already clear – this instinct of freedom forced back, repressed, imprisoned within itself and finally only able to vent and relieve itself; *this*, this *alone*, is the beginning of ‘bad conscience’.

18

We must be wary of regarding this phenomenon as of no significance at all merely because we find it ugly and painful at first glance. It is the same active force that is at work on a grander scale in those organizers and artists of tyranny, and the same active force which builds states, where here, internally, on a smaller, pettier scale and with a regressive tendency, it creates for itself a bad conscience in the ‘labyrinth of the breast’, to use Goethe’s phrase,[46] and builds negative ideals; it is, I repeat, that identical *instinct for freedom* (to use my own language, the desire for power); but that force, with all its constructive and rapacious nature, is here loosed upon man himself, his old animal self – and *not*, as in that greater and more obvious phenomenon, upon the *other* man, *other* men. This hidden violence upon the

self, this cruelty of the artist, this desire to take oneself as a piece of difficult, refractory, anguished material and form something of it; to brand it with a will, a critique, a contradiction, a contempt, a negation; this sinister and dreadful labour of love on the part of a soul, whose will is divided in two within itself, which makes itself suffer from delight in the infliction of suffering; this whole *active* 'bad conscience' has finally (as already anticipated) – as the true fountainhead of idealism and imagination – produced an abundance of novel and strange beauty and affirmation, and perhaps has really been the first to give birth to beauty at all. What would 'beauty' be, if its contrary had not first been presented to consciousness, if ugliness had not first said to itself, 'I am ugly'?

At any rate, after this hint, the enigma of how far idealism and beauty can be suggested in such opposite ideas as *selflessness*, *self-denial*, *self-sacrifice* becomes less puzzling; and henceforth we shall certainly know one thing, which is the real and original character of the *delight* experienced by the selfless, the self-denying, the self-sacrificing man; this delight is a part of cruelty.

– So much, for the moment, about the origin of 'altruism' as a *moral* value, and the marking-out of the ground from which this value has grown; it is only bad conscience, only the will for self-abuse, that provides the necessary conditions for the existence of altruism as a *value*.

19

Undoubtedly bad conscience is an illness, but it is an illness in the same sense that pregnancy is an illness. If we investigate the conditions under which this illness reaches its most fearful and sublime zenith, we shall see what

actually brought about its entry into the world. But to do this we must first of all take a deep breath, and go back again to an earlier point of view.

In civil law, the relation of the debtor to his creditor (which has already been discussed in detail) has been misinterpreted (and indeed in a manner which historically is exceedingly remarkable and questionable) as a relationship which is perhaps more incomprehensible to us moderns than to any other era; that is, as the relationship of the *present* generation to its *ancestors*.

Within the original tribal society – we are here speaking of primitive times – each living generation recognizes a legal obligation towards the earlier generation, and particularly towards the earliest generation, which founded the clan (and this is something much more than a mere sentimental obligation; the existence of this obligation during the greatest period of man's history is by no means indisputable). There prevails among them the conviction that it is only due to sacrifices and efforts of their ancestors that the clan still *exists* at all – and that these sacrifices and efforts must be *paid back* to the ancestors in kind, that is, by their own similar sacrifices and efforts. This is recognized as the owing of a *debt* which increases, because these ancestors, as powerful spirits, continue to exist, to give new privileges and advantages to the clan, and to endow its members with some of their power. Gratis, perhaps? But there is no 'gratis' for that raw and 'spiritually impoverished' age. What offering can be made? Sacrifices (in the beginning, in the form of nutriment, or food, in its crudest sense); veneration (festivals, temples, tributes); and above all obedience (since all customs, *qua* works of the ancestors, thus embody their precepts and commands). Are the offerings to the ancestors ever sufficient? This suspicion

lingers and grows, and from time to time it exacts a great ransom, something monstrous in the way of repayment to the ‘creditor’ (such as the notorious sacrifice of the first-born; it must be blood, human blood, in any case).

Following this sort of logic, the *fear* of the ancestor and his power, the consciousness of indebtedness to him, must increase in step with the growth of power of the clan itself, that is, as the clan becomes more victorious, independent, honoured, feared. This, and not the contrary, is the fact! Every step towards the decline of the clan, every disastrous event, every symptom of degeneration, of approaching disintegration, always *diminishes* the fear of the founder’s spirit and weakens the notion of his sagacity, providence and potent presence. If this crude kind of logic is carried to its conclusion, it follows that the ancestors of the *most powerful* races, through the increasing fear that they exercise on the imagination, must have grown to monstrous dimensions and must have been consigned to the obscurity of a divine mystery that transcends imagination – the ancestor is ultimately transfigured into a god. Perhaps this is the very origin of the gods, that is, an origin in *fear*! Those who feel bound to add ‘but from piety also’ will have difficulty in justifying this claim, if it is applied to the primeval and longest period of the human race. On the contrary, however, this claim is quite true as regards the *middle period*, the formative period of the aristocratic lines – the aristocratic lines that have repaid, with interest, their founders, the ancestors (heroes, gods), with all those traits which in the meanwhile have appeared in themselves, that is, the *aristocratic* ones. We will later on glance again at the ennobling and exalting of the gods (which, of course, is quite distinct from their ‘sanctification’); let us now pursue to its end the development of the consciousness of guilt.

According to the teachings of history, the notion of indebtedness to the deity by no means came to an end after the decline of a ‘community’ organized along blood-lines; just as mankind has inherited the ideas of ‘Good’ and ‘Bad’ from the clan nobility (together with its fundamental tendency towards the establishment of social hierarchies), mankind also inherited, in addition to the legacy of the racial and tribal gods, the burden of debts as yet unpaid and the desire to discharge them. (The transition is effected by those large populations of slaves and serfs, who, whether through compulsion or through submission and mimicry,[47] have adopted the religions and cults of their masters; it was from them that these inherited tendencies were dispersed in every direction). The feeling of indebtedness to the deity has grown without pause for several millennia, always in the same proportion in which the concept of God and the consciousness of God developed and became exalted among mankind. (The whole history of ethnic conflicts, victories, reconciliations, alliances, everything, in fact, which precedes the eventual stratification of all the social elements in each great racial synthesis, is mirrored in the chaotic genealogy of their gods, in the legends of their battles, victories and reconciliations. Progress towards universal empires invariably means progress towards universal deities; despotism, with its subjugation of the independent nobility, always paves the way for some sort of monotheism or other.)

The appearance of the Christian God as the most powerful god ever conceived has for that very reason brought into the world the greatest feeling of indebtedness as well. If we have in fact gradually started to *retreat* from that, we

should not find it difficult to conclude with a fair degree of certainty, from the gradual but inexorable abandonment of belief in the Christian God, that a considerable loss of the sense of indebtedness has already occurred; indeed, we cannot shut our eyes to the prospect of the complete and eventual triumph of atheism, freeing mankind from all this feeling of indebtedness to their origin, their *causa prima*.[48] Atheism and a kind of *secondary innocence* complement and supplement one another.

21

So much for my rough and preliminary sketch of the connection of the notions ‘debt’ or ‘guilt’ and ‘duty’ with the precepts of religion. I have intentionally set aside till now the actual moralization of these concepts (their being pushed back into conscience, or more precisely the entwining of bad conscience with the notion of God), and at the end of the last section I spoke as though this moralization did not exist, and that consequently these notions would give way if their foundation, the credence in our ‘creditor’, in God, were removed. The facts differ enormously from this.

It is with the moralization of the concepts ‘debt’ or ‘guilt’ and ‘duty’ and with their being pushed back into bad conscience that there occurs the first actual attempt to *reverse* the direction of the development we have just described, or at any rate to arrest it altogether; it is just at this juncture that the very hope of an eventual redemption *has to* put itself once and for all into the prison of pessimism; it is at this juncture that we *must* recoil, disconsolate, at the sight of an implacable impossibility; it is at this juncture that the concepts ‘debt’ or ‘guilt’ and ‘duty’

have to turn backwards – but against *whom*? Of this there can be no doubt: at first against the 'debtor', in whom bad conscience now establishes itself, eats, extends and grows like a polyp throughout its length and breadth, all with such virulence that at last, with the impossibility of paying the debt, there is conceived the notion that debt cannot be paid, the sin is unforgivable (the idea of '*eternal* punishment') – finally, too, it turns against the 'creditor', whether found in the *causa prima* of man, the origin of the human race, its sire, who henceforth is burdened with a curse ('Adam', 'original sin',[49] 'constraint of the will'), or in Nature, from whose womb man springs, and on whom the responsibility for the principle of Evil is now cast ('Diabolization of Nature'), or in existence generally, which is left as something *inherently worthless*, with which mankind is landed (the nihilistic flight from life, the demand for oblivion, or for the 'opposite' of existence, for some other existence, Buddhism and the like) – till suddenly we are confronted with something paradoxical and appalling, something in which a tortured humanity has found some palliation, *Christianity's* true stroke of genius: God personally sacrificing himself for the sins, for the debts of Man; God himself personally paying himself; God as the one being who can deliver Man from what Man had become unable to deliver himself – the creditor playing scapegoat for his debtor, out of *love* (can you believe it?), out of love for his debtor! …

22

The reader will already have surmised *what* actually has happened here, what lies *behind* all of this. It was that desire for self-torture in the savage who suppresses his

cruelty because he was forced to contain himself (incarcerated as he was in ‘the state’, as part of his taming process), who invented bad conscience so as to hurt himself, after the more *natural* outlet for this desire to hurt had been blocked – in other words, this man of bad conscience armed himself with religious precepts so as to carry his martyrdom to its ghastly extreme. Indebtedness to *God*: this thought becomes his instrument of torture. He takes ‘God’ as the most extreme antitheses that he can find to his own characteristic and indomitable animal instincts; he himself gives a new interpretation to these animal instincts as being ‘sins’ before God (as hostility to and rebellion against the ‘Lord’, the ‘Father’, the ‘Founder’, the beginning of the world); he places himself between the horns of the dilemma ‘God’ and ‘Devil’. Every ‘no’ which he is inclined to say to himself, to the nature, naturalness and reality of his being, he utters as ‘yes’, as something existing, living, real, as God, as God the holy, as God the judge, as God the hangman, as transcendent, as eternity, as unending torment, as hell, as unimaginably vast punishment and guilt.

This is a kind of madness of desire, manifested as psychological cruelty which is absolutely unparalleled: man’s *desire* to find himself so guilty and reprehensible that he cannot be absolved; his *desire* to think of himself as punished, though without ever being punished adequately for his guilt; his *desire* to infect and to poison everything with the problem of punishment and guilt, in order to cut off once and for all any escape from this labyrinth of ‘fixed ideas’, his *desire* to establish an ideal – that of the ‘holy God’ – an ideal which, when confronted, will provide tangible proof of his own unworthiness. Alas for this mad, melancholy beast, Man! What wild fantasies are visited

upon this beast, what perversity, paroxysms of hysteria, madness and *bestiality of ideas* spring forth immediately, if he is impeded in the slightest way from being the *beast in deed*!

All of this is exceedingly interesting, but it is at the same time imbued with a black, gloomy, enervating melancholy, so that we must avoid peering too long into these abysses if we are to escape their noxious influence. Here is *disease*, certainly the most dreadful disease that has as yet afflicted men; and whoever can still hear (as so few now can) how the cry of *love* has rung out in this night of torment and madness, the cry of the most passionate ecstasy, of redemption in *love*, will turn away gripped by utterly overwhelming horror – in Man there is so much that is ghastly – for too long the world has been a madhouse!

23

Let this suffice once and for all concerning the origin of the ‘holy God’.

In itself the conception of gods must not lead to a debasement of the fantasy which we could not help but call to mind for a moment; there exist *nobler* methods of utilizing the invention of the gods than this self-crucifixion and self-deprecation of men, which has reigned in Europe for the last millennia. These truths can fortunately still be gleaned from even the briefest glance at the *Greek gods* (these reflections of noble and grandiose men), in whom the *animal* in Man felt itself deified, and did *not* tear itself apart or consume itself in *fury*! These Greeks long employed their gods precisely to ward off ‘bad conscience’ – so that they could continue to enjoy their psychological freedom; this, of course, is the very opposite of the way Christianity

employed its God. They went *very far* on this principle, these children, splendid and lion-hearted; and no less an authority than Homer's Zeus gives them to understand that they are taking life too easy: 'Strange!' he says. It is about the case of Aegistheus, which is a *tragic* one,

> Strange how they grumble, the mortals against the gods!
> *Only from us*, they presume, comes evil, but in their folly,
> They fashion, in spite of fate, the doom of their own disaster.[50]

Yet the reader will note and observe that this Olympian spectator and judge is far from being angry with them and thinking ill of them on this score. 'How *foolish* they are' – this is what he thinks of mortals' misdeeds – 'Folly', 'imprudence', 'a little mental disturbance' – this is what the Greeks, even of the strongest, bravest period, *acknowledged* to be the ground of much that is evil and fatal. – Folly, *not* sin, do you understand? …

But even this mental disturbance was a problem – 'Come, how is it even possible? How could this actually have occurred among *us*, able, intelligent men, high-born men, men blessed by fortune and nature, men of the best society, men of nobility and virtue?' This was the question that for century after century the aristocratic Greek put to himself when confronted with the incomprehensible abominations and outrages committed by his peers. 'It must be that a *god* had bewitched him,' he would say at last, nodding his head … This solution is *typical* of the Greeks … thus the gods in those times served to justify Man to a certain extent, even in evil – in those days they took upon themselves not the punishment, but rather, what is even *nobler*, the guilt.

I shall conclude with three questions, as you will see. ‘Is an ideal actually being erected here, or being demolished?’ This is what I may be asked …

But have you ever really asked yourselves how dear a price has been paid for *every* ideal in the world? How ruthlessly must reality be falsely condemned? How many lies must be dignified? How badly must conscience be disturbed? How much of ‘God’ must be sacrificed every time, to achieve that consummation? If a shrine is to be built, *a shrine must be destroyed*: that is the law! – show me an instance where it has not been so! …

We modern men are heirs to the ancient practice of vivisecting our consciences, and inflicting cruelty upon our animal selves. This we have practised for the longest time, and it has perhaps become our characteristic art; at any rate it represents our refinement, the indulgence of our taste. Man has for too long regarded his natural inclinations maliciously, and thus eventually they have become in his mind associated with ‘bad conscience’. To attempt the opposite would be *intrinsically* feasible – but who is strong enough for that? – namely, to connect ‘bad conscience’ with all those *unnatural* inclinations, all those transcendental or spiritual aspirations, contrary to sense, instinct, nature and animal existence – in short, all the ideals which hitherto have been hostile to life, and have defamed the world. To whom is one to turn now with *such* hopes and claims?

It is thus precisely the *good* men that we should have arrayed against us; and, naturally enough, the indolent, the complacent, the vain, the zealous, the weary …

What is more offensive or more likely to cause estrangement than giving any hint of the high regard we have for ourselves, and of the severity with which we treat ourselves? Yet how amicable and pleasant the world is

towards us so long as we do as the world does, and ‘let ourselves go’ like the world.

For such a consummation we need spirits of an altogether *different* sort than seems really likely to be found in this age; spirits strengthened through wars and victories, for whom conquest, adventure, danger, even pain, have become needs; we need habituation to crisp mountain air, to winter journeys, to ice and crags; we even need a kind of sublime malevolence, a supreme and self-conscious insolence regarding our knowledge, which is the constant companion of great health; we need (to summarize the awful truth) precisely this *great health*! …

Is this even possible today? … But some day, in an age of stronger, more confident men than those of the present day, he must come to us, the *saviour*, the man of great love and scorn, the creative spirit, he who is driven away from any transcendental plane or dimension by his strength, he whose solitude is misunderstood by the people, as though it were a flight *from* reality – while actually it is only his way of being enveloped and immersed *in* reality, so that, when he emerges again into the light, he can bring with him the *redemption* of this reality, freeing it from the curse which the old ideal has laid upon it. This man of the future will free us not only from the old ideal, but also from *what was bound to arise from it*: great loathing, the desire for oblivion and nihilism. This stroke of noon and of the great decision which renders the will again free, the one who gives back to the world its purpose and to Man his hope, this Antichrist[51] and Anti-nihilist, this conqueror of God and of nothingness – *he must one day come* …

But what am I saying here? Enough! Enough! At this juncture I have only one proper course: silence; otherwise I intrude upon that which properly belongs to one who is younger than I am, stronger, and who belongs more to the ‘future’ than I do; for this is the destiny of *Zarathustra*[52] alone, *Zarathustra the godless*.

THIRD ESSAY

What Do Ascetic Ideals Mean?

> Cavalier, mocking, violent – this is what wisdom wishes for us to be: she is a woman, and will ever love only a warrior.
>
> *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*[1]

1

What is the meaning of ascetic ideals? For artists, nothing, or too much; for philosophers and scholars, a keen instinct for the conditions most favourable to advancing the intellect; for women, at best, a *complementary* charm, a fascination, a little *morbidezza*[2] in the lovely flesh, the angelic visage of a fine, fair, plump animal; for physiological casualties and the malcontents (for the *majority* of mortals), an attempt to seem 'too good' for this world, a sort of holy debauchery, their chief weapon in the battle with chronic pain and ennui; for priests, the genuine priestly faith, their best instrument for exercising power and the supreme authority for power; for saints, finally a pretext for hibernation, their *novissima gloriae cupido*,[3] their peace in oblivion ('God'), their form of madness. *But in the very fact that* the ascetic ideal has meant so much to Man, there is expressed the fundamental feature of Man's will, his *horror vacui*[4]*: he needs a goal* – and he will rather desire *oblivion* than not desire at all. – Am I not understood? – Have I been

understood? – '*Certainly not, sir!*' – Well, let us begin at the beginning.

2

What is the meaning of ascetic ideals? Or, to take an individual case about which I have received many enquiries, what is the meaning, for example, of an artist such as Richard Wagner idolizing chastity in his old age?[5] He had always done so, of course, in a certain sense, but it was not until quite near the end that he did so in an ascetic sense. What is the meaning of this 'change of attitude', this radical revolution in his attitude? – for that was what it was. Wagner leaped straight into his own opposite. What is the meaning of an artist leaping straight into his own opposite? At this point (provided that we do not mind pausing a moment to ponder a little over this question), we immediately call to mind the best period in Wagner's life that there perhaps ever was – when he was the strongest, gayest, and *boldest* – that was the period when he was genuinely and deeply occupied with the idea of 'Luther's Wedding'.[6] Who knows why we now have *Die Meistersinger*[7] instead of this wedding music? Is it merely a matter of chance? And how much in the latter is perhaps just an echo of the former? There can be no doubt, though, but that 'Luther's Wedding' would have dealt with the praise of chastity, and certainly it would also have dealt with the praise of sensuality; yet even so, it would seem to me to be quite in order, and equally 'Wagnerian'.

For there is no necessary antithesis between chastity and sensuality; for every good marriage, every genuine heartfelt love transcends this antithesis. Wagner would, it seems to me, have done well to have reminded his German audience

of this *pleasant* fact, using a bold yet charming Luther-comedy, for there were and are among the Germans many who vilify sensuality; and perhaps Luther's greatest merit lies just in the fact of his having had the courage of his *sensuality* (which used to be called, euphemistically, 'evangelical freedom').[8] But even when that antithesis between chastity and sensuality does exist, the time is fortunately long since past when it must be a tragic antithesis. At any rate, this should be the case with all mortals who are sound in mind and body, who are far from regarding their delicate balance between 'animal' and 'angel' as necessarily an objection to existence – the brightest and most insightful of them, such as Goethe and Hafiz,[9] have even seen in this *another* of life's charms. Such 'conflicts' actually make life all the more enticing. On the other hand, it is only too clear that once the miserable swine are reduced to worshipping chastity – and there are such swine! – they will only see and worship in it the antithesis to themselves, the antithesis to miserable swine. Oh, and accompanied by such tragic grunting and excitement! You can just think of it – they worship that embarrassing and superfluous antithesis, which Richard Wagner in his latter days undoubtedly wished to set to music and to place on the stage! '*To what end?*' as we may reasonably ask. What did the swine matter to him? What do they matter to us?

3

At this point it is impossible to avoid the further question of what that man (though was he so unmanly), that 'country bumpkin', that poor devil and nature-lover, Parsifal, actually meant to Wagner, who eventually made him into a Catholic

by such insidious means. What? Was this Parsifal really intended to be taken *seriously*? One might be tempted to suppose the contrary, even to wish that Wagner's *Parsifal* was intended as a farce, as an epilogue and satire, in which Wagner the tragedian wished to say farewell to us, to himself, above all to *tragedy*, and to do so in a manner that should be quite fitting and worthy of him, that is, through the most extreme and pompous parody of the tragic itself, of the ghastly dourness and earthly misery of old – a parody of that *crudest form* of the perversion of the ascetic ideal, which had at length been overcome. That, as I have said, would have been quite worthy of a great tragedian, one who, like every artist, first attains the ultimate pinnacle of his greatness when he can see himself and his art as *subordinate* to him, when he can *laugh* at himself.

Is Wagner's *Parsifal* his sly chuckle of superiority over himself, the triumph of that supreme artistic freedom and artistic transcendence which he has at length attained? We might, I repeat, wish it were so, for what can *Parsifal*, if taken *seriously*, amount to? Is it really necessary to see in him 'the issue of an insane hatred of knowledge, intellect, and flesh' (an accusation once hurled against me)? A curse on the senses and the intellect in *one* hateful breath? An apostasy and reversion to morbid Christian and obscurantist ideals? And finally a self-negation and self-elimination on the part of an artist, who till then had devoted all the strength of his will to the contrary, namely, the *highest artistic expression of soul and body*? And not only his art, but of his life as well.

Just remember how eagerly Wagner followed in the footsteps of Feuerbach[10] in his day. During the thirties and forties of this century, Feuerbach's motto of 'healthy sensuality'[11] sounded like the word of redemption to

Wagner, as it did to many Germans (they dubbed themselves '*Young* Germans').[12] Did he eventually *change his opinion* on the subject? For it seems at any rate that he eventually wished to *change his teaching* on that subject … and not just when the horns announce *Parsifal*'s arrival on the stage; in the melancholy writings of his later years, so poignant and affecting, there are a hundred passages which betray a secret wish, a weak, hesitant, never-expressed desire to preach actual reversion, conversion, denial, Christianity, medievalism, and to say to his disciples, 'It is nothing! Seek salvation elsewhere!' Even the 'blood of the Redeemer' is once invoked.

4

Let me speak my mind in a case like this, which has many distressing aspects – and it is a *typical* case; it is certainly best to separate an artist from his work so completely that he cannot be taken as seriously as his work. He is after all merely the prerequisite for his work, the womb, the soil, in certain cases the dung and manure, upon which and from which it grows – and consequently, in most cases, something that must be forgotten if the work itself is to be a source of enjoyment. The true *origin* of a work is a matter of concern for psychologists and vivisectionists of the mind, but neither now nor in the future for the aesthetes, the artists.

The author and creator of *Parsifal* was no more spared the necessity of delving into and immersing himself in the terrible depths of medieval religious controversies, the necessity of remaining aloof from all intellectual advancement, rigour and discipline, the necessity of a kind of intellectual *perversity* (if the reader will pardon me such a

word), than an expectant mother is spared the queer and sometimes unpleasant events which occur throughout the course of her pregnancy, which, as I have said, must be *forgotten* if the child is to be a source of joy.

We must guard ourselves against the confusion into which an artist himself would fall only too easily out of psychological contiguity,[13] as the English call it; as though the artist himself actually *were* the object which he is able to represent, imagine and express. In point of fact, even *if* he conceived he were such an object, he would certainly not be able to represent, conceive, express it. Homer could not have created an Achilles, nor Goethe a Faust, if Homer had been an Achilles or if Goethe had been a Faust. An artist, no matter how consummate in his art, is forever separated from the 'real', from the actual; on the other hand, it will be appreciated that he can sometimes become so sick and tired of this never-ending 'unreality' and falseness of his innermost existence that he is driven to the point of despair – and to venture into what is forbidden to him, into reality: to have *real* existence.

With what success? This can be guessed … it is the *typical proclivity* of the artist; the same diffidence to which Wagner fell a victim in his old age, and for which he had to pay so dearly; because of it he lost his most valuable friends. But after all, quite apart from this diffidence, who would not wish, for Wagner's own sake, that he had said farewell to us and to his art in some quite *different* manner, not with a *Parsifal*, but with something more victorious, more self-confident, more Wagnerian – something less misleading, less ambiguous with regard to his overall intention, less Schopenhauerian,[14] less nihilistic? …

What, then, is the meaning of ascetic ideals? In the case of an artist we understand they mean *nothing at all*! … or do they mean so much that it is as if they have no meaning at all?

Let us eliminate artists from consideration for the moment, for they have for a long time past not taken up a sufficiently independent position, either in the world or *against* it, to warrant any interest on our part in their opinions, current or former. They have always been the servants of some morality, philosophy or religion, quite apart from the fact that unfortunately they have often been the snivelling courtiers of their clients and patrons, always courting the rich and powerful parties that are well established or ascendant. They always need at least protection, support, an established authority; artists never stand alone; this runs contrary to their deepest instincts.

In this way, for example, Richard Wagner, 'when the time had come',[15] used the philosopher Schopenhauer as his advance guard. Who would consider it even conceivable that he would have had the *courage* for an ascetic ideal, without the support afforded him by the philosophy of Schopenhauer, without the authority of Schopenhauer, which *dominated* Europe in the seventies? (This is leaving aside the question whether an artist in the *new* Germany would have been possible at all without the milk of an orthodoxy devoted to the empire.)[16]

This brings us to the more serious question: what is the meaning of a real *philosopher* paying homage to the ascetic ideal, a genuinely independent intellect such as Schopenhauer, a man and knight with a penetrating glance, who has the courage to be himself, who knows how to stand alone without first waiting for heralds and heavenly signs?

Let us now consider at once the remarkable attitude of Schopenhauer towards *art*, an attitude which has a fascination for certain sorts of men. For that is obviously why Richard Wagner *at first* went over to Schopenhauer (persuaded, as is known, by the poet Herwegh),[17] and went over so completely that a complete theoretical contradiction between his earlier and his later aesthetic beliefs ensued – his earlier thinking, for example, was expressed in *Opera and Drama*,[18] the later in the writings which he published after 1870. In particular, Wagner from that time onwards (and this is the *volte-face* which disturbs us the most) had no scruples about changing his judgement concerning the value and standing of *music* itself. What did he care if up to that time he had made of music a means, a medium, a 'woman', that in order to thrive needed an end, a man – that is, the drama! He suddenly realized that *more* could be effected by the novelty of the Schopenhauerian theory *in majorem musicae gloriam*[19] – that is to say, with the notion of the *sovereignty* of music, as Schopenhauer understood it; music set apart from and distinguished from all the other arts, music as the independent art-in-itself, *not* like the other arts, affording images of the phenomenal world, but rather *speaking the language of the will itself,* straight out of the 'abyss', as its most personal, original and direct manifestation. This extraordinary increase in the regard for music (which seemed to grow out of the Schopenhauerian philosophy) was at once accompanied by an unprecedented rise in the esteem in which the *musician* himself was held; he became now an oracle, a priest, indeed, more than a priest, a sort of mouthpiece for the 'essence of things',[20] a telephone[21] from the other world – henceforward he spoke not only of music, this ventriloquist of God, he also spoke of

metaphysics; it is no wonder that one day he eventually spoke of *ascetic ideals*!

6

Schopenhauer employed the Kantian treatment of the aesthetic problem – though he certainly did not regard it with Kantian eyes. Kant thought that he bestowed honour upon art by favouring and emphasizing those predicates of the beautiful, namely impersonality and universality, which distinguish knowledge. Whether this was a blunder on his part shall not be discussed here; what I wish to emphasize is merely that Kant, like other philosophers, instead of viewing the aesthetic problem through the eyes of the artist (the creator), has considered art and beauty only from the standpoint of the 'observer', and has thereby inadvertently introduced the 'observer' himself into the concept 'beautiful'. If only these aesthetic philosophers had been sufficiently well acquainted with this 'observer'! – By this I mean knowledge of the observer as a fact, as a *person*, as experience, as a wealth of strong desires, surprises and pleasures in the realm of beauty! But, as I feared, the contrary was always the case; and so, from the very beginning, we get from our philosophers definitions upon which the lack of any refined personal experience squats like a big fat stupid worm, as it does on Kant's famous definition of the beautiful. 'That is beautiful,' says Kant, 'which pleases *without interest*.'[22] Without interest?! Compare this definition with this other one, made by an 'artist', an 'observer' truly capable of aesthetic appreciation – by Stendhal,[23] who once called the beautiful *une promesse de bonheur*.[24] Here, at any rate, the one point which Kant emphasizes in the understanding of aesthetic appreciation

is repudiated and *rejected* – *le désinteressement*.[25] Who is right, Kant or Stendhal?

If our aestheticians never weary of siding with Kant, in maintaining that under the spell of beauty men can view *even* statues of the nude female form 'without interest', we can certainly laugh a little at their expense – on this ticklish point the experiences of *artists* are more 'interesting', and at any rate Pygmalion[26] was *not* necessarily an 'anaesthetic man'. Let us think all the better of the innocence of our aestheticians, reflected as it is in such arguments; let us, for instance, honour Kant for the country-parson *naivety* of his doctrine concerning the peculiar character of the sense of touch![27]

And here we come back to Schopenhauer, who stood much closer to the arts than did Kant, and who yet never escaped the spell of the Kantian definition; how was that? The circumstance is curious enough; he interprets the expression 'without interest' in the most personal fashion, based on an experience which must have been part of his regular routine.

On few subjects does Schopenhauer speak with such assuredness as he does on the effect of aesthetic contemplation; he says of it that it simply counteracts *sexual* interest, like lupulin[28] and camphor;[29] he never wearies of praising *this* escape from the 'will' as the great advantage of the aesthetic state. One may be tempted to ask if his fundamental conception of will and thought, the notion that there can only exist freedom from the 'will' by means of 'thought', did not originate in a generalization from this sexual experience. (Incidentally, in all questions concerning the Schopenhauerian philosophy, one should never lose sight of the consideration that it is the creation of a youth of twenty-six, so that it manifests not only what is

peculiar to Schopenhauer's life, but what is peculiar to that special period of his life.) Let us listen, for instance, to one of the most expressive among the countless passages which he has written in honour of the aesthetic condition (*World as Will and Representation*, Book III, Section 38); let us listen to the tone, the suffering, the happiness, the gratitude, with which such words are uttered:

> This is the painless state which Epicurus[30] praised as the highest good and as the state of the gods; we are during that moment freed from the vile urgings of the will, we celebrate the Sabbath of the will's hard labour, the wheel of Ixion[31] stands still.

What vehemence of expression! What images of ordeal and protracted tedium! How almost pathological is that contrast between 'that moment' and everything else, the 'wheel of Ixion', 'the hard labour of the will', 'vile urgings of the will'. But granted that Schopenhauer was a hundred times right for himself personally, how does that help our insight into the nature of the beautiful? Schopenhauer has described *one* effect of the beautiful – the calming of the will – but is this effect the usual one? As has been mentioned, Stendhal, no less a sensualist than Schopenhauer but with a more contented personality than the latter, places emphasis on another effect of the 'beautiful': 'The beautiful *promises* happiness.' To him it is precisely the *excitement of the will* (the 'interest') by beauty that seems to be the essential fact. And does not Schopenhauer ultimately lay himself open to the objection that he is quite wrong in regarding himself as a Kantian on this point, that he has utterly failed to understand, in a Kantian sense, the Kantian definition of the beautiful – that the beautiful pleased him as well by means of an interest, by means, in fact, of the strongest and most personal interest of all, that of the victim of torture who escapes from his torture? … And to come back again to

our first question, ‘What is the *meaning* of a philosopher paying homage to ascetic ideals?’ We get now, at any rate, a first hint: he wishes to *escape from torture.*

7

Let us try not to cringe when we hear the word ‘torture’ – there is certainly in this case plenty to mitigate it – there is even something to laugh at. For we must certainly not underestimate the fact that Schopenhauer, who in practice treated sexuality as a personal enemy (including its tool, woman, that ‘*instrumentum diaboli*’),[32] *needed* enemies to keep himself in good humour; that he loved grim, bitter, bilious words; that he raged for the sake of raging, with a passion; that he would have fallen ill, would have become a *pessimist* (for he was not a pessimist, however much he wished to be) without his enemies, without Hegel,[33] woman, sensuality and the whole will for existence – for persistence. It is safe to say that otherwise Schopenhauer would *not* have persisted; he would have run away; but his enemies held him back, and always enticed him back again to existence; his rage was his release, just as theirs was to the ancient Cynics;[34] it was his recreation, his recompense, his remedy for disgust, his *happiness*. So much with regard to what is most personal in the case of Schopenhauer; on the other hand, there is still much which is typical in him – and finally now we come back to our problem.

Beyond doubt, so long as there have been philosophers, and wherever in the world philosophers have existed (from India to England, to take the opposite poles of aptitude for philosophic endeavours), there exists a genuine antipathy on the part of philosophers towards sensuality. Schopenhauer is merely the most eloquent and, if one can

appreciate it, the most fascinating and enchanting expression of that sentiment. There similarly exists a real philosophic bias and fondness for the ascetic ideal; there should be no illusions on this score. Both these sentiments, as has been said, are characteristic of the true philosopher; if a 'philosopher' lacks both of them, then he is – you may be certain of it – nothing of the sort. What does this *mean*? For this state of affairs must first be interpreted; *in itself*, it stands there, dumb for all eternity, like any 'Thing-in-itself'.

Every animal, including *la bête philosophe*,[35] strives instinctively after the most favourable conditions: those under which it can exert its full strength, and experience its greatest feeling of power; every animal also instinctively abhors (and with an acute sense 'surpassing all reason')[36] any kind of disruption or hindrance which obstructs or could obstruct his path to this optimum (it is *not* his way to 'happiness' of which I speak, but his path to power, to action, the most powerful action, and in point of fact in many cases his way to misery). Likewise, the philosopher abhors *marriage*, together with anything that might entice him to marry – marriage is for the philosopher a fatal hindrance on the path to the ideal situation. Among the great philosophers of history, which have been married? Heraclitus, Plato, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Kant, Schopenhauer – they were not married, and, further, one cannot even *imagine* them as married. A married philosopher belongs in a *comedy*, that is what I say; and as for that exception of Socrates – the mischievous Socrates married, it seems, *ironically*, just to prove *this very rule*.[37]

Every philosopher would say, as Buddha said, when the birth of a son was announced to him: 'Râhula has been born to me, a fetter has been forged for me'[38] (Râhula means here 'a little demon'); a moment of reflection must come to

every ‘free spirit’ (granted that he has had previously a thoughtless moment), just as one came once to the same Buddha: ‘Confining and oppressive,’ he reflected, ‘is life in the house; it is an unclean place; freedom is found in leaving the house.’ ‘Because he thought like this, he left the house.’ So many bridges to *independence* are shown in the ascetic ideal that the philosopher cannot refrain from rejoicing when he hears the history of all those resolute men, who one day refused all servitude and went into some *desert*, even granting that they were only stubborn asses, and the very antithesis of keen minds.

What, then, does the ascetic ideal mean in a philosopher? This is my answer – it will have been guessed long ago – when he sees this ideal, the philosopher smiles because he sees therein an optimum of the conditions of the highest and boldest intellect; he does *not* thereby deny ‘existence’, he rather affirms thereby his existence and only his existence, and this is perhaps not far from making the imperious wish, *pereat mundus, fiat philosophia, fiat philosophus, fiam!* …[39]

8

These philosophers, you see, are by no means reliable, honest witnesses and judges of the *value* of the ascetic ideal. They think of *themselves* – what is the ‘saint’ to them? They think only of that which to *them* is most indispensable, of freedom from coercion, disturbance, noise; freedom from business, duties, cares; of a clear head; of the dance, spring and the flight of thoughts; of good air – rare, clear, free, dry mountain air, the kind of air in which all animal existence is heightened, intensified, and takes to flight; they think of peace in every cellar; all the hounds

neatly chained and quiet; no remorse of wounded ambition; viscera quietly working, busy as mills, but unseen; the heart alien, transcendent, eager, posthumous – all in all, they think of the ascetic ideal as the serene asceticism of a glorious and newly fledged creature, sweeping over life rather than resting.

We know the three great catch-words of the ascetic ideal: poverty, humility, chastity;[40] and if we look closely at the lives of all the great productive, creative intellects, we will find these present again and again, in some measure. *Not* for a minute, as is self-evident, are these to be considered as 'virtues' – what has this type of man to do with virtues! – but as the most essential and natural conditions in which they *flourish*. In this connection it is quite possible that their dominant intellect first had to curb their audacity or their wanton sensuality, or that they had to struggle, with vigour and determination, to maintain their dedication to the 'harsh life of the desert' against an inclination to luxury and comfort, or similarly against an extravagant liberality. But their intellect did bring about all this, simply because it was the *dominant* instinct, which imposed its demands upon all the other instincts. It still does this; if it ceased to do so, it would simply not be dominant. So there is not one iota of 'virtue' in all this.

Further, this *desert*, of which I have just spoken, to which the strong, independent and well-equipped spirits retreat as hermits – oh, how different is it from the cultured classes' notion of a desert! In certain cases, in fact, they are the desert. And it is certain that all those acting the part of intellectuals would not endure this desert for a minute. It is not romantic enough or Syrian enough for them, not enough like a desert stage! Here as well there are plenty of camels, but at this point the resemblance ceases. But a desert

nowadays is something like this – perhaps a deliberate obscurity; avoidance of confronting one's self; an aversion to noise, recognition, newspapers, anything that influences one; a little office, daily tasks, something that hides rather than brings to light; sometimes associating with tame, pleasant animals and birds, the sight of which brings enjoyment; a mountain for company, but not a dead one, one with *eyes* (that is, with lakes); perhaps even a room in a crowded hotel of the ordinary sort, where one can easily blend in and count on being able to talk with impunity to everyone; here is the desert – oh, it is lonely and desolate enough, believe you me! I admit that when Heraclitus retreated to the courts and cloisters of the colossal temple of Artemis,[41] this 'desert' was something worthier; why have we *no* such temples now? (perhaps we *do* have them after all; I was just thinking of my lovely study in the Piazza di San Marco,[42] in the spring, of course, between ten and twelve in the morning). But that which Heraclitus shunned is just what *we* too avoid nowadays: the noise and popular babble of the Ephesians, their politics, news from the 'empire' (I mean, of course, Persia), their commerce in 'the things of today' – for there is one thing from which we philosophers especially need a rest – from the things of 'today'. We revere what is calm, cold, noble, distant, ancient, everything, in fact, at the sight of which the soul is not bound to brace itself up and defend itself – something with which one can speak without speaking *aloud*.

Just listen now to the tone an individual has when he speaks; everyone has his own tone and is fond of his own tone. That one over there, for instance, is bound to be an agitator, that is, an empty head, an empty mug; whatever may go into him, everything comes back from him dull and thick, heavy with the echo of the great void. That one over

there nearly always speaks hoarsely; has he, perhaps, *thought* himself hoarse? It may be so – ask the physiologists – but he who thinks in *words*, thinks as a speaker and not as a thinker (which shows that he does not think objectively, about things, but only of his relations with things – that, in point of fact, he only thinks of *himself* and his audience). This third one speaks aggressively, he comes too near to us, his breath can be felt upon us – instinctively we are silent, although he speaks to us through a book; the tone revealed in his style supplies the reason – he has no time, he has little faith in himself, he finds expression now or never. But one who is sure of himself speaks softly; he seeks a place of concealment, he keeps you in suspense.

A philosopher may be recognized by the fact that he shuns showy and ostentatious things – things such as fame, princes and women, which is not to say that they do not come to him. He shuns any glaring light; therefore he shuns his age and its 'daylight'. Therein he dwells as a shadow; the deeper his sun sinks, the taller he, the shadow, grows. As for his 'humility', he endures, as he endures darkness, a certain dependence and obscurity; further, he fears the shock of lightning; he does not seek refuge under a tree which is too isolated and exposed to offer any protection – a tree upon which every storm vents its temper, every temper its storm. His 'maternal' instinct, his secret love for that which grows within him, guides him into states where he is relieved from the necessity of thinking of *himself*, in the same way in which the *maternal* instinct in woman has generally maintained woman's dependent position. After all, they demand little enough, these philosophers; their motto is 'He who possesses is possessed.' All this is *not*, as I must say again and again, to be attributed to a virtue, to some noble desire for moderation and simplicity; but because

their supreme lord *so* demands, cunningly and adamantly; their lord whose obsession dictates that he collect and hoard everything – time, strength, love, interest – to satisfy it.

This sort of man prefers not to be disturbed by enmity, or by friendship; he forgets or despises easily. It strikes him as bad form to play the martyr, 'to *suffer* for truth' – he leaves all that to the ambitious and to the stage-heroes of the intellect, and to all those, in fact, who have time enough for such luxuries (they, the philosophers themselves, have something to *do* for truth). They make a sparing use of big words; they are said to be reluctant to employ the word 'truth' itself, as it has an ostentatious ring to it.

Finally, as far as the 'chastity' of philosophers is concerned, their fruitfulness is obviously not that of begetting children; perhaps they have some other way to ensure the survival of their name, or to achieve some modicum of immortality (philosophers in ancient India would express themselves with still greater boldness: 'Of what use is progeny to him whose soul is the world?'[43]). In this attitude there is to be found no trace of any ascetic scruple or hatred of the flesh which is essential in the practice of what is called chastity, and it is for this very reason that an athlete or a jockey who abstains from relations with women is not regarded as practising chastity; it is rather, at least during the period of their advanced philosophic pregnancy, their dominant instinct. Every artist knows how detrimental the effects of sexual intercourse can be when the intellectual and emotional demands connected with preparing his new work are at their height; as far as the strongest artists and those with the surest instincts are concerned, this is not necessarily a case of experience – hard experience – but it is simply the manifestation of their

‘maternal’ instinct which, in order to benefit the growing work, ruthlessly appropriates all other reserves of energy, of animal vigour; the greater force then *consumes* the lesser.

Let us now apply this interpretation to the case of Schopenhauer, which we have already mentioned; in his case, the sight of the beautiful obviously served to stimulate his *principal strength* (that of contemplation and of intense penetration), which then exploded and all at once became master of his consciousness. But this by no means excludes the possibility of that particular sweetness and fullness which is peculiar to the aesthetic state, springing directly from the ‘sensual’ component (just as that ‘idealism’ which is characteristic of girls at puberty stems from the same source) – it may be, consequently, that sensuality is not left behind upon entering the aesthetic state, as Schopenhauer believed, but merely becomes transfigured, and ceases to enter into the consciousness as sexual excitement. (I shall return once again to this point in connection with the more delicate problems of the *physiology of the aesthetic*, a subject which up to the present has been seemingly untouched and insufficiently elucidated.)[44]

9

A certain asceticism, a hard and firm habit of renunciation, is, as we have seen, one of the most favourable prerequisites for a supreme intellect and, consequently, for the most natural corollaries of such an intellect; so it will come as no surprise if the ascetic ideal has never been treated by philosophers in an impartial manner. A serious historical investigation shows the connection between the ascetic ideal and philosophy to be even closer and stronger. It may be said that it was only in the *leading strings* of this

ideal that philosophy really learned to make its tentative first steps – alas how clumsily, alas how crossly, alas how ready to tumble down and lie on its stomach and pout was this shy little darling of a brat with its bandy legs!

The early history of philosophy is like that of all good things; for a long time philosophers suffered from a want of self-confidence; they kept looking round to see if anyone would come to their aid; further, they were afraid of everyone who looked at them. Just enumerate in order the particular instincts and virtues of the philosopher – his instinct to doubt, to deny, to prevaricate (to be 'ephectic'),[45] his instinct to analyse, search, explore, dare, his instinct to compare and to equate, his desire to be neutral and objective, his desire for everything which is '*sine ira et studio*';[46] has it yet been realized that for the longest time these tendencies ran counter to the principal demands of morality and conscience? (To say nothing at all of *Reason*, which even Luther was fond of calling '*the sly whore*'.) Has it yet been appreciated that *if* a philosopher had become conscious of his character, he must feel himself the embodiment of '*nitimur in vetitum*'[47] – and consequently *guard* himself against 'sensations of himself', against self-consciousness?

It is, I repeat, just the same with all good things to which we can now point with pride; even measured against the ancient Greeks, our modern life is pure *hubris* and godlessness in so far as it is power and the consciousness of power, and not weakness; for a long time the things which are the very antitheses of those which we honour today have had good conscience on their side, and God as their guardian. Our attitude to nature nowadays, our mechanized violation of nature, along with the unscrupulous ingenuity of our scientists and engineers, is nothing less than *hubris*.

Hubris is present in our attitude to God, that is, to some teleological and ethical spider that is supposed to be lurking behind the mesh of the causal web. Like Charles the Bold in his struggle with Louis XI,[48] we may say, '*je combats l'universelle araignée*';[49] *hubris* is present in our attitude to *ourselves* – for we experiment with ourselves in a way that we would not allow with any animal, and with pleasure and curiosity perform vivisections on our souls; how little the 'salvation of the soul' matters to us now! We heal ourselves afterwards; we have no doubt that being ill is instructive, even more instructive than being well – *those who make us sick* seem to us today even more necessary than medicine-men or 'saviours'. There is no doubt that we do violence to ourselves nowadays; we are nutcrackers of the soul, questioning and questionable, as though life were nothing but the cracking of a nut; and thus we must become day by day more deserving of being questioned, more deserving of asking questions, *more deserving* – of life? …

All good things were once bad things; every original sin has become an original virtue. Marriage, for example, was for a long time regarded as infringing upon the rights of the community; in former times a man had to make amends for having the audacity to claim one woman for himself (to this phase belongs the *jus primae noctis*[50] still practised in Cambodia as the privilege of the priests, guardians of the 'good old customs'). The feelings we call tenderness, benevolence, care, sympathy – which have been valued so highly that they are now almost 'intrinsic values' – were for a very long time actually despised by their possessors; gentleness was at one time a cause for shame, just as harshness is now (compare *Beyond Good and Evil*, section 260). The submission to *law*; oh, how reluctantly the noble races throughout the world renounced the vendetta[51] and

gave to the law power over themselves! ‘Law’ was for a long time a *vetitum*,[52] an outrage, something unheard of; it was introduced with force, *as* a force, something to which men submitted only in shame. Every tiny step forward on earth was made at a price – that of mental and physical torture. Nowadays this point of view, ‘that not only stepping forward, but stepping at all, movement, change, all needed their countless martyrs’, sounds so strange to us – this I have made known in *The Dawn*, section 18.

‘Nothing has been purchased more dearly,’ says the same book a little later,[53] ‘than the small measure of reason and feeling of freedom upon which we now pride ourselves.’ It is this very pride, however, which makes it almost impossible for us today to have sympathy for those who lived through vast stretches of time preceding the period of ‘world history’ when ‘morality of custom’ held sway, and to consider this lapse of time as the real and decisive epoch that established the character of mankind, an epoch when suffering, cruelty, hypocrisy, revenge and the denial of reason were regarded as virtue; whereas well-being, longing for knowledge, peace and pity were regarded as dangers; an epoch when being pitied was looked upon as an insult, work as a disgrace, madness as a divine trait, and any kind of *change* as immoral in itself and pregnant with disaster!

10

There is in the same book, section 42, a critical examination of the *scorn* which the earliest race of contemplative men had to endure – when they were not feared, they were despised! Contemplation first appeared on earth in a disguised form, in an ambiguous form, with malice and often with anxiety – of this there can be no doubt. The element in

the instincts of contemplative men that was brooding, not active or warlike, long enveloped them in a cloud of suspicion; the only way to combat this was to provoke a genuine *fear* of oneself. And the old Brahmans,[54] for example, knew full well how to do this! The first philosophers knew how to provide their existence and appearance with a meaning, a foundation, a background from which men learned to *fear* them; considered more carefully, they did this from an even more fundamental need, the need to inspire in themselves fear and self-respect. For they found in themselves all their judgements turned *against* them; they had to fight off every kind of suspicion and antagonism against 'the philosopher in themselves'. Being men of a cruel age, they did this using the most fearful methods: self-abuse, ingenious means of self-mortification – these were the principal methods employed by these ambitious hermits and intellectual revolutionaries, who were obliged to suppress the gods and the traditions within themselves, so as to enable themselves to *believe* in their own revolution. I should mention here the famous story of the king named Vishvamitra,[55] who, as the result of a thousand years of self-martyrdom, achieved such a sense of power and confidence in himself that he undertook to build a *new heaven* – the preternatural symbol of all the stories of philosophers from the most ancient times down to the present. Everyone who has ever built a '*new heaven*' found the power for it only in his *own hell*.

Let us state everything concisely. To be even *possible*, the philosophical man had to masquerade and disguise himself as one of the *age-old* types of the contemplative man, to disguise himself as priest, wizard, soothsayer, as a religious man in general; the *ascetic ideal* has for a long time served the philosopher as a superficial form, as a condition which

enabled him to exist … To be able to be a philosopher he had to *exemplify* the ideal; and to do this, he was bound to *believe* in it. The peculiarly withdrawn attitude of philosophers, with their negation of the world, their hostility to life, their suspicion of the senses, which has been maintained up to the most recent time, and has almost become the ideal *philosophical attitude* – this is the result of the dire conditions under which philosophy came into existence and continued to exist; for quite a very long time philosophy would have been *absolutely impossible* in the world without an ascetic cloak and dress, without an ascetic misunderstanding of itself. Expressed clearly and concretely, *the ascetic priest* has taken on the repulsive and dull appearance of the grub, in which form philosophy could live and crawl about …

Has all that really *changed*? Has that colourful and dangerous winged creature, that 'spirit' which that caterpillar concealed within itself, thanks to a sunnier, warmer, brighter world, finally shuffled off its cocoon and escaped into the light? Can we today point to enough pride, enough daring, enough courage, enough self-confidence, enough determination, enough willingness to take responsibility, enough *freedom of the will*, for 'the philosopher' to be now really *possible?*

11

And now that the *ascetic priest* has come into our view, we can tackle our problem. What is the meaning of the ascetic ideal? Only now does it become 'serious' – vitally serious. We are confronted with the *real specimens of something serious*. 'What is the meaning of all seriousness?' This even more fundamental question is perhaps already forming itself

in our minds, a question for physiologists, as is only proper, but one which we shall for the time being pass over. In that ideal the ascetic priest finds not only his faith, but also his will, his strength, his interest. His *right* to existence stands and falls with that ideal. Is there any wonder, then, that we here run up against a formidable opponent (on the supposition, of course, that we are the opponents of that ideal), an opponent fighting for his life against those who repudiate that ideal? …

On the other hand, it is from the outset improbable that such a biased attitude towards our problem will do him any particular good; the ascetic priest himself will scarcely prove the most capable champion of his own ideal (on the same principle on which a woman usually fails when she wishes to champion the cause of ‘womanhood’) – let alone proving him to be the most objective critic and judge of the controversy raised here. We shall therefore (as is already so obvious) actually have to help him to defend himself properly against us, rather than having to fear being thoroughly refuted by him.

The notion which is the subject of this dispute is the *value* of our life from the standpoint of the ascetic priests; this life, then (together with the whole of which it is a part, ‘Nature’, ‘the world’, the whole sphere of becoming and passing away), is placed by them in relation to an existence of quite another character, which it excludes and to which it is opposed, *unless* it turns against itself and *denies itself*; in this case, the case of an ascetic life, life is regarded as a bridge to another form of existence. The ascetic treats life as a wrong path, in which one must retrace one’s steps till one comes to the place where it starts; or he treats it as an error which one may, no *must*, refute through action; for he

demands that he should be followed; he enforces, where he can, *his* judgement of existence.

What does this mean? Such a monstrous way of thinking is not an exceptional case, or a curiosity recorded in human history; it is one of the most general and persistent phenomena. A being on another world observing terrestrial life from afar might be led to the conclusion that earth was a superb specimen of an *ascetic planet*, the abode of discontented, arrogant and repulsive creatures who maintained a deep disgust of themselves, of the world, of all life, and who brought upon themselves as much woe as possible for the sheer pleasure derived from doing so – presumably their one and only pleasure. Let us consider how regularly the ascetic priest appears almost everywhere throughout history; he is not a member of any particular race; he thrives everywhere; he arises in every social class. Not that he breeds and propagates his ethical system by heredity: the contrary is the case – there is in him a deep instinct which forbids him to propagate, generally speaking. It must be a vital need which makes this ascetic priesthood, *hostile to life* as it is, appear again and again, always to thrive and prosper. *Nature* – life itself – must have some *urgent interest* in the existence and preservation of such a self-contradictory species. For an ascetic life is a self-contradiction; here resentment without equal prevails, the resentment of an insatiable instinct and ambition which would be master, not merely over some element in life, but over life itself, over life's most demanding and profound conditions; here is an attempt made to use power to dam the sources of power; here a baleful eye is cast at physiological well-being, especially against the expression of such well-being, beauty, joy; while a sense of pleasure is experienced and *sought* in failure, in decay, in pain, in

misfortune, in ugliness, in wilful privation, in self-denial and in flagellation. All of this is supremely paradoxical; we are here confronted with a rift that *wills* itself to be a rift, which *enjoys* itself in this very *suffering*, and becomes more confident, more triumphant, even as its own essential physiological vitality *decreases*. 'Triumph precisely in the ultimate agony': under this extravagant emblem the ascetic ideal has always done battle; in this enticing mystery, in this symbol of rapture and torment, it recognized its brightest light, its salvation, its final victory. *Crux, nux, lux*[56] – it has all these three in one.

12

Granted that such a corporeal desire for contradiction and the perverse is induced to *philosophize*, on what will it vent its very personal caprice? On that which is perceived most vividly as true, as real; it will look for *error* in those very places where the vital instinct believes quite confidently that truth is to be found. It will, for instance, after the example of the ascetics of the Vedânta,[57] reduce matter to an illusion, and similarly treat pain, the manifold, the whole logical contrast of 'subject' and 'object' – errors, nothing but errors! To renounce the belief in one's own ego, to deny to oneself one's own 'reality' – what a triumph! And here then we have a much higher kind of triumph, which is not merely a triumph over the senses, over appearances, but a cruel act of violence against *reason*; and this ecstasy culminates in the ascetic self-contempt, the ascetic scorn of one's own reason making this decree: there *is* a realm of truth and of life, but reason is specifically *excluded* from it! …

(Incidentally, even in the Kantian notion of 'the intelligible character of things' there remains a trace of that lascivious

discord, so dear to the heart of the ascetic, that discord which likes to turn reason against itself; in fact, ‘intelligible character’ means in Kant a kind of quality in things of which the intellect comprehends only so much that the intellect finds it *utterly incomprehensible*.)[58]

After all, as men of science, let us not be ungrateful towards such resolute reversals of the ordinary perspectives and values, with which the mind has for too long raged against itself with apparently futile irreverence! In the same way, seeing things differently, indeed *wishing* to see things differently, is not without significance as training and preparation of the intellect for its eternal ‘objectivity’ – objectivity being understood not as ‘contemplation without interest’ (for that is inconceivable and nonsensical), but as having the pros and cons *at our disposal*, so as to get to know how to employ the *diversity* of perspectives and emotional interpretations for the advancement of knowledge.

Henceforth, my philosophic colleagues, let us be on our guard against this dangerous ancient mythology which has set up a ‘pure, will-less, painless, timeless subject of knowledge’; let us be wary of the tentacles of such contradictory notions as ‘pure reason’, ‘absolute intelligence’, ‘knowledge-in-itself’ – in these theories an eye that cannot be conceived has to be conceived, an eye which is turned in no direction at all, an eye in which the active and interpreting functions are supposed to be suppressed, absent; those functions, by means of which ‘abstract’ seeing at once became seeing something; in these theories consequently the inconceivable and the nonsensical eye is always demanded. There is *only* a seeing from a perspective, *only* a ‘knowing’ from a perspective, and the *more* emotions we express concerning a thing, the *more*

eyes, different eyes, we train on the same thing, the more complete will be our ‘idea’ of that thing, our ‘objectivity’. But the elimination of the will altogether, the switching-off of the emotions one and all (if we could do so) – well! Would not that be a sort of intellectual *castration*? …

13

But let us return. Such a self-contradiction, as apparently manifests itself among the ascetics, ‘life turned *against* itself’, is – so much is absolutely obvious – from the physiological and not only from the psychological standpoint, simply nonsense. It can only be an *apparent* contradiction; it must be a kind of provisional expression, an interpretation, a formula, an adaptation, a psychological misunderstanding of something, whose *real nature* could not for a long time be understood or described; a mere word forced into an old *gap* in human knowledge. Briefly put, the case against its being real is this: *the ascetic ideal springs from the prophylactic and self-preservative instincts which mark a decadent life*, which endeavours by every resource at its disposal to sustain itself, unceasingly struggling to maintain its existence; it points to a partial physiological reluctance and exhaustion, against which the most profound vital instincts, which have remained intact, fight ceaselessly, using new weapons and discoveries. The ascetic ideal is such a weapon; its position is consequently exactly the reverse of that which the worshippers of the ideal imagine – life struggles in it and through it with death and *against* death; the ascetic ideal is a subterfuge or stratagem for the *preservation* of life.

As history teaches, an important fact is revealed by the extent to which this ideal could rule and exercise power

over Man, especially in all those places where the civilization and taming of Man was successful; that fact is the *diseased state* of the kind of man which has existed up to the present, at any rate, of the man who has been tamed, the physiological struggle of Man with death (more precisely, with the disgust with life, with exhaustion, with the wish for the 'end'). The ascetic priest is the very incarnation of the desire for an existence of another kind, existence in another place – he is, in fact, the apotheosis of this desire, its essential fervour and passion; but the very *power* of this desire is the fetter which binds him here, which makes of him a tool that must labour to create more favourable conditions for earthly existence, for existence on the human plane – it is this very power that enables him to persuade the masses of the unfit, the discontent, the dispossessed, the unfortunate, all those who have inflicted misery on themselves, to retain their hold on life, by instinctively going before them and leading them. You understand me already; this ascetic priest, this apparent enemy of life, this *denier* – he is among the vital *conserving* and *affirming* forces …

Where does it come from, this diseased state? For Man is more diseased, more insecure, more changeable, more unpredictable, more capricious than any other animal, there is no doubt of it – he is *the* diseased animal; why so? Certainly he has also dared, innovated, braved more, and challenged fate more than all the other animals put together; he, the great experimenter, the unsatisfied, the insatiable, who struggles for supreme mastery against the beasts, Nature, and the gods; he, never conquered, always looking towards the future; he, who finds no longer any rest from his own aggressive strength, goaded inexorably on by the spur of the future dug into the flesh of the present – how

should so brave and rich an animal not also be the most endangered, the most chronically ill, the most seriously ill animal, of all? …

Man is sick of it all; often enough there are whole epidemics of this condition (as about 1348, the time of the Dance of Death);[59] but even this very nausea, this weariness, this disgust with himself, all this builds within him with such intensity that it is immediately made into a new fetter. His ‘no’, which he utters to life, brings to light as if by magic an abundance of gentler affirmations; even when he *wounds* himself, this master of destruction, of self-destruction, it is subsequently the wound itself that compels him *to live*.

14

The more that this sickliness in Man becomes something normal – and that this has occurred is beyond dispute – the more appreciation we should have for those individuals who embody exceptional psychological and physical vigour, who are such a *boon* to humanity, and the more carefully the healthy should be isolated from the air of the sick-room, the worst air of all. But is that done?

The sick are the greatest threat to the healthy; it is *not* from the strongest that ill befalls the strong, but from the weakest. But is that known?

Broadly considered, it is not the fear of Man which we should wish to see diminished; for this fear forces the strong to be strong, at times even frightful – it *preserves* the healthy. What is to be feared, what poses more of a threat than any other possibility, is not that Man is regarded as a source of fear, but as something *disgusting* and even *pathetic*. If disgust and pity were one day to mate, to breed,

the immediate and inevitable product of such a mating would be something monstrous – the ‘last will’ of Man, his desire for oblivion, nihilism. And, in fact, the way there has already been paved. He who has not only a nose, but eyes and ears, breathes in the atmosphere of a madhouse, a hospital, everywhere he goes – I am speaking, as is only reasonable, of all mankind’s cultural treasures, of every kind of ‘Europe’ that there is in the world. The *sickly* pose the greatest threat to Man, *not* the wicked, *not* the ‘beasts of prey’. It is the *weakest* – those who are failures from the outset, the unfortunate, the oppressed – who most undermine the life of Man, who poison and destroy our trust in life, in Man, in ourselves. Where can we escape from it, that covert glance (which brings about such deep sadness in us), from that averted gaze of him who is doomed from the beginning, that look which betrays what such a man says to himself – that look which is a sigh? ‘If only I were someone else,’ he sighs, ‘but there is no hope. I am what I am. How could I escape from myself? And, truly – *I am sick of myself!*’

On this soil of self-contempt, this swampy soil, grow weeds and poisonous plants of every sort, and all so tiny, so hidden, so treacherous, so sugary. Here the soil teems with the worms of revenge and vindictiveness; here the stench of things secret and concealed hangs in the air; here the web of the most malignant conspiracy is spun – the conspiracy of the miserable against the strong and victorious; here the very sight of the victorious elicits *contempt*. And how disingenuous not to acknowledge this contempt for what it is! Such a pretentious display of big words and grand gestures, such talent for ‘righteous’ slander! These wretches! What noble eloquence gushes from their lips! How much sugary, moist humility and submissiveness wells up in their eyes! What do they really want? At any rate to

represent righteousness, love, wisdom, pre-eminence, that is the ambition of the ‘lowly’, the sick! And how clever does such an ambition make them! You cannot help but admire the counterfeiter’s skill with which the stamp of virtue, even the ring, the golden ring of virtue, is here imitated. They have taken exclusive possession of virtue, these weaklings and wretched invalids; there is no doubt of it; ‘We alone are the good, the righteous,’ they say, ‘we alone are the *homines bonae voluntatis*.’[60] They wander in our midst, uttering reproaches and warnings to us – as though health, fitness, strength, pride, the feeling of power were really vicious things in themselves, for which one would have some day to do penance, bitter penance. Oh, how keen they are to *exact* penance, how willing to be *hangmen*! Among them we find an abundance of spiteful, vengeful creatures disguised as judges, who hold the word ‘justice’ in their mouths like venomous spittle – with lips always pursed, ready to spit at anyone who does not seem disaffected, but goes blithely on his way. Among them, again, we find many representatives of that most vile sort – the smug contemptible liars who strive to impersonate ‘beautiful souls’,[61] and perhaps also try to pass off their degeneracy, enwrapped in verse and swaddling clothes, as ‘purity of heart’ – the pursuers of ‘self-gratification’, the moral onanists. The desire of the sick to represent *some* form or other of superiority, their instinct for subterfuge, which leads them to subjugate the healthy – is there any place where it cannot be found, this desire for power of the very weakest?

The sick woman especially; no one surpasses her in the subtleties of domineering, oppressing, tyrannizing. The sick woman, moreover, spares nothing, living or dead; she digs

up everything, no matter how deeply buried (the Bogos[62] say, ‘Woman is a hyena’).[63]

Look into the background of every family, of every institution, of every community; you will see everywhere the struggle of the sick against the healthy – a silent fight for the most part with small dosages of poison, with pin-pricks, with grimaces of patient suffering, but also at times with that diseased Pharisaism[64] of *pure* pantomime, playing the favourite role of ‘righteous indignation’. Even in the hallowed halls of learning this hoarse yelping of sick hounds, this rabid mendaciousness of such ‘noble’ Pharisees can be heard. (I remind those readers who have ears once more of that apostle of vindictiveness, Eugen Dühring of Berlin, who disgorges more vile offal on the topic of morality than anyone in all of Germany today; Dühring, the most belligerent moralist that there is today, even among his own kind, the anti-Semites).[65]

They are all full of resentment, these wretches and casualties, a whole quivering subterranean kingdom of revenge, relentless and insatiable in its outbursts against the happy, and equally so in disguises for revenge, in pretexts for revenge; when will they really reach their ultimate, most subtle, most sublime triumph of revenge? At that time, doubtless, when they succeed in forcing their own misery, in fact, all misery, *into the consciousness* of the happy, so that the latter begin one day to be ashamed of their happiness, and perhaps say to themselves when they meet, ‘It is a shame to be happy; *there is too much misery!*’ …

But there could be no worse misunderstanding than for the happy, the fit, the strong in body and mind, to be led in this way to doubt their *right to happiness*. Away with this ‘perverse world’! Away with this shameful mawkishness!

Preventing the sick from making the healthy sick – for that is what such mawkishness comes to – *this* ought to be our supreme object in the world – but for this it is above all essential that the healthy should remain *isolated* from the sick, not even see the sick, so as not to mistake themselves for the sick. Or might it be their mission to be nurses or physicians?

But they could hardly be more mistaken and deceived about *their* mission – the higher *must* not degrade itself by allowing itself to be the tool of the lower, the pathos of distance *must* keep their missions always separate. The right of the happy to existence, the privilege of the bells with a full tone over the discordant cracked bells, is indeed a thousand times greater, for they alone are the *custodians* of the future, they alone are *beholden* to Man's future. What *they* can do, what *they* should do, is what the sick can never do, should never do; but if they are to be *enabled* to do what *they alone* must do, how can they possibly be free to play the doctor, the comforter, the 'Saviour' of the sick? ...

And we need good air! good air! and away, at any rate, from the madhouses and hospitals of culture! And we therefore want good company, *our own* company, or solitude, if it must be so! But away, at any rate, from the noxious fumes of internal corruption and the hidden putrefaction of disease! So that, my friends, we may defend ourselves, at least still for a while against the two worst plagues that could have been reserved for us – against the *great revulsion at Man*! against the *great pity for Man*!

15

If you have understood the reasons completely – and I insist that you grasp and understand them *thoroughly* – the

reasons that it absolutely *cannot* be the responsibility of the healthy to nurse the sick, to make the sick healthy, you should also have grasped something else – that doctors and nurses must themselves also *be sick*. And now we have and hold with both our hands the essence of the ascetic priest.

The ascetic priest must be accepted by us as the predestined saviour, shepherd and champion of the sick flock; in this way alone can we understand his most historic mission. *His dominion is over the suffering*, and to this his instinct drives him, wherein lie his own special art, his mastery, his kind of happiness. He must himself be sick; he must be close to the sick and the unfortunate so as to understand them, so as to arrive at a common understanding with them; but he must also be strong, master of himself even more than of others, formidable, indeed, in his desire for power, so as to inspire in the weak trust and awe, so that he can be their support, bulwark, prop, compulsion, overseer, tyrant, god. He has to protect them, his flocks – against whom? Against the healthy, to be sure, but also against the envy of the healthy. He must be the natural adversary of, and *despise*, all crude, stormy, unrestrained, harsh, violently predatory health and might. The priest is the earliest form of the more *delicate* animal which scorns more easily than it hates. He will not be spared the scourge of war with the beasts of prey, a war of cunning (of 'intellect') rather than of force, as is self-evident – he will, under certain circumstances, find it almost necessary to transform into a new species of predator, or at the very least to *foreshadow* a ferocious new animal in which the polar bear, the graceful panther patiently stalking her prey and, not least important, the fox, are combined into a single monstrous beast as fascinating as it is fearsome. If forced by necessity, he will reveal his ursine nobility – determined,

venerable, clever, cold, full of calculated superiority, as the herald and mouthpiece of more mysterious powers, sometimes even going among the other predators, determined to sow on their soil, wherever he can, suffering, discord, self-contradiction, and only too confident in his capacity as master of the *suffering* at all times. He carries with him, to be sure, balms and ointments; but before he can be the healer he must first inflict injury; so, while soothing the pain which the wound causes, *he also puts poison into the wound*. He is well versed in this above all things, this wizard and wild beast tamer, in whose presence everything healthy must become ill, and everything ill must become tame.

He does protect his sick flock well enough, this strange shepherd; he protects them even against themselves, against the wickedness, deceit, malice and all the other ills that the frail and the diseased are heir to (and which smoulder even in the midst of the flock). He fights hard, using his cunning and stealth, to preserve the flock, to prevent it from falling into anarchy, disorder and disarray; for in the flock, *resentment*, that most dangerous of explosives, continually accumulates. His importance, his value, lies precisely in his peculiar ability to discharge this dynamite in such a way that the explosion is rendered harmless to the flock or the shepherd; if you wish to summarize the value of the priestly life, it would be correct to say the priest *directs resentment elsewhere*.

Everyone who suffers, in fact, seeks instinctively the cause of his suffering; to put it more precisely, an agent – to put it more precisely still, a *culprit,* some guilty party susceptible to pain – in brief, some living thing upon which, either actually or in effigy, he can, on any pretext, vent his emotions. For the release of emotion is the best palliative,

or should I say, *narcotic*, for any kind of affliction or pain, and to this he is addicted. In my judgement, the real physiological cause of resentment, revenge and so forth is *the wish to alleviate pain through the discharge of emotion*; this cause is generally, but in my view very erroneously, looked for in the defensive reaction of a 'reflex movement' when presented with a sudden threat, such as that which we observe in the decapitated frog which moves to avoid being splashed with corrosive acid. But the difference is fundamental. In one case the objective is to prevent being hurt any more; in the other case the object is to *relieve*, through a more violent emotion of any kind, a tormenting, insidious pain that is becoming nearly unbearable, and to banish it from consciousness, at least momentarily – for this purpose one needs an emotion as savage as possible, and to excite that emotion the first suitable pretext will suffice. 'It must be somebody's fault that I feel ill' – this sort of reasoning is universal among the ill, and they are more convinced of it, the more ignorant they remain of the real cause of their feeling ill, the physiological cause (the cause may lie in a disorder of the *nervus sympathicus*,[66] or in an excessive secretion of bile, or in an insufficiency of potassium sulphate and phosphate in the blood, or in an obstruction in the bowels which impedes the circulation of the blood, or in degeneration of the ovaries, and so forth).

All sufferers display a distressing eagerness and ingenuity in devising excuses for painful emotions; they revel in their suspicions, dwelling upon imagined slights and injuries; they grope through the entrails of their past and present in their search for obscure mysteries, so as to wallow in the anguish of suspicion; they intoxicate themselves on the venom of their own malice – they tear open their oldest wounds and bleed from scars long since healed; they blame and vilify

friends, wife, child – whomever is near to them. ‘I suffer: someone is to blame’ – all sick sheep think this. But his shepherd, the ascetic priest, says to him, ‘Quite so, my sheep, it must be the fault of someone; but you yourself are that someone, you alone are to blame – *you yourself are to blame for yourself*’; that is bold enough, false enough, but one thing is at least attained thereby, as I have said: resentment is – *diverted.*

16

You can see now what the healing instinct of life has at least *tried* to accomplish, in my view, through the ascetic priest, and why he found it necessary to resort, for a while, to such paradoxical and illogical notions as ‘guilt’, ‘sin’, ‘sinfulness’, ‘corruption’, ‘damnation’. What was intended was to make the sick *harmless* up to a certain point, to see the incurable destroy themselves, to direct the resentment of the less severely afflicted back upon themselves, (‘man needs but one thing’),[67] and to *exploit* similarly the bad instincts of all sufferers with a view to self-discipline, self-surveillance, self-mastery.

It is obvious that there can be no question at all in the case of a ‘medication’ of this kind, which is a mere emotional palliative, of any real *healing* of the sick in the physiological sense; it cannot even for a moment be asserted that in this connection the instinct of life has undertaken healing as its goal and purpose. All that was accomplished for a long time was, on the one hand, a kind of concentration and organization of the sick (this is termed ‘the Church’); on the other, a kind of provisional sequestering of the comparatively healthy, the more perfect specimens, and thus the cleaving of a *rift* between the

healthy and the sick – that was all! And it was much! It was *very much*!

In this essay I am proceeding, as you see, from an assumption which, as far as my readers are concerned, does not need to be proved beforehand; that assumption is that 'sinfulness' in Man is not a fact, but rather merely the interpretation of a fact, of a physiological discomfort – a discomfort seen through a moral and religious perspective which is no longer binding upon us. The fact that anyone *feels* 'guilty' or 'sinful' is certainly no more proof that he is justified in feeling so, than feeling healthy is proof that one *is* healthy. Remember the celebrated witch-trials;[68] in those days the most discerning and humane judges had no doubt but that they were confronted with guilt – *even the 'witches' themselves had no doubt on the point* – and yet the guilt was absent. Let me elaborate: I do not for a minute accept the existence of 'psychological pain' as a real fact, but only as an interpretation (a causal interpretation) of facts which could not hitherto be precisely explained; I still regard it therefore as a matter of speculation and something devoid of scientific cogency – just a nice fat word in place of a little question mark. If anyone cannot deal with his 'psychological pain', the cause is, speaking crudely, more likely to be found *not* in his 'psyche' but in his stomach (speaking crudely, I repeat, but by no means is it my intention that it should be heard or understood crudely). A strong and fit man digests his experiences (deeds and misdeeds all included) just as he digests his meals, even when he has some tough morsels to swallow. If he cannot 'deal with' an experience, this kind of indigestion is quite as much physiological as the other indigestion – and indeed, in more ways than one, simply one of the results of the other. One can adopt such a theory, and

yet, between ourselves, be the strongest opponent of all materialism.

17

But is he really a *physician*, this ascetic priest? We already understand why we can hardly call him a physician, however much he likes to regard himself as a ‘saviour’ and be admired as a ‘saviour’. Our most radical objection to priestly medication is that it is only the suffering, the discomfort of the one suffering, that he treats, and *not* its cause, *not* the actual condition. But if just for a moment you place yourself in the priest’s position and try to see things from his perspective, the one he alone knows, there will be no end to your admiration at what he has seen, sought and found. His genius lies in the *mitigation* of suffering, in ‘comforting’ in every manner possible – how ingeniously he has interpreted his mission of comforter, how unscrupulously and audaciously he has chosen the weapons necessary for the part! Christianity in particular may be considered a great treasure-trove of ingenious nostrums – never have so many restoratives, palliatives and narcotics been gathered together; never has so much been risked and dared to that end; never has such subtlety and refinement, southerly refinement, been employed to divine which emotional stimulants can relieve, at any rate for a time, the deep depression, the leaden fatigue, the black melancholy of the physiologically incapacitated – for, speaking generally, all great religions are mainly concerned with combating a certain malaise that has infected everything.

One can regard it as probable that here and there large masses of the population will at times suffer from a *feeling of physiological depression*; this feeling, however, owing to

their lack of physiological knowledge, was not understood as such, so that consequently its ‘cause’ and its remedy can be sought and tested only in the science of moral psychology (this, in fact, is my most general formula for what is generally called a ‘*religion*’). Such a feeling of depression can have the most diverse origins; it may be the result of the crossing of races too dissimilar (or of classes – genealogical and racial differences are also brought out in the classes; the European ‘world-weariness’, the ‘pessimism’ of the nineteenth century, is really the result of a foolishly precipitate mixture of classes); it may be brought about by emigration gone awry – a race settling in a climate to which it is ill adapted (the case of the Indians in India); it may be the effect of age and fatigue on a race (the Parisian pessimism from 1850 onwards); it may be a deficient diet (the alcoholism of the Middle Ages, the nonsense of *vegetarianism* – which, however, has in its favour the authority of Sir Andrew in Shakespeare);[69] or it may be a blood disorder, malaria, syphilis or the like (German depression after the Thirty Years’ War,[70] which infected half of Germany with debilitating diseases, and thereby paved the way for German servility, for German timidity). In such a case there is invariably an effort on a grand scale to *defeat the feeling of apathy*; let us review briefly the most important aspects of that struggle. (I leave aside, as is reasonable, the actual *philosophic* war against the feeling of apathy which always accompanies it – the war is interesting enough, but too absurd, too insignificant, too prone to gathering cobwebs and dust, especially when pain is proved to be an error, on the *naive* presumption that pain *must* vanish when the error within it is recognized – but behold! It will not vanish …)

First, that prevailing apathy is fought with weapons which reduce the consciousness of life itself to its nadir. Wherever possible, no more wishes, no more wants; shun everything which arouses the emotions or excites the blood (eating no salt, the fakir[71] hygiene); no love; no hate; equanimity; no revenge; no getting rich; no work; begging! And, so far as possible, abstaining from the company of women; as far as the intellect is concerned, Pascal's[72] principle, '*il faut s'abêtir*'.[73] The result, expressed in moral and psychological language, is 'self-abnegation', 'sanctification'; expressed in physiological language, 'hypnotism' – the attempt to find some rough human equivalent for what *hibernation* is for certain animals and what *aestivation* is for many tropical plants, a state in which the vital functions (metabolism and assimilation) are maintained at the lowest level possible, without entering consciousness. An amazing amount of human energy has been expended towards this end – perhaps in vain?

There cannot be the slightest doubt but that such sportsmen[74] of 'holiness', always so abundant in nearly every culture, have found a true deliverance from that which they have struggled against with such rigorous training – in countless cases they have *escaped* from deep physiological depression with the aid of their system of hypnotism; their method is consequently counted among the universal ethnological facts accepted by anthropology. Nor are we justified in regarding the intention to starve the body and the emotions as in itself a symptom of insanity (as clumsy roast-beef-eating 'freethinkers' and Sir Andrew would do). It is all the more certain that their regimen can and does *lead to* all sorts of mental disturbances, for instance, 'inner lights' (as in the case of Hesychasts of Mount Athos),[75] auditory and visual hallucinations,

voluptuous excesses and ecstasies of sensuality (e.g. St Theresa).[76] The explanation of such events given by the victims has always been utterly false and the result of enthusiasm; this is self-evident. We would be remiss, however, if we were to overlook the deep sense of humility which *prompts* them to give an explanation of such a character. The supreme state, that of *salvation* itself, of ultimate hypnosis, serenity, is always regarded by them as the mystery of mysteries, which even the loftiest symbols are inadequate to express; it is regarded as a retreat and homecoming to the essence of things, as a liberation from all illusion, as 'knowledge', as 'truth', as 'being', as an escape from every end, every wish, every action, as something even beyond Good and Evil. 'Good and Evil,' say the Buddhists, 'both are fetters. The perfect man is master of them both.' 'What is done or left undone,' says the disciple of the Vedânta, 'can do him no harm; sage that he is, he shakes from him the Good and the Evil; his dominion suffers no more from any act; Good and Evil: he goes beyond them both.' [77] – This is an absolutely Indian conception, as much Brahmanist as Buddhist. Neither in the Indian nor in the Christian doctrine is this 'Redemption' regarded as *attainable* by means of virtue and moral improvement, however highly they may place the hypnotic value of virtue; and I feel this is an important point – indeed it simply corresponds with the facts. The fact that they remained *true* on this point is perhaps to be regarded as the best instance of realism in the three great religions, so thoroughly saturated as they are with morality, with this one exception. 'For those who possess knowledge, there is no duty.'

'Redemption is not attained by the *acquisition* of virtues; for redemption consists in being one with Brahman, who is

incapable of acquiring any perfection; nor does it consist in the *elimination of faults*, for the Brahman, union with whom is what constitutes redemption, is eternally pure' (these passages are taken from the commentary of Shankara,[78] cited by the first real European *expert* on the Indian philosophy, my friend Paul Deussen).[79] We wish, therefore, to pay homage to the notion of 'redemption' in the great religions; but it is hard for us to remain entirely serious in view of the extravagant appreciation for *deep sleep* shown by these exhausted pessimists who are too tired even to dream – that deep sleep representing a fusing into Brahman, as the *attainment* of the *unio mystica*[80] with God.

'When he is fast sleep,' the oldest and most venerable 'scripture' tells us, 'and is so completely at rest that he is visited by no visions, then, O beloved one, he is united with Being, he has entered into his own self – encircled by the Self with its absolute knowledge, he has no more any consciousness of anything within him or without. Neither Day nor Night can cross these bridges, nor age, nor death, nor suffering, nor good deeds, nor evil deeds.'

'In deep sleep,' the believers in this deepest of the three great religions say, 'the soul lifts itself from out this body of ours, enters the supreme light and assumes its true form; there it is the Supreme Spirit itself, which travels about, while it rests and plays and enjoys itself, whether with women, or chariots, or friends; there its thoughts turn no more back to this appendage of a body, to which the "prâna"[81] (the vital breath) is harnessed like a beast of burden to the cart.'[82]

Nonetheless we will take care to realize (as we did when discussing 'redemption') that in spite of all its splendour of Oriental exaggeration this simply expresses the same criticism of life as did the clear, cold, Greek-cold, but

suffering Epicurus.[83] The hypnotic sensation of nothingness, the peace of deepest sleep, *anaesthesia* in short – this is regarded by the sufferers and the absolutely depressed as their supreme good, their value of values; that is what must be treasured by them as something positive, must be felt by them as the essence of the positive (according to the same logic of the feelings, nothingness is called *God* in all pessimistic religions).

18

Such a hypnotic deadening of sensibility and susceptibility to pain, which presupposes exceptional aptitudes, above all courage, disdain of popular sentiment, 'intellectual stoicism', is less common than another and certainly easier sort of training,[84] which is used in an attempt to combat depression. I mean *mechanical activity*. It is indisputable that it can considerably alleviate suffering. This is given the rather dubious title 'the blessing of work'. It achieves its effect by diverting the attention of the sufferer from his suffering, keeping the consciousness occupied with ceaseless activity, so that there is little room left for suffering – for the capacity of human consciousness is *small*!

Mechanical activity, with its implications, such as absolute punctuality, blind obedience, the quotidian routine of life, activities which serve merely to occupy one's time, a certain liberty, indeed the discipline, to be impersonal; self-forgetfulness, '*incuria sui*'[85] – how thoroughly and subtly all these methods have been exploited by the ascetic priest in his war with pain! So when he had to deal with the suffering of the lowly, the desperate, slaves, or prisoners (or women, who for the most part are both slaves and prisoners), all he had to do is to change the names around a little, so that

henceforth they would see those things which they had previously despised as beneficial – the slave's discontent with his lot was at any rate *not* invented by the priests.

An even more valuable antidote prescribed for depression is that of indulging in *petty pleasures*, which is easily enough done and made part of a routine; this medication is frequently used in combination with that previously mentioned. The commonest form in which pleasure is prescribed as a remedy is the pleasure in *giving pleasure* (such as acts of kindness, charity, encouraging, comforting, praising, honouring), together with the prescription of 'love thy neighbour'. In doing so, the ascetic priest prescribes, though in the most cautious doses, what is in fact a stimulation of the strongest and most life-affirming impulse – the *desire for power*. The delight experienced in the feeling of a 'slight superiority' which accompanies all such beneficent acts, if they are well advised, is the best consolation available to the downtrodden; otherwise they hurt each other, and naturally in obedience to the same fundamental instinct.

An investigation of the origin of Christianity in the Roman world shows that mutual-aid societies, associations to provide assistance to the poor and the sick, and for funerary needs, sprang up in the lowest stratum of Roman society, where the chief antidote against depression, the little pleasure experienced in offering aid to one another, was deliberately cultivated. Perhaps this was then a novelty, a real discovery? This evoking of the desire for cooperation, for the formation of social groups, for communal life, for '*cenacle*',[86] necessarily brought the desire for power, which had been already stimulated in a small way, to a new and much fuller manifestation. The *formation of the social group* is an essential step and genuine advance in the struggle

against depression. With the growth of the community a new interest develops for the individual too, which often enough lifts him beyond the more private element in his discontent: his aversion to *himself*, the '*despectio sui*'[87] of Geulincx.[88] The sick and feeble all strive instinctively for a social organization, the comfort of the group, the herd, the congregation, out of a desire to shake off their feeling of apathy and weakness; the ascetic priest divines this instinct and promotes it; wherever congregations have arisen they have been demanded by the instinct of weakness, and organized by the shrewdness of the priests. It is important to note in this connection that the strong instinctively strive for *isolation* just as the weak strive for *alliance*; when the strong unite, it is only for concerted aggressive action and satisfaction of their desire for power, and they do so only with reluctance; the weak, on the contrary, *delight* in such a muster and preparation for battle – their instincts are as much gratified in doing so as the instincts of the 'lords' (that is, the solitary human predators) are disturbed and irritated to the quick by the prospect of organization. Behind every oligarchy there always lurks the lust for *tyranny* – such is the universal lesson of history. Every oligarchy constantly trembles with tension from the effort required by each individual to maintain his control over this desire. (So it was among the ancient *Greeks*; Plato attests to it in a hundred places – Plato, who knew his contemporaries – *and* himself.)

19

The specific medicaments employed by the ascetic priest, with which we have become familiar – stifling of all vitality, mechanical activity, indulging in little pleasures, and especially the 'love of thy neighbour', social-group

organization, the awaking of the communal feeling of power to such a degree that the individual's disgust with himself is overwhelmed by his delight in the thriving of the community – these are, according to modern standards, the more '*innocuous*' medicaments employed in the struggle against depression; let us turn now to the more interesting topic of the 'harmful' medicines. They seem to have one thing in common: to produce *emotional excess* – which is used as the most efficacious anaesthetic against their dull, persistent, debilitating pain; it is for this reason that tireless priestly effort has been devoted to this one question: '*By what means* can you produce an emotional excess?'

This sounds harsh; it is obvious that it would sound nicer and would grate less if I were to say: 'The ascetic priest has always made use of the *enthusiasm* present in all strong emotions.' But what good lies in placating our modern weaklings, for fear of offending their delicate sensibilities? What is the good *on our side* of conceding a single inch to their verbal Tartuffery? What is to be gained by this? For us psychologists to do that, it would be a flagrant act of *hypocrisy*, apart from the fact that we should find any such actions abhorrent. A modern psychologist can demonstrate his *good taste* (others might say, his integrity) by resisting the shamefully *moralized* language with which all modern judgements of men and things are besmirched. For, do not deceive yourself: what constitutes the chief characteristic of modern minds and of modern books is not the lying, but the *innocence* which is part and parcel of their intellectual dishonesty. To have to discover this 'innocence' anew is the most distasteful aspect of the somewhat perilous business which a modern psychologist has to undertake: it is a part of *our* great danger – it is a road which perhaps leads *us* straight to the great loathing – I have no doubt *what use*

posterity will make of modern books (if they endure, which is certainly not to be feared, and likewise if at some future day there is a generation with a more demanding and *healthier* taste) – what purpose *everything* modern will serve at all, could serve, for this posterity – that of an emetic – and this by virtue of its moral sweetness and falsity, its ingrained feminism, which it is pleased to call 'Idealism', and at any rate believes itself to be idealism. Our cultured men of today, our 'good' men, do not lie – that is true; but this *hardly* aggrandizes them! The real lie, the genuine, determined, 'honest' lie (whose value Plato discussed)[89] would prove too tough and strong an article for them by far; it would demand something of them that *must not* be demanded, to open their eyes to their own selves, and to learn to distinguish between 'true' and 'false' in their own selves. The *ignoble* lie alone befits them; everyone who feels himself a good man treats all matters with hypocrisy, as a *dishonourable liar*, an absolute liar, but nonetheless an innocent liar, a naive liar, a virtuous liar. These 'good men', they are all now saturated with morality through and through, and as far as honour is concerned they are disgraced and corrupted for ever. Which of them could stand a further *truth* 'about Man'? or, put more tangibly, which of their lives could withstand the scrutiny of a *thorough*, *revealing* biography? One or two instances: Lord Byron composed an autobiography containing matters of a most intimate nature, but Thomas Moore was 'too good' for this: he burned his friend's papers.[90] Dr Gwinner, Schopenhauer's executor, is said to have done the same;[91] for Schopenhauer wrote about himself, and was perhaps also critical of himself (ει'ς ε´αυτο´ν).[92] The capable American Alexander Wheelock Thayer, Beethoven's biographer, abruptly stopped his work when he came to a certain point in that honourable

and simple life, and could stand it no longer.[93] Moral: what prudent man today writes one honest word about himself? To do so he must belong to the Holy Order of the Foolhardy. We are promised an autobiography of Richard Wagner;[94] who doubts but that it will be a *prudent* one? Think of the horrible, ridiculous outcry which the Catholic priest Janssen[95] aroused in Protestant Germany with his extremely simplistic and innocuous chronicle of the German Reformation; what would people do if someone were to treat that movement *differently* for once, if a capable psychologist were to tell us about the real Luther; tell us, not in the morally simplistic manner of a country parson, or in the saccharine, deferential manner of a Protestant historian, but say with the fearlessness of a *Taine*,[96] springing from strength of character and not from calculated deference to a superior force? (The Germans, by the bye, have already produced the classic specimen of the opportunist – they may well be allowed to claim him, fittingly, as one of their own – in Leopold Ranke,[97] that instinctive advocate of every *causa fortior*,[98] that most prudent of all prudent 'realists'.)

20

But you will soon understand me. Surely there is reason enough, is there not, that we psychologists are never able to rid ourselves of a certain mistrust of *ourselves*?

We are probably still 'too good' for our line of work; probably, whatever contempt we feel for this current fashion for morality, we are perhaps nonetheless its victims, its prey, its slaves; it probably infects even *us*. Of what was that diplomat[99] warning us, when he said to his colleagues: 'Mistrust first impulses; *they are nearly always good*'?[100]

Nowadays every psychologist should talk to his colleagues in such a manner.

With this, we return to our problem, which in point of fact does demand from us a certain measure of severity, of mistrust, especially against 'first impulses'. *The ascetic ideal is intended to relieve emotional distress* – he who remembers the previous essay will be able to anticipate the essential meaning condensed into these nine words. To loose the human soul from its moorings, to plunge it into terror, frost, ardour, rapture, so as to free it, as though by a bolt out of the blue, from all misery, apathy and discomfort: which paths lead to *this* goal? And which of these is the *sure* course? …

All intense emotions have this power, provided that they find a sudden outlet – emotions such as anger, fear, lust, revenge, hope, triumph, despair, cruelty; and, in fact, the ascetic priest has had no scruples in unleashing *all* the wild dogs that rage in Man, releasing first this one and then that one, with the same intention of waking Man from his protracted melancholy, of dispelling, at least for a while, his dull pain, his lingering misery, but always under the sanction of a religious interpretation and 'justification'. It is needless to say that this emotional excess must subsequently be *paid for* – it makes the ill worse – and this kind of remedy for pain is therefore, according to modern standards, a 'harmful' one. The dictates of fairness, however, demand that we should all the more emphasize that this remedy was administered with a *good conscience*, that the ascetic priest has prescribed it with the utmost faith in its efficacy and indispensability – and often enough nearly collapsing when confronted with the sorrow which he caused; that we should similarly emphasize the fact that the ravages resulting from such excesses, perhaps even mental

disturbances, are not inconsistent with the object of administering this kind of medication, which, as we have shown previously, is *not* the curing of diseases, but rather that of palliation: to combat the apathy born of that depression, to alleviate and anaesthetize it. That object too was achieved *in this way*.

The principal manoeuvre by which the ascetic priest was able to produce all manner of agonizing and ecstatic music in the human soul was, as everyone knows, the exploitation of the *feeling of 'guilt'.* I have already indicated in the previous essay the origin of this feeling, as merely an aspect of animal psychology, nothing more. There we dealt with the feeling of 'guilt' in its raw state, as it were. Only in the hands of the priest, the real artist in manipulating the feelings of guilt, did it assume its final form – and oh, what a work of art it was! The discovery of 'sin' – for that is the name of the new priestly interpretation of the animal 'bad-conscience' (remorse) – has up to the present been the greatest event in the history of the diseased mind; in 'sin' we find a masterpiece of religious interpretation, one laden with the most sinister implications. Imagine Man, in torment, like a caged animal, unable to comprehend the reasons for his plight! … aching for explanations – for they are comforting – and for remedies and narcotics, at length consulting even the occultist – and, lo and behold, he receives a hint from this psychic, the ascetic priest, his *first* inkling of the 'cause' of his misery; he must search for it *in himself*, in his *guilt*, in a piece of the past, he must understand his suffering itself as *punishment*.

He – the unfortunate – has heard, he has understood; he now suffers the fate of a hen round which a circle has been drawn. He can never escape the circle. The patient has been turned into 'the sinner' – and now we will be forced to

contemplate this new patient, ‘a sinner’, for a few thousand years – shall we ever be rid of him? – wherever we look we encounter the hypnotic gaze of the sinner, always staring in one direction (at his guilt, the *only* cause of his suffering); everywhere bad conscience, this ‘*ghastly beast*’,[101] to use Luther’s language; everywhere rumination over the past, distortion of fact, the ‘jaundiced eye’; everywhere the *delusion* that suffering is all there is to life; suffering interpreted as guilt, fear, punishment; everywhere the lash, the sackcloth, the emaciated body, contrition; everywhere the sinner torturing himself on the rack of his perverse conscience; everywhere mute pain, agonizing fear, the agony of a tortured heart, the paroxysms of an unknown bliss, the cry for ‘redemption’. Thanks to this regimen, the old depression, dullness and fatigue were thoroughly *overcome*; life itself became *very* interesting again, awake, eternally awake, sleepless, glowing yet burned up, exhausted yet not weary – such was the man, ‘the sinner’, who was initiated into *these* mysteries. This ascetic priest, this ancient sorcerer and warrior against apathy, had clearly triumphed, *his* kingdom had come; men no longer *grumbled* at pain, men *panted* after pain: ‘*More pain! More pain!*’ This was, for centuries on end, the shrieking demand of his acolytes and initiates. Every woeful emotional excess; everything which shattered, overthrew, crushed, transported, ravished; every secret of the torture-chamber, the ingenuity of hell itself – all this was now discovered, divined, exploited, all this was at the sorcerer’s disposal, all this was enlisted to further the triumph of his ideal, the ascetic ideal. ‘*My kingdom is not of this world*,’[102] he exclaimed, both at the beginning and at the end; did he still have the right to talk like that? …

Goethe has maintained that there are only thirty-six tragic situations.[103] We could infer from that, if we did not know otherwise, that Goethe was no ascetic priest. He – knows more …

21

So far as all *this* kind of medication, the 'harmful' kind, is concerned, every word of criticism is superfluous. Who would feel inclined to maintain that emotional excess, as prescribed by the ascetic priest to his patients (under the most sacred euphemism, as is obvious, and likewise impregnated with the sanctity of his purpose), has ever really been of *benefit* to any sick man? At any rate, let us come to an understanding as to the expression 'benefit'. If you wish merely to express that such a system of treatment has reformed Man, I do not deny it; I merely add that '*reformed*' conveys to my mind much the same as 'tamed', 'weakened', 'discouraged', 'refined', 'pampered', 'emasculated' (and thus it means almost the same as '*injured*'). But if the question is principally of the sick, depressed and oppressed, such a system, even if it helps them to get 'better', also invariably makes them *sicker*; ask the alienists[104] about the invariable result of a methodical application of a regimen of penance, contrition and lashings of salvation. Likewise, let us look at history. In every body politic where the ascetic priest has instituted this treatment of the sick, disease has on every occasion spread with astonishing rapidity throughout its length and breadth. What was invariably the 'result'? A shattered nervous system, in addition to the other existing ailments, and this on the largest as on the smallest scale, in individuals as well as among the masses.

We find, as a result of the regimen of penance and supplication in the Middle Ages, awful epidemics of epilepsy, the greatest known to history, afflicting many with St Vitus dance and St John's dance;[105] we find, as another effect, frightful paralysis and chronic depression, which can alter irreversibly the temperament of a nation or a city (Geneva, Basle); this regimen is also responsible for the witch-hysteria, a phenomenon analogous to somnambulism (there were eight large outbreaks of this alone between 1564 and 1605); we find similarly that death-seeking mass delirium, whose dreadful cry, '*evviva la morte!*',[106] echoed throughout the whole of Europe, interrupted here by voluptuous idiosyncrasies and there by destructive ones. The same emotional lability, with periods of calm punctuated by sudden and violent changes of mood, is now universally observed in every case where the ascetic doctrine of sin prevails (religious neurosis *appears* as a manifestation of the devil, there is no doubt of it. What is it? *Quaeritur*).[107] Speaking generally, the ascetic ideal, with its sublime moral cult, this most ingenious, unscrupulous and dangerous systematization of all the methods of emotional excess performed under the pretext of holy purposes, is inscribed indelibly upon the whole history of Man, and unfortunately *not only* upon his history.

I scarcely know of anything else which is more injurious to the *health* and racial strength of Europeans than this ideal; it can be called, without exaggeration, *the supreme disaster* in the health of the European man. The closest comparison that can be drawn to its influence is specifically German: I mean the poisoning of Europe with alcohol, which up to the present has kept pace closely with the political and racial ascendancy of the Germans (for their vice has followed their

blood). Of far lesser importance than these is syphilis – *magno sed proxima intervallo.*[108]

22

The ascetic priest, wherever he has assumed a position of authority, has brought about the ruin of psychological health; he has consequently also corrupted taste in *artibus et litteris*[109] – he corrupts it still. 'Consequently?' I hope I shall not have to plead for this 'consequently'. A single hint should suffice; it concerns the most cherished document of Christian literature, the model, the 'book of all books'.[110] At the very pinnacle of the ancient classical period, a time of literary splendour, when literature had not yet fallen into desuetude, and certain books were still to be read, books which we would now give half of our literature in exchange to possess, at that time the simplicity and vanity of Christian agitators – they are usually called Fathers of the Church – dared to declare: '*We* too have our classical literature, *we do not need that of the Greeks*' – while proudly pointing to their books of legends, their letters of the apostles and their Apologist scribblings, in the same way that the English 'Salvation Army' today uses an analogous literature as a weapon in its fight against Shakespeare and other 'heathens'.[111]

You may already surmise that I have no fondness for the 'New Testament'; it troubles me that I stand almost alone in my thorough distaste for this highly esteemed, this far-too-highly esteemed portion of what is collectively called 'the scriptures'; (for two thousand years popular taste has been quite the *contrary* of my own); but what does it matter? 'Here I stand! I cannot help myself'[112] – I have the courage to confess my 'poor taste'. The *Old* Testament – now, that is

something quite different! Let me express my admiration for the Old Testament! I find within its pages great men, a heroic landscape and one of the rarest things in the world, the incomparable *naivety* of the *strong heart*; further still, I find a people. In the New Testament, on the contrary, I find nothing save petty sectarianism, rococo of the soul, arabesques and fancy touches, nothing but convent-air, to say nothing of an occasional breath of bucolic sweetness which clings to the epoch (*and* to the Roman province) and which is more Hellenistic than Jewish. Meekness and braggadocio cheek by jowl; an emotional garrulousness that almost overwhelms; passionate hysteria, but no passion; an embarrassing amount of gesturing; here manifestly good breeding was entirely lacking. How dare anyone make so much fuss about their petty failings as do these pious little fellows! No one cares a straw about it – let alone God. Finally, all these little provincials actually demand 'the crown of eternal life'![113] I ask: why? On what grounds? Of all the gall! (An 'immortal' Peter![114] who could stand *him*!) *Such* people have an ambition which makes one laugh; regurgitating their most private grievances and miseries, as though the universe itself were under an obligation to care about them and their petty woes, they are ever complaining to God Himself about even the most trifling inconveniences. And their presumption! The familiarity with which they address their God! Such bad form! This Jewish, and not merely Jewish, nuzzling and pawing of God! …

In the furthest reaches of the Orient there are found isolated 'pagan tribes' from whom these first Christians could have learned something useful and important: *tactfulness*; for, according to the testimony of Christian missionaries, these tribes are forbidden by custom to utter the name of their God. This sort of deference seems to me

tactful enough, but certainly it is *too* extreme, and not only for the ‘early’ Christians; let me remind the reader of the example of Luther, the most ‘eloquent’ and presumptuous peasant whom Germany has produced; think of the familiar, casual tone which he typically adopted when he addressed God. Luther’s antipathy to the clergy as ‘intermediaries’ to God (in particular, against the Pope, ‘that devil’s hog’), was, no doubt, nothing but a boor’s antipathy to the *proper etiquette* of the Church, that reverent etiquette of the sacerdotal code, which admits to the holy of holies only the initiated and the discreet, and excludes the boors. They were definitely not to be allowed to speak there, in the inner sanctum – but Luther the peasant thought otherwise; it was not *German* enough for him as it was. He wished to talk directly, personally, ‘informally’ with his God. Well, he’s done it.

The ascetic ideal, you will guess, was at no time and in no place a school of good taste, still less of good manners – at the best it was a school for sacerdotal manners; it contains something inimical to all good manners, which is a lack of moderation, a rejection of moderation; it is itself a ‘*non plus ultra*’. [115]

23

The ascetic ideal has not only ruined health and corrupted taste, there are many more things which it has corrupted – I shall refrain from enumerating them all (when should I get to the end?). My purpose here is not to expose what this ideal has *effected*, but rather only what it *means*, on what it is based, what lies lurking behind it and beneath it, and what it has expressed, however provisional and indistinct, however uncertain and misunderstood. It was only with *this*

object in view that I presumed to offer my reader a glimpse at the enormity of the devastation which it has caused; I did this to prepare the reader for the final and most awful aspect of the question regarding that ideal: what is the meaning of the ascetic ideal and of its *enormous power*? Why has it been given such freedom of action? Why has it not met with more resistance? The ascetic ideal expresses one intention; *where* is the opposition, in which an *opposing ideal* expresses itself? The ascetic ideal has an *aim* – which is so all-encompassing that all the other interests of human life appear, in comparison, petty and narrow. It interprets epochs, nations, men, in reference to this one end; it forbids any other interpretation, any other end; it repudiates, denies, affirms, confirms, only in accordance with *its own* interpretation (and was there ever a more thoroughly elaborated system of interpretation?); it submits to no power, indeed it believes in its own *absolute superiority* over all others – it believes that nothing powerful exists in the world but that which derives a meaning, a right to exist, a value from it, from being an instrument in its work, a way and means to *its* end, to *one* end. Where is the antithesis to this complete system of intention, end and interpretation? Why is it lacking? Where is the *other* 'one end'?

But I am told it *does* exist, that not only has it waged a long and successful battle with the ascetic ideal, but that it has already triumphed over that ideal in all essentials as well: all of our modern *scientific knowledge*[116] attests to this – and, as a philosophy founded on reality, it clearly stands alone and firm; it is able to get on well enough without God, another world and virtues of denial. All this noise, agitation and propaganda, however, do not affect me in the least; those who trumpet reality are bad musicians; their voices do *not* echo from the depths, they are *not* the font of scientific

knowledge – for today scientific knowledge is an abyss – the word ‘science’, in their ‘snouts’, is obscenity, impudence, blasphemy. The truth is just the opposite from what is maintained in the ascetic theory. Science has today absolutely *no* belief in itself, let alone a belief in an ideal superior to itself, and wherever science still consists of passion, love, ardour, *suffering*, it is not the opposition to that ascetic ideal, but rather the incarnation of its *latest and noblest form*. Does that sound strange to you?

There are plenty of decent, modest, hard-working scholars amongst us today who are quite content with their little niche, and who become at times insistent in their demand that everyone else *should* likewise be satisfied with the current state of affairs, especially in science – for in science there is so much useful work to do. I cannot disagree – there is nothing I should like less than to spoil the enjoyment of these honest workers, because their work pleases me. But the fact that in science today are to be found dedicated and contented workers, is in itself *no* proof at all that science as a whole has an end, a will, an ideal, the passion of a great faith. The contrary, as I have said, is the case. When science is not the latest manifestation of the ascetic ideal (such splendid examples are exceptional and so rare as to preclude the general judgement being affected) science is a *refuge* for every kind of cowardice, scepticism, remorse, *despectio sui*,[117] bad conscience – it is the very *anxiety* that springs from having no ideal, the suffering from the lack of a great love, the dissatisfaction with a moderation which is enforced from without.

What is science hiding today? How much, at any rate, is it *supposed* to be hiding? The diligence of our best scholars, their stupendous industry, burning the candle at both ends – the mastery of their handiwork – isn’t all of that merely an

effort to conceal something from themselves? Science serves as a narcotic: *did you know that?*

Everyone who associates with scholars knows that they can sometimes be deeply hurt by just a chance remark; in attempting to pay them a compliment we leave them incensed, simply because we are too insensitive to recognize in them their deep *suffering* (nor do they admit it even to themselves), for they are dazed and unconscious men who have but one fear – *regaining their consciousness*.

24

Let us now examine those rare cases which I mentioned earlier, the last idealists still to be found among philosophers and scholars. Is it here, perhaps, that we may encounter the *antagonists* of the ascetic ideal*?* In fact, this is what these 'unbelievers' *believe* themselves to be (for they are all agnostics). The last remaining vestige of their faith is their conviction that they are opponents of this ideal; they are prone to such solemn pronouncements on this subject, every word and gesture most passionate – but does it follow that what they believe must be *true?*

We 'men of science' have grown more and more suspicious of all kinds of believers; our mistrust has gradually led us to a way of thinking contrary to long-established practice; wherever a belief is particularly strong, we presuppose the difficulty, or even the *improbability,* of proving what is believed*.* Even we do not deny that 'salvation comes from faith',[118] but for that *very reason* we do deny that faith *proves* anything; a strong faith arouses suspicion of the object of that faith; it does not establish its 'truth', but rather establishes a certain probability – that of *delusion*. How is this to apply in the present case?

These outsiders and nay-sayers, who *insist* upon one thing (intellectual scrupulousness); these hard, stern, Spartan, heroic souls, who are a credit to our age; all these pale atheists, anti-Christians, immoralists, nihilists; these sceptics, 'ephectics'[119] and 'hectics' of the intellect (in a certain sense they are hectics, both collectively and individually); these supreme idealists of knowledge, in whom alone nowadays the intellectual conscience dwells and is alive – these 'free, *very* free souls' believe themselves to be wholly unaffected by the ascetic ideal; and yet, if I may reveal to them what they themselves cannot see – for they stand too close – this ideal is simply *their* ideal as well; they, and perhaps no one else, represent it nowadays; they themselves are its most intellectualized offspring, its most front-line troops and scouts, its most insidious, delicate and elusive form of seduction – if I am ever to solve an enigma, let it be *this* one: for some time past there have been no *freethinkers, for they still believe in truth*.

When the Christian Crusaders in the East encountered that invincible order of Assassins,[120] that order of free spirits *par excellence*, whose lowest ranks observed blind obedience and stricter discipline than that practised by any Christian monastic order, they managed to get some vague notion of the code which was the privilege of the highest rank alone, as their secret: 'Nothing is true, everything is permitted' – now, *that* was *freedom* of thought, *that* was the *renunciation* of truth itself.

Has indeed any European, any Christian freethinker, ever lost himself in the labyrinthine *consequences* of such a notion? Has he ever *encountered* the Minotaur[121] inhabiting this cave? … I doubt it – indeed, I know otherwise. Nothing is truly more alien to these *intransigents*, these *so-called* 'free

spirits', than liberation in that sense; in no respect are they more firmly committed; the absolute fanaticism of their belief in truth is unparalleled. I know all this perhaps too well – that venerable philosopher's abstinence which such a belief imposes upon its adherents, that stoicism of the intellect which ultimately refuses either to affirm or to deny, that desire to stop short at the factual, the *factum brutum*,[122] that fatalism in '*petits faits*' (*ce petit fatalisme*,[123] as I call it), in which French scholarship now seeks to establish a kind of moral superiority over German, this renunciation of interpretation generally (that is, of forcing, doctoring, abridging, omitting, suppressing, inventing, falsifying and all the other *essential* aspects of interpretation) – all of this expresses the asceticism of virtue just as much as does any repudiation of the senses (it is merely a *modus*[124] of that repudiation). But the *compulsion* towards it, that irresistible demand for truth, is the belief *in the ascetic ideal itself*, even if it takes the form of its unconscious imperatives – make no mistake about it, it is the belief, I repeat, in a *metaphysical* value, in an *intrinsic* value of *truth*, of a character which this ideal alone can furnish (it stands and falls with that ideal).

Strictly speaking, there does not exist a system of knowledge, or science, without its 'presuppositions'; such a science is inconceivable, illogical: a philosophy, a 'belief', must always exist first, so as to furnish science with a direction, a meaning, a limit, a method, a *right* to existence. (He who holds a contrary opinion on the subject – one who takes it upon himself to establish philosophy 'upon a strictly scientific basis' – inevitably turns not only philosophy but also truth itself *on its head* – the gravest insult imaginable to the dignity of two such respectable ladies!) Yes, there is no doubt about it – and in this connection, if I may, I shall

quote from the fifth book of my *Gay Science* (Section 344): ‘The man who speaks truthfully (in that audacious and extreme fashion which faith in science presupposes) thereby *asserts the existence of “another world”*, one different from that of life, nature and history; and in so doing, come, must he not also repudiate its counterpart, this world, *our* world? … The belief on which our faith in science is based has remained to this day a *metaphysical* belief. Even we modern men of science – we who are godless foes of metaphysics – light *our* torches in that conflagration which was kindled by a belief thousands of years old, that Christian belief, which was also Plato’s belief, the belief that God is truth, that truth is *divine* … But what if this belief becomes more and more incredible, what if nothing proves itself to be divine, unless it be error, blindness, lies – what if God Himself proved to be our *oldest* lie?’

It is necessary to stop at this point and to consider the situation carefully. Science itself now *needs* a justification (which is not for a minute to say that there is such a justification). Appealing to the most ancient and the most modern philosophies is of no avail, for they all fail to realize the extent of the need for a justification of the desire for truth – here is a lacuna in every philosophy – why does it exist? Because up to the present the ascetic ideal *dominated* all philosophy, because truth was established as Being, as God, as the Supreme Authority, because truth was not *allowed* to be a problem. Do you understand this ‘allowed’? Once the belief in the God of the ascetic ideal is repudiated, there arises *a new problem*: the problem of the *value* of truth. The desire for truth needed a critique – let this critique be then our own task – the value of truth is tentatively *to be called in question* …

(If this seems too laconically expressed, I recommend the reader to peruse again that passage from the *Gay Science* entitled ‘How pious are we still?’(Section 344) and best of all the whole fifth book of that work, as well as the Preface to *The Dawn*.)

25

No! Don’t approach me with science, when I am seeking the natural antagonists of the ascetic ideal, when I ask: ‘*Where* is the antipathy in which the *contrary ideal* expresses itself?’ Science is by no means independent enough to undertake this alone; in every respect science needs an ideal of value, a capacity to create values, a force which it can *serve* confidently – science itself never creates values. Its relation to the ascetic ideal is not yet essentially antagonistic; speaking roughly, it rather represents the progressive force in the inner evolution of that ideal. Examined more carefully, we perceive that its opposition and antagonism are directed not at the ideal itself, but only at that ideal’s external aspects, its outer garb, its masquerade, at the way it hardens, stiffens and becomes dogmatic – it makes the life in the ideal free once more, while it repudiates its superficial elements. Both science and the ascetic ideal spring from the same soil and thus share the same foundation – I have already made this clear – both share the same over-estimation of truth (more accurately, they share the same belief in the *impossibility* of judging and of criticizing truth) and consequently they are *necessarily* allies, so that, if they are to be attacked, they must always be attacked and called into question together. A depreciation of the ascetic ideal inevitably entails a

depreciation of science as well; one must always keep alert to this!

(As for *art* – I am speaking here provisionally, for I shall elaborate upon it on some other occasion – art, I repeat, is much more fundamentally opposed to the ascetic ideal than is science. In art, lying is consecrated, and the *desire for deception* has good conscience on its side. Plato felt this instinctively – Plato, the greatest enemy of art whom Europe has ever produced. Plato *versus* Homer: this is absolute, genuine antagonism.[125] On the one side we have the perfect 'transcendental', the great defamer of life; on the other, its reluctant idolater, the *golden* one. An artistic subservience to the ascetic ideal is consequently the most absolute artistic *corruption* that there can be, though unfortunately it is one of the commonest forms, for there is nothing more corruptible than an artist.)

Considered physiologically, moreover, science rests on the same basis as does the ascetic ideal, in that a certain *biological impoverishment* is a necessary condition for both – to which one may add cooling of the emotions, slackening of the *tempo*, the substitution of dialectic for instinct, along with a *sombre expression and solemn gestures* (which are the unmistakable signs of a sluggish metabolism, a strenuous life). Consider for a moment the periods in human history in which the scholar achieves prominence; we observe at these times the appearance of exhaustion, of decline, of decay – vigour, confidence in life, confidence in the *future* are no more to be seen. It does not bode well for a society when the Mandarins[126] are predominant; nor does the advent of democracy, international arbitration instead of war, equal rights for women, the religion of pity, or any other symptoms of declining vitality. (Science conceived as

a problem; what is the meaning of science? On this point, see the Preface to *The Birth of Tragedy*.)[127]

No! This 'modern science' – mark this well – is now the *best* ally for the ascetic ideal, and for the very reason that it is the least conscious, least spontaneous, least known of allies! These 'poor in spirit'[128] and the scientific opponents of that ideal – they have been playing the same game throughout history (one must beware of thinking that these opponents are the antithesis of this ideal, that they are the *rich* in spirit – for that they are *not*; I have called them the *hectic* in spirit). As for the celebrated *victories* of science, surely these are victories – but victories over what? The ascetic ideal has not been conquered in the least. Indeed, it has become stronger in the struggle, that is, more elusive, more abstract, more insidious; for all that science has managed to do is ruthlessly to destroy and break down wall after wall of outer fortifications which the ascetic ideal had succeeded in erecting around itself, and which served only to disfigure it. Does anyone seriously suggest that the downfall of the theological astronomy signified the downfall of that ideal? …

Has Man, perhaps, become *less dependent* upon a transcendental solution to the enigma of his existence, because his existence has become, since the time of Copernicus,[129] more random, casual and superfluous in the *visible* order of the universe? Is this not precisely when Man began unceasingly to belittle himself, *to desire* to belittle himself? Alas, his belief that he was precious, unique and indispensable in the hierarchy of beings is gone – he has become merely an *animal*, literally and without qualification or condition an animal, he who in his earlier belief was almost God ('child of God', 'demigod').

Since the time of Copernicus Man seems to have fallen onto a steep slope – he rolls faster and faster away from the centre – whither? into the void? into the '*piercing sensation of his own oblivion*'?[130] – Well! Would this not be the straight way – to the *old* ideal? ...

All science (and by no means only astronomy, the study of the universe, a universe in which, as Kant himself remarkably confessed, Man pales into insignificance),[131] all science, natural as much as *unnatural* – by unnatural I mean the self-critique of reason – nowadays sets out to dissuade Man of his present opinion of himself, as though that opinion had been nothing but a bizarre piece of conceit; you might go so far as to say that science feels a peculiar sort of pride, a peculiar bitter form of stoical *ataraxia*,[132] in preserving Man's *contempt of himself*, a contempt which it took so much trouble to bring about, as Man's ultimate and most serious claim to self-respect (rightly so, in point of fact, for he who despises is always 'one who has not forgotten how to respect').[133] But does all this count as any real *opposition* to the ascetic ideal? Can anyone seriously suggest that Kant's *victory* over the theological dogmatism about 'God', 'Soul', 'Freedom', 'Immortality'[134] has harmed that ideal in any way (as the theologians imagined to be the case for a while)? In this connection the question of whether Kant himself intended any such consummation does not concern us for a single moment. It is certain that from the time of Kant every type of transcendentalist is playing a winning game – they are emancipated from the theologians; what luck! – he has revealed to them that subterfuge which enables them to pursue their 'heart's desire' on their own, and with all the 'airs' of science.

Similarly, who can be annoyed at the agnostics, admirers of the unknown and mysterious, if they now worship *the*

ineffable itself as God? (Xaver Doudan[135] writes somewhere of the ravages which '*l'habitude d'admirer l'inintelligible au lieu de rester tout simplement dans l'inconnu*'[136] has produced – the ancients, he thinks, must not have succumbed to this.) Supposing that everything 'known' to Man fails to satisfy his desires, and on the contrary contradicts and horrifies them, what a divine expedient it would be to make not 'desiring' but 'knowing' responsible for this state of affairs! …

'There is no knowledge. *Consequently* there is a God'; what a novel *elegantia syllogismi*![137] What a *triumph* for the ascetic ideal!

26

Do most modern historians perhaps reveal in their writing greater confidence in life and in their ideals? Their loftiest pretension is now to *reflect* what they see, repudiating all teleology; they will have nothing more to do with 'proving'; they disdain playing the judge, thus showing their good taste – they neither assert nor deny; they ascertain, they 'describe'. All this is to a high degree ascetic, but at the same time it is to a much greater degree *nihilistic*; let us make no mistake about this! You see in the historian a sombre, hard, but determined gaze – an eye that *peers out* like that of a lone polar explorer (perhaps so as not to look within, so as not to look back?) – here is nothing but snow – here everything is hushed; nothing is heard save for a few crows, whose distant cries of 'why?' 'in vain' and '*nada*'[138] vanish into the void and silence – here nothing more flourishes and grows, except perhaps Petersburg[139] metapolitical intrigue and Tolstoian[140] 'pity'.

But there is another sort of historian, perhaps even more ‘modern’, a hedonistic and lascivious sort who flirts with life and the ascetic ideal, who wears the word ‘artist’ like a kid glove and who has garnered all the praise given to contemplation; oh, how these so-precious intellectuals make me yearn even for ascetics and winter landscapes! No! The devil can take these ‘contemplative’ ones! How much I would prefer the company of those historical nihilists as we wander through the grey, cold, gloomy mist! – If indeed I had to choose, I should not mind listening to one whose pronouncements do not rely on historical evidence, and even fly in the face of historical evidence (a man such as Dühring,[141] for instance, whose voice enraptures a retiring and hitherto unidentified species of ‘beautiful souls’[142] in contemporary Germany (the *species anarchistica*)[143] among the educated proletariat).

The ‘contemplative’ historians are a hundred times worse – I never knew anything as intensely nauseating as the ‘objective’ armchair scholar, the perfumed voluptuary of history, a thing half-priest, half-satyr (Renan-scented)[144] whose high, shrill falsetto betrays *what* he lacks, betrays *where* the Fates have plied their ghastly shears, alas in too surgeon-like a fashion! This is distasteful to me, and it tries my patience; let him who has nothing to lose here be patient at such sights – such a sight enrages me; I become disillusioned more by such ‘spectators’ than by the ‘spectacle’ itself (the spectacle of history itself, you understand). Anacreontic[145] moods imperceptibly come over me. Nature gave to the steer its horn, to the lion its *χάσμ’ ὀδόντων*;[146] for what purpose did nature give me my foot? … To trample, by St Anacreon, and not merely to run away! To trample on all the worm-eaten armchairs, the cowardly

complacency, the lascivious eunuchs of history, the flirters with ascetic ideals, the hypocritical ‘fairness’ of impotence!

I have the utmost respect for the ascetic ideal, *in so far as it is honourable*! So long as it believes in itself and plays no pranks on us! But I have no liking for all these coquettish bugs who have an insatiate ambition to smell of the infinite, until eventually the infinite smells of bugs; I have no liking for the pale imitators of life; I have no liking for the exhausted who swathe themselves in wisdom so as to appear ‘objective’; I have no liking for histrionic agitators costumed as heroes, who wear the sorcerer’s cap of ideals on their straw heads; I have no liking for the ambitious artists who would pose as the ascetic and the priest, but are merely nothing but pathetic buffoons; I have no liking for, again, these modern speculators in idealism, the anti-Semites, who roll their eyes in typical Christian-Aryan-bourgeois fashion, and stir up the dimmest elements in the populace by resorting to cheap moral posturing. (The invariable success of *every* kind of charlatanism in present-day Germany may be attributed to the obvious and undeniable *stultification* of the German mind. The cause for this affliction may be found in a too-narrow diet of newspapers, politics, beer and Wagnerian music, along with national isolation and vanity, the strong but narrow-minded principle ‘Germany, Germany above everything’[147] and finally the *paralysis agitans*[148] of ‘modern ideas’.)

In modern Europe one may find all manner of stimulants, some quite ingenious; Europeans apparently have no more crying need than for stimulants and spirituous liquors. Hence the enormous trade in counterfeit ideals, the mind’s most potent spirits; hence too the foul, false, alcoholic atmosphere everywhere. I should like to know how many shiploads of counterfeit idealism, of hero-costumes and

highfalutin’ clap-trap, how many casks of sweetened pity liqueur (firm: *la religion de la souffrance*),[149] how many crutches of righteous indignation for the help of these flat-footed intellects, how many *comedians* of the Christian moral ideal would today need to be exported from Europe, to enable its air to smell clean and pure again.

It is obvious that such over-production has tremendous untapped *commercial potential*: there is a good ‘business’ to be done in little idolatrous ideals and their pet ‘idealists’ for anyone sufficiently enterprising! But who shall it be? We have in our *hands* the possibility of idealizing the whole earth.

But why am I talking about enterprise? We only need one thing here – a hand, a free, a *very* free hand.

27

Enough! Enough! Let us leave these curiosities and complexities of the modern mind, which inspire as much laughter as chagrin. *Our* problem, the problem of the *meaning* of the ascetic ideal, can certainly do without them – what has it got to do with yesterday or today? I intend to deal with these things more thoroughly and rigorously in another connection (under the title ‘A Contribution to the History of European Nihilism’, to be included in a work which I am now preparing: *The Will to Power, an Attempt at a Re-evaluation of All Values*,[150] to which I refer the reader). I allude to it here solely because the ascetic ideal has at times, even in the most intellectual sphere, only *one* real kind of enemy which poses a *threat* to it: these are the comedians of this ideal – for they arouse mistrust. Everywhere else where rigorous, incisive, genuine thought survives, this ideal seems to have disappeared (the popular

expression for this abstinence is ‘atheism’) *with the exception of the desire for truth*. But this will, this *remnant* of an ideal, is, if you will believe me, that ideal itself in its strictest and most abstract formulation, esoteric through and through, divested of all adornments and consequently not so much its remnant as its *kernel*. Unconditional, honest atheism (and it is *this* air alone which we, the intellectual elite of this age, breathe!) is thus *not* opposed to that ideal, to the extent that it appears to be; it is rather one of the final phases of its evolution, one of its natural and logical consequences – it is the awe-inspiring *catastrophe* of two millennia of discipline in truth, which in the end forbids itself *the lie implicit in the belief in God*.

(The same course of development occurred in India quite independently, and is consequently of some demonstrative value. The same ideal led to the same conclusion, the decisive point being reached five hundred years before the European era, or more precisely at the time of Buddha. It started in the Sankhya philosophy,[151] which was then popularized by Buddha, and codified into a religion.)

What is it that has really *triumphed* over the Christian God? The answer may be found in my *Gay Science*, Section 357: it is ‘Christian morality itself, the concept of truthfulness, taken ever more seriously; it is the confessor-subtlety of the Christian conscience translated and sublimated into scientific conscience, into intellectual integrity, at any price. Regarding Nature as though it were proof of divine goodness and benevolence; interpreting history as the glorification of Divine Reason, as the testimony of a moral world order, a moral teleology; interpreting our personal experiences, as the pious have long done, as though every single thing were ordained, and arranged out of love, for the salvation of the soul; *all this is*

now done away with, our conscience rebels *against* it; we regard it as indecent, dishonourable, dishonest, weak, feminine, cowardly. It is this rigour, if anything, which makes us *good Europeans* and heirs of Europe's most protracted and courageous self-conquest' …

All great things perish by their own accord, by a deliberate act of self-destruction; this is the law of life, the law of *necessary* 'self-conquest' in the essence of life. The legislator himself must heed the cry, '*patere legem quam ipse tulisti*'.[152] In this way Christianity *as a dogma* came to ruin, through its own morality; in the same way Christianity *as a morality* must now come to ruin – we are standing on the threshold of *this* event. After Christian truthfulness has drawn one conclusion after the other, it finally draws its *strongest conclusion*, the conclusion by which it must do away with itself; this, however, happens, when it asks the question, *'what is the meaning of desire for truth?'*

And here again do I touch on my problem, on our problem, my *unknown* friends (for as yet I *know* of no friends amongst you, my readers); what is the meaning of *our* existence, if it is not that in our own selves that desire for truth has come to its own consciousness *as a problem*? …

In attaining self-consciousness, the desire for truth will undoubtedly *destroy* morality; this is that great hundred-act play that is reserved for the next two centuries of Europe, the most terrible, the most mysterious and perhaps yet the most pregnant with hope of all spectacles …

28

Except for the ascetic ideal, Man, the *animal* Man, has had no meaning. His existence on earth had no purpose; 'what is the purpose of Man at all?' was a question without an

answer; the *will* for Man and the world was lacking; behind every great human destiny rang, like a refrain, a still greater 'in vain!' The ascetic ideal simply means that *something was lacking*, that Man was surrounded by a tremendous *void* – he did not know how to justify himself, to explain himself, to affirm himself; he *suffered* from the problem of his own meaning. He suffered also in other ways; he was in the main a *diseased* animal; his problem was *not* suffering itself, though, but the lack of an answer to that crying question, '*Why* do we suffer?'

Man, the bravest animal and the one most inured to suffering, does *not* repudiate suffering in itself; he desires it, he even seeks it out, provided that he is shown a meaning for it, a *purpose* for suffering. The senselessness of suffering, *not* suffering itself, was the curse which lay upon humanity – *until the ascetic ideal gave Man a meaning*! It was the only meaning offered till now; but any meaning is better than no meaning; the ascetic ideal was in that connection the '*faute de mieux*'[153] *par excellence* that existed at that time. In that ideal, suffering *found an explanation*; the tremendous void seemed filled; the door to all suicidal nihilism was closed. The explanation – there is no doubt about it – brought about new suffering, deeper, more penetrating, more venomous, gnawing more brutally into life; it brought all suffering within the compass of *guilt*; but in spite of all that – Man had *saved* himself, he had found a meaning for himself; he was no more tossed about like a leaf in the wind; he was no longer a plaything of chance, a casualty of blind fate; he could now '*will*' something – no matter what, why and how he did so at first – *the will itself was saved.*

We can no longer conceal from ourselves precisely *what* this will, under the direction of the ascetic ideal, expresses,

which is hatred of anything human, animal or material; abhorrence of the senses, of reason itself; fear of happiness and beauty; the desire to escape from all illusion, change, growth, death, wishing, even from desiring itself – all this means – let us have the courage to confront it – *a wish for oblivion*, an aversion to life, a repudiation of everything vital to existence, but it is and remains *a will*! – and to say at the end that which I said at the beginning – Man will desire *oblivion* rather than not desire *at all.*[154]

Notes

PREFACE

1. *We are unknown to ourselves*: An allusion to the Greek maxim ‘know thyself’, which was inscribed on the forecourt of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi.
2. *Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also*: Matthew 6:21.
3. *Each one is the furthest away from himself*: A play on the German saying ‘Jeder ist sich selbst der Nächste’ (‘Every man for himself’). Possibly an adaptation of a quote from Terence (195 or 185–159 BC), ‘proximus sum egomet mihi’ (‘I am closest to myself’ or ‘charity begins at home’).
4. *begun in Sorrento … had wandered*: Nietzsche had recently broken his relationship with the composer Richard Wagner and was staying with his older friend Malwida von Meysenbug (1816–1903) and the philosopher Paul Rée (1849–1901).
5. *where games and God divide one’s heart*: From Johann von Goethe’s (1749–1832) *Faust*, I: 3781–2.
6. *categorical imperative*: The centrepiece of Immanuel Kant’s ethics: ‘Act only according to that maxim whereby you can, at the same time, will that it should become a universal law.’ For Kant, see note 15 below.
7. *Paul Rée*: Author of several books on moral philosophy. Nietzsche first met Rée in 1873 and was close friends with him until 1882, when he split with him over Rée’s relationship with Lou Salomé (1861–1937), a young Russian woman friend of both men.
8. *Schopenhauer*: Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860), noted Kantian philosopher of the Romantic period, who achieved popularity only in the second half of the nineteenth century. Schopenhauer’s magnum opus, *The World as Will and Representation*, originally appeared in 1819, but was greatly expanded in the 1844 edition.
9. *morality of pity*: Pity was a central category of Schopenhauer’s philosophy and the basis of his ethical theory.
10. *a European Buddhism*: Schopenhauer was profoundly influenced by and, in turn, introduced to contemporaries a great deal of Eastern philosophical thought in his writings; here Nietzsche is referring to Schopenhauer’s views on the negation of the will as the path to salvation.
11. *Nihilism*: A frequently encountered term in Nietzsche’s later works meaning the belief in nothing, stemming from the Latin word *nihil*.
12. *Plato*: Greek philosopher (427–347 BC).

13. *Spinoza*: Benedict de Spinoza (1632–77), a Jewish-Dutch rationalist philosopher, best known for his posthumous *Ethics* (1677).
14. *La Rochefoucauld*: François de La Rochefoucauld (1613–80), French author of maxims.
15. *Kant*: Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), most celebrated German philosopher of the Enlightenment, widely known for his three Critiques.
16. *Tartuffery*: Hypocritical piety. Named for the lead character in *Tartuffe* (full title: *Tartuffe, or The Imposter*, French: *Tartuffe, ou l'Imposteur*), one of the most famous theatrical comedies by Molière, a French playwright and actor who is considered to be one of the greatest masters of comedy in Western literature.
17. *in the English style*: Rée was influenced by English thought.
18. *Darwin*: Charles Darwin (1809–82), English naturalist who posited natural selection as the driving force in evolution.
19. *gay science*: A reference to his own book with that title.
20. *Dionysian drama*: In *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872) Nietzsche had claimed Attic tragedy rose from the combination of the Apollonian and Dionysian. The Apollonian refers to Apollo, the Greek god of music, light, prophecy and healing; the Dionysian to Dionysus, the god of wine, ritual madness and ecstasy. By the late 1880s Nietzsche rarely speaks of the Apollonian, but frequently references the Dionysian.

FIRST ESSAY

1. *'Good and Evil', 'Good and Bad'*: Nietzsche had given a preview of this topic in earlier writings, especially in *Beyond Good and Evil*, aphorism 260.
2. *These English psychologists*: Nietzsche likely means 'British', not 'English' philosophers. David. S. Thatcher ('Zur Genealogie der Moral: Some Textual Annotations', *Nietzsche Studien* 18 (1989), p. 588) suggests Nietzsche is referring to W. E. H. Lecky's *History of European Morality* (1869), which Nietzsche mentions in his correspondence. Lecky mentions Bain, Bentham, Hartley, Hobbes, Hume, Hutcheson, Locke, Mandeville, Mill, Paley, Shaftesbury, Adam Smith, Spencer and others in his initial chapter. Most likely, however, Nietzsche is referring to his former friend Paul Rée.
3. *partie honteuse*: 'Shameful part' (Fr.).
4. *vis inertiæ*: 'Force of inertia' (Latin).
5. *Christianity (and Plato)*: Nietzsche associated Christianity with Platonism because both stressed the reality of an otherworldly realm; in the preface to *Beyond Good and Evil* he calls Christianity 'Platonism for the "people" '.
6. *useful*: Nietzsche is here identifying the 'English philosophers' with the Utilitarians, a branch of British philosophy that identifies preferable actions as ones that promote the most overall happiness. John Stuart Mill's (1806–73) book *Utilitarianism* (1863) is the classical presentation of this movement.

7. *pathos of distance*: A Nietzschean term emphasizing the separation of the noble men or masters from the herd or slaves.
8. *désinteressé*: ‘Disinterested’, ‘impartial’ (Fr.).
9. *Herbert Spencer*: (1820–1903), English sociologist, biologist and philosopher. An early disciple of Darwin – Spencer coined the term ‘survival of the fittest’ – his thought is often associated with ‘Social Darwinism’.
10. *the German word ‘schlecht’ … identical with ‘schlicht’*: The words mean ‘bad’ and ‘simple’ or ‘plain’, respectively.
11. *compare ‘schlechtweg’ and ‘schlechterdings’*: The words mean ‘plainly’ or ‘simply’ and ‘positively’ or ‘by all means’.
12. *Thirty Years’ War*: A conflict from 1618 to 1648 involving most Central European countries, in its inception a religious war between Protestants and Catholics, but later a dynastic power struggle.
13. *Buckle*: Henry Thomas Buckle (1821–62), author of a *History of Civilization in England* (1857, 1861).
14. *arya*: ‘Noble’, ‘great’ or ‘truthful’ (Sanskrit).
15. *Theognis, the Megarian poet*: Greek poet, who probably wrote in the second half of the sixth century BC; known for his advocacy of aristocratic values in the face of social and political change. Nietzsche took an interest in Theognis and composed his first scholarly article on him in 1867.
16. *ἑσυλός*: ‘Good’, ‘brave’ (Gk).
17. *κακός* … *δειλός*: ‘Bad’ and ‘cowardly’, respectively (Gk).
18. *ἀγαυός*: ‘Good’, ‘noble’ (Gk).
19. *malus*: ‘Bad’ (Latin).
20. *μέλας*: ‘Black’ (Gk).
21. *‘hic niger est’*: ‘That man is a dark character’, from Horace, *Satires* I, 4, line 85.
22. *the Aryan conquering race*: Nietzsche is referring to the displacement of the aboriginal inhabitants of Italy by an invading people who spoke the Indo-European language.
23. *Gaelic*: A Celtic language that includes the speech of ancient Ireland and the dialects that have developed from it.
24. *Fin-Gal*: Or Fingal, hero in the *Poems of Ossian* (1765), an eighteenth-century forgery by James Macpherson. The hero’s name means ‘white stranger’.
25. *Virchow*: Rudolph Carl Virchow (1821–1902), German doctor and anthropologist. Nietzsche appears to be mistaken about his views, since Virchow clearly identifies the Celts with the Aryan peoples.
26. *shortness of the skull*: Here Nietzsche alludes to phrenology, a pseudo-science practised in the nineteenth century that believed intelligence and other mental qualities could be inferred from the size and shape of the skull.
27. *‘Commune’*: A reference to the Paris Commune, a working-class revolt that briefly took control of Paris in 1871. Nietzsche had been horrified at the actions of the Commune, especially rumours that it had destroyed cultural artefacts. Here he may be using the term to refer to any uprising of the working class.

28. *bonus*: ‘Good’ (Latin).
29. *compare bellum-duellum = duen-lum*: ‘Bellum’ is Latin for war; ‘duellum’ and ‘duenlum’ are older forms of ‘bellum’.
30. *duonus*: Older form of ‘bonus’ (good).
31. *our actual German word gut … Goths*: Nietzsche is speculating on an etymological connection involving the German words ‘gut’ (good), ‘Gott’ (god) and ‘Gothen’ (Goths). The Goths were an east German tribe of Scandinavian origin.
32. *vegetarianism*: Nietzsche experimented with a variety of dietary regimes throughout his life to combat his poor digestion. He adhered to vegetarianism for a time, but appears to have turned against it vehemently after his break with Richard Wagner, who was an advocate of vegetarianism, although perhaps not an adherent himself.
33. *Weir-Mitchell isolation cure*: A treatment for nervous disorders developed by Silas Weir Mitchell (1829–1914) during the US Civil War. The cure consisted of a regime of rest and isolation, dieting, electrotherapy and massage.
34. *fakir*: A Muslim or Hindu religious ascetic.
35. *Brahman*: Member of the highest or priestly caste among the Hindus.
36. *idée fixe*: ‘Fixed idea’, ‘obsession’ (Fr.).
37. *unio mystica*: ‘Mystical union’ (Latin); a theme of pietism familiar to Nietzsche from his theological background.
38. *Nirvana*: Transcendent state and final goal in Buddhism.
39. *the Jews*: Nietzsche is referring here to the Jews of a specific historical period, what might be called the priestly-prophetic period in ancient Jewish history that Nietzsche believes forms a continuity with the beginnings of Christianity. He expresses admiration for the ancient Hebrews of the Old Testament and harbours no obvious anti-Semitic feelings towards Jews in modern times.
40. *all the world*: Luke 2:1.
41. *sub hoc signo*: ‘Under this sign’ (Latin). Eusebius of Caesarea reports that Constantine (later called ‘the Great’) once had a vision of a cross with the attached legend: ‘By this, conquer’ (*De vita Constantini* (*On the Life of Constantine*) I.28). This phrase was eventually transformed into the Latin: ‘In hoc signo vinces’ (‘In this sign you will conquer’). ‘Sub hoc signo’ (‘Under this sign’) is presumably a variant of ‘In hoc signo’. In AD 312 Constantine defeated Maxentius at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, becoming the first Christian Emperor.
42. *Quaeritur*: ‘It is asked’ (Latin).
43. *resentment*: Nietzsche uses the naturalized French term *ressentiment*, probably borrowed from Eugen Dühring’s *Der Werth des Lebens* (*The Value of Life*, 1865). In Nietzsche’s writings the word always has associations with revenge and with the inferior position of the person harbouring it.
44. *ab initio*: ‘From the outset’ (Latin).
45. *in effigie*: ‘In effigy’ (Latin); in the form of an image.
46. *δείλός*: ‘Cowardly’ (Gk).

47. *δείλαιος*: ‘Wretched’ (Gk).
48. *πονηρός*: ‘Toilsome’ (Gk).
49. *μοχθηρός*: ‘Miserable’ (Gk).
50. *οϊζυρός*: ‘Pitiable’ (Gk).
51. *ἄνολβος*: ‘Luckless’, ‘wretched’ (Gk).
52. *τλήμων*: ‘Suffering’ (Gk).
53. *δυστυχεῖν*: ‘To be unlucky’ (Gk).
54. *ξυmφορά*: ‘Accident’, ‘misfortune’ (Gk).
55. *εὖ πράττειν*: ‘To do well’, ‘to prosper’ (Gk).
56. *γενναῖος*: ‘High-born’ (Gk).
57. *Mirabeau*: Honoré Gabriel Riqueti, comte de Mirabeau (1749–91), French revolutionary, writer, diplomat, journalist and politician.
58. *love of one’s enemies*: Matthew 5:43–4.
59. *inter pares*: ‘Among equals’ or ‘peers’ (Latin).
60. *Pericles*: Athenian statesman, orator and general during the fifth century BC.
61. *Our boldness … for good and for ill*: Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* 2:41.
62. *ῥαθυμία*: ‘Easiness of temper’ (Gk); Thucydides, 2:39.
63. *Goth* … *Vandal*: Germanic tribes that contributed to the fall of the Roman Empire.
64. *Hesiod*: Early Greek poet, probably contemporary with Homer. Here Nietzsche is referring to a passage from *Works and Days*, lines 107–201.
65. *beyond Good and Evil*: The phrase is used as the title of Nietzsche’s book from 1886.
66. *Chinese*: Nietzsche uses the term here and elsewhere to refer to a vast mediocre uniformity. An example of how Nietzsche was not immune to nineteenth-century European racial views.
67. *A measure of force … impelling, willing, acting*: The essence of Nietzsche’s ‘will to power’.
68. *Kantian ‘Thing-in-Itself’*: In the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) Kant distinguishes between an unknowable and essential noumenal realm, where an object is a ‘thing in itself’, and a phenomenal realm, in which objects are perceived by us.
69. *for they know not what they do*: Luke 23:34.
70. *authority*: Romans 13:1–2.
71. *sweeter than honey*: Homer, *Iliad* 18:109–10.
72. *brothers in love*: Romans 12:10.
73. *the last judgement*: See, for example, Matthew 25.
74. *in faith, in hope, in love*: 1 Corinthians 13:13.
75. *their kingdom also must come*: See Matthew 6:10 and Luke 11:2.
76. *Eternal love made me too*: From *The Divine Comedy*, *Inferno*, 3:5–6 by the Italian poet Dante Alighieri (1265–1321).
77. *Thomas Aquinas*: (1225–74), Influential Christian philosopher and theologian.
78. *Beati in regno … magis complaceat*: ‘The blessed in the kingdom of heaven will see the punishment of the damned, so that their happiness will be more

delightful to them.' *Summa Theologiæ*, Suppl. IIIae, Q 94, A 1.

79. *father of the Church*: Tertullian (Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus, 160–225), early prolific Christian writer from Carthage in North Africa.
80. *Rhadamanti … Minois*: Rhadamanthys and Minos; brothers, sons of Zeus and Europa; both later thought to be judges of the dead.
81. *vivos*: Nietzsche obviously miscopied the text here; the original is 'visos'. The translation is thus 'not even would I wish to see them', while Nietzsche's miscopying of the text would yield something like 'not even would I wish they were alive'.
82. *Talmud*: Jewish book of ceremonial law and legend. There are two versions, the Babylonian and the earlier Palestinian or Jerusalem Talmud. Nietzsche refers here to a passage in the Babylonian Talmud.
83. *Samarites et daemonium habens*: 'The Samaritan, who had a devil'; John 8: 48–9.
84. *quem a Juda redemistis*: 'Whom you bought from Judas'; Matthew 26:14–16.
85. *At enim supersunt … omni stadio gratiora*: 'Yes, and there are still to come other spectacles – that last, that eternal Day of Judgement, that Day which the Gentiles never believed would come, that Day they laughed at, when this old world and all its generations will be consumed in one fire. How vast the spectacle that day, and how wide! What sight will wake my wonder, what my laughter, my joy and exultation? As I see all those kings, those great kings, welcomed (we were told) in heaven, along with Jove, along with those who told of their ascent, groaning in the depths of darkness! And the magistrates who persecuted the name of Jesus, liquefying in fiercer flames than they kindled in their rage against the Christians! Those sages, too, the philosophers blushing before their disciples as they blaze together, the disciples whom they taught that God was concerned with nothing, that men have no souls at all, or that what souls they have will never return to their former bodies! And, then, the poets trembling before the judgement-seat, not of Rhadamanthus, not of Minos, but of Christ whom they never looked to see! And then there will be the tragic actors to be heard, more vocal in their own tragedy; and the players to be seen, more lithe of limb by far in the fire; and then the charioteer to watch, red all over in the wheel of flame; and, next, the athletes to be gazed upon, not in their gymnasiums but hurled in the fire – unless it be that not even then would I wish to see them, in my desire rather to turn an insatiable gaze on them who vented their rage and fury on the Lord. "This is he," I will say, "the son of the carpenter or the harlot, the Sabbath-breaker, the Samaritan, who had a devil. This is he whom you bought from Judas; this is he, who was struck with reed and fist, defiled with spittle, given gall and vinegar to drink. This is he whom the disciples secretly stole away, that it might be said he had risen – unless it was the gardener who removed him, lest his lettuces should be trampled by the throng of visitors!" Such sights, such exultation, – what praetor, consul, quaestor, priest, will ever give you of his bounty? And yet all these, in some sort, are ours, pictured through faith in the imagination of the spirit. But

what are those things which eye has not seen nor ear heard, nor ever entered into the heart of man? (I Corinthians 2:9.) I believe, things of greater joy than circus, theatre or amphitheatre or any stadium.' Translation from the Latin of Tertullian, *De Spectaculis*, trans. T. R. Glover, in Loeb Classical Library No. 250, English and Latin Edition (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1931), pp. 294–300, language modernized. Nietzsche's interpolations appear in parentheses.

86. *Per fidem*: 'By my faith', 'truly' (Latin). Possibly also a play on the German word 'perfid' (perfidious).
87. *convicted … human race*: Tacitus, *Annals* 15:44.
88. *The Apocalypse of John*: The Book of Revelations, last book in the New Testament.
89. *Nor should one … for this purpose*: A reference to the traditional theory that the Gospel of John and the Apocalypse of John had the same author.
90. *Napoleon*: Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821), French military and political leader who rose to power in the latter stages of the French Revolution.
91. *relegated ad acta*: 'To consider something closed' or 'finished' (Latin).
92. *English biologists*: Probably refers to Darwin and Herbert Spencer.

SECOND ESSAY

1. *vis inertiæ*: 'Power of inertia' (Latin).
2. *tabula rasa*: 'Blank slate' (Latin); term central to empirical theories of epistemology, such as those propagated by John Locke (1632–1704), maintaining that our minds are initially 'blank slates' that become filled with perceptions from the external world.
3. *forgetfulness*: Nietzsche had explored this theme earlier in the opening section to *On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life* (1874).
4. *good things*: Nietzsche's main sources for legal and cultural practices in the past were Albert Hermann Post, *Bausteine für eine allgemeine Rechtswissenschaft auf vergleichend-ethnologischer Basis*, 2 vols. (*Foundations of a General Jurisprudence Based on Comparative Ethnology*, 1880); and Josef Kohler, *Das Recht als Kulturerscheinung* (*Law as a Cultural Phenomenon*, 1885).
5. *concept of 'guilt' … concept of 'obligation'*: In German the word 'Schuld' means 'guilt', while 'Schulden' means 'debts' or 'obligation'.
6. *Roman Code of the Twelve Tables*: Legislation of the Roman senate in 450 and 449 BC establishing the foundation of Roman law.
7. *si plus minusve secuerunt, ne fraude esto*: Found in the third paragraph of the sixth tablet: 'If they cut off more or less, let that not be considered a crime.' The actual Latin reads 'se fraude esto'.
8. *de faire le mal pour le plaisir de la faire*: 'To do evil for the pleasure of doing it' (Fr.), citation from Prosper Mérimée (1803–70), *Lettres à une inconnue* (*Letters to an Unknown Woman*, 1874), 1:8.
9. *categorical imperative*: See Preface, note 6.

10. *sympathia malevolens*: ‘Malevolent sympathy’ (Latin).
11. *auto-da-fé*: The burning of a heretic by the Spanish inquisition; literally ‘act of faith’ (Portuguese).
12. *Don Quixote at the court of the Duchess*: Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quixote* (1605 and 1615), Book 2, chapters 30–57; at the court of the Duke and Duchess Quixote is made the butt of cruel and sometimes brutal practical jokes.
13. *human, all-too-human*: Title of Nietzsche’s earlier collection of aphorisms in two volumes (1878 and 1879).
14. *Pope Innocent the Third … and excrement*: Pope from 1198 until his death, Innocent the Third (*c.*1160–1216) composed the short treatise *De miseria humanae conditionis* (*On the Misery of the Human Condition*) in 1195 when he was Cardinal Lotario dei Segni. Nietzsche summarizes from various chapters in this extremely popular medieval text.
15. *Negroes*: Another example of Nietzsche’s adoption of typical racist views circulating in the Europe of his times.
16. *the collective suffering of all the animals … is simply negligible*: A possible allusion to and criticism of Wagner and his followers, who were ardent anti-vivisectionists.
17. *les nostalgies de la croix*: ‘Nostalgia for the cross’ (Fr.).
18. *Calvin and Luther*: Reference to John Calvin (1509–64) and Martin Luther (1483–1546), two leaders of the Protestant Reformation who did not hesitate to employ force to promote their cause.
19. *for the poets as well*: ‘The gods were responsible for that, weaving catastrophe into men’s lives to make a song for future generations.’ Homer, *The Odyssey*, trans. E. V. Rieu (London: Penguin, 1946), 8, pp. 579–80.
20. *manas*: ‘Mind’; ‘conscious will’ (Sanskrit).
21. *‘Elend’ (êlend)*: Modern German ‘Elend’ means ‘misery’. It derives from ‘êlend’, which means foreign, exile, or banishment.
22. *the criminal … broken his word*: Nietzsche plays on the word ‘Verbrecher’, which means criminal, but also contains the root ‘to break’ (‘brechen’).
23. *vae victis*: ‘Woe to the vanquished’ (Latin), from Livy, *Ab urbe condita* (*From the Founding of the City*), Book V, 48:9.
24. *compositio*: A term from Roman law referring to the amicable settlement of a case.
25. *privilege … beyond the law*: Another Nietzschean play on words involving ‘Vorrecht’, which means ‘privilege’, and ‘Jenseits des Rechts’, which means literally ‘beyond the law’, but also alludes to the title of Nietzsche’s previous book, *Beyond Good and Evil* (*Jenseits von Gut und Böse*).
26. *anti-Semites*: The term ‘anti-Semite’ to refer to anti-Jewish sentiments was relatively new to German usage, having appeared for the first time in 1879 in a pamphlet written by Wilhelm Marr.
27. *E. Dühring*: Eugen Karl Dühring (1833–1921), German philosopher and political economist. Dühring was a Socialist, who occasioned the sharp critique of Friedrich Engels, and also a leading anti-Semite.

28. *the theory of revenge … thread of justice*: E. Dühring, *Sache, Leben und Feinde* (*Issues, Life and Enemies*, Karlsruhe and Leipzig, 1882), p. 293.
29. *causa fiendi*: ‘Initial cause’ (Latin).
30. *purpose in law*: The German is ‘Zweck im Recht’, which is the title of a two-volume book (1877 and 1883) by the noted legal scholar Rudolph Ritter von Jhering (1818–92).
31. *toto caelo*: ‘By the whole extent of the heavens’; ‘diametrically’ (Latin).
32. *raison d’être:* ‘Reason for existence’.
33. *misarchism*: Neologism meaning ‘hatred of rule’ or ‘power’.
34. *Huxley*: Thomas Henry Huxley (1825–95), English biologist and public defender of Darwin. Huxley published an essay in 1872 entitled ‘Administrative Nihilism’, in which he discusses Spencer’s notion of moral evolution of the human species.
35. *per analogiam*: ‘By analogy’ (Latin).
36. *Spinoza*: See Preface, note 13, above.
37. *Kuno Fischer*: (1824–1907), Prolific German critic and professor of philosophy; wrote on Spinoza in his eight-volume history of philosophy.
38. *morsus conscientiae*: ‘Pangs of conscience’ (Latin).
39. *sub ratione boni*: ‘For the sake of the good’ (Latin).
40. *but this was … of all absurdities*: From Spinoza’s *Ethics* I, Prop. 33, Schol. 2.
41. *gaudium*: ‘Joy’ (Latin).
42. *a sadness … past disappointments*: Nietzsche indicates the source (*Ethics* III, Prop. 18, Schol. 1 and 2), but probably was not working with Spinoza in the original. His citation is an amalgam of the first and second note (*scholilum*) to the eighteenth proposition and was likely drawn from a secondary source.
43. *Injury makes a man more intelligent*: Nietzsche uses the German ‘Schaden macht klug’; the more frequently encountered saying is ‘Aus Schaden wird man klug’ (‘From injury one becomes more intelligent’).
44. *Heraclitus*: Pre-Socratic philosopher (*c.*535–*c.*475 BC). Nietzsche appears to be referring to Fragment 52: ‘Time is a child playing draughts, the kingly power is a child’s.’
45. *contract*: A reference to the social contract theory of government, whereby the origin of the state emanates from an agreement or contract among the citizens. Social contract theory is associated with Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau.
46. *labyrinth … phrase*: From Goethe’s poem ‘An den Mond’ (‘To the Moon’).
47. *mimicry*: In English in Nietzsche’s text.
48. *causa prima*: ‘First cause’ (Latin).
49. *original sin*: Christian doctrine asserting mankind’s inherently sinful state of existence resulting from Adam’s disobedience of God in the Garden of Eden.
50. *Strange … their own disaster*: Homer, *Odyssey* 1:32–4.
51. *Antichrist*: The title of one of Nietzsche’s last books from 1895; it has the meaning of both ‘Antichrist’ and ‘Antichristian’.

52. *Zarathustra*: The title character of Nietzsche's four-part work *Also sprach Zarathustra* (*Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 1883–5).

THIRD ESSAY

1. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*: The epigram for this essay is slightly reworded from Part I, 'On Reading and Writing'.
2. *morbidezza*: 'Delicacy', 'softness' (It.).
3. *novissima gloriae cupido*: 'The latest desire for glory' (Latin); allusion to Tacitus, *Histories* 4:6.
4. *horror vacui*: 'Horror of a vacuum' (Latin). In the fourth book of Aristotle's *Physics* the philosopher contends that nature abhors a vacuum and is always trying to suck matter into empty space.
5. *Richard Wagner … in his old age*: Nietzsche frequently made disparaging remarks about Wagner (1813–83) in the composer's later years, projecting a turn away from his initial cultural aspirations to, and embrace of, Christian asceticism in the opera *Parsifal* (1882). See section 3 and 4 of this essay. Two of Nietzsche's books in his last year of sane life, *The Case of Wagner* and *Nietzsche contra Wagner*, dealt with the composer.
6. *Luther's Wedding*: The project Wagner began to work on in 1868 to celebrate the 350th anniversary of the Reformation. It remained unfinished. Nietzsche's relationship with Wagner was most intense in the years 1868–76.
7. *Die Meistersinger*: *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (*The Mastersingers of Nuremberg*) is a Wagnerian opera first performed in 1868.
8. *evangelical freedom*: A reference to the elimination of celibacy in the Protestant Church; also an allusion to the broader notion of freedom in Martin Luther's *Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen* (*On the Freedom of a Christian*, 1520).
9. *Hafiz*: Khwā ja Shamsu d-Dīn Muhammad Hā fez-e Shīrāzī (*c.*1325–*c.*1389), celebrated Persian lyric poet. Hafiz's poetry inspired Goethe's *West-östlicher Diwan* (*West-Eastern Divan*), a collection of poems published in 1819.
10. *Feuerbach*: Ludwig Feuerbach (1804–72), German philosopher often noted for his advocacy of atheism and materialism, as well as his influence on the young Karl Marx.
11. *healthy sensuality*: From Feuerbach's *Principles of the Philosophy of the Future* (1843), esp. Sections 31ff. of this work.
12. *Young Germans*: A group of liberal poets and critics from the 1830s who openly embraced sensualism. Nietzsche's timing is slightly off, since Feuerbach's main influence in German culture does not occur until the 1840s with the publication of *Das Wesen des Christentums* (*The Essence of Christianity*, 1841).
13. *contiguity*: In English in Nietzsche's text. A term from associationist psychology.

14. *Schopenhauerian*: Reference to Schopenhauer's pessimism and advocacy of negation of the will.
15. *when the time had come*: Possible reference to Galatians 4:4, or Luke 9:51.
16. *empire*: A reference to the founding of the Second German Empire in 1871 following the Franco-Prussian War.
17. *Herwegh*: Georg Herwegh (1817–75), German poet. In the autumn of 1854 Wagner had been introduced by Herwegh to Schopenhauer's *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (*The World as Will and Representation*).
18. *Opera and Drama*: Essay by Wagner from 1851 in which he discusses his views on opera as an art form.
19. *in majorem musicae gloriam*: 'In the greater glory of music' (Latin); Nietzsche parodies the motto of the Jesuits: 'Ad majorem Dei gloriam' ('For the greater glory of God').
20. *essence of things*: The German is ' "An-sich" der Dinge', alluding thereby to Kantian philosophy, of which Schopenhauer was a disciple.
21. *telephone*: The telephone was a recent invention, having been patented by Alexander Graham Bell in 1876.
22. *without interest*: Not an exact citation from Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (*Critique of Judgement*), but a sentiment that captures Kant's assertion that the beautiful involves a pleasure without any interest on the part of the subject.
23. *Stendhal*: Pseudonym for French author Marie-Henri Beyle (1783–1842).
24. *une promesse de bonheur*: 'A promise of happiness' (Fr.), cited from Stendhal's *Rome, Naples et Florence* (1817).
25. *le désinteressement*: 'Disinterestedness' (Fr.).
26. *Pygmalion*: A legendary sculptor, best known from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, who fell in love with the sculpture he created.
27. *sense of touch*: Possibly a reference to Kant's 'Vom Sinne der Betastung' ('On the Sense of Touch') in *Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht* (*Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, 1798).
28. *lupulin*: A fine yellow resinous powder on the strobiles of hops that contains humulone and lupulon; acts as a sedative.
29. *camphor*: White or transparent solid with a strong aromatic odour; acts as an anaesthetic.
30. *Epicurus*: (341–270 BC) Greek philosopher who taught about the happy, tranquil life characterized by freedom from fear and the absence of pain.
31. *Ixion*: Mythological figure bound to a spinning fiery wheel for eternity by Zeus for his romantic interest in Hera.
32. *instrumentum diaboli*: 'Instrument of the devil' (Latin). Schopenhauer was well known for his misogyny; see, for example, the section 'Über die Weiber' ('On Women') in *Parerga und Paralipomena*.
33. *Hegel*: Georg Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel (1770–1831), noted philosopher of German idealism, was severely criticized by Schopenhauer, who believed Hegel offered only a colossal piece of mystification and a pseudo-philosophy.

34. *Cynics*: Ancient school of Greek philosophy that advocated the simple, self-sufficient life and rejected desires for wealth, power, sex and fame.
35. *la bête philosophe:* 'The philosophical beast' (Fr.).
36. *surpassing all reason*: Philippians 4:7
37. *to prove this very rule*: Socrates' wife Xanthippe became the stereotype of the nagging, shrewish housewife.
38. *Râhula … forged for me*: Cited from H. Oldenburg, *Buddha: Sein Leben, seine Lehre, seine Gemeinde* (*Buddha: His Life, His Teaching, His Community*, 1881), p. 122.
39. *pereat*. … *fiam*: 'Let the world perish, but let philosophy exist, let the philosopher exist, let me exist'; modelled on the common Latin saying 'Fiat justicia, pereat mundus' ('Let the world perish, but let justice be done').
40. *poverty, humility, chastity*: Nietzsche is referring to Christian ideals and religious vows.
41. *Heraclitus retreated … temple of Artemis*: Reported by Diogenes Laertius at the beginning of his life of Heraclitus in *Lives and Opinions of the Philosophers*, Book ix.
42. *Piazza di San Marco*: A square in the city of Venice.
43. *Of what use … the world*: Cited from Paul Deussen (1845–1919), *Das System des Vedânta* (*The System of the Vedânta*, 1883). Deussen was a childhood friend of Nietzsche.
44. *I shall return once again … elucidated*: Nietzsche never in fact wrote further on this topic.
45. *ephectic*: 'Hesitating' (Gk). The Sceptic philosophers were called the Ephectics. 'To be ephectic' would thus mean 'to be hesitant' or 'to reserve judgement'.
46. *sine ira et studio*: 'With neither anger not partisanship' (Latin); from Tacitus, *Annals* 1:1.
47. *nitimur in vetitum*: 'We strive after what is forbidden' (Latin); from Ovid, *Amores* (*Loves*), Book 3, 4:7.
48. *Charles the Bold … Louis XI*: Charles the Bold (1433–77) and Louis XI (1423–83) were brothers-in-law and political enemies.
49. *je combats l'universelle araignée*: 'I combat the universal spider' (Fr.).
50. *jus primae noctis*: 'Right of the first night' (Latin); refers to the alleged right of the feudal lord to deflower the wife of his vassal on the night of the wedding; this 'right' may have been largely a fiction perpetrated by the Enlightenment to discredit feudalism.
51. *vendetta*: 'Blood feud' (It.).
52. *vetitum*: 'Something forbidden' (Latin).
53. *says the same book a little later*: In section 19.
54. *Brahmans*: See First Essay, note 35 above.
55. *Vishvamitra*: In Indian mythology one of the great sages, who renounced his kingship and attained great powers through ascetic self-discipline.
56. *Crux, nux, lux*: 'Cross', 'nut', 'light' (Latin). Some editors believe the second term should be 'nox' ('night'), but 'nux' appears in the manuscript.

57. *Vedânta*: The last part of the Veda (Sanskrit for 'knowledge') known as the Upanishads; composed between 800 and 600 BC, they contain the philosophy of Brahmanism, a renunciation of the world and a turn towards the absolute.
58. *Incidentally … utlerly incomprehensible*: Another reference to Kant's dualistic philosophy, in which the noumenal or essential realm remains inaccessible through empirical perception of phenomena.
59. *Dance of Death*: Late-medieval allegory, in which personified Death leads all others into the grave. Meant to remind one of the transitory nature of life on earth, it coincided with the Black Death of 1347–50. (See *The Black Death* by Philip Ziegler (London: Collins, 1969.)
60. *homines bonae voluntatis*: 'Men of goodwill' (Latin); Luke 2:14.
61. *beautiful souls*: A reference to a section of Goethe's novel *Wilhelm Meister* (1795): 'Bekenntnisse einer schönen Seele' ('Confessions of a beautiful soul'); in this context a critique of the ideals of German classicism.
62. *Bogos*: An Ethiopian tribe.
63. *Woman is a hyena*: Cited from Post (see Second Essay, note 4).
64. *Pharisaism*: A reference to an ancient Jewish sect, characterized by strict observance; Pharisee has come to mean a self-righteous or hypocritical person.
65. *apostle of vindictiveness … anti-Semites*: See Second Essay, note 26.
66. *nervus sympathicus*: 'Sympathetic nerve' (Latin); governs internal organs by reflex action.
67. *man needs but one thing*: Luke 10:42.
68. *witch-trials*: A reference to a European practice from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century of hunting and killing women thought to be practising witchcraft and consorting with Satan.
69. *Sir Andrew in Shakespeare*: *Twelfth Night* 1:3:82–6. Nietzsche uses the name 'Junker Christoph' in his text, following the Schlegel/Tieck rendition of 'Sir Andrew'.
70. *Thirty Years' War*: See First Essay, note 12.
71. *Fakir*: See First Essay, note 34.
72. *Pascal*: Blaise Pascal (1623–62), French mathematician, physicist and philosopher; a precocious scientist, he devoted himself to theological and philosophical writings in 1654 after a mystical religious experience. His most celebrated work, *Pensées*, was incomplete at his death.
73. *il faut s'abêtir*: 'One must become stupid' (Fr.). This exact formulation does not appear in Pascal's *Pensées*.
74. *sportsmen*: Original in English.
75. *Hesychasts of Mount Athos*: Hesychasm is an eremitic tradition of prayer in the Eastern Orthodox Church, involving turning inwards and ceasing to heed the senses in an endeavour to perceive the divinity. Mount Athos is a centre of the practice of Hesychasm.
76. *St Theresa*: St Teresa of Avila (1515–82), prominent Spanish mystic and reformer of the Carmelite order.

77. *Good and evil … beyond them both*: Cited in slightly modified form from Hermann Oldenberg, *Buddha* (1881), p. 50.
78. *Shankara*: Adi Shankara (*c.*788–*c.*820), Indian philosopher and founder of monasteries.
79. *Redemption is … Paul Deussen*: Nietzsche's sources are Paul Deussen's *Das System des Vedânta* (*The System of the Vedânta*, Leipzig, 1883) and *Die Sutras des Vedânta aus dem Sanskrit übersetzt* (*The Sutras of the Vedânta Translated from the Sanskrit*, Leipzig, 1887). See Third Essay, note 43.
80. *unio mystica*: See First Essay, note 37.
81. *prâna*: 'Vital life' (Sanskrit).
82. *In deep sleep … to the cart*: Again citations are from Deussen.
83. *Epicurus*: See note 30.
84. *training*: Original in English.
85. *incuria sui*: 'Neglect of oneself' (Latin).
86. *cenacle*: From the Latin *cenaculum* (upper room), the room in which the Last Supper was held; generalized to mean a meeting or gathering place.
87. *despectio sui*: 'Contempt for oneself' (Latin). Probably cited from Fischer; see Second Essay, note 37.
88. *Geulincx*: Arnold Geulincx (1624–69), Flemish philosopher and follower of Descartes.
89. *discussed*: Plato, *Republic* 3:414B–C.
90. *Lord Byron … friend's papers*: Thomas Moore (1779–1852), an Irish poet, singer and songwriter, was thought to be responsible for burning the memoirs of the noted English Romantic poet Lord Byron (1788–1824). The latest thinking is that he protested against their destruction at the hands of the publisher John Murray.
91. *Dr Gwinner … the same*: Wilhelm von Gwinner (1825–1917), a lawyer and writer, was the executor of Schopenhauer's will and destroyed his autobiographical writings. Gwinner himself wrote three biographical works about Schopenhauer.
92. *εἰς ἑαυτόν*: 'Against himself' (Gk).
93. *Alexander Wheelock Thayer … no longer*: Alexander Wheelock Thayer (1817–97), librarian, diplomat and journalist, wrote the first scholarly biography of Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827).
94. *We are promised an autobiography of Richard Wagner*: This autobiography appeared under the title *Mein Leben* (*My Life*); it appeared first in privately printed editions before it was made available to the wider public in the twentieth century.
95. *Janssen*: Johannes Janssen (1829–91), German historian, caused a great deal of protest with his denigration of Luther and the Reformation in his six-volume Catholic history of Germany since the Middle Ages.
96. *Taine*: Hippolyte Adolphe Taine (1828–93), noted French critic and historian; influential for naturalism, a proponent of sociological positivism and a practitioner of historicist criticism.

97. *Leopold Ranke*: Leopold von Ranke (1795–1886), celebrated German historian who insisted on source material and empirical methods of historical research.
98. *causa fortior*: ‘Stronger reason’ (Latin).
99. *that diplomat*: An allusion to Charles Maurice de Talleyrand (1754–1838).
100. *Mistrust … good*: We have followed Nietzsche’s translation here. The French original reads: ‘méfiez-vous du premier mouvement; il est toujours généreux’. A better translation would have been: ‘they are nearly always generous’.
101. *ghastly beast*: From Luther’s *Table Talk* (1566).
102. *My kingdom is not of this world*: John 18:36.
103. *Goethe has maintained … tragic situations*: In *Conversations with Eckermann*, 14 February 1830.
104. *alienist*: A nineteenth-century term for a physician specializing in mental disorders.
105. *St Vitus dance and St John’s dance*: A dancing mania found in Europe of the medieval and early modern period; it seems to have been a type of group hysteria that had a social origin, although in some cases it may also have had somatic causes.
106. *evviva la morte!*: ‘Long live death’ (It.).
107. *Quaeritur*: ‘One asks’, ‘that is the question’ (Latin).
108. *magno sed proxima intervallo*: ‘Next but by a great distance’ (Latin), possibly adapted from Virgil, *Aeneid*, 5:320.
109. *artibus et litteris*: ‘In arts and letters’ (Latin).
110. *book of all books*: The Bible.
111. *Salvation Army … heathens*: English religious charitable organization founded by Methodist minister William Booth and his wife Catherine in 1865; it opposed theatre productions as the work of the devil, but there is no evidence of any particular animus against Shakespeare.
112. *Here I stand! I cannot help myself*: A statement Luther allegedly made at the Council of Worms in 1521 when he was asked to recant his teachings.
113. *the crown of eternal life*: Revelation 2:10.
114. *Peter*: One of the twelve disciples of Christ; first Bishop of Rome and chief pastor of the Catholic Church.
115. *non plus ultra*: ‘Unsurpassable extreme’ (Latin).
116. *scientific knowledge*: The German is simply ‘Wissenschaft’. Here and throughout the *Genealogy* ‘Wissenschaft’ and its adjectival forms have been translated as ‘science’ and ‘scientific’. While ‘science’ in English has come to be identified with the natural sciences, ‘Wissenschaft’ in German is a much broader notion, encompassing all fields of knowledge.
117. *despectio sui*: See Third Essay, note 87.
118. *salvation comes from faith*: A possible reference to the doctrine of ‘faith alone’ (Latin: ‘sola fide’), which distinguishes most Protestant denominations from Catholicism. See Mark 16:16, Luke 1:45, John 20:29.
119. *ephectics*: See note 45.

120. *invincible order of Assassins*: An Islamic sect founded in the eleventh century.
121. *labyrinthine … Minotaur*: An allusion to the Greek legend of the Cretan Minotaur, half-man and half-bull, confined to a labyrinth by Daedalus.
122. *factum brutum*: 'Brute fact' (Latin).
123. *petits faits (ce petit fatalisme)*: 'Little facts' 'the little fatalism' (Fr.); Nietzsche puns on facts and fatalism, reflecting his criticism of positivism.
124. *modus*: 'Method' or 'mode' (Latin).
125. *Plato felt … genuine antagonism*: A reference to Plato's banishment of art in the *Republic*. His deprecation of art is based on its being an imitation of an appearance of which the true form is the ultimate reality. His opposition to Homer comes from the claim that Homer imitates things he does not know first-hand; poetry, Plato argues, does not supply real knowledge. See *Republic* 595a–607a; also 388c–392c.
126. *Mandarins*: An official in any of the top nine grades of the former imperial Chinese civil service; hence, any bureaucrat or official.
127. *Preface to The Birth of Tragedy*: Nietzsche is referring to the new preface he composed in 1886, 'Versuch einer Selbstkritik' ('Attempt at a Self-Criticism'), not to the original short preface to Richard Wagner from late 1871.
128. *poor in spirit*: An allusion to Matthew 5:3.
129. *Copernicus*: Nicolaus Copernicus (1473–1543), founder of modern astronomy, developed a heliocentric astronomy, which displaced the notion that the earth was the centre of the universe.
130. *piercing sensation of his own oblivion*: Slight variation on an utterance from the Duke of Alba in Act 2, Scene 5 (line 1388) of Friedrich Schiller's *Don Carlos*.
131. *Kant himself … into insignificance*: From the conclusion of the *Critique of Pure Reason* (A 289).
132. *ataraxia*: A state of freedom from emotional disturbance or anxiety.
133. *he who despises … how to respect*: In German 'der Verachtende' is 'one who despises'; 'das Achten nicht verlernt hat' is 'not forgotten how to respect'.
134. *Kant's victory … Freedom, Immortality*: In the *Critique of Pure Reason*.
135. *Xaver Doudan*: Ximenés Doudan (1800–72), French critic and moralist.
136. *l'habitude d'admirer … dans l'inconnu*: 'Ravages caused by the habit of admiring the intelligible, instead of simply remaining in the unknown' (Fr.).
137. *elegantia syllogismi*: 'Elegance of syllogism' (Latin).
138. *nada*: 'Nothing' (Spanish).
139. *Petersburg*: St Petersburg, the imperial capital of Russia until 1918.
140. *Tolstoian*: Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy (1828–1910), Russian novelist, moral thinker and social reformer, who adopted unorthodox Christian ideals.
141. *Dühring*: See Second Essay, note 27.
142. *beautiful souls*: See Third Essay, note 61.
143. *species anarchistica*: 'Anarchist species' (Latin).

144. *Renan*: Joseph Ernest Renan (1823–92), French writer and philosopher known for his works about early Christianity.
145. *Anacreontic*: In the manner of the poet Anacreon (sixth century BC), who wrote of wine and love.
146. *χάσμ' ὀδόντων*: 'Chasm of teeth' (Gk), from the twenty-fourth poem of the *Anacreontea*, a collection of poems written in the style of Anacreon, composed by various poets.
147. *Germany, Germany above everything*: 'Deutschland, Deutschland über alles'. First line of 'Das Lied der Deutschen' ('The Song of the Germans'), a popular patriotic song in the Second Reich, composed originally by August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben in 1841; it was sung to the melody of Joseph Haydn's 'Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser' ('God Save the Emperor Franz'). After the First World War it became the German national anthem.
148. *paralysis agitans*: 'Shaking palsy' (Latin); Parkinson's disease.
149. *la religion de la souffrance*: 'The religion of suffering' (Fr.); adapted from the last words in the novel *Un crime d'amour* (*A Crime of Love*, 1886) by Paul Bourget (1852–1935): 'la religion de la souffrance humaine' ('the religion of human suffering').
150. *The Will to Power … of All Values*: One of many books planned by Nietzsche that never came to fruition. Nietzsche sketched many outlines of *The Will to Power* in his notebooks. A book by that name was published after Nietzsche's death by his sister, Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche, and his friend Heinrich Köselitz, using Nietzsche's notes. A first edition appeared in 1901, an expanded version in 1906.
151. *Sankhya philosophy*: One of the six schools of Hindu philosophy, regarded as the oldest in India.
152. *patere legem quam ipse tulisti*: 'Obey the law that you yourself proposed' (Latin).
153. *faute de mieux*: 'For lack of anything better' (Fr.).
154. *Man will … desire at all*: In the German Nietzsche plays with 'das Nichts' ('oblivion' or 'nothingness') and the simple negation 'nicht' ('not'): 'lieber will noch der Mensch *das Nichts* wollen, als *nicht* wollen'.

Further Reading

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Chronology

1844 Birth of Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche on 15 October in Röcken, Prussian Saxony, to the pastor Karl Ludwig Nietzsche and his wife Franziska, née Oehler.
1846 Birth of Elisabeth Nietzsche on 10 July.
1848 Birth of Joseph Ludwig Nietzsche on 27 February.
1849 Death of Karl Ludwig Nietzsche on 30 July.
1850 Death of Nietzsche's brother, Joseph Ludwig. Family moves to cathedral city of Naumburg.
1855 Nietzsche enters school associated with the cathedral.
1858 Accepted at prestigious boarding school Schulpforta, where he receives a traditional classical education.
1864 Matriculates at Bonn University to study theology and classical philology.
1865 Transfers to the University of Leipzig, where he becomes Friedrich Ritchl's favourite student. First acquaintance with the philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer.
1866 Friendship with Erwin Rohde. Reads Friedrich Albert Lange's *History of Materialism*.
1867 First publication in classical philology. Enters military service in October.
1868 Riding accident in March leads to discharge from military on 15 October. First meeting with Richard Wagner in November.
1869 Appointed to special professorship in Basel in classical philology (January). Awarded doctorate by Leipzig (23 March). Gives up Prussian citizenship. Holds inaugural

lecture on ‘Homer and Classical Philology’ (28 May). Meets colleagues: historian Jacob Burckhardt and the theologian Franz Overbeck.

1870 Professorship regularized. Public lectures on ‘The Greek Music Drama’ (18 January) and ‘Socrates and Tragedy’ (1 February). Serves as an orderly in Franco-Prussian War with Prussian army; contracts dysentery and diphtheria. Discharged in October.

1871 Granted leave of absence from Basel due to ill-health.

1872 Publication of *The Birth of Tragedy* (January), which was largely ignored by the academic world. Series of five public lectures on education (‘On the Future of Our Educational Institutions’). Present at laying of foundation stone for Bayreuth opera house (22 May).

1873 Publication of first *Untimely Meditation*: *David Strauss, the Confessor and Writer*. Befriends Jewish student and moral philosopher Paul Rée.

1874 Publication of second and third *Untimely Meditation*: *On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life* and *Schopenhauer as Educator*.

1875 Meets Heinrich Köselitz (to whom Nietzsche gives the pseudonym Peter Gast in 1881). Elisabeth moves to Basel and sets up home for herself and her brother.

1876 Publication of fourth *Untimely Meditation*: *Richard Wagner in Bayreuth*. Attends first Bayreuth festival (July). Granted one-year leave of absence from the University. Lives in Sorrento with Rée and Malwida von Meysenbug. Sees Wagner for last time.

1877 Returns to Basel and resumes teaching. Lives with Elisabeth and Gast.

1878 Publication of *Human, All Too Human*, which finalizes break with Wagner.

1879 Publication of second volume of *Human, All Too Human* (*Assorted Opinions and Maxims*). Resignation from professorship due to ill-health; granted pension. Travels in Switzerland, then to Naumburg.

1880 Publication of *The Wanderer and His Shadow*. Travels to Riva, Venice, Marienbad, Naumburg, Stresa and Genoa, where he spends the winter.

1881 Publication of *The Dawn*. Travels to Recoaro and Riva with Gast; alone to St Moritz and Sils-Maria. Winter in Genoa.

1882 Publication of *The Gay Science*. Meets Lou Salomé in Rome at the home of Malwida von Meysenbug (May). Returns to Naumburg; visits Berlin and Tautenburg, where Lou joins him. With Lou and Rée in Leipzig (October). Break with Lou and Rée; leaves for Rapallo (November).

1883 Publication of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, parts one and two. Death of Wagner (13 February). Travels to Genoa, Rome, Sils-Maria, Naumburg, Genoa and Nice. In Naumburg learns of Elisabeth's engagement to anti-Semite Bernhard Förster, a member of the extended Wagner circle.

1884 Publication of *Zarathustra*, part three. Stays in Venice, Sils-Maria, Zürich and Nice.

1885 Publication of *Zarathustra*, part four (published privately). Travels to Venice, Sils-Maria, Naumburg and Nice. Marriage of Elisabeth and Förster, who leave together for the colony Nueva Germania in Paraguay.

1886 Publication of *Beyond Good and Evil*. Stays in Naumburg, Leipzig, Genoa and Nice.

1887 Publication of *On the Genealogy of Morals*. Travels to Sils-Maria, Venice and back to Nice.

1888 Publication of *The Case of Wagner*. Stays in Turin and Sils-Maria; returns to Turin in September. Composition of

last sane writings.

1889 Publication of *Twilight of the Idols* (completed in 1888). Collapses on street in Turin (3 January). Retrieved by Overbeck. Enters clinic in Basel (10 January). Transferred to clinic in Jena (17 January). Förster commits suicide in Paraguay after embezzling colony's funds.

1890 Franziska Nietzsche takes her son to Naumburg, where he remains in her care. Elisabeth returns from Paraguay.

1892 Plan for first edition of Nietzsche's published works (discontinued after volume five), edited by Köselitz, but arranged by Elisabeth, who then returns to Paraguay to clear up business of the colony.

1893 Elisabeth returns from Paraguay for good.

1894 Founding of the Nietzsche archive.

1895 Publication of *The Antichrist* and *Nietzsche contra Wagner* (both completed in 1888). Elisabeth acquires all rights to Nietzsche's writings.

1896 Archives transferred to Weimar.

1897 Death of Nietzsche's mother. Elisabeth takes Nietzsche to Weimar.

1900 Death of Nietzsche (25 August); buried in Röcken.

1901 First version of *Will to Power* (second, expanded edition 1906), edited by Elisabeth and Köselitz; based on Nietzsche's notebooks and plans in his notebooks.

1908 First publication of *Ecce Homo* (written in 1888).

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