

## 6

This problem of the *value* of compassion and of the morality of compassion (– I am opposed to the disgraceful modern softness of feeling –) seems at first to be only an isolated phenomenon, a lone question mark; but whoever pauses over the question and *learns* to ask, will find what I found: – that a vast new panorama opens up for him, a possibility makes him giddy, mistrust, suspicion and fear of every kind spring up, belief in morality, all morality, wavers, – finally, a new demand becomes articulate. So let us give voice to this *new demand*: we need a *critique* of moral values, *the value of these values should itself, for once, be examined* – and so we need to know about the conditions and circumstances under which the values grew up, developed and changed (morality as result, as symptom, as mask, as tartuffery, as sickness, as misunderstanding; but also morality as cause,

<sup>8</sup> In his ‘Über die Grundlagen der Moral’ (1840) Schopenhauer claimed that compassion was the basis of morality.

remedy, stimulant, inhibition, poison), since we have neither had this knowledge up till now nor even desired it. People have taken the *value* of these 'values' as given, as factual, as beyond all questioning; up till now, nobody has had the remotest doubt or hesitation in placing higher value on 'the good man' than on 'the evil', higher value in the sense of advancement, benefit and prosperity for man in general (and this includes man's future). What if the opposite were true? What if a regressive trait lurked in 'the good man', likewise a danger, an enticement, a poison, a narcotic, so that the present *lived at the expense of the future*? Perhaps in more comfort and less danger, but also in a smaller-minded, meaner manner? . . . So that morality itself were to blame if man, as species, never reached his *highest potential power and splendour*? So that morality itself was the danger of dangers? . . .

– But let us return: the problem of the *other* origin of ‘good’, of good as thought up by the man of *ressentiment*, demands its solution. – There is nothing strange about the fact that lambs bear a grudge towards large

birds of prey: but that is no reason to blame the large birds of prey for carrying off the little lambs. And if the lambs say to each other, 'These birds of prey are evil; and whoever is least like a bird of prey and most like its opposite, a lamb, – is good, isn't he?', then there is no reason to raise objections to this setting-up of an ideal beyond the fact that the birds of prey will view it somewhat derisively, and will perhaps say: 'We don't bear any grudge at all towards these good lambs, in fact we love them, nothing is tastier than a tender lamb.' – It is just as absurd to ask strength *not* to express itself as strength, *not* to be a desire to overthrow, crush, become master, to be a thirst for enemies, resistance and triumphs, as it is to ask weakness to express itself as strength. A quantum of force is just such a quantum of drive, will, action, in fact it is nothing but this driving, willing and acting, and only the seduction of language (and the fundamental errors of reason petrified within it), which construes and misconstrues all actions as conditional upon an agency, a 'subject', can make it appear otherwise. And just as the common people separates lightning from its flash and takes the latter to be a *deed*, something performed by a subject, which is called lightning, popular morality separates strength from the manifestations of strength, as though there were an indifferent substratum behind the strong person which had the *freedom* to manifest strength or not. But there is no such substratum; there is no 'being' behind the deed, its effect and what becomes of it; 'the doer' is invented as an after-thought, – the doing is everything. Basically, the common people double a deed; when they see lightning, they make a doing-a-deed out of it: they posit the same event, first as cause and then as its effect. The scientists do no better when they say 'force moves, force causes' and such like, – all our science, in spite of its coolness and freedom from emotion, still stands exposed to the seduction of language and has not rid itself of the changelings foisted upon it, the 'subjects' (the atom is, for example, just such a changeling, likewise the Kantian 'thing-in-itself'): no wonder, then, if the entrenched, secretly smouldering emotions of revenge and hatred put this belief to their own use and, in fact, do not defend any belief more passionately than that *the strong are free* to be weak, and the birds of prey are free to be lambs: – in this way, they gain the right to make the birds of prey *responsible* for being birds of prey . . . When the oppressed, the downtrodden, the violated say to each other with the vindictive cunning of powerlessness: 'Let us be different from evil people, let us be good! And a good person is anyone who does not rape, does not harm anyone, who does not attack, does not retaliate, who leaves the taking of

revenge to God, who keeps hidden as we do, avoids all evil and asks little from life in general, like us who are patient, humble and upright' – this means, if heard coolly and impartially, nothing more than: 'We weak people are just weak; it is good to do nothing *for which we are not strong enough*' – but this grim state of affairs, this cleverness of the lowest rank which even insects possess (which play dead, in order not to 'do too much' when in great danger), has, thanks to the counterfeiting and self-deception of powerlessness, clothed itself in the finery of self-denying, quiet, patient virtue, as though the weakness of the weak were itself – I mean its *essence*, its effect, its whole unique, unavoidable, irredeemable reality – a voluntary achievement, something wanted, chosen, a *deed*, an *accomplishment*. This type of man *needs* to believe in an unbiased 'subject' with freedom of choice, because he has an instinct of self-preservation and self-affirmation in which every lie is sanctified. The reason the subject (or, as we more colloquially say, *the soul*) has been, until now, the best doctrine on earth, is perhaps because it facilitated that sublime self-deception whereby the majority of the dying, the weak and the oppressed of every kind could construe weakness itself as freedom, and their particular mode of existence as an *accomplishment*.

## 14

– Would anyone like to have a little look down into the secret of how *ideals are fabricated* on this earth? Who has enough pluck? . . . Come on! Here we have a clear glimpse into this dark workshop. Just wait one moment, Mr Nosy Daredevil: your eyes will have to become used to this false, shimmering light . . . There! That's enough! Now you can speak! What's happening down there? Tell me what you see, you with your most dangerous curiosity – now *I* am the one who's listening. –

– 'I cannot see anything but I can hear all the better. There is a guarded, malicious little rumour-mongering and whispering from every nook and cranny. I think people are telling lies; a sugary mildness clings to every sound. Lies are turning weakness into an *accomplishment*, no doubt about it – it's just as you said.' –

– Go on!

– 'and impotence which doesn't retaliate is being turned into "goodness"; timid baseness is being turned into "humility"; submission to people one hates is being turned into "obedience" (actually towards someone who, they say, orders this submission – they call him God). The

inoffensiveness of the weakling, the very cowardice with which he is richly endowed, his standing-by-the-door, his inevitable position of having to wait, are all given good names such as “patience”, also known as *the* virtue; not-being-able-to-take-revenge is called not-wanting-to-take-revenge, it might even be forgiveness (“for *they* know not what they do – but we know what *they* are doing!”).<sup>33</sup> They are also talking about “loving your enemies” – and sweating while they do it.’

– Go on!

– ‘They are miserable, without a doubt, all these rumour-mongers and clandestine forgers, even if they do crouch close together for warmth – but they tell me that their misery means they are God’s chosen and select, after all, people beat the dogs they love best; perhaps this misery is just a preparation, a test, a training, it might be even more than that – something that will one day be balanced up and paid back with enormous interest in gold, no! in happiness. They call that “bliss”.’

– Go on!

– ‘They are now informing me that not only are they better than the powerful, the masters of the world whose spittle they have to lick (*not* from fear, not at all from fear! but because God orders them to honour those in authority)<sup>34</sup> – not only are they better, but they have a “better time”, or at least will have a better time one day. But enough! enough! I can’t bear it any longer. Bad air! Bad air! This workshop where *ideals are fabricated* – it seems to me just to stink of lies.’

– No! Wait a moment! You haven’t said anything yet about the masterpieces of those black magicians who can turn anything black into whiteness, milk and innocence: – haven’t you noticed their perfect *raffinement*, their boldest, subtlest, most ingenious and mendacious stunt? Pay attention! These cellar rats full of revenge and hatred – what do they turn revenge and hatred into? Have you ever heard these words? Would you suspect, if you just went by what they said, that the men around you were nothing but men of *ressentiment*? . . .

– ‘I understand, I’ll open my ears once more (oh! oh! oh! and *hold* my nose). Now, at last, I can hear what they have been saying so often: “We good people – *we are the just*” – what they are demanding is not called retribution, but “the triumph of *justice*”; what they hate is not their enemy, oh no! they hate “*injustice*”, “godlessness”; what they believe and hope for

<sup>33</sup> Gospel according to Luke 23.34.

<sup>34</sup> Romans 13.1.

is not the prospect of revenge, the delirium of sweet revenge (– Homer early on dubbed it “sweeter than honey”),<sup>35</sup> but the victory of God, the *just* God, over the Godless; all that remains for them to love on earth are not their brothers in hate but their “brothers in love”,<sup>36</sup> as they say, all good and just people on earth.’

– And what do they call that which serves as a consolation for all the sufferings of the world – their phantasmagoria of anticipated future bliss?

– ‘What? Do I hear correctly? They call it “the last judgment”, the coming of *their* kingdom, the “kingdom of God” – but *in the meantime* they live “in faith”, “in love”, “in hope”.’<sup>37</sup>

– Enough! Enough!

## 15

Faith in what? Love of what? Hope for what? – These weaklings – in fact *they*, too, want to be the powerful one day, this is beyond doubt, one day *their* ‘kingdom’ will come too – ‘the kingdom of God’ *simpliciter* is their name for it, as I said: they are so humble about everything! Just to experience *that*, you need to live long, well beyond death, – yes, you need eternal life in order to be able to gain eternal recompense in ‘the kingdom of God’ for that life on earth ‘in faith’, ‘in love’, ‘in hope’. Recompense for what? Recompense through what? . . . It seems to me that Dante made a gross error when, with awe-inspiring naïvety he placed the inscription over the gateway to his hell: ‘Eternal love created me as well’;<sup>38</sup> – at any rate, this inscription would have a better claim to stand over the gateway to Christian Paradise and its ‘eternal bliss’: ‘Eternal *hate* created me as well’ – assuming that a true statement can be placed above the gateway to a lie! For *what* is the bliss of this Paradise? . . . We might have guessed already; but it is better to be expressly shown it by no less an authority in such matters than Thomas Aquinas, the great teacher and saint. ‘Beati in regno coelesti’, he says as meekly as a lamb, ‘videbunt poenas damnatorum, *ut beatitudo illis magis complacet*.’<sup>39</sup> Or, if you want

<sup>35</sup> *Iliad* XVIII, 107ff.

<sup>36</sup> First Thessalonians 1.3.

<sup>37</sup> First Corinthians 13.13; First Thessalonians 1.3.

<sup>38</sup> Dante, *Inferno* III. 5–6.

<sup>39</sup> The blessed in the heavenly kingdom will see the torment of the damned *so that they may even more thoroughly enjoy their blessedness*. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplement* to the *Third Part*, question XCVII, article i, ‘conclusio’. Some modern editions do not contain this ‘conclusio’.

it even more forcefully, for example from the mouth of a triumphant Church Father<sup>40</sup> who advised his Christians against the cruel voluptuousness of the public spectacles – but why? ‘Faith offers us much more’ – he says, *De Spectaculis*. Chs. 29ff<sup>41</sup> – ‘something *much stronger*; thanks to salvation, quite other joys are at our command; instead of athletes we have our martyrs; we want blood, well then, we have the blood of Christ . . . But think what awaits us on the day of his second coming, of his triumph!’ – and then the enraptured visionary goes on: ‘At enim supersunt alia spectacula, ille ultimus et perpetuus iudicii 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 congemescerent! 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 erubescerent, quibus nihil ad deum pertinere suadebant, quibus animas aut nullas aut non in pristina corpora redituras affirmabant! Etiam poetàs non ad Rhadamanti nec ad Minois, sed ad inopinati Christi tribunal palpitantes! Tunc magis tragoedi audiendi, magis scilicet vocales (in better voice, screaming even louder) 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, ut qui malim ad eos potius conspectum insatiabilem conferre, qui in dominum desaevierunt. “Hic est ille, dicam, fabri aut quaestuarie filius (Tertullian refers to the Jews from now on, as is shown by what follows and in particular by this well-known description of the mother of Jesus from the Talmud), sabbati destructor, Samarites et daemonium habens. Hic est, quem a Juda redemistis, hic est ille arundine et colaphis diverberatus, sputamentis dedecoratus, felle et aceto potatus. Hic est, quem clam discentes subriperunt, ut resurrexisse dicatur vel hortulanus detraxit, ne lactucae suae frequentia commeantium laederentur.” Ut talia spectes, ut

<sup>40</sup> Tertullian.

<sup>41</sup> In chapter XV of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Gibbon cites this same passage and comments: ‘the Christians, who, in this world, found themselves oppressed by the power of the pagans, were sometimes seduced by resentment and spiritual pride to delight in the prospect of their future triumph’.



*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 tragic stages) et omni stadio gratiora.<sup>42</sup>

(*Per fidem*:<sup>43</sup> that is what is written.)

## 16

Let us draw to a close. The two *opposing* values ‘good and bad’, ‘good and evil’ have fought a terrible battle for thousands of years on earth; and

<sup>42</sup> But there are yet other spectacles: that final and everlasting day of judgement, that day that was not expected and was even laughed at by the nations, when the whole old world and all it gave birth to are consumed in one fire. What an ample breadth of sights there will be then! *At which one shall I gaze in wonder? At which shall I laugh? At which rejoice? At which exult*, when I see so many great *kings* who were proclaimed to have been taken up into heaven, groaning in the deepest darkness together with those who claimed to have witnessed their apotheosis and with Jove himself. And when I see those [provincial] governors, persecutors of the Lord’s name, melting in flames more savage than those with which they insolently raged against Christians! When I see those wise philosophers who persuaded their disciples that nothing was of any concern to God and who affirmed to them either that we have no souls or that our souls will not return to their original bodies! Now they are ashamed before those disciples, as they are burned together with them. Also the poets trembling before the tribunal not of Minos or of Radamanthus, but of the unexpected Christ! Then the tragic actors will be easier to hear because they will be in better voice [i.e. screaming even louder] in their own tragedy. Then the actors of pantomime will be easy to recognize, being much more nimble than usual because of the fire. Then the charioteer will be on view, all red in a wheel of flame and the athletes, thrown not in the gymnasia but into the fire. Unless even then I don’t want to see them [alive +], preferring to cast an *insatiable* gaze on those who raged against the Lord. ‘This is he’, I will say, ‘that son of a carpenter or prostitute [– Tertullian refers to the Jews from now on, as is shown by what follows and in particular by this well-known description of the mother of Jesus from the Talmud –] that destroyer of the Sabbath, that Samaritan, that man who had a devil. He it is whom you bought from Judas, who was beaten with a reed and with fists, who was defiled with spit and had gall and vinegar to drink. He it is whom his disciples secretly took away so that it might be said that he had risen again, or whom the gardener removed so that his lettuces would not be harmed by the crowd of visitors.’ What praetor or consul or quaestor or priest will grant you from his largesse the chance of seeing and *exulting in such things*? And yet to some extent we have such things already *through faith*, made present in the imagining spirit. Furthermore what sorts of things are those which the eye has not seen nor the ear heard, and which have not come into the human heart? (1. Cor. 2, 9) I believe that they are more pleasing than the circus or both of the enclosures [first and fourth rank of seats, or, according to others, the comic and the tragic stages] or than any race-track.’

The material above in square brackets is Nietzsche’s addition to Tertullian’s text. At ‘[alive +]’ Nietzsche incorrectly reads ‘vivos’ (‘alive’) for ‘visos’ (‘seen’).

<sup>43</sup> ‘By my faith’.

although the latter has been dominant for a long time, there is still no lack of places where the battle remains undecided. You could even say that, in the meantime, it has reached ever greater heights but at the same time has become ever deeper and more intellectual: so that there is, today, perhaps no more distinguishing feature of the ‘*higher nature*’, the intellectual nature, than to be divided in this sense and really and truly a battle ground for these opposites. The symbol of this fight, written in a script which has hitherto remained legible throughout human history, is ‘Rome against Judea, Judea against Rome’: – up to now there has been no greater event than *this* battle, *this* question, *this* contradiction of mortal enemies. Rome saw the Jew as something contrary to nature, as though he were its antipodean monster (*Monstrum*); in Rome, the Jew was looked upon as *convicted* of hatred against the whole of mankind:<sup>44</sup> rightly, if one is right in linking the well being and future of the human race with the unconditional rule of aristocratic values, Roman values. What, on the other hand, did the Jews feel about Rome? We can guess from a thousand indicators; but it is enough to call once more to mind the Apocalypse of John, the wildest of all outbursts ever written which revenge has on its conscience. (By the way, we must not underestimate the profound consistency of Christian instinct in inscribing this book of hate to the disciple of love, the very same to whom it attributed that passionately ecstatic gospel –: there is some truth in this, however much literary counterfeiting might have been necessary to the purpose.) So the Romans were the strong and noble, stronger and nobler than anybody hitherto who had lived or been dreamt of on earth; their every relic and inscription brings delight, provided one can guess *what* it is that is doing the writing there. By contrast, the Jews were a priestly nation of *ressentiment par excellence*, possessing an unparalleled genius for popular morality: compare peoples with similar talents, such as the Chinese or the Germans, with the Jews, and you will realize who are first rate and who are fifth. Which of them has *prevailed* for the time being, Rome or Judea? But there is no trace of doubt: just consider to whom you bow down in Rome itself, today, as though to the embodiment of the highest values – and not just in Rome, but over nearly half the earth, everywhere where man has become tame or wants to become tame, to *three Jews*, as we know, and *one Jewess* (to Jesus of Nazareth, Peter the Fisherman, Paul the Carpet-Weaver and the mother of Jesus mentioned first, whose

<sup>44</sup> At *Annals* XV. 44 Tacitus describes ‘those popularly called “Christians”’ as ‘convicted of hatred against the whole human species’; at *Histories* V.5 he claims that the Jews show benevolence to one another, but exhibit hatred of all the rest of the world.

name was Mary). This is very remarkable: without a doubt Rome has been defeated. However, in the Renaissance there was a brilliant, uncanny reawakening of the classical ideal, of the noble method of valuing everything: Rome itself woke up, as though from suspended animation, under the pressure of the new, Judaic Rome built over it, which looked like an ecumenical synagogue and was called 'Church': but Judea triumphed again at once, thanks to that basically proletarian (German and English) *ressentiment*-movement which people called the Reformation, including its inevitable consequence, the restoration of the church, – as well as the restoration of the ancient, tomb-like silence of classical Rome. In an even more decisive and profound sense than then, Judea once again triumphed over the classical ideal with the French Revolution: the last political nobility in Europe, that of the *French* seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, collapsed under the *ressentiment*-instincts of the rabble, – the world had never heard greater rejoicing and more uproarious enthusiasm! True, the most dreadful and unexpected thing happened in the middle: the ancient ideal itself appeared *bodily* and with unheard-of splendour before the eye and conscience of mankind, and once again, stronger, simpler and more penetrating than ever, in answer to the old, mendacious *ressentiment* slogan of *priority for the majority*, of man's will to baseness, abasement, levelling, decline and decay, there rang out the terrible and enchanting counter-slogan: *priority for the few*! Like a last signpost to the *other* path, Napoleon appeared as a man more unique and late-born for his times than ever a man had been before, and in him, the problem of the *noble ideal itself* was made flesh – just think *what* a problem that is: Napoleon, this synthesis of *Unmensch* (brute) and *Übermensch* (overman) . . .

17

– Was it over after that? Was that greatest among all conflicts of ideals placed *ad acta* for ever? Or just postponed, postponed indefinitely? . . . Won't there have to be an even more terrible flaring up of the old flame, one prepared much longer in advance? And more: shouldn't one desire *that* with all one's strength? or will it, even? or even promote it? . . . Whoever, like my readers, now starts to ponder these points and reflect further, will have difficulty coming to a speedy conclusion, – reason enough, then, for me to come to a conclusion myself, assuming that it has been sufficiently clear for some time what I *want*, what I actually want with that dangerous slogan which is written on the spine of my last book, *Beyond Good and Evil* . . . at least this does *not* mean 'Beyond Good and Bad.' –