Friedrich Nietzsche
Beyond Good and Evil

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A number in brackets indicates an explanatory endnote provided by the translator.

Part One
On the Prejudices of Philosophers (complete)

1

The will to truth, which is still going to tempt us to many a daring exploit, that celebrated truthfulness of which all philosophers up to now have spoken with respect, what questions this will to truth has already set down before us! What strange, serious, dubious questions! There is already a long history about them—and yet it seems that this history has scarcely begun. Is it any wonder that we finally become mistrustful, lose patience and, in our impatience, turn ourselves around, and learn from this sphinx to ask questions for ourselves? Who is really asking us questions here? What is it in us that really wants "the truth"?

In fact, we pause for a long time before the question about the origin of this will—until we finally remain completely and utterly immobile in front of an even more fundamental question. We ask about the value of this will. Suppose we want truth. Why should we not prefer untruth? And ignorance? Ignorance of the self? The problem of the value of truth steps up before us—or are we the ones who step up before the problem? Who among us here is Oedipus? Who is the Sphinx? It seems to be a tryst between questions and question marks. And is it possible to believe that we are finally the ones to whom it seems as if the problem has never been posed up to now, as if we are the first ones to see it, to fix our eyes on it, and to dare confront it? For there is a risk involved in this—perhaps there is no greater risk.
"How could something arise out of its opposite? For example, truth out of error? Or the will to truth out of the will to deception? Or selfless action out of self-seeking? Or the pure sunny look of wise men out of greed? Origins like these are impossible. Anyone who dreams about them is a fool, even worse. Things of the highest value must have another separate origin. They cannot be derived from this ephemeral, seductive, deceptive, trivial world, from this confusion of madness and desire! Their basis must lie, by contrast, in the womb of being, in the immortal, in hidden gods, in 'the thing in itself'—and nowhere else."

—This way of shaping an opinion creates the typical prejudice which enables us to recognize the metaphysicians of all ages. This way of establishing value stands behind all their logical procedures. From this "belief" of theirs they wrestle with their "knowledge," with something which is finally, in all solemnity, christened "the truth." The fundamental belief of the metaphysicians is the belief in the opposing nature of values. Even the most careful among them has never had the idea of raising doubts right here on the threshold, where such doubts are most essential, even when they praise themselves for believing "de omnibus dubitandum" (1).

For we can doubt, first, whether such an opposition of values exists at all and, second, whether that popular way of estimating worth and that opposition of values on which the metaphysicians have imprinted their seal might be only evaluations made in the foreground, only temporary perspectives, perhaps even a view from a corner, perhaps from underneath, like a frog's viewpoint, to borrow an expression familiar to painters. For all the value which the true, genuine, unselfish man may be entitled to, it might be possible that a higher and more fundamental value for everything in life has to be ascribed to appearance, the will for deception, self-interest, and desire. It might even be possible that whatever creates the value of those fine and respected things exists in such a way that it is, in some duplicitous way, related to, tied to, intertwined with, perhaps essentially the same as those undesirable, apparently contrasting things. Perhaps!

But who is willing to bother with such a dangerous Perhaps? For that we must await the arrival of a new style of philosopher, the kind who has a different taste and inclination, the reverse of philosophers so far—in that sense, a philosopher of the dangerous Perhaps. And speaking in all seriousness, I see such new philosophers arriving on the scene.
After examining philosophers between the lines with a sharp eye for a sufficient length of time, I say to myself: we must consider even the greatest part of conscious thinking an instinctual activity. Even in the case of philosophical thinking we must re-learn here, in the same way we re-learned about heredity and what is "innate." Just as the act of birth merits little consideration in the procedures and processes of heredity, so there's little point in setting up "consciousness" in any significant sense as something opposite to what is instinctual—the most conscious thinking of a philosopher is led on secretly and forced into particular paths by his instincts. Even behind all logic and its apparent dynamic authority stand evaluations of worth or, putting the matter more clearly, physiological demands for the preservation of a particular way of life—for example, that what is certain is more valuable than what is uncertain, that appearance is of less value than the "truth." Evaluations like these could, for all their regulatory importance for us, still be only foreground evaluations, a particular kind of naïveté, necessary for the preservation of beings precisely like us. That's assuming, of course, that not just man is the "measure of things"... (2)

For us, the falsity of a judgment is no objection to that judgment—that's where our new way of speaking sounds perhaps most strange. The question is the extent to which it makes demands on life, sustains life, maintains the species—perhaps even creates species. And we are even ready to assert that the falsest judgments (to which a priori synthetic judgments belong (3)) are the most indispensable to us, that without our allowing logical fictions to count, without a way of measuring reality against the purely invented world of the unconditional and self-identical, without a constant falsification of the world through numbers, human beings could not live—that if we managed to give up false judgments, it would amount to a renunciation of life, a denial of life. To concede the fictional nature of the conditions of life means, of course, taking a dangerous stand against the customary feelings about value. A new philosophy which dared to do that would thus stand alone, beyond good and evil.

What's attractive about looking at all philosophers in part suspiciously and in part mocking is not that we find again and again how innocent they are—how often and how easily they make mistakes and get lost, in short, how childish and child-like they are—but that they are not honest enough in what they do, while, as a group, they make huge, virtuous noises as soon as the
problem oftruthfulness is touched on, even remotely. Collectively they take
up a position as if they had discovered and reached their real opinions
through the self-development of a cool, pure, god-like disinterested dialectic
(in contrast to the mystics of all ranks, who are more honestly stupid with
their talk of "inspiration"—), while basically they defend with reasons sought
out after the fact an assumed principle, an idea, an "inspiration," for the most
part some heart-felt wish which has been abstracted and sifted.

—They are all advocates who do not want to call themselves that. Indeed, for
the most part they are even mischievous pleaders for their judgments, which
they baptize as "Truths,"—and very remote from the courage of conscience
which would admit this, even this, to itself, very remote from that courageous
good taste which would concede as much, whether to warn an enemy or
friend, or whether to mock themselves as an expression of their own high
spirits.

That stiff and well-behaved hypocrisy of old Kant with which he enticed us,
or more correctly, seduced us, onto the clandestine path of dialectic leading to
his "categorical imperative," this dramatic performance makes us
discriminating people laugh, for it amuses us in no small way to keep a sharp
eye on the fine tricks of the old moralists and preachers of morality. Or that
sort of mathematical hocus pocus with which Spinoza presented his
philosophy—in the last analysis "the love of his own wisdom," to use the
correct and proper word—as if it were armed in metal and masked, in order
to intimidate from the start the courage of any assailant who would dare to
cast an eye on this invincible virgin and Pallas Athena. How much of his own
shyness and vulnerability is betrayed by this masquerade of a sick hermit!

Gradually I came to learn what every great philosophy has been up to now,
namely, the self-confession of its originator and a form of unintentional and
unrecorded memoir, and also that the moral (or immoral) intentions in every
philosophy made up the essential living seed from which on every occasion
the entire plant has grown. In fact, when we explain how the most remote
metaphysical claims in a philosophy really arose, it's good (and shrewd) for us
always to ask first: What moral is it (is he—) aiming at?

Consequently, I don't believe that a "drive to knowledge" is the father of
philosophy but that knowledge (and misunderstanding) have functioned only
as a tool for another drive, here as elsewhere. But whoever explores the basic
drives of human beings, in order to see how far they may have carried their
game as inspiring geniuses (or demons or goblins), will find that all drives
have practised philosophy at some time or another, and that every single one of them has all too gladly liked to present itself as the ultimate purpose of existence and the legitimate master of all the other drives. For every drive seeks mastery and, as such, it tries to practise philosophy.

Of course, with scholars, men of real scientific knowledge, things may be different—"better" if you will—where there may really be something like a drive for knowledge, some small independent clock which, when well wound, bravely goes on working, without all the other drives of the scholar playing any essential role. The essential "interests" of scholars thus commonly lie entirely elsewhere, in the family or in earning a living or in politics. Indeed, it is almost a matter of indifference whether his small machine is placed on this or on that point in science and whether the "promising" young worker makes a good philologist or expert in fungus or chemist—whether he becomes this or that does not define who he is. By contrast, with a philosopher nothing is at all impersonal. And his morality, in particular, bears a decisive and crucial witness to who he is—that is, to the rank ordering in which his innermost drives are placed relative to each other.

7

How malicious philosophers can be! I know nothing more poisonous than the joke which Epicurus permitted himself against Plato and the Platonists: he called them Dionysiokolakes. The literal meaning of that, what stands in the foreground, is "flatterers of Dionysus," hence accessories of tyrants and lickspittles.(4) But the phrase says more than that—"they are all actors, with nothing true about them" (for Dionysiokolax was a popular description of an actor). And that last part is the really malicious remark which Epicurus hurled against Plato: the magnificent manners which Plato, along with his pupils, understood, the way they set themselves in the scene, things Epicurus did not understand, that irritated him, the old schoolmaster from Samos, who sat hidden in his little garden in Athens and wrote three hundred books, who knows, perhaps out of rage and ambition against Plato?—It took a hundred years until Greece came to realize who this garden god Epicurus was. Did they realize?

8

In every philosophy there is a point where the "conviction" of the philosopher steps onto the stage, or, to make the point in the language of an old mystery:
Adventavit asinus
Pulcher et fortissimus. (5)

Do you want to live "according to nature"? Oh you noble Stoics, what a verbal swindle! (6). Do you think a being like nature—extravagant without limit, indifferent without limit, without purposes and consideration, without pity and justice, simultaneously fruitful, desolate, and unknown—do you think of this indifference itself as a power? How could you live in accordance with this indifference? Living—isn't that precisely a will to be something different from what this nature is? Isn't living appraising, preferring, being unjust, being limited, wanting to be different? And if your imperative "live according to nature" basically means what amounts to "live according to life," why can't you just do that? Why make a principle out of what you yourselves are and must be?

The truth of the matter is quite different: while you pretend to be in raptures as you read the canon of your law out of nature, you want something which is the reverse of this, you weird actors and self-deceivers! Your pride wants to prescribe to and incorporate in nature, this very nature, your morality, your ideal. You demand that nature be "in accordance with the stoa," and you'd like to make all existence only living in accordance with your own image of it—as a huge and eternal glorification and universalizing of stoicism.

With all your love for truth, you have forced yourselves for such a long time and with such persistence and hypnotic rigidity to look at nature falsely, that is, stoically, until you're incapable of seeing anything else any more—and some abysmal arrogance finally inspires you with the lunatic hope that, because you know how to tyrannize over yourselves—Stoicism is self-tyranny—nature allows herself to be tyrannized. For isn't the Stoic a part of nature?

But this is an ancient eternal story: what happened then with the Stoics is still happening today, as soon as a philosophy begins to believe in itself. It always creates a world in its own image. It cannot do anything different. Philosophy is this tyrannical drive itself, the spiritual will to power, to a "creation of the world," to the causa prima. (7)

The enthusiasm and the delicacy—I might even say the cunning—with which people everywhere in Europe today go at the problem "of the true and the
apparent world" make one think and listen—and whoever hears only a "will
to truth" in the background and nothing else certainly doesn't enjoy the
keenest hearing. In single rare cases there may really be such a will to truth,
some extravagant and adventurous spirit, a metaphysical ambition to hold an
isolated post, something which in the end always prefers a handful of
"certainty" to an entire wagon full of beautiful possibilities. There may even be
puritan fanatics of the conscience who prefer to lie down and die on a certain
nothing than on an unknown something.

But this is nihilism and the indication of a puzzled, deathly tired soul, no
matter how bravely the gestures of such virtue may appear. Among strong
thinkers, more full of life, still thirsty for life, it appears to be something
different. When they take issue with appearances and, in their arrogance, start
to talk of the word "perspective," when they determine that the credibility of
their own bodies is about as low as they rank the credibility of appearance,
which asserts that "the earth stands still," and, as result, in an apparently good
mood, let go of their surest possession (for what do we think is more secure
than our bodies?), who knows whether they don't, at bottom, want to win
back something which people previously possessed with more certainty,
something or other of the old ownership of an earlier faith, perhaps "the
immortal soul," perhaps the old god, in short, ideas according to which life
could be lived better, that is, more powerfully and more cheerfully than
according to "modern ideas"?

It's a mistrust of these modern ideas, it's a lack of faith in everything which
has been built up yesterday and today, it's perhaps a mixture of a slight excess
and scorn which can no longer tolerate the bric-a-brac of ideas coming from
different places, of the sort so-called positivism brings to market, a disgust of
the discriminating taste with the fair-ground colourful patchiness of all these
pseudo-philosophers of reality, in whom there is nothing new or genuine,
other than these motley colours.

In my view, we should, in these matters, side with today's sceptical anti-realists
and microscopists of knowledge: their instinct, which forces them away from
modern reality, is irrefutable—what do we care about their retrogressive secret
paths! The fundamental issue with them is not that they want to go "back,
but that they want to go away. With some more power, flight, courage and
artistry they'd want to move out—and not backwards.

It strikes me that nowadays people everywhere are trying to direct their gaze
away from the real influence which Kant exercised on German philosophy,
that is, cleverly to slip away from the value which he ascribed to himself. Above everything else, Kant was first and foremost proud of his table of categories. With this table in hand, he said, "That is the most difficult thing that ever could be undertaken on behalf of metaphysics."—But people should understand this "could be"! He was proud of the fact that he had discovered a new faculty, the ability to make synthetic judgments a priori. Suppose that he deceived himself here. But the development and quick blood of German philosophy depend on this pride and on the competition among all his followers to discover, if possible, something even prouder—at all events a "new faculty"!

But let's think this over. It's time we did. "How are synthetic judgments a priori possible?" Kant asked himself. And what did his answer amount to? Thanks to a faculty. Unfortunately he didn't answer in four words, but so laboriously, venerably, and with such an expenditure of German profundity and curlicues that people failed to hear the comical naiserie allemande inherent in such an answer. People even got really excited about this new faculty, and the rejoicing reached its height when Kant discovered yet another additional faculty—a moral faculty—in human beings, for then the Germans were still moral and not yet at all "political realists."

That was the honeymoon of German philosophy. All the young theologians of the Tubingen seminary went off right away into the bushes, all looking for "faculties." And what didn't they find—in that innocent, rich, still youthful time of the German spirit, in which Romanticism, that malicious fairy, played her pipes and sang, a time when people did not know how to distinguish between "finding" and "inventing"! Above all, a faculty for the "supersensory." Schelling christened this intellectual contemplation and, in so doing, complied with the most heart-felt yearnings of his Germans whose cravings are basically pious—(9)

The most unfair thing we can do to this entire rapturously enthusiastic movement, which was adolescent, no matter how much it boldly dressed itself up in gray and antique ideas, is to take it seriously and deal with it with something like moral indignation. Enough—people grew older—the dream flew away. There came a time when people rubbed their foreheads. People are still rubbing them today. They had dreamed: first and foremost—the old Kant. "By means of a faculty," he had said, or at least meant. But is that an answer? An explanation? Or is it not rather a repetition of the question? How does opium make people sleep? "By means of a faculty," namely, the virtus dormitiva, answered that doctor in Moliere.
Quia est in eo virtus dormitiva
Cujus est natura sensus assoupire (10)

But answers like that belong in comedy, and the time has finally come to replace the Kantian question "How are synthetic judgments a priori possible?" with another question, "Why is the belief in such judgments necessary?"—that is, to understand that for the purposes of preserving beings of our type we must believe that such judgments are true, although, of course, they could still be false judgments! Or to speak more clearly, crudely, and fundamentally: synthetic judgments a priori should not "be possible" at all: we have no right to them. In our mouths they are nothing but false judgments.

Now, it's true that a belief in their truth is necessary as a foreground belief and appearance which belongs in the perspective optics of living. —In order finally to recall the immense influence which "German philosophy"—you understand, I hope, its right to quotation marks?—has exercised throughout Europe, there should be no doubt that a certain virtus dormitiva was a part of that: people—among them noble loafers, the virtuous, the mystics, artists, three-quarter Christians, and political obscurantists of all nations—were delighted to have, thanks to German philosophy, an antidote to the still overpowering sensuality which flowed over from the previous century into this one, in short—to have a "sensus assoupire" (11).

So far as the materialistic atomism is concerned, it belongs with the most effectively refuted things we have, and perhaps nowadays in Europe no scholar remains so unscholarly that he still ascribes a serious meaning to it other than for convenient hand-and-household use (that is, as an abbreviated way of expressing oneself), thanks primarily to that Pole Boscovich, who, together with the Pole Copernicus, has so far been the greatest and most victorious opponent of appearances (12). For while Copernicus convinced us to believe, contrary to all our senses, that the earth did not stand still, Boscovich taught us to renounce the belief in the final thing which made the earth "stand firm," the belief in "stuff," in "material," in what was left of the earth, in atomic particles. —It was the greatest triumph over the senses which has ever been achieved on earth so far.

But we must go even further and declare war, a relentless war to the bitter end, against the "atomic need," which still carries on in a dangerous afterlife in places where no one suspects, like that celebrated "metaphysical need." — We must also then get rid of that other and more disastrous atomism, which Christianity has taught best and longest, the atomism of the soul. With this
phrase let me designate the belief which assumes that the soul is something indestructible, eternal, indivisible—like a monad, like an *atomon*. We should rid science of this belief.

Just between us, it is not absolutely necessary to get rid of "the soul" itself and to renounce one of the oldest and most venerable hypotheses, as habitually happens with the clumsiness of the naturalists who hardly touch upon "the soul" without losing it. But the way to new versions and refinements on the hypothesis of the soul stands open: and ideas like "mortal soul" and "soul as the multiple possibilities of the subject" and soul as the "social structure of drives and emotional affects" from now on want to have civil rights in scientific knowledge.

While the new psychologist is preparing an end to superstition, which so far has flourished with an almost tropical lushness in the way the soul has been imagined, at the same time he has pushed himself into a new desert and a new mistrust. It may be the case that the old psychologist had a more comfortable and happier time—; finally, however, he knows that he himself is condemned to invent things, and — who knows?—perhaps to discover something.

Physiologists should think carefully about setting up the drive to preserve the self as the cardinal drive in an organic being. Above everything else, something living wants to release its power—living itself is will to power. Self-preservation is only one of the most frequent indirect consequences of that. In short, here as everywhere, beware of extraneous teleological principles! The drive for self-preservation is one such principle (we have Spinoza's inconsistency to thank for it—). For the essential principle of economy must hold—that's what method demands.

Nowadays in perhaps five or six heads the idea is dawning that even physics is only an interpretation and explication of the world (for our benefit, if I may be permitted to say so) and not an explanation of the world. But to the extent it rests upon a faith in the senses, it counts for more and must continue to count for more for a long time yet, that is, as an explanation. Physics has eyes and fingers on its side; it has appearance and tangibility on its side: that works magically on an age with basically plebeian taste—persuasively and convincingly—indeed, it follows instinctively the canon of truth of eternally popular sensuality. What is clear, what is explained? First, whatever lets itself be seen and felt—every problem has to be pushed that far.
By contrast, the magic of the Platonic way of thinking, which was a noble way of thinking, consists precisely in its reluctance to accept the pleasures of the senses, perhaps among human beings who enjoyed even stronger and more discriminating senses than our contemporaries have, but who knew how to experience a higher triumph in remaining master of these senses and to do this by means of the pale, cool, gray, conceptual nets which they threw over the colourful confusion of sense, the raffle of the senses, as Plato called them.

That form of enjoyment in overcoming this world and interpreting the world in the manner of Plato was different from the one which today's physicists offer us, as well as the Darwinists and anti-teleological workers among the physiologists, with their principle of the "smallest possible force" and the greatest possible stupidity. "Where human beings have nothing more to look at and to understand, there they have also no more to seek out"—that is, of course, an imperative different from the Platonic one, but for a crude, diligent race of mechanics and bridge builders to the future, who have nothing but rough work to do, it might be precisely the right imperative.

In order to carry on physiology in good conscience, people must hold to the principle that the sense organs are not phenomena in the sense of idealistic philosophy: as such they cannot, in fact, be causes! Sensualism at least as a regulative hypothesis, if not as a heuristic principle. What's that? And other people even say that the outer world might be the work of our organs? But then even our bodies, as a part of this outer world, would be the work of our organs! But then our organs themselves would be—the work of our organs. It seems to me that this is a fundamental reductio ad absurdum provided that the idea of causa sui is fundamentally absurd (13). Consequently, the exterior world is not the work of our organs—?

There are always still the harmless observers of themselves who believe that there are "unmediated certainties," for example, "I think," or like Schopenhauer's superstition, "I will," just as if perception was able to seize upon its object pure and naked, as "the thing in itself," and as if there was no falsification either on the part of the subject or on the part of the object (14).

The fact is that "unmediated certainty," together with "absolute perception" and "thing in itself," contains within itself a contradictio in aequo (15). I'll repeat it a hundred times: people should finally free themselves of the seduction of
words! Let folk believe that knowing is knowing all of something. The philosopher must say to himself, "When I dismantle the process which is expressed in the sentence 'I think,' I come upon a series of daring assertions whose grounding is difficult, perhaps impossible, for example, that I am the one who thinks, that there must be some general something that thinks, that thinking is an action and effect of a being which is to be thought of as a cause, that there is an 'I,' and finally that it is already established what we mean by thinking—that I know what thinking is. For if I had not yet decided these questions in myself, how could I assess that what just happened might not perhaps be 'willing' or 'feeling'?

It's sufficient to point out that this "I think" presupposes that I compare my immediate condition with other conditions which I know in myself in order to establish what it is. Because of this referring back to other forms of "knowing" it certainly does not have any unmediated "certainty" for me. — Instead with this "unmediated certainty," which people may believe in the case under discussion, the philosopher encounters such a series of metaphysical questions, really essential questions of intellectual knowledge, "Where do I acquire the idea of thinking? Why do I believe in cause and effect? What gives me the right to speak of an 'I,' and indeed of an 'I' as a cause, finally even of an 'I' as the cause of thinking?"

Anyone who dares to answer that metaphysical question right away with an appeal to some kind of intuitive cognition, as does the man who says "I think and know that at least this is true, real, and certain"—such a person nowadays will be met by a philosopher with a smile and two question marks. "My dear sir," the philosopher will perhaps give him to understand, "it is unlikely that you are not mistaken but why such absolute truth?"—

So far as the superstitions of the logicians are concerned, I will never tire of emphasizing over and over again a small brief fact which these superstitious types are unhappy to concede—namely, that a thought comes when "it" wants to and not when "I" want it, so that it's a falsification of the fact to say that the subject "I" is the condition of the predicate "think." It thinks: but that this "it" is precisely that old, celebrated "I" is, to put it mildly, only an assumption, an assertion, in no way an "immediate certainty." After all, we've already done too much with this "it thinks": this "it" already contains an interpretation of the event and is not part of the process itself.

Following grammatical habits we conclude here as follows: "Thinking is an activity. To every activity belongs someone who does the action, therefore—."
With something close to this same pattern, the old atomists, in addition to the "force" which created effects, also looked for that clump of matter where the force was located, out of which it worked—the atom. Stronger heads finally learned how to cope without this "remnant of earth," and perhaps one day people, including even the logicians, will also grow accustomed to cope without that little "it" (to which the good old "I" has reduced itself).

18

It's true that the fact that a theory can be disproved is not the least of its charms: that's precisely what attracts finer minds to it. Apparently the theory of free will, which has been refuted hundreds of times, owes its continuing life to this very charm—someone or other comes along again and again who feels he's strong enough to refute it.

19

Philosophers habitually speak of the will as if it was the best-known thing in the world. Indeed, Schopenhauer let it be known that the will was the only thing known to us, totally known, understood without anything taken away or added. But still, it seems to me that Schopenhauer in this case has simply done what philosophers customarily do—he's taken over and exaggerated a popular opinion. Willing seems to me, above all, something complicated, something which is unified only in the word — and popular opinion inheres in this one word, which has always overmastered the inadequate caution of philosophers. If we are, for once, more careful, if we are "unphilosophical," then let's say, firstly, in that word there is a multiplicity of feelings, namely, the feeling of the condition away from which, a feeling for the condition towards which, the feeling of this "away" and "towards" themselves, then again, an accompanying muscular feeling which comes into play through some kind of habit, without our putting our "arms and legs" into motion, as soon as we "will" something.

Secondly, just as we acknowledge feelings, and many different feelings, as ingredients of willing, so we do also with thinking. In every act of will there is a commanding thought, and people should not believe that this thought can be separated from the "will," as if then the will would be something left over!

Thirdly, the will is not only a complex of feelings and thinking but, above all, an affect, and, indeed, an affect of the commander. What is called "freedom of the will" is essentially the feeling of superiority with respect to the one who has to obey: "I am free; he' must obey"—this awareness inheres in every will, as does that tense attentiveness, that direct gaze fixed exclusively on one thing, that unconditional value judgment "Do this now—nothing else needs to be
done," that inner certainty about the fact that obedience is in order—and everything else that accompanies the condition of the one issuing commands.

A man who wills gives orders to something in himself which obeys or which he thinks obeys. But now observe what is the strangest thing about willing—about this many-faceted thing for which people have only a single word: insofar as we are in a given case the one ordering and the one obeying both at the same time, and as the one obeying we know the feelings of compulsion, of pushing and pressing, resistance and movement, which are accustomed to start right after the act of will, and insofar as we, by contrast, have the habit of disregarding this duality, thanks to the synthetic idea of "I," a whole series of mistaken conclusions and, consequently, false evaluations of the will have attached themselves to the act of willing, with the result that the person doing the willing believes in good faith that willing is sufficient for action.

Because in the vast majority of cases a person only wills something where he may expect his command to take effect in obedience and thus in action, what is apparent has translated itself into a feeling as if there might be some necessary effect. In short, the one who is doing the willing believes, with a reasonable degree of certainty, that will and action are somehow one thing,—he ascribes his success, the carrying out of the will, to the will itself and, in the process, enjoys an increase in that feeling of power which all success brings with it.

"Freedom of the will"—that's the word for that multi-faceted condition of enjoyment in the person willing, who commands and at the same identifies himself with what is carrying out the order. As such, he enjoys the triumph over things which resist him, but in himself is of the opinion that it is his will by itself which really overcomes this resistance. The person doing the willing thus acquires the joyful feelings of the successful implements carrying out the order, the serviceable "under-wills" or under-souls—for our body is merely a social construct of many souls—in addition to his joyful feeling as the one who commands. L'effet c'est moi (16).

What happens here is what happens in every well-constructed and happy commonality—the ruling class identifies itself with the success of the community. All willing is simply a matter of giving orders and obeying, on the basis, as mentioned, of a social construct of many "souls": for this reason philosophy should arrogate to itself the right to include willing as such within the field of morality: morality, that is, understood as a doctrine of the power relationships out of which the phenomenon "living" arises.
That individual philosophical ideas are not something spontaneous, not something which grow out of themselves, but develop connected to and in relationship with each other, so that, no matter how suddenly and arbitrarily they may appear to emerge in the history of thinking, they nevertheless belong to a system just as much as do the collective members of the fauna of a continent: that point finally reveals itself by the way in which the different philosophers keep confidently filling out again and again a certain ground plan of possible philosophies. Under an invisible spell they always run around the same orbit all over again: they may feel they are still so independent of each other with their critical or systematic wills, but something or other in them leads them, something or other drives them in a particular order one after the other, that very inborn stem system and relationship of ideas.

Their thinking is, in fact, much less a discovery than a recognition, a remembering again, a journey back home into a distant primordial collective household of the soul, out of which these ideas formerly grew. To practice philosophy is to this extent a form of atavism of the highest order. The strange family similarity of all Indian, Greek, and German ways of practising philosophy can be explained easily enough. It's precisely where a relationship between languages is present that we cannot avoid, thanks to the common philosophy of grammar—I mean thanks to the unconscious mastery and guidance exercised by the same grammatical functions—everything has been prepared from the beginning for a similar development and order of philosophical systems, just as the road to certain other possibilities of interpreting the world seems sealed off.

There will be a greater probability that philosophers from the region of the Ural-Altaic language (in which the idea of the subject is most poorly developed) will look differently "into the world" and will be found on other pathways than Indo-Germans or Muslims: the spell of particular grammatical functions is, in the final analysis, the spell of physiological judgments of value and racial conditions.—So much for the repudiation of Locke's superficiality in connection with the origin of ideas.

The *causa sui* (17) is the best self-contradiction which has been thought up so far, a kind of logical rape and perversity. But the excessive pride of human beings has worked to entangle itself deeply and terribly with this very nonsense. The demand for "freedom of the will," in that superlative metaphysical sense, as it unfortunately still rules in the heads of the half-educated, the demand to bear the entire final responsibility for one's actions
oneself and to relieve god, the world, ancestors, chance, and society of responsibility for it, is naturally nothing less than this very *causa sui* and an attempt to pull oneself into existence out of the swamp of nothingness by the hair, with more audacity than Munchhausen (18).

Suppose someone in this way gets behind the boorish simplicity of this famous idea of the "free will" and erases it from his head, then I would invite him to push "enlightenment" a step further and erase even the inverse of this idea of "free will" from his head: I refer to the "unfree will," which leads to an abuse of cause and effect. People should not mistakenly reify "cause" and "effect" the way those investigating nature do (and people like them who nowadays naturalize their thinking—) in accordance with the ruling mechanistic foolishness which allows causes to push and shove until they "have an effect."

People should use "cause" and "effect" merely as pure ideas, that is, as conventional fictions for the purpose of indicating and communicating, not as an explanation. In the "in itself" there is no "causal connection," no "necessity," no "psychological unfreedom" and hence no "effect of the cause"; no law holds sway. We are the ones who have, on our own, made up causes, causal sequences, for-one-another, relativity, compulsion, number, law, freedom, reason, and purpose, and when we fabricate this world of signs inside things as something "in itself," when we stir them into things, then we're once again acting as we have always done, namely, mythologically.

The "unfree will" is a myth: in real life it's simply a matter of strong and weak wills. It is almost always a symptom of something lacking in a thinker himself once he senses in all "causal connections" and "psychological necessity" some purpose, necessity, inevitable consequence, pressure, and unfreedom. To feel that is a tell-tale give away—the person is betraying himself.

And if I have seen things correctly, the problem of the "unfreedom of the will" has generally been seen from two totally contrasting points of view, but always in a deeply personal way: some people are not willing at any price to let go of their "responsibility," their belief in themselves, their personal right to the credit (the vain races belong to this group—); the others want the reverse—they don't wish to be responsible, to be guilty of anything, and demand, out of an inner self-contempt, that they can shift blame for themselves somewhere else.

People in this second group, when they write books, are in the habit nowadays of taking up the cause of criminals; a sort of socialist pity is their most attractive disguise. And in fact, the fatalism of those with weak wills
brightens up amazingly when it learns how to present itself as "la religion de la souffrance humaine"—that's its "good taste" (19).

22

People must forgive me, as an old philologist who cannot prevent himself from maliciously setting his finger on the art of bad interpretation—but that "conformity to nature" which you physicists talk about so profoundly, as if—well, it exists only thanks to your interpretation and bad "philology," and is not a matter of fact, a "text." It is much more only a naïvely humanitarian emendation and distortion of meaning, with which you make concessions ad nauseam to the democratic instincts of the modern soul!

"Equality before the law everywhere—in that respect nature is no different and no better than we are": a charming ulterior motive here, in which once again lies disguised the rabble's hostility to everything privileged and autocratic, as well as a second and more cunning atheism. Ni dien, ni maître (20). That's how you want it, and therefore "Up with natural law!" Isn't that so? But, as mentioned, that is interpretation, not text, and someone could come along who had an opposite intention and style of interpretation and who would know how to read out of this same nature, with a look at the same phenomena, the tyrannical, inconsiderate, and inexorable enforcement of power claims,—an interpreter who set right before your eyes the unexceptional and unconditional nature in all "will to power," in such a way that almost every word, even that word "tyranny," would finally appear useless or as a weakening metaphor losing its force—as too human, and which nonetheless in the process finished up asserting the same thing about this world as you claim, namely, that it has a "necessary" and "calculable" course, but not because laws rule the world but because there is a total absence of laws, and every power draws its final consequence in every moment. Supposing that this also is only an interpretation—and you will be eager enough to raise that objection—well, so much the better.—

23

All psychology so far has remained hung up on moral prejudices and fears. It has not dared to go into the depths. To understand it as the morphology and doctrine of the development of the will to power—the way I understand it—no one in his own thinking has touched on that, insofar, that is, as one is permitted to recognize in what has been written up to now a symptom of what people so far have kept silent about. The power of moral prejudices has driven deep into the most spiritual, the most apparently cool world, the one
with the fewest assumptions, and, as is self-evident, damages, limits, blinds, and distorts that world.

A true physical psychology has to fight against an unconscious resistance in the heart of the researcher. It has "the heart" against it. Even a doctrine of the mutual interdependence of the "good" and the "bad" drives creates, as a fine immorality, distress and weariness in a still powerful and hearty conscience—even more so a doctrine of how all the good drives are derived from the bad ones. But assuming that someone takes the affects of hate, envy, greed, and ruling as the affects which determine life, as something that, in the whole household of life, have to be present fundamentally and essentially, and, as a result, have to be intensified if life is to be further intensified, he suffers from an orientation in his judgment as if he were seasick.

Nevertheless, even this hypothesis is not nearly the most awkward or the strangest in this immense and almost new realm of dangerous discoveries—and, in fact, there are a hundred good reasons that everyone should stay away from it, everyone who can! On the other hand, if someone aboard ship ends up here—well, then! Come on! Now's the time to keep one's teeth tightly clenched, the eyes open, and the hand firm on the tiller! We're moving directly away from morality, and in the process we're overwhelming, perhaps smashing apart, what's left of our morality, as we dare make our way there—but what a job we've got!

Never before has a more profound world of insights revealed itself to daring travellers and adventurers: and the psychologist who in this matter "makes a sacrifice"—it is not the \textit{sacrificio dell'intelletto} \textbf{(21)}, quite the opposite—will for that reason at least be permitted to demand that psychology is recognized again as the mistress of the sciences, with the other sciences there to prepare things for her. For from now on psychology is once more the route to fundamental problems.

\textbf{Notes}

(1) \ldots \textit{dubitandum}: it is necessary to doubt everything.

(2) \textit{niaiserie}: stupidity

(3) \textit{a priori synthetic judgments}: a central claim’s of Kant’s theory of knowledge, these are judgments which do not arise from experience but which reveal knowledge of experience (like deductively argued mathematically based scientific laws).

(4) \textit{Dionysus}: a tyrant in Syracuse. [}
(5) The ass arrived/ Beautiful and very strong.
(6) Stoics: Greek philosophical school teaching patient endurance and a repression of the emotions.
(7) *causa prima*: first cause.
(8) *naisierie allemande*: German stupidity.
(9) *Schelling*: Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling (1775-1854), a well-known professor of philosophy.
(10) *virtus dormitiva*: the sleeping virtue. *Quia... assoupire*: Because it has the virtue of making people sleep./Whose nature is to put the senses to sleep.
(11) *sensus assoupire*: way of putting the sense to sleep.
(12) *Boscovich*: Roger Boscovich was an 18th-century Jesuit philosopher who denied material substance to atoms.
(13) *reductio ad absurdum*: an absurd conclusion; *causa sui*: something being its own cause.
(14) *Schopenhauer*: Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), an important German philosopher who influenced Nietzsche’s thought considerably.
(15) . . . *ajecto*: contradiction between the adjective and the word it modifies, a contradiction in terms.
(16). . . *moi*: the effect is I.
(17) *causa sui*: something being its own cause.
(18) *Munchhausen*: the hero of an 18th century book of tall tales.

Part Nine
What is Noble? (selection)

Every enhancement in the type “man” up to this point has been the work of an aristocratic society—and that’s how it will always be, over and over again—a society which believes in a long scale of rank ordering and differences in worth between man and man and which, in some sense or other, requires slavery. Without the pathos of distance, the sort which grows out of the deeply rooted difference between the classes, out of the constant gazing outward and
downward of the ruling caste on the subjects and work implements, and out of its equally sustained practice of obedience and command, holding down and holding at a distance, that other more mysterious pathos would have no chance of growing at all, that longing for an ever-widening of new distances inside the soul itself, the development of ever higher, rarer, more distant, more expansive, more comprehensive states, in short, that very enhancement in the type “man,” the constant “self-conquest of man,” to cite a moral formula in a supra-moral sense.

Of course, where the history of the origins of aristocratic society is concerned (and thus the precondition for that raising of the type “man”), we should not surrender to humanitarian illusions: truth is hard. So without further consideration, let’s state how up to this point every higher culture on earth has started! Men with a still natural nature, barbarians in every dreadful sense of the word, predatory men still in possession of an unbroken power of the will and a desire for power, threw themselves on weaker, more civilized, more peaceful, perhaps trading or cattle-raising races, or on old, worn cultures, in which at that very moment the final forces of life were flaring up in a brilliant fireworks display of spirit and corruption. At the start the noble caste has always been the barbarian caste: its superiority has lain not primarily in physical might but in spiritual power—it has been a matter of more complete human beings (which at every level also means “more complete beasts”).

Corruption as the expression of the fact that within the instincts anarchy is threatening and that the foundation of the affects, what we call “life,” has been shaken: according to the living structure in which it appears, corruption is something fundamentally different. When, for example, an aristocracy, like France’s at the start of the Revolution, throws away its privileges with a sublime disgust and sacrifices itself to a dissipation of its moral feelings, this is corruption. Essentially it was only the final act in that century-long corruption, thanks to which step-by-step it gave up its ruling authority and reduced itself to a function of the monarchy (finally even to the monarch’s finery and display pieces).

But the essential thing in a good and healthy aristocracy is that it feels itself not as a function (whether of a monarchy or of a community) but as their significance and highest justification, that it therefore with good conscience accepts the sacrifice of an enormous number of men, who for its sake must be oppressed and reduced to incomplete men, slaves, and instruments of work. Its fundamental belief must, in fact, be that the society should exist, not for the sake of the society, but only as a base and framework on which an exceptional kind of
nature can raise itself to its higher function and, in general, to a higher form of being, comparable to those heliotropic climbing plants on Java—people call them Sipo Matador—whose branches clutch an oak tree so much and for so long until finally, high over the tree but supported by it, they can unfold their crowns in the open light and make a display of their happiness.

259

Mutually refraining from wounding each other, from violence, and from exploitation, and setting one’s will on the same level as others—all these can in a certain crude sense become good habits among individuals, if conditions exist for that (namely, a real similarity in the quality of their power and their estimates of value, as well as their belonging together within a single body). However, as soon as people wanted to take this principle further and, where possible, establish it as the basic principle of society, it immediately revealed itself for what it is, as the willed denial of life, as the principle of disintegration and decay.

Here we must think through to the basics and push away all sentimental weakness: living itself is essentially appropriation from and wounding and overpowering strangers and weaker men, oppression, hardness, imposing one’s own forms, annexing, and at the very least, in its mildest actions, exploitation. But why should we always use these precise words, which have from ancient times carried the stamp of a slanderous purpose? Even that body in which, as previously mentioned, the individuals deal with each other as equals—and that happens in every healthy aristocracy—must itself, if it is a living body and not dying out, do to other bodies all those things which the individuals in it refrain from doing to each other: it will have to be the living will to power, it will grow, grab things around it, pull to itself, and want to acquire predominance—not because of some morality or immorality, but because it is alive and because living is precisely the will to power.

But in no point is the common consciousness of the European more reluctant to be instructed than here. Nowadays people everywhere, even those in scientific disguises, are raving about the coming conditions of society from which “the exploitative character” is to have disappeared. To my ears that sounds as if people had promised to invent a life which abstained from all organic functions. The “exploitation” is not part of a depraved or incomplete and primitive society: it belongs in the essential nature of what is living, as a basic organic function. It is a consequence of the real will to power, which is precisely the will to live. Granted that this is something new as a theory, but it is, in reality, the fundamental fact of all history: we should at least be honest with ourselves to this extent!
As the result of a stroll though the many more sophisticated and cruder moral systems which up to this point have ruled or still rule on earth, I found certain characteristics routinely return with each other, bound up together, until finally two basic types revealed themselves to me and a fundamental difference sprang up. There is master morality and slave morality. To this I add immediately that in all higher and mixed cultures attempts at a mediation between both moralities make an appearance and, even more often, a confusion and mutual misunderstanding between the two, in fact, sometimes their harsh juxtaposition, even in the same man, within a single soul.

Distinctions in moral value have arisen either among a ruling group, which was happily conscious of its difference with respect to the ruled, or among the ruled, the slaves and dependent people of every degree. In the first case, when it’s the masters who establish the idea of the good, it’s the elevated and proud conditions of the soul which emotionally register as the distinguishing and defining order of rank. The noble man separates himself from the nature of those in whom the opposite of such exalted and proud states expresses itself. He despises them.

We should notice at once that in this first kind of morality the opposites “good” and “bad” mean no more than “noble” and “despicable.” The opposition between “good” and “evil” has another origin. The despised one is the coward, the anxious, the small, the man who thinks about narrow utility—also the suspicious man with his inhibited look, the self-abasing man, the species of human dogs who allow themselves to be mistreated, the begging flatterer, above all, the liar. It is a basic belief of all aristocrats that the common folk are liars. “We tellers of the truth”—that’s what the nobility called themselves in ancient Greece. It’s evident that distinctions of moral worth everywhere were first applied to men and later were established for actions; hence, it is a serious mistake when historians of morality take as a starting point a question like “Why was the compassionate action praised?”

The noble kind of man experiences himself as a person who determines value and does not need to have other people’s approval. He makes the judgment “What is harmful to me is harmful in itself.” He understands himself as something which in general first confers honour on things, as someone who creates values. Whatever he recognizes in himself he honours. Such a morality is self-glorification. In the foreground stands the feeling of fullness and power, which wants to overflow, the happiness of high tension, the consciousness of riches which wants to give and deliver; the noble man also helps the unfortunate,
but not, or hardly ever, from pity, more in response to an impulse which the excess of power produces.

The noble man honours the powerful man in himself and also the man who has power over himself, who understands how to speak and how to keep silent, who takes delight in dealing with himself severely and toughly and respects, above all, severity and toughness. “Wotan set a hard heart in my breast,” says an old Scandinavian saga: that’s how poetry emerged, with justice, from the soul of a proud Viking. A man of this sort is even proud of the fact that he has not been made for compassion. That’s why the hero of the saga adds a warning, “In a man whose heart is not hard when he is still young the heart will never become hard.” Noble and brave men who think this way are furthest removed from that morality which sees the badge of morality in pity or actions for others or désintéressement (1); the belief in oneself, pride in oneself, a fundamental hostility and irony against “selflessness” clearly belong to noble morality, just as much as an easy contempt and caution before feelings of compassion and a “warm heart.”

Powerful men are the ones who understand how to honour—that is their art, their realm of invention. The profound reverence for age and for the tradition—all justice stands on this double reverence—the belief and the prejudice favouring ancestors and working against newcomers are typical in the morality of the powerful, and when, by contrast, the men of “modern ideas” believe almost instinctively in “progress” and the “future” and constantly and increasingly lack respect for age, then in that attitude the ignoble origin of these “ideas” reveals itself well enough.

At most, however, a morality of the rulers is alien and embarrassing to the present taste because of the severity of its basic principle that man has duties only with respect to those like him, that man should act towards those beings of lower rank, towards everything strange, at his own discretion, “as his heart dictates,” and, in any case, “beyond good and evil.” Here pity and things like that may belong. The capacity for and obligation to a long gratitude and a long revenge—both only within the circle of those like oneself—the sophistication in paying back again, the refined idea in friendship, a certain necessity to have enemies (as, so to speak, drainage ditches for the feelings of envy, quarrelsomeness, and high spirits—basically in order to be capable of being a good friend): all those are typical characteristics of a noble morality, which, as indicated, is not the morality of “modern ideas” and which is thus nowadays difficult to sympathize with, as well as difficult to dig up and expose.

Things are different with the second type of moral system, slave morality. Suppose the oppressed, depressed, suffering, and unfree people, those ignorant
of themselves and tired out, moralize: what will be the common feature of their moral estimates of value? Probably a pessimistic suspicion directed at the entire human situation will express itself, perhaps a condemnation of man, along with his situation. The gaze of a slave is not well disposed towards the virtues of the powerful; he possesses scepticism and mistrust; he has a subtlety of mistrust against everything “good” and what is honoured in it; he would like to persuade himself that even happiness is not genuine there.

By contrast, those characteristics will be pulled forward and flooded with light which serve to mitigate existence for those who suffer: here respect is given to pity, to the obliging hand ready to help, to the warm heart, to patience, diligence, humility, and friendliness, for these are the most useful characteristics and almost the only means to endure the pressure of existence. Slave morality is essentially a morality of utility. Here is the focus for the origin of that famous opposition of “good” and “evil”: power and danger are felt within evil itself, a certain terror, subtlety, and strength, which does not permit contempt to spring up. According to slave morality, the “evil” man thus inspires fear; according to master morality, it is precisely the “good” man who inspires and will inspire fear, while the “bad” man will be felt as despicable.

This opposition reaches its peak when, in accordance with the consequences of slave morality, finally a trace of disregard is also attached to the “good” of this morality—it may be light and benevolent—because within the way of thinking of the slave the good man must definitely be an harmless man: he is good natured, easy to deceive, perhaps a bit stupid, a bonhomme (2). Wherever slave morality gains predominance the language reveals a tendency to bring the words “good” and “stupid” into closer proximity. A final basic difference: the longing for freedom, the instinct for happiness and the refinements of the feeling for freedom belong just as necessarily to slave morality and morals as art and enthusiasm in reverence and devotion are the regular symptoms of an aristocratic way of thinking and valuing. From this we can without further ado understand why love as passion—which is our European specialty—must clearly have a noble origin: as is well known, its invention belongs to the Provencal knightly poets, those splendidly inventive men of the “gay saber,” to whom Europe owes so much—almost its very self (3).

296 [Last paragraph]
Alas, what are you then, my written and painted thoughts! It’s not so long ago that you were still so colourful, young, and malicious, full of stings and secret seasonings, so that you made me sneeze and laugh—and now? You have already stripped off your novelty and some of you, I fear, are ready to become truths: you already look so immortal, so heartbreakingly honest, so boring! And was it
ever different? What things we write and paint, we mandarins with a Chinese paintbrush, we immortalizers of things which let themselves be written—what are the only things we are capable of painting? Alas, always only what is just about to fade and is beginning to lose its fragrance! Alas, always only storms which are worn out and withdrawing, old yellow feelings! Alas, always only birds which have exhausted themselves flying and lose their way and now let themselves be caught by hand—with our hand! We immortalize what can no longer live and fly, only tired and crumbling things!

And it is only your afternoon, my written and painted thoughts, for which I alone have colours, many colours perhaps, many colourful caresses and fifty yellows and browns and greens and reds—but no one will sense from me how you looked in your dawn, you sudden sparks and miracles of my loneliness, you my old loved ones—my wicked thoughts!