Twilight of the Idols

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

1844–1900

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Götzen-Dämmerung

Translated from the German with AI (Claude) and edited



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Twilight of the Idols · Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900)

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INTRODUCTION

Twilight of the Idols (1889), subtitled "How to Philosophize with a Hammer," was written in a few days in the late summer of 1888, one of Nietzsche's last books before his collapse. He meant it as a short, fast introduction to his philosophy, and it is the best one he left.

It opens with forty-four epigrams and moves through short chapters on Socrates, on "reason" in philosophy, on morality as a war against the instincts and on the great errors of cause and free will. In six numbered steps it tells how the "true world" finally became a fable. Longer "skirmishes" attack writers and ideas of his day, and the book closes with what he owed to the ancient Greeks and Romans.

The hammer of the title is less a sledgehammer than a tuning fork: Nietzsche taps the idols of his age to hear how hollow they sound. The book is funny, fierce and quotable, and its judgments of Germans, women, Christians and others are given here as he wrote them.

Preface

Vorwort
A book of recreation and a declaration of war: sounding out idols with a hammer as with a tuning fork.

VORWORT

P To keep one's cheerfulness in the midst of a gloomy and exceedingly responsible business is no small feat. And yet what could be more necessary than cheerfulness? Nothing turns out well unless exuberance has a hand in it. Only an excess of strength is proof of strength.—A *revaluation of all values*, this question mark so black, so monstrous that it casts shadows on the one who sets it down—a task of such fateful weight compels one at every moment to run out into the sun and shake off a seriousness that is heavy, that has grown all too heavy. Every means to this end is justified, every "case" a stroke of luck. Above all, *war*. War has always been the great cleverness of all spirits that have grown too inward, too profound; there is healing power even in being wounded. A saying whose origin I withhold from scholarly curiosity has long been my motto:

increscunt animi, virescit volnere virtus. [Spirits grow, and courage flourishes through a wound.][1]

Another form of recovery, in certain circumstances even more welcome to me, is *sounding out idols*... There are more idols than realities in the world: that is *my* "evil eye" for this world, and it is also my "evil *ear*"... For once to pose questions here with

1 A line of the Roman poet Furius Antias, preserved by Aulus Gellius (*Attic Nights* 18.11).

a *hammer* and, perhaps, to hear in reply that famous hollow sound which speaks of bloated entrails—what a delight for one who has ears even behind his ears—for me, an old psychologist and pied piper, before whom precisely what would like to stay silent *has to speak up*...

This book too—the title gives it away—is above all a recreation, a patch of sunlight, an escapade into the idleness of a psychologist. Perhaps also a new war? And are new idols being sounded out?... This little book is a *great declaration of war*; and as for the sounding out of idols, this time they are not idols of the age but *eternal* idols, which are touched here with the hammer as with a tuning fork—there are no older idols at all, none more convinced, none more puffed up... None hollower either... That does not stop them from being the *most believed in*; and besides, especially in the noblest case, nobody calls them idols at all...

Turin, 30 September 1888,
on the day the first book of the *Revaluation of All Values* was completed.
Friedrich Nietzsche[2]

2 The "first book" of the planned *Revaluation* was *The Antichrist*.

Maxims and Arrows

Sprüche und Pfeile
Forty-four epigrams, from "What doesn't kill me makes me stronger" to "Without music life would be an error."

SPRÜCHE UND PFEILE

1.1 Idleness is the beginning of all psychology. What? Could psychology be—a vice?[1]

1.2 Even the bravest of us rarely has the courage for what he actually *knows*...

1.3 To live alone one must be a beast or a god—says Aristotle. Leaving out the third case: one must be both—a *philosopher*.[2]

1.4 "All truth is simple."—Isn't that a lie twice over? —

1.5 Once and for all, there is a great deal I do *not* want to know. —Wisdom sets limits even to knowledge.

1.6 One recovers best from one's unnature, from one's spirituality, in one's own wild nature...

1.7 What? Is man merely a blunder of God's? Or God merely a blunder of man's? —

1.8 *From the military school of life.*—What doesn't kill me makes me stronger.

1.9 Help yourself: then everyone else will help you too. Principle of love of one's neighbor.

1.10 Let us not commit cowardice against our own actions! Let us not leave them in the lurch afterward!—Remorse is indecent.

1 A play on the German proverb "Idleness is the beginning of all vice."
2 Aristotle, *Politics* 1.2.

1.11 Can an *ass* be tragic?—To perish under a burden one can neither carry nor throw off?.. The case of the philosopher.

1.12 If we have our *why?* of life, we can put up with almost any *how?*—Man does *not* strive for happiness; only the Englishman does that.[3]

1.13 Man created woman—out of what, though? Out of a rib of his god—of his "ideal"...

1.14 What? You are seeking? You would like to multiply yourself by ten, by a hundred? You are looking for followers?—Look for *zeros*! —

1.15 Posthumous people—I, for example—are understood less well than timely ones, but *heard* better. More strictly: we are never understood—and *hence* our authority...

1.16 *Among women.*—"Truth? Oh, you don't know the truth! Isn't it an assault on all our *pudeurs* [modesties]?" —

1.17 That is an artist such as I love, modest in his needs: all he really wants is two things, his bread and his art—*panem et Circen* [bread and Circe]...[4]

1.18 Whoever does not know how to put his will into things at least puts a *meaning* into them: that is, he believes there is already a will in them (principle of "faith").

1.19 What? You chose virtue and the swelling breast, and at the same time you look askance at the advantages of the unscrupulous?—But with virtue one *renounces* "advantages"... (to be posted on an anti-Semite's front door).

1.20 The perfect woman commits literature the way she commits a small sin: as an experiment, in passing, glancing around to see whether anyone notices—and *that* someone notices...

1.21 To put oneself only in situations where one may not have sham virtues, where instead, like the tightrope walker on his rope, one either falls or stands—or gets away...

3 A jab at English utilitarianism, which made happiness the aim of conduct.

4 A pun on Juvenal's *panem et circenses* ("bread and circuses"); Circe is the enchantress of the *Odyssey*.

1.22 "Wicked people have no songs."—How is it that the Russians have songs?[5]

1.23 "German spirit": for eighteen years a *contradictio in adjecto* [contradiction in terms].[6]

1.24 By searching for beginnings one turns into a crab. The historian looks backward; in the end he also *believes* backward.

1.25 Contentment protects even against colds. Has a woman who knew she was well dressed ever caught a cold?—I am assuming she was scarcely dressed.

1.26 I mistrust all systematizers and avoid them. The will to a system is a lack of integrity.

1.27 Woman is considered deep—why? Because one never gets to the bottom of her. Woman is not even shallow.

1.28 If a woman has manly virtues, it's enough to make one run away; and if she has no manly virtues, she runs away herself.

1.29 "How much conscience used to have to bite on! What good teeth it had!—And today? What is missing?"—A dentist's question.

1.30 One rarely commits a single rash act. In the first rash act one always does too much. For that very reason one usually commits a second—and this time one does too little...

1.31 The trodden worm curls up. That is clever. It thereby reduces the likelihood of being trodden on again. In the language of morality: *humility.* —

1.32 There is a hatred of lying and dissembling that comes from a touchy sense of honor; there is an equal hatred that comes from cowardice, insofar as lying is *forbidden* by divine commandment. Too cowardly to lie...

1.33 How little it takes to be happy! The sound of a bagpipe.—Without music, life would be an error. The German imagines even God singing songs.

1.34 *On ne peut penser et écrire qu'assis* [One can think and write only sitting down] (G. Flaubert).—There I have you, nihilist! The

5 A proverbial line adapted from Johann Gottfried Seume's poem "Die Gesänge."
6 That is, since the founding of the German Empire in 1871.

sedentary life is precisely the *sin* against the Holy Spirit. Only thoughts *reached by walking* have value.

1.35 There are cases where we are like horses, we psychologists, and grow restless: we see our own shadow bobbing up and down in front of us. The psychologist must look away from *himself* in order to see anything at all.

1.36 Do we immoralists do virtue any *harm*?—No more than anarchists do princes. Only since princes have been shot at do they sit firmly on their thrones again. Moral: *one must shoot at morality.*

1.37 You go *ahead*?—Do you do so as a shepherd? Or as an exception? A third case would be the runaway... *First* question of conscience.

1.38 Are you genuine? Or only an actor? A representative? Or the thing represented itself?—In the end you may be merely an imitation of an actor... *Second* question of conscience.

1.39 *The disappointed one speaks.*—I looked for great human beings; all I ever found were the *apes* of their ideal.

1.40 Are you one who looks on? Or one who lends a hand?—Or one who looks away, steps aside... *Third* question of conscience.

1.41 Do you want to go along? Or go ahead? Or go your own way?.. One must know *what* one wants and *that* one wants.—*Fourth* question of conscience.

1.42 Those were steps for me; I have climbed up over them—to do so I had to pass beyond them. But they thought I wanted to settle down on them and rest...

1.43 What does it matter whether *I* am proved right! I *am* too much in the right.—And he who laughs best today also laughs last.

1.44 Formula of my happiness: a Yes, a No, a straight line, a *goal*...

The Problem of Socrates

Das Problem des Sokrates
The wisest men judged life worthless; Socrates, dialectic and reason at any price as symptoms of decadence.

DAS PROBLEM DES SOKRATES

2.1 In every age the wisest have passed the same judgment on life: *it is no good*... Always and everywhere one has heard the same sound from their mouths—a sound full of doubt, full of melancholy, full of weariness with life, full of resistance to life. Even Socrates said as he died: "To live—that means to be sick a long time: I owe a rooster to Asclepius the savior." Even Socrates had had enough of it.—What does that *prove*? What does it *point to*?—In the past people would have said (— oh, they did say it, and loudly enough, our pessimists in the lead!): "Here, at any rate, something must be true! The *consensus sapientium* [consensus of the wise] proves the truth."—Shall we still talk like that today? *May* we?[1] "Here, at any rate, something must be *sick*"—is *our* reply: these wisest of all ages, one ought first to take a close look at them! Were they perhaps, every one of them, no longer steady on their legs? Late? Shaky? *décadents*? Could it be that wisdom appears on earth as a raven, excited by a faint whiff of carrion?...

2.2 This irreverence—that the great sages are *types of decline*—first dawned on me in precisely the case where scholarly and unscholarly prejudice most strongly opposes it: I recognized

1 Socrates' last words in Plato's *Phaedo* (118a): an offering owed to the god of healing, read here as thanks for being cured of life.

Socrates and Plato as symptoms of decay, as instruments of the Greek dissolution, as pseudo-Greek, as anti-Greek (*The Birth of Tragedy*, 1872). That *consensus sapientium*—I grasped this better and better—proves least of all that they were right about what they agreed on. What it proves, rather, is that they themselves, these wisest of men, agreed in some respect *physiologically*, so as to stand in the same negative relation to life—so as to *have to* stand in it. Judgments, value judgments about life, for or against, can in the end never be true: they have value only as symptoms, they come into consideration only as symptoms—in themselves such judgments are stupidities. One must by all means reach out one's fingers and try to grasp this astonishing *finesse*: *that the value of life cannot be assessed*. Not by a living person, because he is a party to the dispute, indeed its very object, and not its judge; not by a dead one, for a different reason.—For a philosopher to see a problem in the *value* of life is thus even an objection to him, a question mark over his wisdom, an unwisdom.—What? and all these great sages—they were not only *décadents*, they were not even wise?—But I return to the problem of Socrates.

2.3 By origin, Socrates belonged to the lowest of the people: Socrates was rabble. We know, we can even still see, how ugly he was. But ugliness, in itself an objection, is among Greeks almost a refutation. Was Socrates a Greek at all? Ugliness is often enough the expression of a crossed development, one *thwarted* by crossing. Otherwise it appears as a *declining* development. The anthropologists among the criminologists tell us that the typical criminal is ugly: *monstrum in fronte, monstrum in animo* [a monster in the face, a monster in the soul]. But the criminal is a *décadent*. Was Socrates a typical criminal?—At the very least this would not be contradicted by that famous verdict of the physiognomist which sounded so offensive to Socrates' friends.[2] A foreigner who knew about faces, passing through Athens, told Socrates to his face that he *was* a *monstrum* [monster]—that he

2 The criminal anthropologists are chiefly Cesare Lombroso and his school, who read criminality from physical features.

harbored within him every foul vice and appetite. And Socrates merely replied: "You know me, sir!" —[3]

2.4 It is not only the admitted wildness and anarchy of his instincts that points to *décadence* in Socrates: so does the superfetation of logic and that *rachitic malice* which sets him apart. Nor let us forget those auditory hallucinations which were interpreted religiously as "the *daimonion* of Socrates." Everything about him is exaggerated, *buffo* [clownish], caricature; everything is at the same time hidden, full of ulterior motives, subterranean.—I am trying to understand what idiosyncrasy gave rise to that Socratic equation of reason = virtue = happiness: the most bizarre equation there is, and one that has, in particular, all the instincts of the older Hellenes against it.[4]

DIALECTICS AS THE RABBLE'S WEAPON

Nietzsche argues that Socratic dialectic was a plebeian means of self-defense and revenge that fascinated noble Athenians.

2.5 With Socrates, Greek taste swings round in favor of dialectics: what is really happening there? Above all, a *noble* taste is defeated; with dialectics the rabble comes out on top. Before Socrates, dialectical manners were rejected in good society: they were considered bad manners; they exposed a person. The young were warned against them. People also mistrusted all such parading of one's reasons. Respectable things, like respectable people, do not carry their reasons around in their hands like that. It is indecent to show all five fingers. What has to be proved first is worth little. Wherever authority is still part of good custom, wherever one does not "give reasons" but commands, the dialectician is a kind of buffoon: people laugh at him, they don't take him seriously. — Socrates was the buffoon who *got himself taken seriously*: what really happened there? —

3 The physiognomist Zopyrus; the anecdote is told by Cicero (*Tusculan Disputations* 4.80).

4 The *daimonion* was the inner voice that, Socrates said, held him back from certain actions.

2.6 One chooses dialectics only when one has no other means. One knows that it arouses mistrust, that it persuades little. Nothing is easier to wipe away than the effect of a dialectician: the experience of every meeting where speeches are made proves it. It can only be *self-defense*, in the hands of those who have no other weapons left. One must have to *extort* one's rights; until then one makes no use of it. That is why the Jews were dialecticians; Reynard the Fox was one: what? and Socrates was one too? —[5]

2.7 — Is Socrates' irony an expression of revolt? Of the rabble's *ressentiment*? Does he, as one of the oppressed, relish his own ferocity in the knife thrusts of the syllogism? Does he *take revenge* on the noble people he fascinates?—As a dialectician one holds a merciless tool in one's hand; with it one can play the tyrant; one exposes by winning. The dialectician leaves it to his opponent to prove he is no fool: he enrages him and at the same time makes him helpless. The dialectician *disempowers* his opponent's intellect.—What? Is dialectics in Socrates only a form of *revenge*?[6]

2.8 I have made it clear what could make Socrates repellent: all the more does it remain to be explained *that* he fascinated.—That he discovered a new kind of *agon* [contest], that he was its first fencing master for the noble circles of Athens, is one thing. He fascinated by appealing to the agonal drive of the Hellenes—he introduced a variation into the wrestling matches between young men and youths. Socrates was also a great *eroticist*.

2.9 But Socrates guessed still more. He saw *behind* his noble Athenians; he grasped that *his* case, his idiosyncrasy of a case, was already no exception. The same kind of degeneration was quietly getting ready everywhere: old Athens was coming to an end.—And Socrates understood that the whole world *needed* him —his means, his cure, his personal trick of self-preservation... Everywhere the instincts were in anarchy; everywhere people

5 Reynard the Fox is the cunning trickster of the medieval beast epic.
6 *Ressentiment*: French for a lasting, vengeful resentment; Nietzsche's term for the hatred the weak nurse against the strong.

were five steps away from excess: the *monstrum in animo* was the general danger. "The drives want to play the tyrant; one must invent a *counter-tyrant* who is stronger"... When that physiognomist had revealed to Socrates what he was, a den of every foul appetite, the great ironist let fall one more remark that provides the key to him. "That is true," he said, "but I became master of them all." *How* did Socrates become master of *himself*?—His case was at bottom only the extreme case, only the most glaring instance of what was then beginning to be the general plight: that no one was master of himself any longer, that the instincts were turning *against* one another. He fascinated as this extreme case—his fear-inspiring ugliness proclaimed it to every eye: and, it goes without saying, he fascinated even more as the answer, as the solution, as the apparent *cure* for this case. —

2.10 If one needs to make a tyrant of *reason,* as Socrates did, then the danger that something else will play the tyrant cannot be small. Rationality was divined at that time as a *savior*; neither Socrates nor his "patients" were free to be rational or not—it was *de rigueur* [obligatory], it was their *last* resort. The fanaticism with which all Greek reflection throws itself upon rationality betrays an emergency: they were in danger, they had only *one* choice: either to perish or—to be *absurdly rational*... The moralism of the Greek philosophers from Plato on is pathologically conditioned; so is their esteem for dialectics. Reason = virtue = happiness simply means: one must imitate Socrates and establish, against the dark desires, a permanent *daylight*—the daylight of reason. One must be clever, clear, bright at any cost: every concession to the instincts, to the unconscious, leads *downward*...

2.11 I have made it clear how Socrates fascinated: he seemed to be a physician, a savior. Is it still necessary to point out the error in his faith in "rationality at any cost"?—It is self-deception on the part of philosophers and moralists to believe that by waging war on *décadence* they have already escaped it. Escaping is beyond their power: what they choose as a remedy, as salvation, is

itself only another expression of *décadence*—they *change* its expression, they do not get rid of it. Socrates was a misunderstanding; *the whole morality of improvement, the Christian one included, was a misunderstanding*... The harshest daylight, rationality at any cost, life bright, cold, cautious, conscious, without instinct, in resistance to the instincts—this was itself only a sickness, another sickness, and by no means a way back to "virtue," to "health," to happiness... *Having to* fight the instincts—that is the formula for *décadence*: as long as life is *ascending*, happiness equals instinct. —

2.12 — Did he himself still grasp this, this cleverest of all self-outwitters? Did he tell himself so at the last, in the *wisdom* of his courage in the face of death?... Socrates *wanted* to die—not Athens, *he* handed himself the cup of poison, he forced Athens to the cup of poison... "Socrates is no physician," he said softly to himself: "death alone is the physician here... Socrates himself was only sick a long time..."

“Reason” in Philosophy

Die »Vernunft« in der Philosophie
Philosophers’ Egyptianism: their hatred of becoming, their trust in words, and the fiction of a “true world.”

DIE »VERNUNFT« IN DER PHILOSOPHIE

3.1 You ask me what counts as idiosyncrasy in philosophers?... For example, their lack of historical sense, their hatred of the very idea of becoming, their Egyptianism. They think they are doing a thing an *honor* when they dehistoricize it, *sub specie aeterni* [under the aspect of eternity]—when they make a mummy of it. Everything philosophers have handled for millennia has been conceptual mummies; nothing real has ever come out of their hands alive. They kill, they stuff, these gentlemen idolaters of concepts, when they worship—they become mortally dangerous to everything when they worship. Death, change, age, as well as procreation and growth, are objections to them—even refutations. What is does not *become*; what becomes *is* not... Now they all believe, desperately even, in being. But since they cannot get hold of it, they look for reasons why it is being kept from them. “There must be some illusion, some deception at work, if we do not perceive being: where is the deceiver hiding?”—“We’ve got him,” they cry in bliss, “it’s the senses! These senses, *which are so immoral in other respects too*, deceive us about the *true* world. Moral: break free of the deception of the senses, of becoming, of history, of the lie—history is nothing but belief in the senses, belief in the lie. Moral: say No to everything that puts faith in the senses, to all the rest of humanity: that is all ‘the people.’ Be a philosopher, be a mummy,

represent monotono-theism with a gravedigger's mime! — And away, above all, with the *body*, that pitiful *idée fixe* [obsession] of the senses! afflicted with every logical error there is, refuted, even impossible, though it is impudent enough to behave as if it were real!"...

3.2 With the highest reverence I set aside the name of *Heraclitus*. When the rest of the philosopher crowd rejected the testimony of the senses because they showed multiplicity and change, he rejected their testimony because they showed things as if they had permanence and unity. Heraclitus too did the senses an injustice. They lie neither in the way the Eleatics believe nor as he believed—they do not lie at all. It is what we *make* of their testimony that first puts the lie into it—for example, the lie of unity, the lie of thinghood, of substance, of permanence... "Reason" is the cause of our falsifying the testimony of the senses. Insofar as the senses show becoming, passing away, change, they do not lie...[1] But in this Heraclitus will remain eternally right: that being is an empty fiction. The "apparent" world is the only one: the "true world" is merely a lie *added on*...

3.3 — And what fine instruments of observation we have in our senses! This nose, for example, of which no philosopher has yet spoken with reverence and gratitude, is for the time being even the most delicate instrument at our disposal: it can register minimal differences in motion that even the spectroscope does not register. We possess science today precisely to the extent that we have resolved to *accept* the testimony of the senses—to the extent that we have learned to sharpen them further, to arm them, to think them through to the end. The rest is misbegotten, not-yet-science: that is to say, metaphysics, theology, psychology, epistemology. *Or* formal science, a theory of signs: such as logic and that applied logic, mathematics. In them reality does not occur at all, not even as a problem; nor does the question of

1 Heraclitus taught that everything flows; the Eleatics (Parmenides, Zeno) held that change and plurality are illusion.

what value a convention of signs such as logic has in the first place. —

3.4 The *other* idiosyncrasy of philosophers is no less dangerous: it consists in confusing the last and the first. They place what comes at the end—unfortunately! for it ought not to come at all!—the "highest concepts," that is, the most general, the emptiest concepts, the last wisp of smoke of evaporating reality, at the beginning, *as* the beginning. Once again this is only the expression of their way of revering: the higher *may* not grow out of the lower, *may* not have grown at all... Moral: everything of the first rank must be *causa sui* [the cause of itself]. Coming from something else counts as an objection, as casting doubt on its value. All the supreme values are of the first rank; all the highest concepts—being, the unconditioned, the good, the true, the perfect—none of this can have become, and so it *must* be *causa sui*. But none of this can be unlike the rest, either, or at odds with itself... And so they arrive at their stupendous concept "God"... The last, thinnest, emptiest is posited as the first, as cause in itself, as *ens realissimum* [the most real being]... That humanity should have had to take seriously the brain ailments of sick webspinners!—And it has paid dearly for it!...

3.5 — Let us, finally, set against this the different way in which *we* (— I say "we" out of politeness... view the problem of error and appearance. In the past, alteration, change, becoming in general were taken as proof of appearance, as a sign that something must be there leading us astray. Today, conversely, precisely to the extent that the prejudice of reason compels us to posit unity, identity, permanence, substance, cause, thinghood, being, we see ourselves to some degree entangled in error, *necessitated* to error—however certain we are, on the basis of rigorous checking, *that* the error lies here. It is no different with the movements of the great heavenly body: there error has our eye as its constant advocate; here it has our *language*. In its origin, language belongs to the age of the most rudimentary form of psychology: we enter a crude fetishism when we bring to consciousness the basic presuppositions of the metaphysics of lan-

guage—in plain words: of *reason*. *It* sees doers and doing everywhere; it believes in will as cause in general; it believes in the "I," in the I as being, in the I as substance, and *projects* its belief in the I-substance onto all things—only thereby does it *create* the concept "thing"... Being is everywhere thought in as cause, *slipped in* beneath things; only from the conception "I" does the concept "being" follow, as something derived... At the beginning stands the great calamity of error that the will is something that *acts*—that will is a *faculty*... Today we know it is merely a word... Very much later, in a world a thousand times more enlightened, the *security*, the subjective *certainty* with which the categories of reason were handled suddenly struck philosophers with surprise: they concluded that these could not come from experience—after all, the whole of experience contradicts them. *So where do they come from?*—And in India as in Greece the same blunder was made: "We must once have been at home in a higher world (— instead of *in a much lower one*: which would have been the truth!), we must have been divine, *for* we have reason!"... Indeed, nothing has so far had a more naive power of persuasion than the error of being as formulated, for example, by the Eleatics: after all, it has every word on its side, every sentence we speak!—Even the opponents of the Eleatics still succumbed to the seduction of their concept of being: Democritus among others, when he invented his *atom*... "Reason" in language: oh, what a deceitful old woman! I am afraid we are not rid of God because we still believe in grammar...

3.6 People will be grateful to me if I compress so essential, so new an insight into four theses: I thereby make it easier to understand, I thereby provoke contradiction.

First proposition. The grounds on which "this" world has been called apparent establish, on the contrary, its reality—any *other* kind of reality is absolutely indemonstrable.

Second proposition. The characteristics that have been assigned to the "true being" of things are the characteristics of non-being, of *nothingness*—the "true world" has been construc-

ted out of contradiction to the actual world: an apparent world indeed, insofar as it is merely a *moral-optical* illusion.

Third proposition. To spin tales about a world "other" than this one makes no sense at all, unless an instinct for slandering, belittling, casting suspicion on life is powerful in us: in that case we *take revenge* on life with the phantasmagoria of an "other," a "better" life.

Fourth proposition. Dividing the world into a "true" and an "apparent" one, whether in the manner of Christianity or in the manner of Kant (an *underhanded* Christian, when all is said and done —), is only a suggestion of *décadence*—a symptom of *declining* life… That the artist values appearance more highly than reality is no objection to this proposition. For "appearance" here means reality *once again*, only selected, strengthened, corrected… The tragic artist is *no* pessimist—he says *Yes* precisely to everything questionable and terrible itself; he is *Dionysian*…

How the “True World” Finally Became a Fable

Wie die »wahre Welt« endlich zur Fabel wurde
The history of an error in six steps, from Plato to “Incipit Zarathustra.”

WIE DIE »WAHRE WELT« ENDLICH ZUR FABEL WURDE. GESCHICHTE EINES IRRTUMS

4.1 1. The true world, attainable for the wise man, the pious man, the virtuous man—he lives in it, *he is it*.

(Oldest form of the idea, relatively clever, simple, convincing. A paraphrase of the proposition “I, Plato, *am* the truth.”)

4.2 2. The true world, unattainable for now, but promised to the wise man, the pious man, the virtuous man (“to the sinner who repents”).

(Progress of the idea: it becomes subtler, more insidious, more elusive—*it becomes a woman*, it becomes Christian…)

4.3 3. The true world, unattainable, unprovable, unpromisable, but even as a thought a consolation, an obligation, an imperative.

(The old sun at bottom, but seen through mist and skepticism; the idea grown sublime, pale, Nordic, Königsbergian.)[1]

4.4 4. The true world—unattainable? At any rate unattained. And being unattained, also *unknown*. Consequently not consoling, redeeming, or obligating either: what could something unknown oblige us to?…

1 Königsberg was Kant’s city.

(Gray morning. First yawn of reason. Cockcrow of positivism.)

4.5 5. The "true world"—an idea that is no longer good for anything, no longer even obligating—an idea that has become useless, superfluous, *consequently* a refuted idea: let us abolish it!

(Broad daylight; breakfast; return of *bon sens* [good sense] and cheerfulness; Plato blushes with shame; pandemonium of all free spirits.)

4.6 6. The true world—we have abolished it: what world was left? The apparent one, perhaps?... But no! *With the true world we have also abolished the apparent one!*

(Noon; moment of the shortest shadow; end of the longest error; high point of humanity; INCIPIT ZARATHUSTRA [here begins Zarathustra].)[2]

2 Echoes *The Gay Science* §342, "Incipit tragoedia," which introduces Zarathustra.

Morality as Anti-Nature

Moral als Widernatur
The church fights the passions by cutting them out; a healthy morality is ruled by an instinct of life.

MORAL ALS WIDERNATUR

5.1 All passions have a phase when they are merely disastrous, when they drag their victim down with the weight of stupidity—and a later, much later one, when they marry the spirit, when they "spiritualize" themselves. In the past, because of the stupidity in passion, people made war on passion itself: they conspired to annihilate it—all the old moral monsters are unanimous on this: *"il faut tuer les passions"* [the passions must be killed]. The most famous formula for this stands in the New Testament, in that Sermon on the Mount where, incidentally, things are by no means viewed *from a height*. There it is said, for example, with application to sexuality: "If your eye offends you, pluck it out": fortunately, no Christian acts on this precept.[1] To *annihilate* the passions and desires merely in order to forestall their stupidity and its unpleasant consequences strikes us today as itself merely an acute form of stupidity. We no longer admire dentists who *pull out* teeth so that they stop hurting... On the other hand, it should in fairness be conceded that on the soil from which Christianity grew, the concept of the "*spiritualization* of passion" could not possibly have been conceived. The early Church, as is well known, fought *against* the "intelligent" on behalf of the "poor in spirit": how could one expect of it an

1 Matthew 5:29.

intelligent war on passion?—The Church fights passion by cutting it out in every sense: its practice, its "cure," is *castratism*. It never asks: "How does one spiritualize, beautify, deify a desire?"—at all times it has laid the weight of its discipline on extirpation (of sensuality, of pride, of the lust for power, of greed, of vengefulness).—But to attack the passions at the root means to attack life at the root: the practice of the Church is *hostile to life*...

5.2 The same means—cutting out, extirpation—is instinctively chosen in the struggle against a desire by those who are too weak-willed, too degenerate, to be able to impose moderation on it: by those natures who need la Trappe, to speak figuratively (and not figuratively —), some definitive declaration of hostility, a *gulf* between themselves and a passion. Radical means are indispensable only to the degenerate; weakness of will, or more precisely the inability *not* to respond to a stimulus, is itself merely another form of degeneration. Radical hostility, mortal hostility, toward sensuality remains a telling symptom: it entitles one to conjectures about the overall condition of someone so excessive.[2] — That hostility, that hatred, incidentally, reaches its peak only when such natures no longer have enough firmness even for the radical cure, for renouncing their "devil." Survey the whole history of priests and philosophers, and of artists too: the most venomous things against the senses have *not* been said by the impotent, nor by ascetics, but by the impossible ascetics, by those who would have needed to be ascetics...

5.3 The spiritualization of sensuality is called *love*: it is a great triumph over Christianity. Another triumph is our spiritualization of *hostility*. It consists in grasping deeply the value of having enemies: in short, in acting and reasoning the opposite way from how people used to act and reason. The Church has always wanted the annihilation of its enemies: we, we immoralists and anti-Christians, see our advantage in the Church's continued

2 La Trappe is the abbey in Normandy that gave its name to the austere Trappist order.

existence... In politics too, hostility has now become more spiritual—much cleverer, much more thoughtful, much more *forbearing*. Almost every party understands that its interest in self-preservation lies in the opposing party's not losing its strength; the same holds for grand politics. A new creation especially, the new Reich for example, needs enemies more than friends: only in opposition does it feel necessary, only in opposition does it *become* necessary... We behave no differently toward the "inner enemy": there too we have spiritualized hostility, there too we have grasped its *value*. One is *fruitful* only at the price of being rich in contradictions; one stays *young* only on condition that the soul does not stretch out and long for peace... Nothing has become more alien to us than that old desideratum, "peace of the soul," the *Christian* desideratum; nothing arouses less envy in us than the moral cow and the fat contentment of a good conscience. One has renounced *great* life when one renounces war... In many cases, of course, "peace of the soul" is merely a misunderstanding—something *else* that just doesn't know how to name itself more honestly. Without beating about the bush and without prejudice, a few cases. "Peace of the soul" can be, for example, the gentle radiation of a rich animality into the moral (or religious) sphere. Or the onset of weariness, the first shadow cast by evening, by every kind of evening. Or a sign that the air is damp, that south winds are on the way. Or unwitting gratitude for a good digestion (sometimes called "love of humanity"). Or the growing calm of the convalescent, to whom all things taste new and who is waiting... Or the state that follows a strong gratification of our ruling passion, the well-being of a rare satiety. Or the senility of our will, of our cravings, of our vices. Or laziness, talked by vanity into dressing itself up as moral. Or the arrival of a certainty, even a terrible certainty, after long tension and torment from uncertainty. Or the expression of maturity and mastery in the midst of doing, creating, working, willing, calm breathing, "freedom of the will" *attained*... *Twilight of the Idols*: who knows? perhaps also just a kind of "peace of the soul"...

HEALTHY AND ANTI-NATURAL MORALITY

A healthy morality serves an instinct of life; most morality so far has condemned life's instincts.

5.4 — Let me put a principle into a formula. Every naturalism in morality—that is, every *healthy* morality—is governed by an instinct of life: some commandment of life is fulfilled by a particular canon of "you shall" and "you shall not," some obstacle and hostility on life's path is thereby cleared away. *Anti-natural* morality—that is, almost every morality that has so far been taught, revered, and preached—turns, on the contrary, precisely *against* the instincts of life: it is a *condemnation* of these instincts, now secret, now loud and impudent. In saying "God looks upon the heart," it says No to the lowest and highest desires of life and takes God to be the *enemy of life*... The saint in whom God is well pleased is the ideal castrate... Life is over where the "kingdom of God" *begins*...

5.5 Once one has grasped the sacrilege of such a revolt against life as has become almost sacrosanct in Christian morality, one has thereby, fortunately, grasped something else too: the futility, illusoriness, absurdity, *mendacity* of such a revolt. A condemnation of life by the living remains in the end only the symptom of a particular kind of life: the question whether it is justified or unjustified is not even raised by it. One would have to have a position *outside* life, and on the other hand know it as well as one, as many, as all who have lived it, to be permitted even to touch the problem of the *value* of life: reasons enough to grasp that this problem is inaccessible to us. When we speak of values, we speak under the inspiration, under the optics, of life: life itself compels us to posit values, life itself does the valuing through us *when* we posit values... It follows that even that *anti-nature of a morality* which conceives God as the counter-concept to life and its condemnation is only a value judgment of life—of *which* life? of *which* kind of life?—But I have already given the answer: of declining, weakened, weary, condemned life. Moral-

ity as it has been understood until now—as it was last formulated by Schopenhauer, as "denial of the will to life"—is the very *instinct of décadence*, making an imperative of itself: it says: *"Perish!"*—it is the judgment of the condemned...[3]

5.6 Let us consider, finally, what naïveté it is in general to say: "Man *ought* to be such and such!" Reality shows us an enchanting wealth of types, the luxuriance of a lavish play and change of forms: and some wretched street-corner loafer of a moralist remarks: "No! Man ought to be *different*"?... He even knows *how* man ought to be, this poor wretch and prig; he paints himself on the wall and says: *"ecce homo!"* [behold the man!]... But even when the moralist addresses himself only to the individual and says to him: "*You* ought to be such and such!" he does not stop making himself ridiculous. The individual is a piece of fate from front to back, one more law, one more necessity for everything that is to come and will be.[4] To say to him "change yourself" means demanding that everything change, even backward... And indeed, there have been consistent moralists: they wanted man different, namely virtuous; they wanted him in their own image, namely as a prig—and to that end they *denied* the world! No small madness! No modest kind of immodesty!... Morality, insofar as it *condemns* for its own sake, *not* out of regard for the concerns, considerations and purposes of life, is a specific error for which one should have no pity, an *idiosyncrasy of the degenerate* that has done unspeakable harm!... We others, we immoralists, have on the contrary opened our hearts wide to every kind of understanding, comprehending, *approving*. We do not negate readily; we seek our honor in being *affirmers*. More and more our eyes have been opened to that economy which still needs and knows how to make use of everything that the holy folly of the priest, of the *sick* reason in the priest, rejects—to that economy in the law of life which draws advantage even from the repugnant species of the prig, the priest, the virtuous man—

3 For Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860), the highest ethical state is the denial of the will to life.

4 "Ecce homo" are Pilate's words presenting Jesus to the crowd (John 19:5).

what advantage?—But we ourselves, we immoralists, are the answer here...

The Four Great Errors

Die vier großen Irrtümer
Confusing cause and effect, false causality, imaginary causes, and free will; the innocence of becoming.

DIE VIER GROSSEN IRRTÜMER

6.1 *The error of confusing cause and effect.*—There is no more dangerous error than *mistaking the effect for the cause*: I call it reason's real corruption. And yet this error is among the oldest and the newest habits of humankind. It is even sanctified among us; it goes by the name of "religion," "morality." *Every* proposition that religion and morality formulate contains it; priests and moral lawgivers are the authors of that corruption of reason.—I take an example. Everyone knows the book of the famous Cornaro, in which he recommends his meager diet as a recipe for a long and happy life—a virtuous one, too. Few books have been so widely read; even now it is printed in England every year in many thousands of copies.[1] I have no doubt that hardly any book (the Bible excepted, as is only fair) has done as much harm, has *shortened* as many lives, as this well-meant curiosity. The reason: mistaking the effect for the cause. The worthy Italian saw his diet as the *cause* of his long life. In fact the precondition for a long life—the extraordinary slowness of his metabolism, his low consumption—was the cause of his meager diet. He was not free to eat little *or* much; his frugality was *not* a matter of "free will": he got sick when he ate more. But anyone

1 Luigi Cornaro (c. 1467–1566), Venetian nobleman whose *Discourses on the Sober Life* praised a strict diet; he lived past ninety.

who is not a carp does not just do well to eat *properly*—he needs to. A scholar of *our* day, with his rapid consumption of nervous energy, would ruin himself on Cornaro's *régime*. *Crede experto* [Believe one who has tried it]. —

6.2 The most general formula underlying every religion and morality is: "Do this and this, don't do that and that—and you will be happy! Otherwise..." Every morality, every religion *is* this imperative—I call it the great original sin of reason, *immortal unreason*. In my mouth that formula turns into its reverse—the *first* example of my "revaluation of all values." A well-constituted human being, a "happy one," *must* perform certain actions and instinctively shrinks from others; he carries the order he represents physiologically into his relations with people and things. As a formula: his virtue is the *effect* of his happiness... A long life, many descendants, are *not* the reward of virtue. Rather, virtue itself is that very slowing of the metabolism which, among other things, also brings a long life and many descendants in its train —in short, *Cornarism*.—The Church and morality say: "A lineage, a people, is ruined by vice and luxury." My *restored* reason says: when a people is perishing, degenerating physiologically, vice and luxury *follow* from it (that is, the need for ever stronger and more frequent stimuli, as every exhausted nature knows). This young man turns pale and withered early. His friends say: such and such an illness is to blame. I say: *that* he became ill, *that* he did not resist the illness, was already the effect of an impoverished life, of hereditary exhaustion. The newspaper reader says: this party is ruining itself with such a mistake. My *higher* politics says: a party that makes such mistakes is finished—it has lost the sureness of its instincts. Every mistake in every sense is the effect of degenerated instinct, of disintegration of the will: this almost defines the *bad*. Everything *good* is instinct—and hence easy, necessary, free. Effort is an objection; the *god* is typically different from the hero (in my language: *light* feet are the first attribute of divinity).

6.3 *The error of a false causality.*—People have always believed they knew what a cause is. But where did we get our knowledge

—more precisely, our belief that we knew? From the realm of the famous "inner facts," none of which has so far proved to be factual. We believed ourselves to be causes in the act of willing; there, at least, we thought we had *caught causality in the act*. Nor did anyone doubt that all the *antecedentia* [antecedents] of an action, its causes, were to be sought in consciousness and would be found there if one looked—as "motives." Otherwise one would not have been free *to do* it, or responsible *for* it. Finally, who would have denied that a thought is caused? that the I causes the thought?... Of these three "inner facts" by which causality seemed to be guaranteed, the first and most convincing is that of the *will as cause*. The conception of a consciousness ("spirit") as cause, and later still that of the I (the "subject") as cause, are mere latecomers, born after the will had established causality as a given, as *empirical fact*... Meanwhile we have thought better of it. Today we don't believe a word of it. The "inner world" is full of phantoms and will-o'-the-wisps: the will is one of them. The will no longer moves anything, and so no longer explains anything either—it merely accompanies events; it can also be absent. The so-called "motive": another error. Merely a surface phenomenon of consciousness, a by-product of the deed, which conceals the *antecedentia* of a deed rather than representing them. And the I, of all things! That has become a fable, a fiction, a play on words: it has stopped thinking, feeling and willing altogether!... What follows from this? There are no mental causes at all! All the supposed empirical evidence for them has gone to the devil! *That* is what follows!—And we had made fine misuse of that "empirical evidence": on its basis we had *created* the world as a world of causes, a world of will, a world of spirits. The oldest and longest-lived psychology was at work here, and it did nothing else. For it, every event was a deed, every deed the effect of a will; the world became a multiplicity of doers; a doer (a "subject") was slipped under every event. Man projected his three "inner facts"—the things he believed in most firmly, the will, the spirit, the I—out of himself. He first drew the concept of being out of the concept of the I; he posited "things" as having

being in his own image, after his concept of the I as cause. No wonder that later he always found in things only *what he had put into them*!—The thing itself, to say it again, the concept of thing: merely a reflection of the belief in the I as cause... And even your atom, gentlemen mechanists and physicists—how much error, how much rudimentary psychology still lingers in your atom!—Not to mention the "thing in itself," the *horrendum pudendum* [horrible shameful part] of the metaphysicians! The error of spirit as cause confused with reality! And made the measure of reality! And called *God*! —

6.4 *The error of imaginary causes.*—To start from dreams: a particular sensation—say, from a distant cannon shot—is supplied with a cause after the fact (often a whole little novel, in which the dreamer is the main character). Meanwhile the sensation persists in a kind of resonance: it waits, as it were, until the causal drive allows it to step into the foreground—now no longer as an accident but as "meaning." The cannon shot appears in a *causal* way, in an apparent reversal of time. What comes later, the motivation, is experienced first, often with a hundred details that pass like lightning; the shot *follows*... What has happened? The ideas *produced* by a certain state were misunderstood as its cause.—In fact we do the same thing when awake. Most of our general feelings—every kind of inhibition, pressure, tension, explosion in the play and counterplay of the organs, and in particular the state of the *nervus sympathicus* [sympathetic nerve]—stir up our causal drive: we want to have a *reason* for feeling *this way or that*—for feeling bad or for feeling good. It is never enough for us simply to note the fact *that* we feel this way or that. We admit this fact—become *conscious* of it—only *when* we have given it some kind of motivation.—Memory, which in such a case goes into action without our knowing it, calls up earlier states of the same kind and the causal interpretations that have grown together with them—*not* their causality. Memory, of course, also brings up with them the belief that the ideas, the accompanying events in consciousness, were the causes. So a

habituation to a particular causal interpretation arises, which in truth inhibits, and even rules out, any *investigation* of the cause.

6.5 *Psychological explanation of this.*—Tracing something unknown back to something known relieves, soothes, satisfies, and gives a feeling of power besides. With the unknown come danger, unrest, worry—the first instinct is to *eliminate* these painful states. First principle: any explanation is better than none. Since at bottom it is only a matter of wanting to be rid of oppressive ideas, one is not exactly strict about the means of getting rid of them: the first idea that explains the unknown as known feels so good that one "holds it to be true." Proof by *pleasure* ("by strength") as the criterion of truth.—The causal drive is thus conditioned and stirred up by the feeling of fear. The "why?" is meant, if at all possible, to give not so much the cause for its own sake as a *kind of cause*—a soothing, liberating, relieving cause. The first consequence of this need is that something already *known*, experienced, inscribed in memory is posited as the cause. The new, the unexperienced, the strange is excluded as a cause.—So what is sought as a cause is not just some kind of explanation but a *select* and *preferred* kind: the kind that has most quickly and most often got rid of the feeling of the strange, the new, the unexperienced—the *most habitual* explanations.—Result: one kind of positing of causes predominates more and more, concentrates into a system, and finally emerges as *dominant*—that is, simply excluding *other* causes and explanations. — The banker thinks at once of "business," the Christian of "sin," the girl of her love.

6.6 *The whole realm of morality and religion falls under this concept of imaginary causes.*—"Explanation" of *unpleasant* general feelings. They are conditioned by beings hostile to us (evil spirits: most famous case—hysterics misunderstood as witches). They are conditioned by actions that cannot be approved (the feeling of "sin," of "sinfulness," slipped under a physiological discomfort—one always finds reasons for being dissatisfied with oneself). They are conditioned as punishments, as payment for something we should not have done, should not have *been* (gen-

eralized impudently by Schopenhauer into a proposition in which morality appears as what it is, the real poisoner and slanderer of life: "Every great pain, whether physical or mental, declares what we deserve; for it could not come to us if we did not deserve it." *The World as Will and Representation* II, 666). They are conditioned as the consequences of rash actions that turned out badly (— the affects, the senses posited as the cause, as "to blame"; physiological distress interpreted, with the help of *other* distress, as "deserved").—"Explanation" of *pleasant* general feelings. They are conditioned by trust in God. They are conditioned by the consciousness of good actions (the so-called "good conscience," a physiological state that at times looks confusingly like a good digestion). They are conditioned by the successful outcome of undertakings (— naive fallacy: the successful outcome of an undertaking gives a hypochondriac or a Pascal no pleasant general feelings at all). They are conditioned by faith, love, hope—the Christian virtues.—In truth all these supposed explanations are *resulting* states and, as it were, translations of feelings of pleasure or displeasure into a false dialect. One is in a state to hope *because* the basic physiological feeling is strong and rich again; one trusts God *because* the feeling of fullness and strength gives one peace. — Morality and religion belong entirely to the *psychology of error*: in every single case, cause and effect are confused; or truth is confused with the effect of what is *believed* to be true; or a state of consciousness is confused with the causality of that state.

THE ERROR OF FREE WILL

Free will was invented to make people guilty and punishable; Nietzsche restores the innocence of becoming.

6.7 *The error of free will.*—Today we no longer have any pity for the concept of "free will": we know only too well what it is—the most disreputable of all theologians' tricks, designed to make humanity "responsible" in their sense, that is, *to make it dependent on them*... I give here only the psychology of all making-

responsible.—Wherever responsibilities are sought, it is usually the instinct of *wanting to punish and judge* that is doing the seeking. Becoming has been stripped of its innocence once some being-thus-and-so is traced back to will, to intentions, to acts of responsibility. The doctrine of the will was invented essentially for the purpose of punishment, that is, of *wanting to find guilty*. The whole of the old psychology, the psychology of will, rests on the premise that its authors, the priests at the head of ancient communities, wanted to create for themselves a *right* to impose punishments—or to create this right for God... Human beings were thought of as "free" so that they could be judged, punished —so that they could become *guilty*. Consequently every action *had* to be thought of as willed, the origin of every action as lying in consciousness (— whereby the most *fundamental* counterfeiting *in psychologicis* [in matters of psychology] was made the very principle of psychology...). Today we have entered the *reverse* movement: we immoralists above all are trying with all our strength to take the concepts of guilt and punishment back out of the world, and to cleanse psychology, history, nature, social institutions and sanctions of them. In our eyes there is no more radical opposition than that of the theologians, who go on infecting the innocence of becoming with "punishment" and "guilt" by means of the concept of the "moral world order." Christianity is a metaphysics of the hangman...

6.8 What alone can *our* doctrine be?—That no one *gives* a human being his qualities: not God, not society, not his parents and ancestors, not *he himself* (— the nonsense of this last idea, rejected here, was taught as "intelligible freedom" by Kant, perhaps already by Plato). *No one* is responsible for being here at all, for being made this way or that, for being in these circumstances, in this environment. The fatality of his nature cannot be disentangled from the fatality of all that was and all that will be. He is *not* the result of an intention of his own, of a will, of a purpose; he is *not* the subject of an attempt to attain an "ideal of man" or an "ideal of happiness" or an "ideal of morality"—it is absurd to want to *offload* his nature onto some purpose. *We*

invented the concept of "purpose": in reality purpose is *absent*... One is necessary, one is a piece of fate, one belongs to the whole, one *is* in the whole—there is nothing that could judge, measure, compare, condemn our being, for that would mean judging, measuring, comparing, condemning the whole... *But there is nothing besides the whole!*—That no one is made responsible any longer, that the mode of being may not be traced back to a *causa prima* [first cause], that the world is not a unity either as a sensorium or as "spirit"—*this alone is the great liberation*; only with this is the *innocence* of becoming restored... The concept "God" has so far been the greatest *objection* to existence... We deny God, we deny responsibility in God: only *thereby* do we redeem the world. —

The "Improvers" of Humanity

Die »Verbesserer« der Menschheit
Moral "improvement" as taming and breeding, from the Christian church to the Law of Manu.

DIE »VERBESSERER« DER MENSCHHEIT

7.1 People know my demand that the philosopher place himself *beyond* good and evil—that he have the illusion of moral judgment *beneath* him. This demand follows from an insight that I was the first to formulate: *that there are no moral facts at all.* Moral judgment has this in common with religious judgment: it believes in realities that are none. Morality is only an interpretation of certain phenomena—more precisely, a *mis*interpretation. Moral judgment, like religious judgment, belongs to a level of ignorance at which even the concept of the real, the distinction between the real and the imaginary, is still lacking. At such a level, then, "truth" designates nothing but things we today call "imaginings." To that extent moral judgment is never to be taken literally: as such it only ever contains nonsense. But as *semiotics* it remains invaluable: it reveals, to the knowing at least, the most valuable realities of cultures and inner lives that did not *know* enough to "understand" themselves. Morality is merely sign language, merely symptomatology: one must already know *what* it is about to profit from it.

7.2 A first example, and quite provisional. At all times people have wanted to "improve" human beings: this above all is what morality meant. But the same word hides the most widely divergent tendencies. Both the *taming* of the human beast and the *breeding* of a particular kind of human being have been called

"improvement." Only these zoological *termini* [terms] express realities—realities, to be sure, of which the typical "improver," the priest, knows nothing—*wants* to know nothing... To call the taming of an animal its "improvement" sounds to our ears almost like a joke. Whoever knows what goes on in menageries doubts that the beast is "improved" there. It is weakened, it is made less harmful; through the depressive affect of fear, through pain, through wounds, through hunger, it becomes a *sickly* beast. — It is no different with the tamed human being whom the priest has "improved." In the early Middle Ages, when the Church was indeed above all a menagerie, the finest specimens of the "blond beast" were hunted down everywhere—the noble Germanic tribes, for example, were "improved." But what did such an "improved" Germanic tribesman, lured into a monastery, look like afterward? Like a caricature of a human being, like a monstrosity. He had become a "sinner," he was stuck in a cage, he had been locked up among nothing but terrible concepts... There he lay now, sick, miserable, malevolent toward himself; full of hatred for the impulses to life, full of suspicion toward everything that was still strong and happy. In short, a "Christian"...[1] Physiologically speaking: in the fight with the beast, making it sick *can* be the only means of making it weak. The Church understood this: it *ruined* the human being, it weakened him—but it claimed to have "improved" him...

BREEDING: THE LAW OF MANU

Nietzsche contrasts Christian taming with the caste breeding of the Law of Manu and its treatment of the Chandala.

7.3 Let us take the other case of so-called morality, the case of *breeding* a particular race and kind. The most magnificent example is Indian morality, sanctioned as religion in the "Law of Manu." Here the task is to breed no fewer than four races at once: a priestly one, a warrior one, one of traders and farmers,

1 "Blond beast" is Nietzsche's phrase from the *Genealogy* for the predatory noble type, pictured as a lion.

and finally a race of servants, the Shudras. Plainly we are no longer among animal tamers here: a kind of human being a hundred times gentler and more reasonable is required even to conceive the plan of such breeding. One breathes a sigh of relief on stepping out of the Christian air of sickroom and dungeon into this healthier, higher, *wider* world. How paltry the "New Testament" is next to Manu, how bad it smells![2] — But this organization, too, needed to be *terrible*—this time not in the fight with the beast but with *its* opposite concept, the unbred human being, the hodgepodge human being, the Chandala. And again it had no means of making him harmless, of making him weak, other than making him *sick*—it was the fight with the "great number." Perhaps nothing contradicts our feelings more than *these* protective measures of Indian morality. The third edict, for example (Avadana-Sastra I), "on unclean vegetables," decrees that the only food permitted to the Chandala shall be garlic and onions, since holy scripture forbids giving them grain or fruit that bears seeds, or *water* or fire.[3] The same edict lays down that the water they need may not be taken from rivers, or springs, or ponds, but only from the approaches to swamps and from holes made by the footprints of animals. They are likewise forbidden to wash their clothes and *to wash themselves*, since the water granted to them as a favor may be used only to quench their thirst. Finally, Shudra women are forbidden to assist Chandala women in childbirth, and the latter are likewise forbidden *to assist one another in it*... — The result of such sanitary policing was not long in coming: murderous epidemics, hideous venereal diseases, and then in turn "the law of the knife," ordering circumcision for male children and removal of the labia minora for female children.—Manu himself says: "The Chandala are the fruit of adultery, incest and crime (— this the *necessary* consequence of the concept of breeding). For clothing they shall

2 The Laws of Manu (*Manusmṛti*), an ancient Sanskrit code of law and caste; Nietzsche read it in Louis Jacolliot's French version.

3 In the Laws of Manu, the Chandala is the lowest outcaste, born of a Shudra father and a Brahmin mother.

have only the rags of corpses, for dishes broken pots, for ornament old iron, for worship only evil spirits; they shall wander without rest from place to place. They are forbidden to write from left to right and to use the right hand for writing: the use of the right hand and of left-to-right is reserved solely for the *virtuous*, for people of *good race*." —

7.4 These decrees are instructive enough. In them we have, for once, *Aryan* humanity, quite pure, quite original—we learn that the concept of "pure blood" is the opposite of a harmless concept. On the other hand it becomes clear in *which* people the hatred, the Chandala hatred against this "humanity" has immortalized itself, where it has become religion, where it has become *genius*... From this point of view the Gospels are a document of the first rank; the Book of Enoch still more so.[4] — Christianity, sprung from Jewish roots and comprehensible only as a growth of this soil, represents the *countermovement* against every morality of breeding, of race, of privilege—it is the *anti-Aryan* religion *par excellence*: Christianity the revaluation of all Aryan values, the victory of Chandala values, the gospel preached to the poor and lowly, the general uprising of everything trodden down, wretched, ill-constituted, hard done by against "race"—immortal Chandala revenge as the *religion of love*...

7.5 The morality of *breeding* and the morality of *taming* are entirely worthy of each other in the means by which they prevail. We may set down as the supreme principle that in order to *make* morality one must have the unconditional will to its opposite. This is the great, the *uncanny* problem I have pursued the longest: the psychology of the "improvers" of humanity. A small and at bottom modest fact, that of the so-called *pia fraus* [pious fraud], gave me my first access to this problem: the *pia fraus*, the heritage of all philosophers and priests who "improved" humanity. Neither Manu nor Plato nor Confucius nor the Jewish and Christian teachers ever doubted their *right* to lie. Nor did they doubt *quite other rights*... Put as a formula, one

4 Nineteenth-century philology used "Aryan" for the ancient Indo-Iranian peoples, among them the authors of the Law of Manu.

might say: *all* the means by which humanity was so far supposed to be made moral were thoroughly *immoral*. —

What the Germans Lack

Was den Deutschen abgeht
The new Reich, beer and bad education; what schools should teach: to see, to think, to speak and write.

WAS DEN DEUTSCHEN ABGEHT

8.1 Among Germans today it is not enough to have spirit: one must also take it, *take the liberty* of having spirit...

Perhaps I know the Germans; perhaps I may even tell them a few truths. The new Germany represents a large quantum of inherited and schooled ability, so that for a while it may even spend its accumulated treasure of strength lavishly. It is *not* a high culture that has come to power with it, still less a delicate taste, a noble "beauty" of the instincts; but *more manly* virtues than any other country in Europe can show. Plenty of good courage and self-respect, plenty of assurance in dealings, in the reciprocity of duties, plenty of industriousness, plenty of perseverance—and an inherited moderation that needs the spur rather than the brake. I add that here people still obey without obedience humiliating them... And no one despises his opponent...

As you see, it is my wish to be fair to the Germans: I would not like to be untrue to myself in this—so I must also make my objection to them. Coming to power costs dearly: power *makes stupid*... The Germans—they were once called the nation of thinkers: do they still think at all today? The Germans are now bored with the spirit, the Germans now distrust the spirit; politics swallows up all seriousness for truly spiritual matters —"Deutschland, Deutschland über alles" [Germany, Germany above all]: I fear that was the end of German philosophy... "Are

there German philosophers? Are there German poets? Are there *good* German books?"—people ask me abroad. I blush; but with the courage that stays with me even in desperate cases, I answer: "Yes, *Bismarck*!"—Could I even admit which books people read today?... Accursed instinct of mediocrity! —

8.2 — What the German spirit *could* be—who has not had melancholy thoughts about that! But this people has deliberately made itself stupid for almost a thousand years: nowhere have the two great European narcotics, alcohol and Christianity, been more viciously abused. Lately a third has even been added, which alone is enough to finish off all fine and bold agility of the spirit: music, our constipated, constipating German music.— How much sullen heaviness, lameness, dampness, dressing gown, how much *beer* there is in the German intelligence! How is it actually possible that young men who dedicate their lives to the most spiritual goals do not feel in themselves the first instinct of spirituality, *the spirit's instinct of self-preservation*—and drink beer?... The alcoholism of learned youth is perhaps not yet a question mark over their learning—one can even be a great scholar without any spirit—but in every other respect it remains a problem.—Where would one not find it, the gentle degeneration that beer produces in the spirit! I once put my finger on such a degeneration, in a case that became almost famous—the degeneration of our first German free spirit, the *clever* David Strauss, into the author of a beer-hall gospel and "new faith"... Not for nothing had he made his vow in verse to the "lovely brunette"—loyalty unto death...[1]

8.3 — I spoke of the German spirit: that it is getting coarser, shallower. Is that enough?—At bottom it is something quite different that frightens me: how German seriousness, German depth, German *passion* in spiritual matters is going more and more downhill. The pathos has changed, not just the intellect.— Now and then I come into contact with German universities:

1 David Friedrich Strauss (1808–1874), author of *The Life of Jesus*; Nietzsche attacked his *The Old Faith and the New* in the first *Untimely Meditation* (1873). The "lovely brunette" is dark beer, celebrated in a poem by Strauss.

what an air prevails among their scholars, what a barren spirituality, grown self-satisfied and lukewarm! It would be a profound misunderstanding to cite German science against me here—and a proof, besides, that one had not read a word of mine. For seventeen years I have not tired of exposing the *de-spiritualizing* influence of our current science industry. The hard helotry to which the enormous scope of the sciences condemns every individual today is a main reason why fuller, richer, *more deeply* constituted natures no longer find an education *and educators* suited to them. Our culture suffers from nothing *more* than from the glut of presumptuous loafers and fragments of humanity; our universities are, *against* their will, the real hothouses for this kind of stunting of the spirit's instincts. And all of Europe already has an idea of this—grand politics deceives no one... Germany is increasingly regarded as Europe's *flatland*.—I am still *looking* for a German with whom *I* could be serious in my way—how much more for one with whom I might be cheerful!—*Twilight of the Idols*: ah, who today would grasp *from what kind of seriousness* a hermit is recovering here!—Cheerfulness is what is most incomprehensible about us...

8.4 Let us do the sums: it is not only obvious that German culture is declining, there is also no lack of sufficient reason for it. In the end no one can spend more than he has—that holds for individuals, it holds for peoples. If one spends oneself on power, on grand politics, on economics, world trade, parliamentarism, military interests—if one gives away in *this* direction the quantum of understanding, seriousness, will, self-overcoming that one is, then it is lacking on the other side. Culture and the state—let no one deceive himself about this—are antagonists: the "culture state" is merely a modern idea. The one lives off the other, the one thrives at the expense of the other. All great ages of culture are ages of political decline: what is great in the sense of culture was unpolitical, even *antipolitical*... Goethe's heart opened at the phenomenon of Napoleon—it *closed* at the "Wars of Liberation"... At the very moment Germany rises as a great power, France gains a changed importance as a *cultural power*.

Already today much new seriousness, much new *passion* of the spirit has moved to Paris. The question of pessimism, for example, the Wagner question, almost all psychological and artistic questions are weighed there incomparably more subtly and thoroughly than in Germany—the Germans themselves are *incapable* of this kind of seriousness.—In the history of European culture the rise of the "Reich" means one thing above all: a *shift of the center of gravity*.[2] It is already known everywhere: in the main thing—and that remains culture—the Germans no longer count. People ask: have you even one spirit to show who *counts* for Europe? as your Goethe, your Hegel, your Heinrich Heine, your Schopenhauer counted?—That there is no longer a single German philosopher: there is no end of astonishment at that. —

8.5 The whole system of higher education in Germany has lost the main thing: the *end* as well as the *means* to the end. That education, *cultivation*, is itself the end—and *not* "the Reich"—that for this end one needs *educators*—and *not* grammar-school teachers and university scholars—this has been forgotten... Educators are needed *who are themselves educated*, superior, noble spirits, proven at every moment, proven by word and by silence: mature cultures grown *sweet—not* the learned louts that grammar school and university offer youth today as "higher wet nurses." The educators are *lacking*, the exceptions of the exceptions aside—the *first* precondition of education: *hence* the decline of German culture. — One of those rarest of exceptions is my venerable friend Jacob Burckhardt in Basel: it is to him first of all that Basel owes its pre-eminence in humane culture.—What the "higher schools" of Germany actually achieve is a brutal drilling, meant to make a countless number of young men usable, *exploitable*, for the civil service with the least possible loss of time. "Higher education" and *countless numbers*—that is a contradiction from the start. All higher education belongs only to the exception: one must be privileged to have a right to so high a privilege. All great, all beautiful things can never be common property: *pulchrum est paucorum hominum* [beauty belongs

2 The Wars of Liberation (1813–1815) against Napoleon.

to the few].—What *conditions* the decline of German culture? That "higher education" is no longer a *prerogative*—the democratism of "universal" education, education become *common*...[3] Not to forget that military privileges positively force the *over-attendance* of the higher schools, that is, their ruin.—In present-day Germany no one is free any longer to give his children a noble education: our "higher" schools are all geared to the most dubious mediocrity, in their teachers, their curricula, their educational aims. And everywhere an indecent haste prevails, as if something had been missed if the young man of 23 is not yet "finished," does not yet know the answer to the "main question": *which* profession?—A higher kind of human being, if I may say so, does not love "professions," precisely because it knows it has a calling...[4] It has time, it takes its time, it does not even think of being "finished"—at thirty one is, in the sense of high culture, a beginner, a child.—Our overcrowded grammar schools, our overburdened grammar-school teachers who have been made stupid, are a scandal. To defend these conditions, as the professors of Heidelberg recently did, one may perhaps have *causes*—there are no reasons for it.

LEARNING TO SEE, THINK AND WRITE

Nietzsche names the three tasks of education: learning to see, to think, and to speak and write.

8.6 — So as not to fall out of character—which is *yes-saying*, and has to do with contradiction and criticism only indirectly, only involuntarily—I shall at once set out the three tasks for which educators are needed. One must learn to *see*, one must learn to *think*, one must learn to *speak* and *write*: the goal in all three is a noble culture.—*Learning to see*—accustoming the eye to calm, to patience, to letting things come to it; postponing judgment,

3 Jacob Burckhardt (1818–1897), Swiss historian of the Renaissance and Nietzsche's older colleague at the University of Basel.

4 A higher-school certificate entitled a young man to serve one year in the army instead of the usual longer term.

learning to walk around the individual case and take it in from all sides. That is the *first* preliminary schooling for spirituality: *not* reacting at once to a stimulus, but getting the inhibiting, the excluding instincts in hand. *Learning to see*, as I understand it, is almost what the unphilosophical way of speaking calls a strong will: the essential thing about it is precisely *not* "willing," *being able* to suspend the decision. All unspirituality, all vulgarity rests on the inability to resist a stimulus—one *has* to react, one follows every impulse. In many cases such a compulsion is already sickliness, decline, a symptom of exhaustion—almost everything that unphilosophical crudeness calls "vice" is merely that physiological inability *not* to react.—A practical application of having learned to see: as a *learner* one will have become altogether slow, mistrustful, resistant. One will at first let the strange, the *new* of every kind approach with hostile calm—one will draw back one's hand from it. Standing open with all doors, lying submissively on one's belly before every little fact, being ever ready to jump—to put oneself, to *plunge* oneself into others and other things—in short, the famous modern "objectivity" is bad taste, is *ignoble par excellence*. —

8.7 *Learning to think*: our schools no longer have any idea of it. Even at the universities, even among the actual scholars of philosophy, logic as theory, as practice, as *craft*, is beginning to die out. Read German books: not the faintest memory any more that thinking requires a technique, a curriculum, a will to mastery—that thinking wants to be learned the way dancing wants to be learned, *as* a kind of dancing… Who among Germans still knows from experience that subtle thrill which *light feet* in spiritual matters send flowing into all the muscles!—The stiff oafishness of the spiritual gesture, the *clumsy* hand in grasping—that is German to such a degree that abroad people mistake it for the German character as such. The German has no *fingers* for *nuances*… That the Germans even put up with their philosophers, above all the most crooked conceptual misfit there has ever been, the *great* Kant, gives no small idea of German grace.—For *dancing* in every form cannot be subtracted from a *noble educa-*

tion: being able to dance with the feet, with concepts, with words. Need I still say that one must be able to do it with the *pen* too—that one must learn to *write*?—But at this point I would become a complete riddle to German readers…

Skirmishes of an Untimely Man

Streifzüge eines Unzeitgemäßen
Fifty-one raids on writers, artists and ideas, from Rousseau and George Sand to art, intoxication and Goethe.

STREIFZÜGE EINES UNZEITGEMÄSSEN

9.1 *My impossibles.—Seneca*: or the toreador of virtue.—*Rousseau*: or the return to nature *in impuris naturalibus* [in impure naturalness].—*Schiller*: or the moral trumpeter of Säckingen.—*Dante*: or the hyena who *writes poetry* in tombs.—*Kant*: or *cant* [pious humbug] as intelligible character.—*Victor Hugo*: or the lighthouse on the sea of nonsense.—*Liszt*: or the school of velocity—after women.—*George Sand*: or *lactea ubertas* [milky abundance], in plain words: the milk cow with a "beautiful style."—*Michelet*: or enthusiasm that takes off its coat.—*Carlyle*: or pessimism as an undigested lunch.—*John Stuart Mill*: or offensive clarity.—*Les frères de Goncourt* [the Goncourt brothers]: or the two Ajaxes in battle with Homer. Music by Offenbach.—*Zola*: or "the joy of stinking." —[1]

9.2 *Renan.*—Theology, or the corruption of reason by "original sin" (Christianity). Witness Renan, who, as soon as he risks a Yes or No of a more general kind, misses the mark with painful regularity. He would like, for example, to tie *la science* [science] and *la noblesse* [nobility] into one; but *la science* belongs to democracy —that is surely as plain as day. With no small ambition, he

1 Allusions: *in puris naturalibus* ("stark naked"); Scheffel's popular verse epic *The Trumpeter of Säckingen* (1854); Czerny's piano studies *The School of Velocity*; Kant's "intelligible character"; Zola's novel *La Joie de vivre* (1884).

wishes to represent an aristocracy of the spirit: but at the same time he lies on his knees before its counter-doctrine, the *évangile des humbles* [gospel of the lowly]—and not only on his knees… What use is all the free-thinking, modernity, mockery and turncoat suppleness if in one's guts one has remained a Christian, a Catholic and even a priest![2] Renan's inventiveness, just like a Jesuit's and a father confessor's, lies in seduction; his spirituality does not lack the broad smirk of the cleric—like all priests, he becomes dangerous only when he loves. No one equals him at worshipping in a way that endangers life… This spirit of Renan's, a spirit that *enervates*, is one more fatality for poor, sick, will-sick France. —

9.3 *Sainte-Beuve.*—Nothing of the man in him; full of petty rancor against all manly spirits. Wanders about, subtle, curious, bored, eavesdropping—a woman at bottom, with a woman's vindictiveness and a woman's sensuality. As a psychologist, a genius of *médisance* [malicious gossip]; inexhaustibly rich in the means for it; no one knows better how to mix poison with praise. Plebeian in his lowest instincts and related to the *ressentiment* of Rousseau: *consequently* a Romantic—for beneath all *romantisme* the instinct of Rousseau grunts and lusts for revenge. A revolutionary, but still kept tolerably in check by fear. Without freedom before everything that has strength (public opinion, the Academy, the court, even Port-Royal). Embittered against everything great in people and things, against everything that believes in itself.[3] Poet and half-woman enough still to feel greatness as power; constantly writhing, like that famous worm, because he constantly feels trodden on. As a critic, without standard, footing or backbone, with the cosmopolitan *libertin*'s [libertine's] tongue for all sorts of things, but without the courage even to admit his *libertinage* [libertinism]. As a historian, without philosophy, without the *power* of the

2 Ernest Renan (1823–1892), French scholar of religion, author of *The Life of Jesus* (1863).

3 Charles-Augustin Sainte-Beuve (1804–1869), the leading French critic of his day; his major work is a history of the Jansenist abbey of Port-Royal.

philosophical eye—hence declining the task of judging in all the main questions, holding up "objectivity" as a mask. He behaves differently toward all matters where a subtle, worn-out taste is the highest authority: there he really has the courage to be himself, the pleasure in himself—there he is a *master*.—In some respects a precursor of Baudelaire. —

9.4 The *Imitatio Christi* [Imitation of Christ] is one of those books I cannot hold in my hands without a physiological resistance. It gives off a *parfum* of the Eternal-Feminine, and to appreciate that one must already be French—or a Wagnerian... This saint has a way of talking about love that makes even the women of Paris curious.—I am told that that *cleverest* of Jesuits, A. Comte, who wanted to lead his French to Rome by the *detour* of science, drew his inspiration from this book. I believe it: "the religion of the heart"...[4]

9.5 *G. Eliot.*—They are rid of the Christian God and now believe all the more that they must hold on to Christian morality. That is an *English* consistency; let us not hold it against the lady moralists *à la* Eliot. In England, for every little emancipation from theology, one has to restore one's good name in a fear-inspiring manner as a fanatic of morality. That is the *penance* one pays there.—For the rest of us, things are different. When one gives up Christian faith, one pulls the *right* to Christian morality out from under one's feet. This morality is by no means self-evident. One has to bring this point to light again and again, in spite of the shallow English minds. Christianity is a system, a view of things that has been thought out as one and is *whole*.[5] If one breaks out a single main concept from it, faith in God, one breaks the whole along with it: nothing necessary remains between one's fingers. Christianity presupposes that man does not know, *cannot* know, what is good for him and what is evil: he believes in God, who alone knows it. Christian morality is a

4 The *Imitation of Christ* is a 15th-century devotional book attributed to Thomas à Kempis. Auguste Comte (1798–1857), founder of positivism, later preached a secular "Religion of Humanity."

5 George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans, 1819–1880), English novelist who abandoned Christian belief but kept a strict morality.

command; its origin is transcendent; it is beyond all criticism, all right to criticism; it has truth only if God is truth—it stands and falls with faith in God. — If the English really believe that they know on their own, "intuitively," what is good and evil, and if they therefore suppose that they no longer need Christianity as a guarantee of morality, then this itself is merely the *consequence* of the rule of the Christian value judgment and an expression of the *strength* and *depth* of this rule. The origin of English morality has been forgotten; the highly conditional nature of its right to exist is no longer felt. For the Englishman, morality is not yet a problem...

9.6 *George Sand.*—I read the first *Lettres d'un voyageur* [Letters of a Traveler]: like everything that stems from Rousseau, false, contrived, all bellows, exaggerated. I cannot stand this gaudy wallpaper style, any more than the plebeian ambition to have generous feelings. The worst, admittedly, remains a woman's coquetry with masculine ways, with the manners of ill-bred boys.—How cold she must have been through it all, this insufferable artist! She wound herself up like a clock—and wrote... Cold, like Hugo, like Balzac, like all the Romantics as soon as they wrote! And how complacently she must have lain there while she did it, this prolific scribbling cow, who had something German about her in the bad sense, like Rousseau himself, her master, and who in any case was possible only with the decline of French taste!—But Renan reveres her...[6]

9.7 *Morality for psychologists.*—No penny-novel psychology! Never observe *in order* to observe! That produces a false perspective, a squint, something forced and exaggerating. Experiencing as *wanting* to experience—that never comes off. One *must not* look at oneself in the midst of an experience; every glance then becomes the "evil eye." A born psychologist guards by instinct against seeing for the sake of seeing; the same goes for the born painter. He never works "from nature." He leaves it to his instinct, his *camera obscura*, to sift and express the "case,"

6 George Sand (Aurore Dupin, 1804–1876), French novelist; her *Lettres d'un voyageur* appeared in 1834–1836.

"nature," what has been "experienced"... Only the *general* reaches his consciousness, the conclusion, the result: he knows nothing of that arbitrary abstracting from the individual case.—What happens when one does it differently? When, for example, one practices penny-novel psychology in the manner of the Parisian *romanciers* [novelists], great and small? *That* lies in wait for reality, as it were; *that* brings home a handful of curiosities every evening... But just look at what finally comes of it—a heap of blotches, at best a mosaic, in every case something added up, restless, garish. The Goncourts go furthest in this: they do not put three sentences together that do not simply hurt the eye, the *psychologist's* eye.—Nature, judged artistically, is no model. It exaggerates, it distorts, it leaves gaps. Nature is *chance*. Studying "from nature" seems to me a bad sign. It betrays submission, weakness, fatalism—this lying in the dust before *petits faits* [little facts] is unworthy of a *whole* artist.[7] To see *what is*—that belongs to another kind of mind, the *anti-artistic*, the factual. One has to know *who* one is...

INTOXICATION AND THE ARTIST

Art requires intoxication, a feeling of heightened strength; Nietzsche distinguishes Apollonian and Dionysian intoxication.

9.8 *Toward a psychology of the artist.*—For there to be art, for there to be any kind of aesthetic doing and seeing, one physiological precondition is indispensable: *intoxication*. Intoxication must first have heightened the excitability of the whole machine; until then there is no art. Every kind of intoxication, however different its causes, has the power to do this—above all the intoxication of sexual arousal, the oldest and most original form of intoxication. Likewise the intoxication that follows in the train of all great desires, all strong affects; the intoxication of the feast, of the contest, of the feat of daring, of victory, of all extreme agitation; the intoxication of cruelty; intoxication in

7 Edmond (1822–1896) and Jules (1830–1870) de Goncourt, French novelists and diarists known for their minutely observed realism.

destruction; intoxication under certain meteorological influences, for example the intoxication of spring; or under the influence of narcotics; finally the intoxication of the will, the intoxication of an overloaded and swollen will.—What is essential in intoxication is the feeling of increased strength and fullness. Out of this feeling one gives to things, one *forces* them to take from us, one violates them—and this process is called *idealizing*. Let us rid ourselves of a prejudice here: idealizing does *not* consist, as is commonly believed, in subtracting or discounting the petty and incidental. What is decisive, rather, is a tremendous *bringing out* of the main features, so that the others vanish in the process.

9.9 In this state one enriches everything out of one's own fullness: whatever one sees, whatever one wills, one sees it swollen, pressing, strong, overloaded with strength. The man in this state transforms things until they mirror his power—until they are reflections of his perfection. This *having to* transform into perfection is—art. Even everything that he is not becomes, nevertheless, a delight in himself; in art man enjoys himself as perfection.—It would be permissible to imagine an opposite state, a specific anti-artistry of instinct—a way of being that would impoverish all things, thin them out, make them consumptive. And in fact history is rich in such anti-artists, in such people starved of life, who of necessity must still take things into themselves, waste them away, make them *thinner*. This is, for example, the case of the genuine Christian—of Pascal, for example. A Christian who was at the same time an artist *does not occur*... Let no one be childish and throw Raphael at me, or some homeopathic Christians of the nineteenth century: Raphael said Yes, Raphael *made* Yes; consequently Raphael was no Christian...

9.10 What is the meaning of the pair of opposites I introduced into aesthetics, *Apollonian* and *Dionysian*, both understood as kinds of intoxication?—Apollonian intoxication above all keeps the eye excited, so that it acquires the power of vision. The painter, the sculptor, the epic poet are visionaries *par excellence*. In the Dionysian state, by contrast, the entire system of the

affects is excited and heightened. It discharges all its means of expression at once and at the same time drives out the power of representing, imitating, transfiguring, transforming, every kind of mimicry and play-acting. The essential thing remains the ease of metamorphosis, the inability *not* to react (— much as with certain hysterical patients, who also slip into *any* role at the slightest hint).[8] It is impossible for the Dionysian man not to understand a suggestion. He overlooks no sign of affect; he has the highest degree of the understanding and divining instinct, just as he possesses the highest degree of the art of communication. He enters into every skin, every affect: he is constantly transforming himself.—Music as we understand it today is likewise a total excitement and discharge of the affects, but even so only the remnant of a much fuller world of affective expression, a mere *residuum* of Dionysian histrionics. To make music possible as a separate art, a number of senses, above all the muscular sense, have been brought to a standstill (relatively at least, for to a certain degree all rhythm still speaks to our muscles), so that man no longer immediately imitates and represents with his body everything he feels. Nevertheless, *that* is the real Dionysian normal state, at any rate the original state; music is its slowly attained specialization at the expense of the most closely related faculties.

9.11 The actor, the mime, the dancer, the musician, the lyric poet are fundamentally related in their instincts and in themselves one, but they have gradually been specialized and separated from one another—even to the point of contradiction. The lyric poet remained united longest with the musician; the actor with the dancer.—The *architect* represents neither a Dionysian nor an Apollonian state. Here it is the great act of will, the will that moves mountains, the intoxication of the great will, that demands art. The most powerful people have always inspired architects; the architect has always been under the spell of power. In a building, pride, victory over gravity, the will to power are meant to become visible. Architecture is a kind of elo-

8 Nietzsche introduced the pair in *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872).

quence of power in forms, now persuading, even flattering, now simply commanding. The highest feeling of power and security finds expression in whatever has *grand style*. Power that no longer needs proof; that disdains to please; that is slow to answer; that feels no witness around it; that lives without awareness that there is opposition to it; that rests in *itself*, fatalistic, a law among laws: *that* is what speaks of itself as grand style. —

9.12 I read the life of *Thomas Carlyle*, this unwitting and unwilling farce, this heroic-moral interpretation of dyspeptic states.—Carlyle: a man of strong words and attitudes, a rhetorician out of *necessity*, constantly agitated by the craving for a strong faith *and* by the feeling that he is incapable of it (— in this a typical Romantic!). The craving for a strong faith is *not* proof of a strong faith, but rather the opposite. *If one has it*, one may permit oneself the beautiful luxury of skepticism: one is secure enough, firm enough, bound enough for it. Carlyle numbs something in himself with the *fortissimo* of his veneration for people of strong faith and with his rage against the less simple-minded: he *needs* noise.[9] A constant, passionate *dishonesty* toward himself—that is his *proprium* [distinctive trait]; that is what makes him interesting, and will keep him so.—In England, of course, he is admired precisely for his honesty... Well, that is English; and considering that the English are the people of consummate *cant*, it is even fitting, not merely understandable. At bottom Carlyle is an English atheist who makes it a point of honor *not* to be one.

9.13 *Emerson.*—Much more enlightened, more roving, more manifold, more refined than Carlyle, above all happier... One who instinctively feeds only on ambrosia and leaves behind whatever in things is indigestible. Compared with Carlyle, a man of taste.—Carlyle, who loved him dearly, nevertheless said of him: "He does not give *us* enough to chew on." That may be rightly said, but not to Emerson's discredit.[10] — Emerson has

9 Thomas Carlyle (1795–1881), Scottish essayist, author of *On Heroes and Hero-Worship*; his life was written by J. A. Froude.

10 Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882), American essayist and poet, whom Nietzsche read with lifelong admiration.

that kindly and witty cheerfulness that discourages all seriousness. He simply does not know how old he already is and how young he is yet to be—he could say of himself, in a phrase of Lope de Vega's: *"yo me sucedo a mi mismo"* [I am my own successor]. His spirit always finds reasons to be content and even grateful; and at times he touches on the cheerful transcendence of that worthy gentleman who came back from a lovers' rendezvous *tamquam re bene gesta* [as though the deed had been well done]. *"Ut desint vires,"* he said gratefully, *"tamen est laudanda voluptas"* [Though the strength be lacking, the pleasure is still to be praised]. —[11]

9.14 *Anti-Darwin.*—As for the famous "struggle for *life*," it seems to me for the present more asserted than proved. It does occur, but as the exception. The overall aspect of life is *not* need or hunger, but rather wealth, abundance, even absurd squandering —where there is struggle, it is a struggle for *power*... One should not mistake Malthus for nature.—But supposing this struggle exists—and indeed it does occur—it unfortunately turns out the opposite way from what Darwin's school wishes, from what one might perhaps *be allowed* to wish along with it: namely, to the disadvantage of the strong, the privileged, the fortunate exceptions.[12] Species do *not* grow in perfection: the weak again and again become masters over the strong—that is because they are the great majority, and they are also *cleverer*... Darwin forgot the spirit (— that is English!); *the weak have more spirit*... One must need spirit to acquire spirit—one loses it when one no longer needs it. Whoever has strength dispenses with spirit (— "let it go!" people think in Germany today, "— the *Reich* must still remain ours"...). By spirit, as one can see, I mean caution, patience, cunning, dissimulation, great self-control, and

11 A twist on Ovid (*Letters from the Black Sea* 3.4.79), where it is the will (*voluntas*), not the pleasure (*voluptas*), that deserves praise.

12 Thomas Robert Malthus (1766–1834), English economist whose theory of population outrunning food supply influenced Darwin.

everything that is *mimicry* (a large part of so-called virtue belongs to the latter).[13]

9.15 *Casuistry for psychologists.*—This man knows people: why, really, does he study them? He wants to snatch small advantages over them, or big ones too—he is a politician!.. That man over there knows people too; and you say he wants nothing for himself from it, he is one of the great "impersonal" ones. Look more closely! Perhaps he wants an even *worse* advantage: to feel superior to people, to be entitled to look down on them, no longer to be mistaken for one of them. This "impersonal" man is a *despiser* of people; and the first is the more humane species, whatever appearances may say. At least he puts himself on the same level, he puts himself *in among them*...

9.16 The *psychological tact* of the Germans seems to me called into question by a whole series of cases, which my modesty prevents me from listing. In one case I shall not lack a great occasion to support my thesis: I hold it against the Germans that they got *Kant* wrong, along with his "philosophy of back doors," as I call it—that was *not* the type of intellectual integrity.—The other thing I do not like to hear is a notorious "and": the Germans say "Goethe *and* Schiller"—I fear they say "Schiller and Goethe"... Do people still not *know* this Schiller?—There are even worse "ands." I have heard with my own ears, though only among university professors, "Schopenhauer *and* Hartmann"...[14]

9.17 The most spiritual people, provided they are the most courageous, also experience by far the most painful tragedies; but it is precisely for this reason that they honor life—because it sets its greatest opposition against them.

9.18 *On the "intellectual conscience."*—Nothing seems rarer to me today than genuine hypocrisy. I strongly suspect that the mild air of our culture does not agree with this plant. Hypocrisy belongs to ages of strong faith, when even under *compulsion* to

13 Echoing Luther's hymn "A Mighty Fortress": "let them go ... the kingdom (*Reich*) must still be ours"; here the *Reich* is the new German Empire.

14 Eduard von Hartmann (1842–1906), author of the popular *Philosophy of the Unconscious*, a derivative of Schopenhauer.

display another faith one did not let go of the faith one had. Today one lets it go; or, more commonly still, one acquires a second faith besides—in either case one remains *honest*. No doubt a far greater number of convictions is possible today than formerly: possible, that is, permitted, that is, *harmless*. From this arises tolerance toward oneself. — Tolerance toward oneself permits several convictions: they live together in harmony—they take care, like everyone today, not to compromise themselves. How does one compromise oneself today? By being consistent. By going in a straight line. By being ambiguous in fewer than five ways. By being genuine... My fear is great that modern man is simply too comfortable for some vices, so that they are actually dying out. All evil that is conditioned by a strong will—and perhaps there is no evil without strength of will—degenerates, in our lukewarm air, into virtue... The few hypocrites I have got to know were imitating hypocrisy: like nearly one in ten people nowadays, they were actors. —

9.19 *Beautiful and ugly.*—Nothing is more conditional, let us say more *limited*, than our feeling for the beautiful. Whoever tried to think of it apart from man's pleasure in man would immediately lose the ground from under his feet. The "beautiful in itself" is merely a word, not even a concept. In the beautiful, man posits himself as the measure of perfection; in select cases he worships himself in it. A species *cannot* do otherwise than say yes to itself alone in this way. Its *lowest* instinct, that of self-preservation and self-expansion, still radiates in such sublimities. Man believes the world itself to be overloaded with beauty—he *forgets* himself as its cause. He alone has bestowed beauty on it—alas! only a very human, all-too-human beauty... At bottom man mirrors himself in things; he considers everything beautiful that throws his image back at him. The judgment "beautiful" is the *vanity of his species*... For a little suspicion may whisper this question into the skeptic's ear: is the world really made more beautiful by the fact that man, of all creatures, takes it to be beautiful? He has *humanized* it: that is all. But nothing, absolutely nothing, guarantees us that man, of all things, should provide the model of

the beautiful. Who knows how he looks in the eyes of a higher judge of taste? Daring, perhaps? perhaps even amusing? perhaps a little arbitrary?... "O Dionysus, divine one, why do you pull my ears?" Ariadne once asked her philosophical lover, in one of those famous dialogues on Naxos.[15] "I find a kind of humor in your ears, Ariadne: why aren't they even longer?"

9.20 Nothing is beautiful, only man is beautiful: all aesthetics rests on this naïveté; it is its *first* truth. Let us add its second right away: nothing is ugly but *degenerating* man—and with that the realm of aesthetic judgment is marked out.—Reckoned physiologically, everything ugly weakens and saddens man. It reminds him of decay, danger, impotence; he actually loses strength in its presence. The effect of the ugly can be measured with a dynamometer. Wherever man is depressed at all, he senses the nearness of something "ugly." His feeling of power, his will to power, his courage, his pride—they fall with the ugly and rise with the beautiful... In both cases *we draw a conclusion*: the premises for it are stored up in tremendous abundance in instinct. The ugly is understood as a hint and symptom of degeneration: whatever reminds us in the remotest way of degeneration produces in us the judgment "ugly." Every sign of exhaustion, of heaviness, of age, of weariness, every kind of unfreedom, such as cramp or paralysis, above all the smell, the color, the form of dissolution, of decomposition, even when thinned out at last into a symbol—all this calls forth the same reaction, the value judgment "ugly." A *hatred* leaps up here: whom does man hate here? There is no doubt: the *decline of his type*. He hates here out of the deepest instinct of the species; in this hatred there is shuddering, caution, depth, farsightedness—it is the deepest hatred there is. Because of it, art is *deep*...

9.21 *Schopenhauer.*—Schopenhauer, the last German worth reckoning with (— who is a *European* event like Goethe, like Hegel, like Heinrich Heine, and *not merely* a local, a "national" one), is a case of the first rank for a psychologist: namely, as a malicious

15 In Greek myth, Dionysus finds Ariadne on Naxos after Theseus abandons her; the pair recur in Nietzsche's late writings.

and brilliant attempt to marshal, on behalf of a nihilistic total devaluation of life, precisely the counter-instances, the great self-affirmations of the "will to life," the exuberant forms of life. One after another he interpreted *art*, heroism, genius, beauty, great compassion, knowledge, the will to truth, and tragedy as consequences of the "negation" of the "will," or of the "will's" need to be negated—the greatest psychological counterfeiting in history, Christianity excepted. Looked at more closely, he is in this merely the heir of the Christian interpretation—except that he knew how to *approve* even what Christianity had *rejected*, the great cultural facts of humanity, still in a Christian, that is, nihilistic sense (— namely as paths to "redemption," as early forms of "redemption," as stimulants of the need for "redemption"...)

9.22 I take a single case. Schopenhauer speaks of *beauty* with a melancholy ardor—why, ultimately? Because he sees in it a *bridge* on which one can get further, or acquire a thirst to get further... For him it is redemption from the "will" for moments at a time—it lures one on to redemption forever... In particular he praises it as the redeemer from the "focal point of the will," from sexuality—in beauty he sees the procreative drive *negated*... Strange saint! Someone contradicts you, and I fear it is nature. *Why* is there beauty at all in sound, color, fragrance, rhythmic movement in nature? What *drives* beauty *forth*?—Fortunately a philosopher contradicts him too. No lesser authority than that of the divine Plato (— so Schopenhauer himself calls him) upholds a different proposition: that all beauty incites to procreation—that this is precisely the *proprium* [distinctive property] of its effect, from the most sensual up to the most spiritual...

9.23 Plato goes further. He says, with an innocence for which one has to be a Greek and not a "Christian," that there would be no Platonic philosophy at all if there were not such beautiful youths in Athens: it is only the sight of them that puts the philosopher's soul into an erotic frenzy and gives it no rest until it has sown the seed of all lofty things in so beautiful a soil. Another strange saint!—one cannot believe one's ears, even supposing one believes Plato. At the very least one guesses that in Athens

philosophy was done *differently*, above all in public. Nothing is less Greek than the conceptual cobweb-spinning of a hermit, *amor intellectualis dei* [intellectual love of God] in the manner of Spinoza.[16] Philosophy in Plato's manner would rather be defined as an erotic contest, as a further development and internalization of the old agonistic gymnastics and its *presuppositions*... What finally grew out of this philosophical eroticism of Plato's? A new art form of the Greek agon: dialectics.—I would also recall, *against* Schopenhauer and in Plato's honor, that the whole higher culture and literature of *classical* France likewise grew up on the soil of sexual interest. Everywhere in it one may look for gallantry, the senses, sexual rivalry, "woman"—one will never look in vain...

ART FOR ART'S SAKE

Nietzsche denies that art is purposeless: it is the great stimulant to life, and tragedy shows fearlessness.

9.24 *L'art pour l'art* [art for art's sake].—The fight against purpose in art is always the fight against the *moralizing* tendency in art, against its subordination to morality. *L'art pour l'art* means: "the devil take morality!"—But even this hostility betrays the overwhelming power of the prejudice. When one has excluded from art the purpose of preaching morals and improving mankind, it by no means follows that art is altogether purposeless, aimless, meaningless—in short, *l'art pour l'art*, a worm biting its own tail. "Better no purpose at all than a moral purpose!"—so speaks mere passion. A psychologist, on the other hand, asks: what does all art do? Does it not praise? Does it not glorify? Does it not select? Does it not bring things to the fore? With all this it *strengthens* or *weakens* certain valuations... Is this merely incidental? An accident? Something in which the artist's instinct would have no part at all? Or is it not rather the precondition for the artist's *being able to* at all...? Is his lowest instinct aimed at art—or rather

16 Nietzsche paraphrases Plato's *Symposium* and *Phaedrus*; *amor intellectualis dei* is Spinoza's phrase in the *Ethics*.

at the meaning of art, at *life*? at a *desirability of life*?—Art is the great stimulant to life: how could one understand it as purposeless, as aimless, as *l'art pour l'art*?—One question remains: art also brings to light much that is ugly, hard, questionable in life—does it not thereby seem to spoil life for us? — And indeed there have been philosophers who lent it this meaning: "to get free of the will" was what Schopenhauer taught as the overall aim of art, and "to dispose us to resignation" was what he revered as the great usefulness of tragedy.—But this—as I have already given to understand—is the pessimist's optics and "evil eye" —: one must appeal to the artists themselves. *What does the tragic artist communicate of himself?* Is it not precisely the state *without* fear in the face of the fearful and questionable that he shows?—This state itself is something supremely desirable; whoever knows it honors it with the highest honors. He communicates it, he *must* communicate it, provided he is an artist, a genius of communication. Courage and freedom of feeling before a powerful enemy, before a sublime calamity, before a problem that arouses dread—it is this *victorious* state that the tragic artist selects, that he glorifies. Before tragedy, the warrior in our soul celebrates its Saturnalia. Whoever is used to suffering, whoever seeks out suffering, the *heroic* man praises his existence through tragedy—to him alone does the tragic poet pour the draught of this sweetest cruelty. —

9.25 Making do with people, keeping open house with one's heart—that is liberal, but it is merely liberal. One recognizes the hearts capable of *noble* hospitality by their many curtained windows and closed shutters: they keep their best rooms empty. Why?—Because they are expecting guests with whom one does *not* "make do"...

9.26 We no longer value ourselves enough when we communicate ourselves. Our real experiences are not at all talkative. They could not communicate themselves if they wanted to. That is because they lack the word. Whatever we have words for, we are already beyond. In all speaking there is a grain of contempt. Language, it seems, was invented only for what is average, mid-

dling, communicable. With language the speaker already *vulgarizes* himself.—From a morality for the deaf and mute and other philosophers.

9.27 "This portrait is enchantingly lovely!"... The literary woman: unsatisfied, agitated, desolate in heart and entrails, forever listening with painful curiosity for the imperative that whispers from the depths of her organism *"aut liberi aut libri"* [either children or books]. The literary woman: educated enough to understand the voice of nature even when it speaks Latin, and on the other hand vain enough and goose enough to speak French to herself in secret as well: *"je me verrai, je me lirai, je m'extasierai et je dirai: Possible, que j'aie eu tant d'esprit?"* [I shall see myself, I shall read myself, I shall go into raptures and say: Is it possible that I had so much wit?]...[17]

9.28 The "impersonal" are given the floor.—"Nothing comes easier to us than being wise, patient, superior. We drip with the oil of forbearance and sympathy, we are absurdly just, we forgive everything. For that very reason we ought to keep ourselves a little stricter; for that very reason we ought, from time to time, to *breed* ourselves a little affect, a little vice of an affect. It may go against the grain; and among ourselves we may laugh at the spectacle we present. But what can we do! We have no other kind of self-overcoming left: this is *our* asceticism, *our* penance"... *Becoming personal*—the virtue of the "impersonal"...

9.29 *From a doctoral examination.*—"What is the task of all higher education?"—To turn man into a machine.—"What is the means to that?"—He must learn to be bored.—"How is that achieved?"—Through the concept of duty.—"Who is his model in this?"—The philologist: he teaches how to *grind*.—"Who is the perfect human being?"—The civil servant.—"Which philosophy provides the highest formula for the civil servant?"—Kant's: the civil servant as thing in itself, set up as judge over the civil servant as appearance. —

9.30 *The right to stupidity.*—The tired, slow-breathing worker who looks on good-naturedly and lets things take their course:

17 The opening line of Tamino's aria in Mozart's *The Magic Flute* (1791).

this typical figure, whom one now meets in every class of society in the age of work (*and* of the "Reich"! —), today lays claim to *art*, of all things, books included, above all newspapers—and how much more to beautiful nature, to Italy... The man of the evening, with the "wild drives now fallen asleep" that Faust speaks of, needs the summer resort, the seaside, the glaciers, Bayreuth... In such ages art has a right to *pure folly*—as a kind of holiday for spirit, wit and heart. Wagner understood that. *Pure folly* restores...[18]

9.31 *Another problem of diet.*—The means by which Julius Caesar defended himself against sickliness and headaches—tremendous marches, the simplest way of life, uninterrupted stays in the open air, constant exertion—are, broadly speaking, the measures of preservation and protection in general against the extreme vulnerability of that subtle machine, working under the highest pressure, which is called genius. —

9.32 *The immoralist speaks.*—Nothing is *more* against a philosopher's taste than man *insofar as he wishes*... If he sees man only in his doings, if he sees this bravest, most cunning, most enduring animal lost even in labyrinthine predicaments, how admirable man seems to him! He even cheers him on... But the philosopher despises man who wishes, and "desirable" man as well—and in general all desirabilities, all of man's *ideals*. If a philosopher could be a nihilist, he would be one because he finds the nothing behind all of man's ideals. Or not even the nothing—but only the good-for-nothing, the absurd, the sick, the cowardly, the weary, every kind of dregs from the *drained* cup of his life... Man, who as reality is so worthy of veneration—how is it that he deserves no respect insofar as he wishes? Must he pay for being so capable as reality? Must he offset his doing, the strain of head and will in all doing, by stretching his limbs in the imaginary and the absurd?—The history of his desirabilities has so far been man's *partie honteuse* [shameful part]: one should beware of reading in it too long. What justifies man is his reality—it will

18 The line is from Goethe's *Faust* I; "pure folly" plays on Wagner's *Parsifal*, whose hero is "the pure fool."

justify him eternally. How much more is the real man worth, compared with any merely wished-for, dreamed-up, barefaced fabrication of a man? with any *ideal* man?... And it is only the ideal man that goes against the philosopher's taste.

9.33 *The natural value of egoism.*—Selfishness is worth as much as the person who has it is worth physiologically: it can be worth a great deal, and it can be worthless and contemptible. Every individual may be looked at in terms of whether he represents the ascending or the descending line of life. Once that is decided, one also has a canon for what his selfishness is worth. If he represents the ascent of the line, then his value is indeed extraordinary—and for the sake of life as a whole, which takes a step *further* with him, the care for his preservation, for creating his *optimum* of conditions, may even be extreme. The single one, the "individual," as the people and the philosophers have understood it so far, is after all an error: he is nothing by himself, no atom, no "link in the chain," nothing merely inherited from former times—he is the whole *single* line of humanity up to and including himself... If he represents the descending development, decay, chronic degeneration, sickness (— illnesses are, broadly speaking, already consequences of decay, *not* its causes), then little value attaches to him, and the first demand of fairness is that he *take away* as little as possible from those who have turned out well. He is merely their parasite...

9.34 *Christian and anarchist.*—When the anarchist, as the mouthpiece of *declining* strata of society, demands "right," "justice," "equal rights" with a fine indignation, he is merely under the pressure of his lack of culture, which cannot grasp *why* he is really suffering—*what* he is poor in: life... A causal drive is powerful in him: someone must be to blame for his feeling bad... The "fine indignation" itself already does him good, too; railing is a pleasure for all poor devils—it gives a little intoxication of power. Even complaint, complaining about oneself, can give life a charm for whose sake one endures it. There is a subtle dose of *revenge* in every complaint: one reproaches those who are different with one's feeling bad, in some cases even with one's own

badness, as if it were an injustice, an *illicit* privilege. "If I am a scoundrel, you should be one too": on this logic, revolutions are made.—Complaining is never any good: it comes from weakness. Whether one attributes one's feeling bad to others or to *oneself*—the socialist does the former, the Christian, for example, the latter—makes no real difference. What the two have in common, let us also say what is *unworthy* in it, is that someone is supposed to be *to blame* for one's suffering—in short, that the sufferer prescribes himself the honey of revenge against his suffering. The objects of this need for revenge, as a need for *pleasure*, are occasional causes: the sufferer finds causes everywhere for cooling his petty revenge—if he is a Christian, to say it again, he finds them in *himself*... The Christian and the anarchist—both are *décadents*. — But even when the Christian condemns, slanders, befouls the *"world,"* he does so from the same instinct from which the socialist worker condemns, slanders, befouls *society*: the "Last Judgment" itself is still the sweet consolation of revenge—the revolution, just as the socialist worker also awaits it, only imagined as somewhat further off... The "beyond" itself—why a beyond, if it were not a means of befouling the here and now?...

9.35 *Critique of the morality of décadence.*—An "altruistic" morality, a morality in which selfishness *withers* —, remains a bad sign under all circumstances. This holds for individuals; it holds above all for peoples. The best is lacking when selfishness begins to be lacking. To choose instinctively what is harmful to *oneself*, to be *lured* by "disinterested" motives, is almost the formula for *décadence*. "Not to seek *one's own* advantage"—that is merely the moral fig leaf for a quite different, namely physiological, state of affairs: "I no longer know how to *find* my advantage"... Disintegration of the instincts!—It is all over with man when he becomes altruistic. — Instead of saying naively, "*I* am no longer worth anything," the moral lie in the mouth of the *décadent* says: "Nothing is worth anything—*life* is worth nothing"... Such a judgment remains, in the end, a great danger; it is contagious—throughout the whole morbid soil of society it soon

proliferates into a tropical vegetation of concepts, now as religion (Christianity), now as philosophy (Schopenhauerism). Under certain circumstances such a poison-tree vegetation, grown out of rot, poisons with its fumes, far and wide and for millennia, *life*...

9.36 *Morality for physicians.*—The sick man is a parasite of society. In a certain state it is indecent to go on living. To vegetate on in cowardly dependence on physicians and medical routines, after the meaning of life, the *right* to life, has been lost, ought to earn the profound contempt of society. Physicians, in turn, would have to be the transmitters of this contempt—not prescriptions, but every day a fresh dose of *disgust* with their patient... To create a new responsibility, the physician's, for all cases where the highest interest of life, of *ascending* life, demands the most ruthless pushing down and aside of *degenerating* life—for example, for the right to procreate, for the right to be born, for the right to live... To die proudly when it is no longer possible to live proudly. Death freely chosen, death at the right time, with clarity and joy, carried out in the midst of children and witnesses: so that a real leave-taking is still possible while the one who is taking leave *is still there*, and likewise a real appraisal of what has been achieved and willed, a *summing up* of life—all in contrast to the pitiful and horrible comedy that Christianity has made of the hour of death. Christianity should never be forgiven for having abused the weakness of the dying to violate consciences, and the manner of death itself to pass value judgments on the person and his past! — Here, in defiance of all the cowardices of prejudice, the main thing is to establish the correct, that is, physiological, appreciation of so-called *natural* death: which in the end is also only an "unnatural" one, a suicide. One never perishes through anyone but oneself. Only it is death under the most contemptible conditions, an unfree death, a death at the *wrong* time, a coward's death. One ought, out of love for *life* —, to will death differently: freely, consciously, without chance, without ambush... Finally, a piece of advice for the gentlemen pessimists and other *décadents*. It is not in our

power to prevent our being born: but we can correct this mistake—for sometimes it is a mistake. When one *does away with* oneself, one does the most estimable thing there is: one almost earns the right to live by it... Society—what am I saying! *life* itself gains more from this than from any "life" of renunciation, anemia and other virtue—one has freed others from the sight of oneself, one has freed life from an *objection*... Pessimism, *pur, vert* [pure and raw], *only proves itself* through the self-refutation of the gentlemen pessimists: one must go one step further in its logic, not merely negate life with "Will and Representation," as Schopenhauer did—one must *first negate Schopenhauer*... Pessimism, incidentally, contagious as it is, still does not increase the sickliness of an age or of a generation as a whole: it is its expression. One falls prey to it as one falls prey to cholera: one must already be morbidly enough disposed for it. Pessimism itself does not make a single additional *décadent*. I recall the statistical finding that the years in which cholera rages do not differ from other years in the total number of deaths.

HAVE WE BECOME MORE MORAL?

Modern gentleness is a sign of declining vitality, not moral progress; the Renaissance was the last great age.

9.37 *Whether we have become more moral.*—Against my concept "beyond good and evil," as was to be expected, the whole *ferocity* of moral stupefaction has thrown itself into the fray. In Germany, as is well known, that stupefaction counts as morality itself. I could tell some pretty stories about it. Above all, I was asked to reconsider the "undeniable superiority" of our age in moral judgment, the *progress* we have really made here: compared with *us*, I was told, a Cesare Borgia was by no means to be set up as a "higher man," as a kind of *overman*, as I set him up... A Swiss editor, of the *Bund*, went so far as to "understand" my work to mean that I was proposing the abolition of all decent feelings—not without expressing his respect for the courage of

such a venture.[19] Much obliged!—by way of reply, I take the liberty of raising the question *whether we really have become more moral.* That all the world believes it is already an objection to it... We modern people, very tender, very easily hurt, giving and taking a hundred considerations, do in fact imagine that this tender humanity we represent is positive progress. We imagine the same of this *achieved* unanimity in sparing one another, in readiness to help, in mutual trust, and suppose that it puts us far beyond the people of the Renaissance. But every age thinks so; it *has* to think so. What is certain is that we could not place ourselves in Renaissance conditions, not even in thought: our nerves would not endure that reality, to say nothing of our muscles. But this incapacity proves no progress, only a different, a later constitution, a weaker, tenderer, more vulnerable one, from which a *considerate* morality is necessarily generated. If we think away our tenderness and lateness, our physiological aging, then our morality of "humanization" too would at once lose its value—no morality has value in itself —: we ourselves would hold it in contempt. On the other hand, let us not doubt that we moderns, with our thickly padded humanity that wants at all costs not to bump against any stone, would give Cesare Borgia's contemporaries a comedy to die laughing at. Indeed, we are beyond measure unintentionally funny, with our modern "virtues"... The decline of hostile, mistrust-arousing instincts—and that, after all, would be our "progress"—represents only one of the consequences of the general decline of *vitality*: it takes a hundred times more effort, more caution, to carry through an existence so conditional, so late. So people help one another; so everyone is to some degree a patient and everyone a nurse. That is then called "virtue" —: among people who still knew life differently, fuller, more lavish, overflowing, it would have been called something else, "cowardice" perhaps, "wretchedness," "old women's morality"... Our softening of manners—this is my proposition, this is, if you like, my *innovation*—is a consequence of

19 *Der Bund* is a Bern daily; its editor J. V. Widmann reviewed *Beyond Good and Evil* in 1886.

decline; the harshness and terribleness of custom can, conversely, be a consequence of a surplus of life. For then much may be dared, much challenged, much also *squandered*. What was once the spice of life would be *poison* for us... To be indifferent—that too is a form of strength—for that we are likewise too old, too late. Our morality of fellow-feeling, against which I was the first to warn, what one might call *l'impressionisme morale* [moral impressionism], is one more expression of the physiological over-excitability that is peculiar to everything *décadent*. That movement which tried to present itself scientifically with Schopenhauer's *morality of pity*—a very unfortunate attempt!—is the real *décadence* movement in morality; as such it is deeply related to Christian morality. Strong ages, *noble* cultures see something contemptible in pity, in "love of one's neighbor," in the lack of self and of self-regard.—Ages are to be measured by their *positive forces*—and by this measure that so lavish and so fateful age of the Renaissance emerges as the last *great* age. And we, we moderns with our anxious self-care and neighbor-love, with our virtues of work, of unpretentiousness, of lawfulness, of scientific method—accumulating, economical, machinelike—emerge as a *weak* age... Our virtues are conditioned, are *called forth* by our weakness... "Equality," a certain actual assimilation that merely finds expression in the theory of "equal rights," belongs essentially to decline. The gulf between man and man, class and class, the multiplicity of types, the will to be oneself, to stand out—what I call the *pathos of distance*—is proper to every *strong* age. The tension, the span between the extremes grows ever smaller today—the extremes themselves finally blur into similarity... All our political theories *and* state constitutions, the "German Reich" by no means excepted, are consequences, necessary consequences, of decline; the unconscious effect of *décadence* has gained mastery even over the ideals of individual sciences. My objection to the whole of sociology in England and France remains that it knows from experience only the *decaying forms* of society and, in perfect innocence, takes its own instincts of decay as the *norm* of sociological value judgment.

Declining life, the decrease of all organizing power—that is, of the power that separates, tears open gulfs, ranks below and above—formulates itself in today's sociology as the *ideal*... Our socialists are *décadents*, but Mr. Herbert Spencer too is a *décadent* —he sees in the victory of altruism something desirable!...[20]

FREEDOM AND WAR

Liberal institutions weaken freedom once won; freedom means the will to self-responsibility, tested against resistance.

9.38 *My concept of freedom.*—The value of a thing sometimes lies not in what one attains with it, but in what one pays for it—what it *costs* us. I give an example. Liberal institutions cease to be liberal as soon as they are attained: afterward there are no worse and no more thorough injurers of freedom than liberal institutions. We know, after all, *what* they bring about: they undermine the will to power, they are the leveling of mountain and valley exalted into morality, they make people small, cowardly and pleasure-seeking—with them the herd animal triumphs every time. Liberalism: in plain words, *herd-animalization*... The same institutions, as long as they are still being fought for, produce quite different effects; then they do in fact promote freedom powerfully. Looked at more closely, it is war that produces these effects, the war *for* liberal institutions, which, as war, lets the *illiberal* instincts endure. And war educates for freedom. For what is freedom? Having the will to be responsible for oneself. Holding fast to the distance that separates us. Becoming more indifferent to hardship, severity, privation, even to life. Being ready to sacrifice people to one's cause, oneself not excepted. Freedom means that the manly instincts, the instincts that delight in war and victory, have mastery over other instincts, for example over those of "happiness." The human being who has *become free*, and how much more the *spirit* that has become free, tramples underfoot the contemptible kind of well-being that

20 Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), English philosopher who applied evolutionary theory to ethics and society.

shopkeepers, Christians, cows, women, Englishmen and other democrats dream of. The free man is a *warrior.*—How is freedom measured, in individuals as in peoples? By the resistance that must be overcome, by the effort it costs to stay *on top*. The highest type of free human beings would have to be sought where the highest resistance is constantly overcome: five steps from tyranny, right at the threshold of the danger of servitude. This is psychologically true if by "tyrants" we here understand inexorable and fearsome instincts that provoke the maximum of authority and discipline against themselves—finest type, Julius Caesar —; it is politically true too, one need only take a walk through history. The peoples that were worth something, that *became* worth something, never became so under liberal institutions: *great danger* made something of them that deserves reverence—the danger that first teaches us to know our resources, our virtues, our shield and sword, our *spirit*—that *compels* us to be strong... *First* principle: one must need to be strong; otherwise one never becomes so. — Those great hothouses for the strong, for the strongest kind of human being there has ever been, the aristocratic commonwealths of the type of Rome and Venice, understood freedom exactly in the sense in which I understand the word: as something one has and does *not* have, something one *wants*, something one *conquers*...

9.39 *Critique of modernity.*—Our institutions are no good anymore: on that everyone agrees. But that is not their fault but *ours*. Once we have lost all the instincts from which institutions grow, we lose institutions altogether, because *we* are no longer good enough for them. Democratism has always been the declining form of organizing power: already in *Human, All Too Human* (I 682) I characterized modern democracy, together with its half-measures such as the "German Reich," as the *decaying form of the state*. For there to be institutions, there must be a kind of will, instinct, imperative that is anti-liberal to the point of malice: the will to tradition, to authority, to responsibility for centuries ahead, to the *solidarity* of chains of generations forward and backward *in infinitum* [to infinity]. If this will is

present, something like the *imperium Romanum* [Roman Empire] is founded: or like Russia, the *only* power today that has durability in its body, that can wait, that can still promise something. Russia is the counter-concept to the wretched European patchwork of petty states and nervousness, which entered a critical condition with the founding of the German Reich... The whole West no longer has those instincts from which institutions grow, from which *future* grows: perhaps nothing goes so much against the grain of its "modern spirit." One lives for today, one lives very fast—one lives very irresponsibly: precisely this is called "freedom." What *makes* institutions institutions is despised, hated, rejected: people believe themselves in danger of a new slavery wherever the word "authority" is so much as spoken aloud. That is how far *décadence* goes in the value-instinct of our politicians, of our political parties: *they instinctively prefer* what dissolves, what hastens the end... Witness *modern marriage.* All reason has obviously gone out of modern marriage: yet that is no objection to marriage, but to modernity. The reason of marriage—it lay in the sole legal responsibility of the husband: that gave marriage weight, whereas today it limps on both legs. The reason of marriage—it lay in its indissolubility in principle: this gave it an accent that knew how *to make itself heard* against the accidents of feeling, passion and the moment. It lay likewise in the families' responsibility for the choice of spouses. With the growing indulgence in favor of the *love* match, one has virtually eliminated the foundation of marriage, what first *makes* it an institution. One never, ever founds an institution on an idiosyncrasy; one does *not*, as I said, found marriage on "love." One founds it on the sex drive, on the drive to property (wife and child as property), on the *drive to dominate*. This last drive constantly organizes for itself the smallest structure of domination, the family; it *needs* children and heirs in order to hold on, physiologically too, to an attained measure of power, influence, wealth, in order to prepare long tasks, an instinct-solidarity between centuries. Marriage as an institution already includes the affirmation of the greatest, the most durable form of organ-

ization: if society itself cannot *vouch* for itself as a whole into the most distant generations, then marriage has no meaning at all.—Modern marriage *lost* its meaning—consequently it is being abolished. —

9.40 *The labor question.*—The stupidity lies in there being a labor question at all—at bottom it is the degeneration of instinct that is today the cause of *all* stupidities. About certain things *one does not ask*: first imperative of instinct.—I simply cannot see what one wants to do with the European worker, now that one has first made a question of him. He is far too well off not to ask for more, step by step, to ask more immodestly. In the end he has the great number on his side. The hope is completely gone that a modest and self-sufficient kind of human being, a type like the Chinese, might develop here into a class: and that would have been reasonable, it would have been positively a necessity. What has been done? — Everything to destroy even the precondition for it in the bud. The instincts by virtue of which a worker becomes possible as a class, becomes possible *to himself*, have been utterly destroyed through the most irresponsible thoughtlessness. The worker has been made fit for military service, he has been given the right of association, the right to vote: no wonder if the worker today already feels his existence as a state of distress (in moral terms, as an *injustice* —)? But what does one *want*? I ask again. If one wants an end, one must also want the means: if one wants slaves, one is a fool to educate them to be masters. —

9.41 "Freedom that I do *not* mean…"—In times like the present, to be left to one's instincts is one more fatality. These instincts contradict, disturb, destroy one another; I have already defined the *modern* as physiological self-contradiction. The reason of education would require that under an iron pressure at least one of these instinct-systems be *paralyzed*, to allow another to gain strength, to become strong, to become master. Today the individual would first have to be made possible by being *pruned*: possible, that is, *whole*… The reverse happens. The claim to independence, to free development, to *laisser aller* [letting oneself go]

is made most hotly by precisely those for whom no rein *would be too tight*—this holds *in politicis* [in politics], this holds in art.[21] But that is a symptom of *décadence*: our modern concept of "freedom" is one more proof of the degeneration of instinct. —

9.42 *Where faith is needed.*—Nothing is rarer among moralists and saints than honesty; perhaps they say the opposite, perhaps they even *believe* it. For when a faith is more useful, more effective, more convincing than *conscious* hypocrisy, then, by instinct, the hypocrisy promptly becomes *innocence*: first principle for understanding great saints. With philosophers too, another kind of saint, the whole trade entails that they admit only certain truths: namely those for which their trade has *public* sanction—in Kantian terms, truths of *practical* reason. They know what they *must* prove; in this they are practical—they recognize one another by their agreement about "truths." — "You shall not lie"—in plain words: *beware*, my dear philosopher, of telling the truth…

9.43 *Whispered in the ear of conservatives.*—What was not known formerly, what is known today, or could be known: a *regression*, a turning back in any sense or degree, is simply not possible. We physiologists at least know that. But all priests and moralists have believed in it—they *wanted* to bring humanity back, to screw it *back*, to an *earlier* standard of virtue. Morality has always been a bed of Procrustes. Even the politicians have imitated the preachers of virtue in this: there are still parties today that dream of the *crabwise backward march* of all things as their goal. But no one is free to be a crab. It is no use: we *must* go forward, that is to say, *step by step further in décadence* (— this is *my* definition of modern "progress"…). One can *check* this development and, by checking it, dam up the degeneration itself, gather it, make it more vehement and more *sudden*: more one cannot do. —

21 Twists the patriotic song "Freiheit, die ich meine" ("Freedom that I mean," 1813) by Max von Schenkendorf.

GENIUS AND THE CRIMINAL

Great men are explosives stored up over generations; the criminal is a strong type made sick by society.

9.44 *My concept of genius.*—Great men, like great ages, are explosives in which a tremendous force is stored up. Their precondition is always, historically and physiologically, that for a long time energy has been gathered, heaped up, saved and preserved for them—that for a long time there was no explosion. When the tension in the mass has grown too great, the most accidental stimulus is enough to call the "genius," the "deed," the great destiny into the world. What then do environment, age, "spirit of the times," "public opinion" matter!—Take the case of Napoleon. The France of the Revolution, and still more that of the pre-Revolution, would have produced out of itself the type opposite to Napoleon's: indeed it *did* produce it. And because Napoleon was *different*, the heir of a stronger, longer, older civilization than the one that was going up in smoke and falling to pieces in France, he became master here; he alone *was* master here. Great men are necessary; the age in which they appear is accidental. That they almost always become master over their age lies solely in their being stronger, older, in more having been gathered for them for longer. Between a genius and his age there is a relation like that between strong and weak, and also like that between old and young: the age is relatively always much younger, thinner, more immature, more insecure, more childish. — That people in France today think *very differently* about this (in Germany too, but that doesn't matter); that there the theory of milieu, a true neurotic's theory, has become sacrosanct and almost scientific, and finds believers even among physiologists—that "doesn't smell good," that gives one sad thoughts.—In England too it is understood no differently, but nobody will grieve over that. For the Englishman only two ways are open to come to terms with genius and the "great man": either *democratically*, in the manner of Buckle, or *religiously*, in the manner of

Carlyle.—The *danger* that lies in great men and great ages is extraordinary; exhaustion of every kind, sterility, follows hard on their heels.[22] The great man is an end; the great age, the Renaissance for example, is an end. Genius—in work, in deed—is necessarily a squanderer: *that it spends itself* is its greatness... The instinct of self-preservation is, as it were, suspended; the overwhelming pressure of the outflowing forces forbids it any such protection and caution. This is called "self-sacrifice"; people praise his "heroism" in it, his indifference to his own well-being, his devotion to an idea, a great cause, a fatherland: all misunderstandings... He flows out, he overflows, he uses himself up, he does not spare himself—fatally, disastrously, involuntarily, as a river's bursting its banks is involuntary. But because we owe such explosives much, we have also given them much in return, for example a kind of *higher morality*... For that is the way of human gratitude: it *misunderstands* its benefactors. —

9.45 *The criminal and what is related to him.*—The criminal type is the type of the strong human being under unfavorable conditions, a strong human being made sick. He lacks the wilderness, a certain freer and more dangerous nature and form of existence, in which everything that is weapon and armor in the strong man's instinct *has its rightful place*. His *virtues* have been placed under a ban by society; his liveliest drives, which he brought with him, soon grow together with the depressive affects, with suspicion, fear, dishonor. But this is almost the *recipe* for physiological degeneration. Whoever must do secretly, with long tension, caution and cunning, what he can do best and would most like to do becomes anemic. And because he reaps nothing but danger, persecution and calamity from his instincts, his feeling too turns against these instincts—he feels them as a fatality. It is society, our tame, mediocre, castrated society, in which a natural human being who comes from the mountains or from the adventures of the sea necessarily degen-

22 Henry Thomas Buckle (1821–1862) explained history through general laws and environment; Thomas Carlyle (1795–1881) wrote *On Heroes and Hero-Worship*.

erates into a criminal. Or almost necessarily: for there are cases where such a man proves stronger than society. The Corsican Napoleon is the most famous case. For the problem at hand the testimony of Dostoevsky is relevant—Dostoevsky, the only psychologist, incidentally, from whom I had anything to learn: he is one of the most beautiful strokes of luck in my life, even more than the discovery of Stendhal. This *profound* man, who was ten times right to hold the superficial Germans in low esteem, lived for a long time among Siberian convicts, all of them serious criminals for whom there was no way back to society. He found them very different from what he himself had expected—carved, roughly speaking, out of the best, hardest and most valuable wood that grows anywhere on Russian soil.[23] Let us generalize the case of the criminal. Let us imagine natures that for some reason lack public approval, that know they are not felt to be beneficial or useful—that Chandala feeling of being counted not as an equal but as outcast, unworthy, polluting. All such natures have the color of the subterranean on their thoughts and actions; on them everything turns paler than on those whose existence lies in daylight. But almost all the forms of existence we honor today once lived in this half-sepulchral air: the scientific character, the artist, the genius, the free spirit, the actor, the merchant, the great discoverer... As long as the *priest* counted as the highest type, *every* valuable kind of human being was devalued... The time is coming—I promise it—when he will count as the *lowest*, as *our* Chandala, as the most mendacious, the most indecent kind of human being... I draw attention to how even now, under the mildest regime of custom that has ever ruled on earth, or at least in Europe, every deviation brings one close to that type which the criminal perfects. So does every long, all too long *underneath*, every unusual, opaque form of existence. All innovators of the spirit bear for a time the pallid and fatalistic mark of the Chandala on their brow: *not* because they are felt to be such, but because they themselves feel the ter-

23 Dostoevsky described his years in a Siberian prison camp in *Notes from the House of the Dead* (1860–62), which Nietzsche read in French in 1887.

rible gulf that separates them from everything conventional and held in honor. Almost every genius knows, as one of his stages of development, the "Catilinarian existence," a feeling of hatred, revenge and revolt against everything that already *is*, that no longer *becomes*... Catiline—the pre-existent form of *every* Caesar. —[24]

9.46 *Here the view is clear.*—It can be loftiness of soul when a philosopher is silent; it can be love when he contradicts himself; a courtesy of the knower is possible that lies. It has been said, not without subtlety: *il est indigne des grands cœurs de répandre le trouble qu'ils ressentent* [it is unworthy of great hearts to spread abroad the distress they feel]. Only one must add that not to be afraid *of the most unworthy* can also be greatness of soul. A woman who loves sacrifices her honor; a knower who "loves" perhaps sacrifices his humanity; a god who loved became a Jew...[25]

9.47 *Beauty no accident.*—The beauty of a race or family too, its grace and kindness in every gesture, is worked for: like genius, it is the end result of the accumulated work of generations. One must have made great sacrifices to good taste; one must have done much for its sake, left much undone—the seventeenth century in France is admirable in both respects. One must have had in it a principle of selection for company, place, dress, sexual satisfaction; one must have preferred beauty to advantage, habit, opinion, sloth. Supreme rule: one must not "let oneself go" even when alone with oneself. — Good things are costly beyond measure: and the law always holds that whoever *has* them is different from whoever *acquires* them. Everything good is inheritance: what is not inherited is imperfect, is a beginning... In Athens in Cicero's time—he expresses his surprise at it—the men and youths were far superior to the women in beauty: but what work and exertion in the service of beauty the male sex there

24 Lucius Sergius Catilina (c. 108–62 BC), Roman aristocrat whose conspiracy against the Republic was exposed by Cicero.

25 The title quotes Goethe, *Faust* II, final scene: "Here the view is clear, the spirit uplifted."

had demanded of itself for centuries!—For one must not be mistaken about method here: a mere discipline of feelings and thoughts is almost nil (— here lies the great misunderstanding of German education, which is wholly illusory): one must first persuade the *body*. The strict maintenance of significant and select gestures, an obligation to live only with people who do not "let themselves go," is quite enough to become significant and select: in two or three generations everything has already been *internalized*. It is decisive for the fate of a people and of humanity that culture begin in the *right place—not* in the "soul" (as was the fateful superstition of priests and half-priests). The right place is the body, gesture, diet, physiology; the *rest* follows from that... That is why the Greeks remain the *first cultural event* of history—they knew, they *did*, what was needed; Christianity, which despised the body, has so far been humanity's greatest misfortune. —

9.48 *Progress in my sense.*—I too speak of a "return to nature," although it is really not a going back but a *coming up*—up into a lofty, free, even terrible nature and naturalness, one that plays with great tasks, that *may* play with them... To put it in a *parable*: Napoleon was a piece of "return to nature" as I understand it (for example *in rebus tacticis* [in tactical matters], still more, as military men know, in strategy).—But Rousseau—where did *he* really want to go back to? Rousseau, this first modern man, idealist and scoundrel in *one* person; who needed moral "dignity" in order to endure the sight of himself; sick with unbridled vanity and unbridled self-contempt. This misshapen figure too, which planted itself on the threshold of the modern age, wanted a "return to nature"—to what, I ask again, did Rousseau want to go back?—I hate Rousseau even *in* the Revolution: it is the world-historical expression of this duality of idealist and scoundrel. The bloody farce in which this Revolution was played out, its "immorality," concerns me little. What I hate is its Rousseauian *morality*—the so-called "truths" of the Revolution, through which it is still at work and wins over everything shallow and mediocre. The doctrine of equality!... But there is no more poisonous poison: for it *seems* to be preached by justice itself,

whereas it is the *end* of justice... "Equal to the equal, unequal to the unequal"—*that* would be the true speech of justice: and, what follows from it, "never make the unequal equal."—That things went so gruesomely and bloodily around this doctrine of equality has given this "modern idea" *par excellence* a kind of glory and fiery glow, so that the Revolution as *spectacle* seduced even the noblest spirits. In the end that is no reason to respect it more.—I see only one who felt it as it must be felt, with *disgust*—Goethe...

ROUSSEAU AND GOETHE

Against Rousseau's "return to nature," Nietzsche praises Goethe as a strong, whole man who created himself.

9.49 *Goethe*—not a German event but a European one: a magnificent attempt to overcome the eighteenth century by a return to nature, by a *coming up* to the naturalness of the Renaissance, a kind of self-overcoming on the part of that century.—He bore its strongest instincts within himself: sentimentality, nature-idolatry, the anti-historical, the idealistic, the unreal and revolutionary (— the last is only a form of the unreal). He called history, natural science, antiquity, and Spinoza too, to his aid, above all practical activity; he surrounded himself with nothing but closed horizons; he did not detach himself from life, he placed himself in the midst of it; he was not faint-hearted and took as much as possible upon himself, over himself, into himself. What he wanted was *totality*; he fought the separation of reason, sensuality, feeling, will (— preached in the most repellent scholasticism by *Kant*, Goethe's antipode); he disciplined himself into wholeness, he *created* himself... Goethe was, in the midst of an age of unreal sentiment, a convinced realist: he said Yes to everything that was related to him in this respect—he had no greater experience than that *ens realissimum* [most real being] called Napoleon. Goethe conceived a strong, highly educated human being, skillful in all things of the body, holding himself in check, reverent toward himself, who may dare to allow him-

self the whole range and wealth of naturalness, who is strong enough for this freedom. He conceived the human being of tolerance, not out of weakness but out of strength, because he knows how to turn to his advantage even what would destroy an average nature. He conceived the human being for whom nothing is forbidden anymore, except *weakness*, whether it be called vice or virtue... Such a spirit *become free* stands in the midst of the universe with a joyful and trusting fatalism, in the *faith* that only the individual is reprehensible, that in the whole everything is redeemed and affirmed—*he no longer negates*... But such a faith is the highest of all possible faiths: I have baptized it with the name of *Dionysus*. —

9.50 One could say that in a certain sense the nineteenth century *also* strove for all that Goethe strove for as a person: a universality in understanding, in approving, a letting everything come close, an audacious realism, a reverence for everything factual. How is it that the overall result is not a Goethe but a chaos, a nihilistic sigh, a not-knowing-which-way-to-turn, an instinct of weariness that *in praxi* [in practice] constantly drives people *to reach back to the eighteenth century*? (— for example as romanticism of feeling, as altruism and hyper-sentimentality, as feminism in taste, as socialism in politics). Is not the nineteenth century, especially at its close, merely an intensified, *coarsened* eighteenth century, that is, a century of *décadence*? So that Goethe, not only for Germany but for all Europe, would have been merely an incident, a beautiful in-vain? — But one misunderstands great human beings if one views them from the paltry perspective of public usefulness. That one does not know how to get any use out of them—*that itself perhaps belongs to greatness*...

9.51 Goethe is the last German for whom I feel reverence: he would have felt three things that I feel—we also understand each other about the "cross"... People often ask me why on earth I write in *German*: nowhere would I be read worse than in the fatherland. But who knows in the end whether I even *wish* to be read today?—To create things on which time tries its teeth in vain; in form, *in substance*, to strive for a little immortality—I

have never yet been modest enough to demand less of myself.[26] The aphorism, the maxim, in which I am the first master among Germans, are the forms of "eternity"; my ambition is to say in ten sentences what everyone else says in a book—what everyone else does *not* say in a book...

I have given humanity the most profound book it possesses, my *Zarathustra*: shortly I shall give it the most independent. —[27]

26 Alludes to Goethe's *Venetian Epigrams* (no. 66), which list among things he loathes tobacco smoke, bedbugs, garlic and the cross.
27 The planned *Revaluation of All Values*.

What I Owe to the Ancients

Was ich den Alten verdanke
Style from Sallust and Horace, realism from Thucydides, and the Dionysian as the key to the Greeks.

WAS ICH DEN ALTEN VERDANKE

10.1 In conclusion, a word about that world to which I have sought access, to which I have perhaps found a new access—the ancient world. My taste, which may be the opposite of a tolerant taste, is here too far from saying Yes wholesale: it does not like to say Yes at all, would rather say No, and likes best of all to say nothing whatever… That goes for whole cultures, it goes for books—it goes also for places and landscapes. At bottom it is quite a small number of ancient books that count in my life; the most famous are not among them. My sense of style, of the epigram as style, awoke almost instantly on contact with Sallust.[1] I have not forgotten the astonishment of my revered teacher Corssen when he had to give his worst Latin pupil the very top mark—at a single stroke I had arrived. Compressed, severe, with as much substance as possible at bottom, a cold malice toward the "beautiful word," and also the "beautiful feeling"—in this I recognized myself. Right into my *Zarathustra*, one will recognize in me a very serious ambition for *Roman* style, for the "*aere perennius*" [more lasting than bronze] in style.—It was no different with my first contact with Horace. To this day no poet has given me the same artistic delight that a Horatian ode gave me from

1 Sallust (86–c. 35 BC), Roman historian famous for his terse, compressed style.

the start.[2] In certain languages what is achieved here cannot even be *willed*. This mosaic of words, in which every word, as sound, as place, as concept, pours out its force to the right and to the left and over the whole; this minimum in the range and number of signs, this maximum thereby attained in the energy of the signs—all that is Roman and, if you will believe me, *noble par excellence*. All the rest of poetry becomes by comparison something too popular—mere garrulousness of feeling...

PLATO AND THUCYDIDES

Nietzsche finds Plato a moralizing décadent of style and prefers Thucydides' courage before reality.

10.2 To the Greeks I owe no impressions of anything like such strength; and, to say it straight out, they *cannot* be to us what the Romans are. One does not *learn* from the Greeks—their manner is too foreign, and also too fluid, to have an imperative, a "classical" effect. Who would ever have learned to write from a Greek! Who would ever have learned it *without* the Romans!... Don't bring up Plato against me. With regard to Plato I am a thorough skeptic and have always been unable to join in the admiration for Plato the *artist* that is customary among scholars. In the end, the most refined judges of taste among the ancients themselves are on my side here. Plato, it seems to me, throws all forms of style into confusion; in this he is a *first décadent* of style. He has something similar on his conscience to the Cynics who invented the *satura Menippea* [Menippean satire]. For the Platonic dialogue, that appallingly self-satisfied and childish kind of dialectic, to work as a charm, one must never have read good French writers—Fontenelle, for example. Plato is boring.—In the end my mistrust of Plato goes deep. I find him so strayed from all the basic instincts of the Hellenes, so moralized, so pre-existently Christian—he already has the concept "good" as the highest concept—that for the whole phenomenon of Plato I

2 Wilhelm Corssen taught Nietzsche Latin at Schulpforta; "aere perennius" is from Horace, *Odes* 3.30.

would rather use the harsh phrase "higher swindle," or, if people prefer to hear it, idealism, than any other.[3] We have paid dearly for this Athenian's going to school with the Egyptians (— or with the Jews in Egypt?...). In the great calamity of Christianity, Plato is that ambiguity and fascination called the "ideal," which made it possible for the nobler natures of antiquity to misunderstand themselves and to step onto the *bridge* that led to the "cross"... And how much Plato there still is in the concept "church," in the construction, system and practice of the church!—My recreation, my predilection, my *cure* from all Platonism has always been *Thucydides*. Thucydides and perhaps Machiavelli's *Prince* are most closely related to me by their unconditional will not to deceive themselves and to see reason in *reality—not* in "reason," still less in "morality"... The "classically educated" youth carries off into life, as the reward for his grammar-school drilling, a pitiful prettifying of the Greeks into the ideal; nothing cures it so thoroughly as Thucydides. One must turn him over line by line and read his hidden thoughts as clearly as his words: there are few thinkers so rich in hidden thoughts. In him the *culture of the Sophists*, that is to say the *culture of the realists*, reaches its consummate expression—this invaluable movement in the midst of the moral and ideal swindle of the Socratic schools, which was just then breaking out everywhere. Greek philosophy as the *décadence* of the Greek instinct; Thucydides as the great sum, the last revelation of that strong, stern, hard factuality that lay in the instinct of the older Hellenes. In the end it is *courage* in the face of reality that distinguishes natures like Thucydides and Plato: Plato is a coward before reality—*consequently* he flees into the ideal; Thucydides has *himself* under control—consequently he also keeps things under control...

10.3 To sniff out "beautiful souls," "golden means" and other perfections in the Greeks, perhaps to admire in them their calm in greatness, their ideal disposition, their lofty simplicity—from

3 Menippean satire, named after the Cynic Menippus (3rd century BC), mixed prose and verse, jest and earnest. Fontenelle (1657–1757) wrote the elegant *Dialogues of the Dead*.

this "lofty simplicity," a *niaiserie allemande* [German silliness] when all is said and done, I was protected by the psychologist I carried within me. I saw their strongest instinct, the will to power; I saw them tremble before the untamable force of this drive. I saw all their institutions grow out of protective measures to secure themselves against one another, against their inner *explosive*. The tremendous tension within then discharged itself outward in terrible and ruthless enmity: the city-states tore one another apart so that the citizens of each might find peace from themselves.[4] One needed to be strong: danger was near—it lurked everywhere. The splendidly supple physicality, the audacious realism and immoralism that belongs to the Hellene, was a *necessity*, not a "nature." It came afterward; it was not there from the beginning. And with festivals and arts, too, they wanted nothing other than to feel themselves *on top*, to *show* themselves on top: these are means of glorifying oneself, and in certain circumstances of making oneself feared... To judge the Greeks, German-fashion, by their philosophers; perhaps to use the petty-bourgeois worthiness of the Socratic schools to learn *what* is at bottom Hellenic!... The philosophers are, after all, the *décadents* of Greek culture, the countermovement against the old, the noble taste (— against the agonal instinct, against the polis, against the value of race, against the authority of tradition). The Socratic virtues were preached *because* the Greeks had lost them: irritable, fearful, fickle, comedians one and all, they had a few reasons too many to let morality be preached to them. Not that it helped: but big words and attitudes suit *décadents* so well...

THE DIONYSIAN MYSTERIES

The Dionysian mysteries affirm eternal life through procreation and pain, the key to the tragic feeling.

10.4 I was the first who, in order to understand the older Hellenic instinct, still rich and even overflowing, took seriously that

wonderful phenomenon which bears the name of Dionysus: it can be explained only by an *excess* of force. Whoever investigates the Greeks, like that most profound connoisseur of their culture now living, Jacob Burckhardt in Basel, knew at once that something had been accomplished with this: Burckhardt added a section of its own on this phenomenon to his *Culture of the Greeks*. For the opposite, look at the almost amusing poverty of instinct of the German philologists when they come near the Dionysian.[5] Above all the famous Lobeck, who crawled into this world of mysterious states with the venerable assurance of a worm dried out among books. He persuaded himself that being frivolous and childish to the point of disgust made him scientific—and with the whole apparatus of erudition Lobeck gave us to understand that there was really nothing to all these curiosities. In fact the priests may well have told the participants in such orgies a few things not without value: for example, that wine stimulates desire, that human beings in certain circumstances live on fruit, that plants bloom in spring and wither in autumn.[6] As for that so strange wealth of rites, symbols and myths of orgiastic origin with which the ancient world is quite literally overgrown, Lobeck finds in it an occasion to become one degree wittier still. "The Greeks," he says (*Aglaophamus* I, 672), "when they had nothing else to do, laughed, leaped and raved about, or, since man sometimes has a mind for that too, sat down, wept and lamented. *Others* then came along later and looked for some reason for this conspicuous behavior; and so, to explain those customs, there arose those countless festival legends and myths. On the other hand, people believed that this *comical activity*, which did after all take place on feast days, also belonged necessarily to the celebration, and held on to it as an indispensable part of the worship."—That is contemptible chatter; no one will

4 Mocks Winckelmann's famous formula for Greek art, "noble simplicity and quiet grandeur" (1755).

5 Burckhardt's lectures on Greek culture appeared posthumously as *Griechische Kulturgeschichte* (1898–1902).

6 Christian August Lobeck (1781–1860), Königsberg philologist whose *Aglaophamus* (1829) debunked the ancient mystery cults.

take a Lobeck seriously for a moment. We are touched quite differently when we examine the concept "Greek" that Winckelmann and Goethe formed for themselves and find it incompatible with that element from which Dionysian art grows—with orgiasm. In fact I do not doubt that Goethe would in principle have excluded anything of the kind from the possibilities of the Greek soul. *Consequently Goethe did not understand the Greeks.* For only in the Dionysian mysteries, in the psychology of the Dionysian state, does the *fundamental fact* of the Hellenic instinct express itself—its "will to life." *What* did the Hellene guarantee himself with these mysteries? *Eternal* life, the eternal return of life; the future promised and consecrated in the past; the triumphant Yes to life beyond death and change; *true* life as life continuing collectively through procreation, through the mysteries of sexuality. For the Greeks the *sexual* symbol was therefore the venerable symbol as such, the real profundity within all ancient piety. Every single element in the act of procreation, of pregnancy, of birth aroused the highest and most solemn feelings. In the teaching of the mysteries, *pain* is pronounced holy: the "pangs of the woman in labor" hallow pain in general—all becoming and growing, everything that guarantees the future, *requires* pain... So that there may be the eternal joy of creating, so that the will to life may eternally affirm itself, there *must* also eternally be the "agony of the woman giving birth"... All this is what the word Dionysus means: I know of no higher symbolism than this *Greek* symbolism, that of the Dionysia. In them the deepest instinct of life, the instinct for the future of life, for the eternity of life, is felt religiously—the very way to life, procreation, as the *holy way*... Only Christianity, with its *ressentiment against* life at bottom, made sexuality something impure: it threw *dung* on the beginning, on the precondition of our life...

10.5 The psychology of orgiasm as an overflowing feeling of life and force, within which even pain still acts as a stimulant, gave me the key to the concept of the *tragic* feeling, which has been misunderstood both by Aristotle and, especially, by our pessim-

ists. Tragedy is so far from proving anything about the pessimism of the Hellenes in Schopenhauer's sense that it must rather count as its decisive rejection and *counter-instance*. Saying Yes to life even in its strangest and hardest problems; the will to life rejoicing in its own inexhaustibility through the *sacrifice* of its highest types—*that* is what I called Dionysian, *that* is what I divined as the bridge to the psychology of the *tragic* poet. *Not* in order to be rid of terror and pity, not in order to purge oneself of a dangerous affect by its vehement discharge—that is how Aristotle understood it —: but in order, beyond terror and pity, *to be oneself* the eternal joy of becoming—that joy which also includes *joy in destroying*... And with that I touch again the place from which I once set out—*The Birth of Tragedy* was my first revaluation of all values: with that I set myself back on the ground from which my willing, my *ability* grows—I, the last disciple of the philosopher Dionysus—I, the teacher of the eternal recurrence...

The Hammer Speaks

Der Hammer redet
A closing passage from Zarathustra: "Become hard!"

DER HAMMER REDET. ALSO SPRACH ZARATHUSTRA

H *"Why so hard! —" the kitchen coal once said to the diamond: "are we not close kin?"*[1]

Why so soft? O my brothers, thus I ask you: are you not, after all—my brothers?

Why so soft, so yielding and giving way? Why is there so much denying, disowning in your hearts? so little destiny in your gaze?

And if you will not be destinies and inexorable ones: how could you one day—conquer with me?

And if your hardness will not flash and cut and cut through: how could you one day—create with me?

For all creators are hard. And it must seem bliss to you to press your hand upon millennia as upon wax, —

— bliss to write upon the will of millennia as upon bronze,—harder than bronze, nobler than bronze. Only the noblest is utterly hard.

This new tablet, O my brothers, I place over you: Become hard!——

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1 This closing piece is taken from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* III, "On Old and New Tablets," section 29.