ON THE GENEALOGY OF MORALS

A Polemic
PREFACE

1

We remain unknown to ourselves,* we seekers after knowledge, even to ourselves: and with good reason. We have never sought after ourselves*—so how should we one day find ourselves? It has rightly been said that: 'Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also',* our treasure is to be found in the beehives of knowledge. As spiritual bees from birth, this is our eternal destination, our hearts are set on one thing only—'bringing something home'. Whatever else life has to offer, so-called 'experiences'—who among us is serious enough for them? Or has enough time for them? In such matters, we were, I fear, never properly 'abreast of things': our heart is just not in it—nor, if it comes to it, are our ears! Imagine someone who, when woken suddenly from divine distraction and self-absorption by the twelve loud strokes of the noon bell, asks himself: 'What time is it?' In much the same way, we rub our ears after the fact and ask in complete surprise and embarrassment: 'What was that we just experienced?', or even 'Who are we really?' Then we count back over in retrospect, as I said, every one of the twelve trembling strokes of our experience, our life, our being—and alas! lose our count in the process... And so we necessarily remain a mystery to ourselves, we fail to understand ourselves, we are bound to mistake ourselves. Our eternal sentence reads: 'Everyone is furthest from himself'—of ourselves, we have no knowledge...

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—My thoughts on the origin of our moral prejudices—for such is the subject of this polemic—found their first, spare, provisional expression in the collection of aphorisms entitled Human, All Too Human: A Book for Free Spirits. I began writing that book in Sorrento, during a winter which allowed me to make a halt, as a walker makes a halt, and to survey the
distant and dangerous expanse through which my mind had been making its way up until then. This was in the winter of 1876–7; the thoughts themselves are older. For the most part, I take up the same thoughts in these present essays—let us hope that they have thrived since then, that they have matured, grown brighter, stronger, more complete! But that I still hold to these ideas today, and that they themselves have since become increasingly inseparable, indeed have even grown into one another and become intertwined—all this strengthens my happy assurance that, far from emerging as isolated, random, or sporadic phenomena, these ideas grew from a common root, from a fundamental will of knowledge, a will which issued its imperatives from the depths, speaking in increasingly definite terms and demanding increasingly definite answers. For nothing else befits a philosopher. We have no right to any isolated act whatsoever: to make isolated errors and to discover isolated truths are equally forbidden us. Rather, our thoughts, our values, our yeses and noes and ifs and whethers grow out of us with the same necessity with which a tree bears its fruits—all related and connected to one another and evidence of a single will, a single health, a single earth, a single sun.—And as to whether these fruits of ours are to your taste?—But what is that to the trees! What is that to us, the philosophers!...

I harbour a particular reservation which I am reluctant to confess—for it concerns morality, everything which has up to now been celebrated as morality—a reservation which emerged so unsolicited, so early and inexorably, so in contradiction with my environment, age, models, and origins, that I might almost be entitled to call it my ‘A priori’.* As to the nature of this reservation—I found that my curiosity and suspicion were soon drawn up short at the question of the real origin of our notions of good and evil. In fact, as a 13-year-old boy I was already preoccupied with the problem of the origin of evil. At an age when one has ‘half children’s games and half God at heart’,* I devoted my first literary piece of child’s play, my first exercise in philosophical writing to this subject—and as for my ‘sou-
tion’ to the problem at that time, I gave God the honour, as is fitting, and made him the father of evil. Was this the very thing which my ‘A priori’ required of me? That new immoral, or at least amoral, ‘A priori’ and the alas! so anti-Kantian, so enigmatic ‘categorical imperative’* which spoke through it and to which I have since been increasingly attentive and more than just attentive?... Fortunately, I have since learnt to separate theology from morality and ceased looking for the origin of evil behind the world. Some schooling in history and philology, together with an innate sense of discrimination with respect to questions of psychology, quickly transformed my problem into another one: under what conditions did man invent the value-judgements good and evil? And what value do they themselves possess? Have they helped or hindered the progress of mankind? Are they a sign of indigence, of impoverishment, of the degeneration of life? Or do they rather reveal the plenitude, the strength, the will of life, its courage, confidence, and future?—To these questions, I found several audacious answers. I distinguished between periods, peoples, degrees of rank among individuals, I narrowed down my problem. Out of the answers grew new questions, investigations, hypotheses, probabilities: until finally I had a land of my own, a soil of my own, a completely unknown, burgeoning, flourishing world, like a secret garden, whose existence no one had been allowed to suspect... Oh how fortunate we are, we seekers after knowledge, provided only that we do not break our silence prematurely!...

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The first impetus to give expression to some of my hypotheses on the origin of morality came from a neat and tidy little book, clever even to the point of precociousness. There for the first time I clearly encountered an inverted and perverted kind of genealogical hypothesis, the genuinely English kind, and found myself drawn to it—as opposites attract one another. The title of this little book was The Origin of Moral Sensations; its author Dr Paul Réé;* the year of its appearance 1877. It is possible that I have never read anything which I have rejected so
thoroughly, proposition by proposition, conclusion by conclusion, as this book: but without the least ill humour and impatience. In the aforementioned work on which I was engaged at that time, I referred, both appropriately and inappropriately, to the propositions of this book, not in order to refute them—what interest have I in refutations!—but rather, as befits a positive spirit, in order to replace an improbability with something more probable, and occasionally even to replace one error with another. At that time, as I said, I first brought to light those hypotheses on the genealogy of morals to which these present essays are devoted. I did so clumsily, as I would be the first to admit to myself, in a manner still constrained, still without my own particular language for these particular things and with much backsliding and hesitation. In specific terms, compare what I say in *Human, All Too Human*, §45 on the dual prehistory of good and evil (that is, in the noble and servile spheres); likewise, in §136 on the value of ascetic morality; likewise, in §§96 and 99 and in *Mixed Opinions and Sayings*, §89 on the ‘morality of custom’, that much older and more original kind of morality which lies worlds apart from the altruistic method of evaluation (in which Dr Rée, like all English genealogists of morals, sees the moral method of evaluation as such); likewise §92, *The Wanderer*, §26, and *Daybreak*, §112 on the origin of justice as a compromise between those who are approximately equal in power (equality as the condition of all contracts, and consequently of all law)—; likewise, *The Wanderer*, §§22 and 33 on the origin of punishment, for which the aim of deterrence is neither essential nor original (as Dr Rée thinks—it is rather only introduced later, under specific conditions, and always as something incidental, something supplementary).

At that particular moment, my real concern was with something much more important than my own or anyone else’s hypotheses about the origin of morality (or, to be more precise: the latter interest was completely subordinate to a single goal, to which it is merely one among many means). For me, what
was at stake was the value of morality—and on that question I had no choice but to engage almost single-handedly with my great teacher Schopenhauer.* That book of mine, its passion and its secret refutation, was addressed to him, as to a contemporary (—for that book too was a ‘polemic’). At issue was the value of the ‘unegoistic’, the instincts of compassion, self-abnegation, self-sacrifice, those very instincts which Schopenhauer had for so long made golden, godly, and transcendent, until finally they became for him ‘values in themselves’, on the basis of which he said no to life and also to himself. But it was against these very instincts that an increasingly fundamental suspicion, a scepticism which dug ever deeper, spoke out within me! It was here that I saw the great danger for mankind, its most sublime temptation and seduction—leading in what direction? towards nothingness?—It was here that I saw the beginning of the end, the stagnation, the tired nostalgia, the will turning against life, the melancholy and tender signs of the approach of the last illness. I regarded the inexorable progress of the morality of compassion, which afflicted even the philosophers with its illness, as the most sinister* symptom of the sinister development of our European culture, as its detour leading in what direction? Towards a new Buddhism?* towards a European Buddhism? towards—nihilism?...* For the modern predilection for compassion, its overestimation in philosophy, is a recent development: the very worthlessness of compassion was formerly a point of agreement among philosophers. To mention only Plato, Spinoza, La Rochefoucauld, and Kant,* four minds as different from one another as possible, but united in one respect: in their contempt for compassion.—

This problem of the value of compassion and of the morality of compassion (—I am an opponent of the shameful modern weakening of sensibility—) seems at first merely an isolated issue, a free-standing question-mark. But whoever pauses here, whoever learns to ask questions here, will undergo the same experience as I—that of a huge new prospect opening up, a vertiginous possibility, as every kind of mistrust, suspicion, and
fear leaps forward, and the belief in morality, all morality, falters. Finally, a new demand finds expression. Let us articulate this new demand: we stand in need of a critique of moral values, the value of these values itself should first of all be called into question. This requires a knowledge of the conditions and circumstances of their growth, development, and displacement (morality as consequence, symptom, mask, Tartuferie,* illness, misunderstanding: but also morality as cause, cure, stimulant, inhibition, poison); knowledge the like of which has never before existed nor even been desired. The value of these ‘values’ was accepted as given, as fact, as beyond all question. Previously, no one had expressed even the remotest doubt or shown the slightest hesitation in assuming the ‘good man’ to be of greater worth than the ‘evil man’, of greater worth in the sense of his usefulness in promoting the progress of human existence (including the future of man). What? And if the opposite were the case? What? What if there existed a symptom of regression in the ‘good man’, likewise a danger, a temptation, a poison, a narcotic, by means of which the present were living at the expense of the future? Perhaps more comfortably and less dangerously, but also in less grand style, in a humbler manner?... So that none other than morality itself would be the culprit, if the highest power and splendour of the human type, in itself a possibility, were never to be reached? So that morality would constitute the danger of dangers?...

Suffice it to say that, since this prospect opened up before me, I myself had reason to look around for learned, daring, and hardworking colleagues (I continue to do so). What is involved is a journey across the wide expanse of morality, so distant and so inaccessible—morality which has actually existed, which has actually been lived—a journey with nothing but new questions and with fresh eyes, as it were: does this not amount practically to discovering this expanse of territory for the first time?... If in the process the aforementioned Dr Rée came to mind, among others, this was because I had no doubt that he would be bound by the very nature of his questions to develop a more correct
method of arriving at the answers. Have I been mistaken? I wished in any case to point such a sharp and impartial eye in a better direction, the direction of the real history of morality, and to warn him off in good time from such English hypothesizing into the blue. For there is clearly another colour which ought to be a hundred times more important to a genealogist of morals: that is, grey—by that I mean what has been documented, what is really ascertainable, what has really existed, in short, the whole long hieroglyphic text, so difficult to decipher, of humanity’s moral past!—This remained unknown to Dr Ré; but he had read Darwin*—and so in his hypotheses, and in a way which is entertaining at least, the Darwinian beast civilly extends a hand to the morally meek and mild, the ultra-modern soul who has learnt ‘not to bite’. In the latter’s expression a certain good-humoured and refined indolence is joined by a grain of pessimism and fatigue: as if all these things—the problems of morality—were really not worth taking so seriously. On the contrary, it seems to me now that there is nothing which better repays serious consideration: to such rewards belong for example the possibility of one day being entitled to approach the problems of morality in high spirits. For high spirits, or, to put it in my own words, gay science*—is a reward: a reward for a long, bold, hard-working, and subterranean seriousness, which is not to everyone’s taste, admittedly. But on the day when we say with full hearts: ‘Onwards! our old morality is part of the comedy too!’, on that day we will have discovered a new plot and potential for the Dionysian drama* of the ‘Fate of the Soul’—: and one which that grand old eternal comic poet of our existence will exploit, on that you may depend!...

—If this text strikes anyone as unintelligible and far from easy listening, the blame, as I see it, does not necessarily rest with me. The text is clear enough, assuming in the first place, as I do, that one has put some effort into reading my earlier writings: for these do, in fact, present difficulties. To take my ‘Zarathustra’,* for instance, only someone whom its every
word had at some time deeply wounded and on another occasion just as deeply delighted might in my view claim a real knowledge of it: for only then he might enjoy the privilege of sharing reverently in the halcyonic element out of which that work was born, in its solar brightness, distance, breadth, and certainty. In other cases, the aphoristic form presents problems: this stems from the fact that nowadays this form is not taken seriously enough. An aphorism, honestly cast and stamped, is still some way from being ‘deciphered’ once it has been read; rather, it is only then that its interpretation can begin, and for this an art of interpretation is required. In the third essay of this book I have offered a model for what I mean by ‘interpretation’ in such a case—the essay opens with an aphorism and is itself a commentary upon it. Admittedly, to practise reading as an art in this way requires one thing above all, and it is something which today more than ever has been thoroughly unlearnt—a fact which explains why it will be some time before my writings are ‘readable’—it is something for which one must be practically bovine and certainly not a ‘modern man’: that is to say, ruminatio...*

*Silis-Maria, Upper Engadine, July 1887*
FIRST ESSAY

‘Good and Evil’, ‘Good and Bad’

1

—These English psychologists,* to whom we owe the only attempts so far to develop a history of the genesis of morality, themselves present us with an enigma. As living and breathing enigmas, this gives them, I confess, an essential advantage over their books—they themselves are interesting! These English psychologists—what are they really after? Whether by accident or design, they are always to be found at the same task—pushing to the forefront the partie honteuse* of our inner world, seeking the real directing force of human development, the real decisive influence upon it, in the very place where the intellectual pride of man would least wish to find it (for example, in the vis inertiae* of habit or in forgetfulness or in the blind arbitrariness of a mechanistic chain of ideas, or in something purely passive, automatic, reflex-like, molecular, and fundamentally stupid). What drives these psychologists always in this particular direction? Is it a secret, spiteful, vulgar, and perhaps unacknowledged instinct to belittle man? Or perhaps a pessimistic suspicion, the mistrust of disappointed, gloomy idealists who have turned green and poisonous? Or a petty, subterranean, rancorous hostility towards Christianity (and Plato),* which may not even have crossed the threshold of consciousness? Or even a lascivious taste for an irritant, the painful paradox, for the questionable and absurd aspects of life? Or finally, a little of all these: a little vulgarity, a little gloom, a little anti-Christianity, a little itch and need for spice?... But I am told that they are simply cold, boring old frogs who crawl around and hop into people, as though they were completely in their element, that is, in a quagmire. I hear this with reluctance—indeed, I do not believe it, and if one may wish where one cannot know, then I wish heartily that the opposite were the case—that these microscopic researchers of the soul
were basically brave, generous, and proud animals, who know how to restrain their emotions as well as their pain, and have taught themselves to sacrifice all wishfulness to truth, to every truth, even the simple, bitter, ugly, repulsive, unChristian, immoral truth... For such truths do exist.—

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So the greatest respect to the good spirits who preside over these historians of morality! Unfortunately, there is no doubt that they lack the historical spirit, that they have been abandoned by all the good spirits of history! As is the wont of philosophers, they all think in an essentially unhistorical manner; there is no doubt about that. The amateurishness of their genealogy of morals comes to light as soon as they have to account for the origin of ‘good’ as concept and judgement. ‘Originally’—so they decree—‘unegoistic actions were acclaimed and described as good by those towards whom they were directed, thus those to whom they were useful. The origin of this acclaim was later forgotten and unegoistic actions were simply felt to be good, because they were habitually always praised as such—as if they were in themselves something good.’ It is clear from the outset that all the typical characteristics of the English psychologists’ prejudice are already present in this first deduction—here we have ‘utility’, ‘forgetting’, ‘habit’, and finally ‘error’, all as the basis of a value-judgement which has up to now been the pride of civilized man and been accepted as a kind of essential human prerogative. The goal here is to humble this pride, devalue this value-judgement: is this goal attained?... It seems clear to me that this theory looks in the wrong place for the real origin of the concept ‘good’. The judgement ‘good’ does not derive from those to whom ‘goodness’ is shown! Rather, the ‘good’ themselves—that is, the noble, the powerful, the superior, and the high-minded—were the ones who felt themselves and their actions to be good—that is, as of the first rank—and posited them as such, in contrast to everything low, low-minded, common, and plebeian. On the basis of this pathos of distance,* they first arrogated the right to create values, to coin the names of values.
What did utility matter to them? The point of view of utility could not be more alien and inappropriate to such a high-temperature outpouring of the highest value-judgements when engaged in the making and breaking of hierarchies: for here feeling is at the opposite end of the scale from the low temperature presupposed by every prudent calculation and utilitarian estimation—and not only on one occasion, not for an exceptional hour, but over the long term. As I said, the pathos of nobility and distance, the enduring, dominating, and fundamental overall feeling of a higher ruling kind in relation to a lower kind, to a ‘below’—that is the origin of the opposition between ‘good’ and ‘bad’. (The right of the masters to confer names extends so far that one should allow oneself to grasp the origin of language itself as the expression of the power of the rulers: they say ‘this is such and such’, they put their seal on each thing and event with a sound and in the process take possession of it.) It follows from this origin that there is from the outset absolutely no necessary connection between the word ‘good’ and ‘unegoistic’ actions, as the superstition of the genealogists of morals would have it. Rather, it is only with the decline of aristocratic value-judgements that this whole opposition between ‘egoistic’ and ‘unegoistic’ comes to impose itself increasingly on the human conscience. To adopt my own terminology, it is the herd-instinct, which here finally has its chance to put in a word (and to put itself into words). Even then, it is a long time before this instinct dominates to such an extent that the moral value-judgement catches and sticks fast on this opposition (as is, for example, the case in contemporary Europe: today the prejudice which takes ‘moral’, ‘unegoistic’, ‘déshintéressé’* as synonyms already rules with the power of an ‘idée fixe’ and mental illness.)

As a second point, however: quite apart from its untenability in historical terms, this hypothesis on the origin of the value-judgement ‘good’ suffers from an inherent psychological contradiction. The acclaim which the unegoistic action receives is supposedly derived from its utility, and this origin has
supposedly been forgotten—but how is such forgetting even possible? Have such actions at some point perhaps ceased to be useful? The opposite is the case: their utility has become rather the daily experience for all time, something which has been continually underlined anew, and, consequently, instead of disappearing from consciousness, instead of becoming forgettable, must have impressed itself on consciousness with ever-greater clarity. How much more reasonable is the opposing theory (which is no more true for all that—), represented by Herbert Spencer,* for example. Spencer postulates that the concept ‘good’ is essentially the same as the concept ‘useful’ or ‘expedient’, so that humanity has summed up and sanctioned precisely its unforgotten and unforgettable experiences of what is useful and expedient on the one hand and what is harmful and inexpedient on the other in the judgements ‘good’ and ‘bad’. According to this theory, whatever has proven itself useful from time immemorial is good: as a result, it may assert its validity as ‘of the highest value’, as ‘valuable in itself’. This mode of explanation is, as I said, also incorrect, but at least the explanation itself is internally consistent and tenable in terms of its psychology.

—What pointed me in the right direction was actually the question of what the designations of ‘good’ coined in various languages meant from an etymological perspective.* I found that they all led back to the same transformation of concepts—that ‘refined’ or ‘noble’ in the sense of social standing is everywhere the fundamental concept, from which ‘good’ in the sense of ‘having a refined soul’, ‘noble’ in the sense of ‘superior in soul’, ‘privileged in soul’ necessarily developed. This development always ran parallel with that other one by means of which ‘common’ or ‘plebeian’ or ‘low’ ultimately slide over into the concept ‘bad’. The most eloquent example of this latter process is the German word schlecht [bad] itself—it is identical with schlicht [simple] (compare schlechtweg, schlechterdings [simply]),* and originally designated the simple common man in straightforward contrast to the noble man, without at that time

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implying a suspicious sideward glance on the part of the speaker. Roughly around the time of the Thirty Years War*—late enough, then—this sense was displaced to produce the one which is usual now.—This seems to me to be a fundamental insight with respect to the genealogy of morals. The reason for its coming to light so late is the inhibiting influence exerted in the modern world by the democratic prejudice against all questions of origin. And this prejudice encroaches even on what are apparently the most objective areas of natural science and physiology, which I shall only allude to here. But the degree of mischief which this prejudice can cause, particularly in matters of ethics and history, once it has been unleashed and allowed to develop into hatred, is shown by the notorious case of Buckle.* There once again the plebeian nature of the modern mind, which is of English origin, broke out on its native soil, with the intensity of a muddy volcano and with the same over-salted, over-loud, common garrulousness with which all volcanoes have previously held forth.

With respect to our problem—which might with good reason be described as a reticent problem, one which addresses itself with discrimination to a few ears only—it is of no small interest to note that, in those words and roots which designate ‘good’, the main nuance, according to which the noble felt themselves to be men of higher rank, often still shows through. Admittedly, the most frequent practice is perhaps for those of higher rank to name themselves according to their superiority in matters of power (as ‘the powerful’, ‘the masters’, ‘those who command’), or according to the most visible sign of this superiority, as, for example, ‘the wealthy’, ‘the owners’ (that is the meaning of aryae* and similar formulations can be found in Persian and Slavic). But they also do so according to a typical character trait: and this is the case which concerns us here. The noble might refer to themselves, for example, as ‘the truthful’: the prime example is the Greek nobility, whose spokesman is the Megarian poet Theognis.* The word coined for this
purpose—\textit{esthlos*}—means according to its root someone who \textit{is}, who has reality, who is real, who is true. Then, with a subjective turn, the true becomes the truthful: in this phase of concept-transformation the word becomes the slogan and motto of the nobility and slides completely over into the meaning ‘noble’, marking it off from the \textit{deceitful} common man, as Theognis takes and represents him—until finally, after the decline of the nobility, the word survives to designate nobility of soul and becomes at the same time ripe and sweet. In the word \textit{kakos,*} as in \textit{deilos*} (the plebeian in contrast to \textit{agathos*}), cowardliness is emphasized: perhaps this gives an indication of the direction in which the etymological origin of \textit{agathos}, with its multiple meanings, is to be sought. In the Latin \textit{malus*} (to which I juxtapose \textit{melas*}), the common man may be designated as having dark skin, above all, dark hair (‘\textit{hic niger est}{*}’), as the pre-Aryan inhabitant of Italian soil, who was through colour most clearly distinguished from the blond, that is, Aryan, race of conquerors who had come to power. At least, Gaelic offered me an exactly corresponding case—\textit{fin} (for example, in the name \textit{Fin-Gal*}), the word characterizing the nobility, which ultimately meant the good, the noble, the pure, but originally the blond-headed, in contrast to the swarthy, dark-haired original inhabitants. The Celts, incidentally, were a thoroughly blond race: it is a mistake to relate those areas of essentially dark-haired population, which are to be seen on the more carefully researched ethnographic maps of Germany, to any sort of Celtic origin and miscegenation, as Virchow* still does. Rather, it is the pre-Aryan population of Germany which shows through in these places. (The same is true for almost the whole of Europe: essentially, the subjugated race has ultimately regained the upper hand, in colour, size of skull, perhaps even in the intellectual and social instincts. Who can say whether modern democracy, the even more recent phenomenon of anarchism, and particularly that tendency, now common to all European socialists, towards the ‘\textit{commune}{*}’ the most primitive form of society, does not for the most part represent a huge \textit{atavistic throwback}—and that the race of conquerors and masters, the Aryan race, now finds itself physiologically in an inferior position?...) I believe that I am entitled to interpret the
Latin *bonus* as ‘warrior’: provided that I correctly derive *bonus* from the older *duonus* (compare *bellum* = *duellum = duentum*, in which *duonus* seems to me to be included). So *bonus* as a man of conflict, of division (*duo*), as warrior: from this it is clear in what a man’s ‘goodness’ consisted in ancient Rome. Our German *gut* [good] itself: should it not mean ‘the godly’ [*den Göttlichen*], the man ‘of godly race’ [*göttlichen Geschlechts*]? And should it not be identical with the Goths [*Goten*],* the name of the people (and originally of the nobility)? The grounds for this hypothesis would be out of place here.—

To the rule that the political concept of rank always transforms itself into a spiritual concept of rank, it at first constitutes no exception (although it may in turn occasion such exceptions) if the highest caste is at the same time the *priestly* caste, and consequently prefers to designate itself collectively through a predicate which reminds one of its priestly function. It is here, for example, that ‘pure’ and ‘impure’ are first opposed as marks of social station; and here also that a ‘good’ and a ‘bad’ are later developed in a sense which is no longer one of social station. By the way, one should be warned against taking these concepts of ‘pure’ and ‘impure’ too seriously, too broadly, or even symbolically from the outset: rather, all human concepts from earlier times were, to an extent which we can scarcely conceive, initially understood in a crude, clumsy, external, narrow, and frankly, particularly unsymbolic way. The ‘pure’ man is from the outset merely a man who washes, who denies himself certain types of food which cause skin complaints, who refrains from sleeping with the unclean women of the lower classes, who abhors blood—and no more, not a great deal more than that! On the other hand, admittedly, the whole constitution of an essentially priestly aristocracy illuminates why it should be here rather than anywhere else that the dangerous internalization and intensification of the value-oppositions could take place at an early stage. In fact, these oppositions have finally torn open chasms between man and man, chasms which would make even an Achilles of spiritual freedom shudder before he
leapt. There is from the outset something unhealthy in such priestly aristocracies and in the customs which prevail among them, customs which are turned away from action and combine brooding with emotional volatility. The consequence of these customs is the almost unavoidable intestinal sickness and neurasthenia which afflicts priests of all times. But as for what they themselves invented as a cure for their sickliness—are we not bound to say that its after-effects have ultimately proven to be a hundred times more dangerous than the illness which it was intended to relieve? Mankind itself continues to suffer from the after-effects of these naïve priestly cures! Let us think, for example, of certain forms of diet (avoidance of meat), of fasting, of sexual abstinence, of flight ‘into the desert’ (Weir Mitchell’s isolation therapy,* admitted without the accompanying fattening diet and over-eating, which constitutes the most effective remedy to all the hysteria* of the ascetic ideal). And added to that, the whole anti-sensual and enervating metaphysics of the priests, their self-hypnosis in the manner of fakirs and Brahmins—Brahma* used as a crystal ball and idée fixe—and the ultimate, only too understandable general satiety with its radical cure, with nothingness (or God—the desire for a unio mystica* with God is the Buddhist’s desire for nothingness, nirvana*—and nothing more!). With the priests, everything becomes more dangerous, not only cures and therapies, but also arrogance, revenge, perspicacity, extravaganza, love, the desire to dominate, virtue, illness. With some fairness, admittedly, it might also be added that it is only on the basis of this essentially dangerous form of human existence, the priestly form, that man has at all developed into an interesting animal, that it is only here that the human soul has in a higher sense taken on depth and become evil—and these have certainly been the two fundamental forms of man’s superiority over other animals up to now!...

—By now it will be clear how easily the priestly mode of evaluation may diverge from the knightly-aristocratic mode and then develop into its opposite. This process receives a
particular impetus each time the priest and warrior castes jealously confront each other and are unwilling to strike a compromise. The knightly-aristocratic value-judgements presuppose a powerful physicality, a rich, burgeoning, even overflowing health, as well as all those things which help to preserve it—war, adventure, hunting, dancing, competitive games, and everything which involves strong, free, high-spirited activity. As we have seen, the noble priestly mode of evaluation has different conditions: so much the worse for the priests when it comes to war! Priests are, as is well-known, the most evil enemies—but why? Because they are the most powerless. From powerlessness their hatred grows to take on a monstrous and sinister shape, the most cerebral and most poisonous form. The very greatest haters of world-history have always been priests, as have the most ingenious. In comparison with the ingenuity of priestly revenge, all other intelligence scarcely merits consideration. Human history would be a much too stupid affair were it not for the intelligence introduced by the powerless. Let us immediately consider the most important example. Nothing which anyone else has perpetrated against the ‘noble’, the ‘powerful’, the ‘masters’, the ‘rulers’ merits discussion in comparison with the deeds of the Jews—the Jews, that priestly people who ultimately knew no other way of exacting satisfaction from its enemies and conquerors than through a radical transvaluation of their values, through an art of the most intelligent revenge. This was only as befitted a priestly people, the people of the most downtrodden priestly vindictiveness. It has been the Jews who have, with terrifying consistency, dared to undertake the reversal of the aristocratic value equation (good = noble = powerful = beautiful = happy = blessed) and have held on to it tenaciously by the teeth of the most unfathomable hatred (the hatred of the powerless). It is they who have declared: ‘The miserable alone are the good; the poor, the powerless, the low alone are the good. The suffering, the deprived, the sick, the ugly are the only pious ones, the only blessed, for them alone is there salvation. You, on the other hand, the noble and the powerful, you are for all eternity the evil, the cruel, the lascivious, the insatiable, the godless ones. You will be without salvation, accursed and damned to all
eternity!’ There is no doubt as to who inherited this Jewish transvaluation...* In relation to the monstrous initiative, disastrous beyond all bounds, which the Jews have taken with this most fundamental of all declarations of war, I remind the reader of the phrase which I arrived at in another context *(Beyond Good and Evil, §195): that with the Jews the slave revolt in morals* begins: that revolt which has a two-thousand-year history behind it and which has today dropped out of sight only because it—has succeeded...

But you are finding this hard to follow? You have no eyes for something which took two thousand years to triumph?... That comes as no surprise: all things whose history stretches out far behind them are difficult to see, to see in their entirety. But this is indeed what happened: from the trunk of that tree of revenge and hatred, Jewish hatred—the deepest and most sublime hatred, that is, the kind of hatred which creates ideals and changes the meaning of values, a hatred the like of which has never been on earth—from this tree grew forth something equally incomparable, a new love, the deepest and most sublime of all the kinds of love—and from what other trunk could it have grown?... But let no one think that it somehow grew up as the genuine negation of that thirst for revenge, as the antithesis of Jewish hatred! No, the opposite is the case! Love grew forth from this hatred, as its crown, as its triumphant crown, spreading itself ever wider in the purest brightness and fullness of the sun, as a crown which pursued in the lofty realm of light the goals of hatred—victory, spoils, seduction—driven there by the same impulse with which the roots of that hatred sank down ever further and more lasciviously into everything deep and evil. This Jesus of Nazareth, as the gospel of love incarnate, this ‘redeemer’ bringing victory and salvation to the poor, the sick, the sinners—did he not represent the most sinister and irresistible form of the very same temptation, the indirect temptation to accept those self-same Jewish values and new versions of the ideal? Has Israel not reached the ultimate goal of its sublime vindictiveness through the detour of this
very ‘redeemer’ who appeared to oppose and announce the dissolution of Israel? Is it not characteristic of the secret black art of a truly great policy of revenge, of a far-sighted, subterranean revenge which unfolds itself slowly and thinks ahead, that Israel itself was obliged to deny the very instrument of this revenge as a mortal enemy and crucify him before the whole world, so that the ‘whole world’, all the opponents of Israel, might unthinkingly bite on just this very bait? And on the other hand, would it be possible, with the most refined ingenuity, to devise a more dangerous bait? To devise something which could even approach the seductive, intoxicating, anaesthetizing, and corrupting power of that symbol of the ‘holy cross’, that horrific paradox of the ‘crucified God’, that mystery of an inconceivably ultimate, most extreme cruelty and self-crucifixion undertaken for the salvation of mankind?... It is certain at least that sub hoc signo* Israel’s revenge and transvaluation of all values has so far continued to triumph over all other ideals, over all nobler ideals.— —

‘But why do you persist in talking about nobler ideals? Let us stick to the facts: the people have won—or the “slaves” or the “plebeians” or the “herd” or whatever you want to call them—and if the Jews brought this about, then so much the better! Never in world history did a people have a more important mission. The “masters” are done away with; the morality of the common man has won. This victory might also be seen as a form of blood-poisoning (it has mixed the races together)—I shall not contradict that; but there is no doubt that the toxin has succeeded. The “redemption” of humanity (from the “masters”, that is) is proceeding apace; everything is visibly becoming more Jewish or Christian or plebeian (what does the terminology matter!). The progress of this poison through the entire body of mankind seems inexorable. From now on, its pace may even be slower, finer, less audible, more considered—there is no hurry, after all... Does the Church still have a necessary role to play in this respect, does it still have a right to existence at all? Or could it be dispensed with? Quaeritur.*
Does it seem to hinder rather than help the advance of this poison? Now this is exactly where its potential usefulness lies... Certainly, the Church remains something crude and uncouth, repulsive to a more delicate intellect, to a really modern taste. Ought it not at least to refine itself a little?... The Church today is more likely to alienate than to seduce... Who among us would be a free spirit if it were not for the existence of the Church? It is the Church which we find repellent, not its poison... The Church aside, we too love its poison... —Such is the epilogue to my speech provided by a ‘free spirit’, an honest animal, as he has amply demonstrated, and a democrat, moreover; he had been listening to me until now and could not bear to hear me keep silent. For on this matter, there is much to keep silent about.—

—The slave revolt in morals begins when ressentiment* itself becomes creative and ordains values: the ressentiment of creatures to whom the real reaction, that of the deed, is denied and who find compensation in an imaginary revenge. While all noble morality grows from a triumphant affirmation of itself, slave morality from the outset says no to an ‘outside’, to an ‘other’, to a ‘non-self’: and this no is its creative act. The reversal of the evaluating gaze—this necessary orientation outwards rather than inwards to the self—belongs characteristically to ressentiment. In order to exist at all, slave morality from the outset always needs an opposing, outer world; in physiological terms, it needs external stimuli in order to act—its action is fundamentally reaction. The opposite is the case with the aristocratic mode of evaluation: this acts and grows spontaneously, it only seeks out its antithesis in order to affirm itself more thankfully and more joyfully. Its negative concept, ‘low’, ‘common’, ‘bad’, is only a derived, pale contrast to its positive basic concept which is thoroughly steeped in life and passion—‘we the noble, we the good, we the beautiful, we the happy ones!’ If the aristocratic mode of evaluation errs and sins against reality, this happens in relation to the sphere with which it is not sufficiently familiar, and against real knowledge...
of which it stubbornly defends itself: it misjudges on occasion the sphere it despises—that of the common man, of the lower people. On the other hand, one may consider that this feeling of contempt, condescension, and superiority, granted that it falsifies the image of those despised, will trail far behind the falsification by means of which the downtrodden hatred, the revenge of the powerless will attack its opponent—in effigie,* of course. There is, in fact, too much nonchalance, too much levity, too much distraction and impatience, even too much good temper mixed up with this aristocratic contempt for it to be capable of transforming its object into a real caricature and monster. One should not fail to notice the almost benevolent nuances present in all the words with which the Greek nobility distinguishes the lower people from itself; how a kind of pity, consideration, and forbearance continually intervenes and sweetens, until ultimately almost all the words applied to the common man survive as expressions meaning ‘unhappy’, ‘pitiable’ (compare deilos, delaioi, poneros, mochtheros,* the last two designating the common man as working slave and beast of burden)—and how, too, ‘bad’, ‘low’, ‘unhappy’ have never since ceased to ring in a single note to the Greek ear, with a tonality in which ‘unhappy’ predominates. This is a legacy from the old, more noble, aristocratic mode of evaluation, which refuses to deny itself even in its contempt for others (—let me remind philologists in what sense oizyros, anolbos, telemon, dystychein, xymphora* were used). The ‘well-bred’ felt themselves to be ‘the fortunate’; they did not have to construe their good fortune artificially through a glance at their enemies, to persuade themselves of it, to convince themselves through lying (as all men of ressentiment usually do). Likewise, as fully developed people overladen with strength, and consequently as necessarily active people, they knew better than to separate action from happiness—with them, activity is necessarily calculated into happiness (from where eu prattein* takes its origin). All this is diametrically opposed to ‘happiness’ as understood on the level of the powerless, the oppressed, of those who suppurate with poisonous and hostile feelings, those for whom happiness appears essentially as narcotic, anaesthetic, calm, peace, ‘sabbath’, the expansion of feeling and the stretching of limbs, in a
word, as *passivity*. While the noble man lives for himself in trust and openness (*gennaios* ‘of noble birth’ underlines the nuance of ‘honest’ and also ‘naïve’), the man of *resentment* is neither upright nor naïve in his dealings with others, nor is he honest and open with himself. His soul *squints*; his mind loves bolt-holes, secret paths, back doors, he regards all hidden things as *his* world, *his* security, *his* refreshment; he has a perfect understanding of how to keep silent, how not to forget, how to wait, how to make himself provisionally small and submissive. A race of such men of *resentment* is bound in the end to become *cleverer* than any noble race, and it will respect cleverness to a completely different degree: that is, as a first condition of existence. In contrast, for aristocratic people cleverness easily acquires a delicate taste of luxury and refinement. They long considered cleverness less essential than the smooth functioning of their unconscious regulating instincts, than a certain recklessness, even. This latter took the form of a bold impetuosity, whether with respect to danger, the enemy, or the instantaneous outbursts of wrath, love, respect, gratitude, and revenge, by means of which noble souls have at all times recognized one another. For the *resentment* of the noble man himself, if it appears at all, completes and exhausts itself in an immediate reaction. For that reason, it does not *poison*. On the other hand, *resentment* simply fails to appear in countless cases where its emergence would be inevitable among the weak and the powerless. To be incapable of taking one’s enemies, accidents, even one’s misdeeds seriously for long—such is the sign of strong full natures, natures in possession of a surplus of the power to shape, form, and heal, of the power which also enables one to forget (a good example of this in the modern world is Mirabeau,* who had no memory for the insults and malicious behaviour directed against him and could not forgive simply because he could not—remember). Such a man with a *single* shrug shakes off much of that which worms and digs its way into others. Here alone is actual ‘*love of one’s enemy*’ possible, assuming that such a thing is at all possible on earth. How much respect a noble man has already for his enemy!—and such respect is already a bridge to love... The noble man claims his enemy for himself, as a mark of
distinction. He tolerates no other enemy than one in whom nothing is to be despised and a great deal is worthy of respect! In contrast, imagine the ‘enemy’ as conceived by the man of *ressentiment*. This is the very place where his deed, his creation is to be found—he has conceived the ‘evil enemy’, the ‘evil man’. Moreover, he has conceived him as a fundamental concept, from which he now derives another as an after-image and counterpart, the ‘good man’—himself!...

11

This, then, is the very opposite of what the noble man does—for the latter conceives the fundamental concept ‘good’ spontaneously and in advance—that is, from his own point of view—and only then does he proceed to create for himself an idea of the ‘bad’! This ‘bad’ of noble origin and that ‘evil’ which issues from the cauldron of insatiable hatred—the former being a retrospective creation, an incidental, a complementary colour, while the latter is the original, the beginning, the real deed in the conception of a slave morality—what a difference there is between these two words ‘bad’ and ‘evil’, in spite of the fact that they both appear to stand in opposition to one and the same concept of ‘good’! But it is not the same concept of ‘good’ which is involved in each case: the question which should be asked is rather: who is actually ‘evil’ according to the morality of *ressentiment*? In all strictness, the answer is: none other than the ‘good man’ of the other morality, none other than the noble, powerful, dominating man, but only once he has been given a new colour, interpretation, and aspect by the poisonous eye of *ressentiment*. We would be the last to deny that anyone who met these ‘good men’ only as enemies would know them only as evil enemies, and that these same men, who are inter pares* so strictly restrained by custom, respect, usage, gratitude, even more by circumspection and jealousy, and who in their relations with one another prove so inventive in matters of consideration, self-control, tenderness, fidelity, pride, and friendship—these same men behave towards the outside world—where the foreign, the foreigners, are to be found—in a manner not much better than predators on the rampage. There
they enjoy freedom from all social constraint, in the wilderness
they make up for the tension built up over a long period of
confinement and enclosure within a peaceful community, they
regress to the innocence of the predator’s conscience, as rejoicing
monsters, capable of high spirits as they walk away without
qualms from a horrific succession of murder, arson, violence,
and torture, as if it were nothing more than a student prank,
something new for the poets to sing and celebrate for some
time to come. There is no mistaking the predator beneath the
surface of all these noble races, the magnificent blond beast*
roaming lecherously in search of booty and victory; the energy
of this hidden core needs to be discharged from time to time,
the animal must emerge again, must return to the wilderness—
Roman, Arab, German, Japanese nobility, Homeric heroes,
Scandinavian Vikings,—they all share this same need. The
noble races are the ones who, wherever they have gone, have
left the concept ‘barbarian’ in their wake; an awareness of this
is betrayed even by their highest culture, which actually takes
pride in it (for example, when Pericles* says to his Athenians
in that famous funeral address, ‘wherever our boldness has
given us access to land and sea, we have established everlasting
monuments of good and wickedness’). This ‘boldness’ of the
noble races, expressed in mad, absurd, sudden ways, the in-
calculable, even the improbable aspect of their undertakings—
Pericles emphasizes the rhathymia* of the Athenians as a mark
of distinction—their indifference and contempt for safety, life,
limb, comfort, their horrific serenity and deep pleasure in all
destruction, in the sensuality of victory and cruelty—all this is
summarized for the victims in the image of the ‘barbarian’, of
the ‘evil enemy’, of the ‘Goth’, the ‘Vandal’. The deep, icy
mistrust which the German arouses as soon as he comes to
power, as he is doing now once again*—remains a throwback
to that inextinguishable horror with which, for hundreds of
years, Europe regarded the raging of the blond Germanic beast
(although between the old Teutons and us modern Germans
there scarcely exists a conceptual, let alone blood-, relation-
ship). I once drew attention to Hesiod’s embarrassment as he
devised the succession of the ages of culture and sought to
express them in terms of gold, silver, and bronze:* he knew of
no other way to deal with the contradiction presented by the magnificent, but equally horrific and violent Homeric world than to divide this single age into two successive ones—the age of the heroes and demigods of Troy and Thebes,* as that world had survived in the memory of the noble races whose ancestors were to be found there; and then the bronze age, as that same age appeared to the descendants of the oppressed, dispossessed, badly treated, those who had been swept aside and bought: an age of bronze, as I said—hard, cold, cruel, without feeling and conscience, crushing everything and daubing everything with blood. Assuming that what is now in any case believed to be the ‘truth’ were true—that it is the meaning of all culture to breed a tame and civilized animal, a domestic animal, from the predatory animal ‘man’—then there is no doubt that one would have to consider all the instincts of reaction and resentment, with whose help the noble races and their ideals were finally ruined and overcome, as the real instruments of culture. Which is not to say that those who possess these instincts are at the same time representatives of culture itself. Rather, the opposite is not only probable—no! today it is patently obvious! Those who possess the oppressive and vindictive instincts, the descendants of all European and non-European slavery, of all pre-Aryan population in particular— they represent the regression of humanity! These supposed ‘instruments of culture’ are a disgrace to mankind, they arouse suspicion and actually constitute an argument against ‘culture’ as a whole! One may have every right to remain fearful and suspicious of the blond beast beneath all noble races: but who would not a hundred times prefer fear accompanied by the possibility of admiration to freedom from fear accompanied by the disgusting sight of the failed, atrophied, and poisoned? And is this not our fate? What causes our revulsion from ‘man’ today?—for we suffer from man, there is no doubt.—Not fear; but rather the fact that we no longer have anything to fear from man; that ‘man’ squirms like a worm before us; that the ‘tame man’, the irremediably mediocre and unedifying man has already learnt to regard himself as goal and destination, as the meaning of history, as the ‘higher man’—and even that he has a certain right to regard himself as such, in so far as he
senses his superiority over the surplus of failed, sickly, tired, worn-out people who are beginning to make Europe smell, in so far as he represents something which remains at least relatively successful, something which is still capable of life, something which affirms life...

—At this point I cannot suppress a sigh and one remaining hope. What, of all things, am I unable to tolerate? The only thing which I find it impossible to deal with, which makes me choke and languish? Bad air! Bad air! When something failed draws near; when I am obliged to smell the entrails of a failed soul!... In comparison, what need, deprivation, bad weather, shallowness, toil, isolation cannot be borne? Basically, one can deal with everything else, born as one is to a subterranean existence of struggle; again and again one will reach the light, again and again experience the golden hour of victory—and then stand forth new-born, indestructible, tensed in readiness for what is new, more difficult, more distant, like a bow which every necessity merely draws tighter.—But from time to time let me be granted—if such things as divine patronesses actually exist beyond good and evil*—let me be granted a glimpse, just one glimpse of something complete, wholly successful, happy, powerful, triumphant, something still capable of inspiring fear! A glimpse of a man who justifies mankind, of a compensatory, redeeming stroke of luck on the part of man, a reason to retain faith in mankind!... For this is how things stand: the withering and levelling of European man constitutes our greatest danger, because it is a wearying sight... Today we see nothing with any desire to become greater, we sense that everything is going increasingly downhill, downhill, thinning out, getting more good-natured, cleverer, more comfortable, more mediocre, more indifferent, more Chinese, more Christian—man, there is no doubt, is ‘improving’ all the time... This and nothing else is the fate of Europe—along with our fear of man we have also forfeited our love, respect, and hope for him, even the will to him. The sight of man is now a wearying sight—what is nihilism today, if not this?... We are weary of man...
—But let us return to our problem: for our discussion of the problem of the other origin of ‘good’, of good as conceived by the man of ressentiment, requires its conclusion.—That lambs bear ill-will towards large birds of prey is hardly strange: but is in itself no reason to blame large birds of prey for making off with little lambs. And if the lambs say among themselves: ‘These birds of prey are evil; and whoever is as little of a bird of prey as possible, indeed, rather the opposite, a lamb—should he not be said to be good?’, then there can be no objection to setting up an ideal like this, even if the birds of prey might look down on it a little contemptuously and perhaps say to themselves: ‘We bear them no ill-will at all, these good lambs—indeed, we love them: there is nothing tastier than a tender lamb.’ To demand of strength that it should not express itself as strength, that it should not be a will to overcome, overthrow, dominate, a thirst for enemies and resistance and triumph, makes as little sense as to demand of weakness that it should express itself as strength. A quantum of force is also a quantum of drive, will, action—in fact, it is nothing more than this driving, willing, acting, and it is only through the seduction of language (and through the fundamental errors of reason petrified in it)—language which understands and misunderstands all action as conditioned by an actor, by a ‘subject’*—that it can appear otherwise. Just as the common people distinguish lightning from the flash of light and takes the latter as doing, as the effect of a subject which is called lightning, just so popular morality distinguishes strength from expressions of strength, as if behind the strong individual there were an indifferent substratum which was at liberty to express or not to express strength. But no such substratum exists; there is no ‘being’ behind doing, acting, becoming; ‘the doer’ is merely a fiction imposed on the doing—the doing itself is everything. Basically, the common people represent the doing twice over, when they make lightning flash—that is a doing doubled by another doing: it posits the same event once as cause and then once again as effect. The natural scientists do not fare any better when they say: ‘Force moves, force causes’,
and the like—in spite of all its coldness, its freedom from emotion, our entire science is still subject to the seduction of language and has not shaken itself free of the monstrous changelings, the ‘subjects’, foisted upon it (the atom* is an example of such a changeling, as is the Kantian ‘thing in itself’*). No wonder that the downtrodden and surreptitiously smouldering emotions of revenge and hatred exploit this belief in their own interests and maintain no belief with greater intensity than that the strong may freely choose to be weak, and the bird of prey to be lamb—and so they win the right to blame the bird of prey for simply being a bird of prey... If, out of the vindictive cunning of impotence, the oppressed, downtrodden, and violated tell themselves: ‘Let us be different from the evil, that is, good! And the good man is the one who refrains from violation, who harms no one, who attacks no one, who fails to retaliate, who leaves revenge to God, who lives as we do in seclusion, who avoids all evil and above all asks little of life, as we do, the patient, the humble, the just.’ When listened to coldly and without prejudice, this actually means nothing more than: ‘We weak men are, after all, weak; it would be good if we refrained from doing anything for which we lack sufficient strength.’ But this dry matter-of-factness, this cleverness of the lowest rank, which even insects possess (insects which, in situations of great danger, probably play dead in order not to do ‘too much’), has, thanks to the forgery and self-deception of impotence, clothed itself in the magnificence of self-abnegating, calm, and patient virtue, exactly as if the weakness of the weak man itself—that is, his essence, his action, his whole single, unavoidable, irredeemable reality—were a free achievement, something willed, chosen, a deed, a merit. Bound to do so by his instinct of self-preservation and self-affirmation, an instinct which habitually sanctifies every lie, this kind of man discovered his faith in the indifferent, freely choosing ‘subject’. The subject (or, to adopt a more popular idiom, the soul) has, therefore, been perhaps the best article of faith on earth so far, since it enables the majority of mortals, the weak and downtrodden of all sorts, to practise that sublime self-deception—the interpretation of weakness itself as freedom, of the way they simply are, as merit.
First Essay

—Would anyone care to take a look into the secret depths of how ideals are fabricated on earth? Who is brave enough?... Very well! Here you can have an unobstructed view into this dark workshop. Wait just another moment, my dear Mr Dare-devil Curiosity: your eyes must first get used to this false shimmering light... There! All right! Now tell us! What is going on down there? Describe what you see, man of the most dangerous curiosity—now it is my turn to listen.—

—‘I can see nothing, but hear all the more. There is a cautious, sly, soft mumbling and whispering coming from all corners. It seems to me that lies are being told; a sugary sweetness clings to every sound. Weakness is to be transformed into a merit through lies, there is no doubt—it is just as you said.’—

—Go on!

—‘And the impotent failure to retaliate is to be transformed into “goodness”; craven fear into “humility”; submission to those one hates into “obedience” (obedience, that is, towards the authority who, so they claim, ordered this submission—they call him God). The inoffensive appearance of the weak man, even the cowardice which he possesses in abundance, his hesitation on the threshold, the inevitability of his being made to wait—all assume a good name here, as “patience”, that is, as virtue as such; the inability to take revenge is called the refusal to take revenge, perhaps even forgiveness (“for they know not what they do*—we alone know what they do!”). There is also talk of “loving one’s enemies”—accompanied by much perspiration.’

—Go on!

—‘There is no doubt that they are miserable, all these mumbling forgers sitting in their corners, in spite of the fact that they huddle together for warmth—but they tell me that their misery is an election and a distinction conferred by God—one beats the dogs one loves the most; perhaps this misery is also a preparation, a test, a schooling, perhaps it is even more—something which will eventually be measured out and paid off at huge interest in gold, no! in happiness. That is what they call “salvation”.’
—Go on!
—‘Now they give me to understand that they are not only better than the powerful, the masters of the earth, whose spittle they are obliged to lick (not from fear, absolutely not! but because God commands respect for all authority)—that they are not only better, but also “have it better”, or will “have it better” one day. But enough! enough! I can stand it no longer. Bad air! Bad air! This workshop where ideals are fabricated—it seems to me to stink of nothing but lies.’
—No! A moment longer! As yet you have said nothing about the masterpiece wrought by these experts in black magic who turn every dark shade into the white of milk and innocence—have you failed to notice their most perfect refinement, their boldest, finest, most intelligent, most duplicitous artistic stroke? Pay attention! These cellar-animals full of revenge and hatred—what exactly do they make out of revenge and hatred? Did you ever hear those particular words? Would you suspect, if you trusted to their words, that you were among men of ressentiment?...
—‘I understand, I will keep my ears open (oh! oh! oh! and my nose shut). Only now do I hear what they have already repeated so often: “We good men—we are the just.”’—They do not call what they demand retaliation, but “the triumph of justice”; they do not hate their enemy, no! they hate “injustice”, “godlessness”; their belief and hope is not the hope of revenge, the intoxication of sweet revenge (—“sweeter than honey” as Homer described it, already in his day), but the triumph of God, of the just God over the godless; what remains on earth for them to love is not their brothers in hatred, but their “brothers in love”, as they say, all the good and just men on earth.’
—And what do they call the hope which serves to console them for all the suffering of life—their phantasmagoria of anticipated future salvation?
—‘What? Am I hearing this right? They call it “the Last Judgement”, the coming of their kingdom, the “Kingdom of God”—but meanwhile they live “in faith”, “in love”, “in hope”,’
—Enough! Enough!
Faith in what? Love of what? Hope for what?—These weak men—for at the same time they too want to be strong, there is no doubt, at some time their ‘kingdom’ should also come—they call it simply ‘the Kingdom of God’, as I said: for one is so humble in all things! In order to experience it, one needs a long life, a life beyond death—eternal life, in fact, in order to take advantage for all eternity of the ‘Kingdom of God’ as compensation for this earthly life ‘in faith, in love, in hope’. Compensation for what? Through what?... It seems to me that Dante made a vulgar error when, with fearful ingenuity, he set this inscription over the gates of Hell: ‘I too was wrought by eternal love.’* In any case, the following would make a more appropriate inscription for the gate to the Christian Paradise: ‘I too was wrought by eternal hatred’—assuming that a truth may stand over the gate to a lie! For what constitutes this Heaven’s bliss?... We could probably guess by this stage; but it is better that in such things an authority who is not to be underestimated should expressly bear witness before us—Thomas Aquinas,* the great teacher and saint: ‘Beati in regno coelesti videbunt poenas damnatorum, ut beatitudo illis magis complacat’,* he says as meekly as a lamb. Or would one rather hear it in stronger terms, say, from the mouth of a triumphant Church Father* who advises his Christians against the cruel sensuality of public spectacles—and the reason? ‘For faith offers us much more’, he says, De Spectac. chapters 29 ff. [sic, actually 30], ‘and something much stronger; thanks to redemption, completely different pleasures are available to us; in the place of athletes, we have our martyrs; if we want blood, then we have the blood of Christ... But what awaits us on the day of his return, his triumph!’—and then he continues, this delighted visionary:* ‘At enim supersunt alia spectacula, ille ultimus et perpetuus judicij dies, ille nationibus insperatus, ille derisus, cum tanta saeculi vetustas et tot ejus naevcitates uno igno hauriuntur. Quae tunc spectacula latitudo! Quid admirer! Quid rideam! Ubi gaudeam! Ubi exultem, spectans tot et tantos reges, qui in coelum recepti muniabantur, cum ipso Jove et ipsis suis testibus in imis tenebris congregeminentes! Item praesides (the provincial
office-holders) persecutores dominici nominis saevioribus quam
ipsi flammis saeverunt insultantibus contra Christianos lique-
centes! Quos praeterea sapientes illos philosophos coram dis-
cipulis suis una conflagrantibus erubescentes, quibus nihil ad
deum pertinere suadebant, quibus animas aut nullas aut non in
pristina corpora redituras affirmabant! Etiam poetas non ad
Rhadamantii nec ad Minois,* sed ad inopinati Christi tribunal
palpitantes! Tunc magis tragoedi audiendi, magis scilicet vocales
(in better voice, with even louder screams) in sua propria
calamitate; tunc histriones cognoscendi, solitores multo per
ignem; tunc spectans auriga in flammea rota toto rubens, tunc
xystici contemplandi non in gymnasii, sed in igne jaculati, nisi
quod ne tunc quidem illos velim vivos [sic, visos in original], ut qui
malim ad eos potius conspectum insatiabili conferre, qui in
dominium desaeuerunt. “Hic est ille”, dicam, “fabri aut quaestu-
rae filius (as all that follows and in particular this well-known
designation of the mother of Jesus taken from the Talmud* indicates,
Tertullian is from this point on referring to the
Jews) sabbati destructor, Samarites et daemonium habens. Hic
est, quem a Juda redemistis, hic est ille arundine et colapis diver-
beratus, sputamentis dedecoratus, felle et aceto potatus. Hic est,
quem clam discentes subripuerunt, ut resurrexisse dicatur vel hortu-
lanus detraxit, ne lactucae suae frequentia commeantium laederen-
tur.” Ut talia spectes
* so it is written.

Let us conclude. For thousands of years, a fearful struggle has
raged on earth between the two opposed value-judgements,
‘good and bad’ and ‘good and evil’; and as certain as it is that
the second value-judgement has long been in the ascendant,
there is even now no shortage of places where the outcome of
the conflict remains undecided. It might even be said that the conflict has escalated in the interim and so become increasingly profound, more spiritual: so that today there is perhaps no more decisive mark of the `higher nature’, of the more spiritual nature, than to be divided against oneself in this sense and to remain a battleground for these oppositions. The symbol for this struggle, written in a script which has remained legible throughout the whole of human history up until now, is called ‘Rome against Judaea, Judaea against Rome’—so far, there has been no greater event than this struggle, this questioning, this mortal enmity and contradiction. Rome felt the Jew to be something like the incarnation of the unnatural, its monstrous opposite, as it were: in Rome, the Jew ‘stood convicted of hatred towards the whole of mankind’:* rightly, in so far as one is entitled to associate the salvation and future of mankind with the absolute supremacy of the aristocratic values, the Roman values. How, on the other hand, did the Jews feel towards Rome? A thousand signs give us an indication; but it is sufficient to call to mind once more the Apocalypse according to St John, that most desolate of all the written outbursts which vindictiveness has on its conscience. (By the way, one should not underestimate the deep logic of the Christian instinct which inscribed this book of hatred with the name of the apostle of love, the one to whom it attributed that infatuated and enraptured gospel as his own—: there is a grain of truth in that, however much literary forgery may have been necessary to bring it about.*) The Romans were the strong and noble men, stronger and nobler than they had ever been on earth, or even dreamed themselves to be; every vestige left behind by them, every inscription is a delight, as long as one has an inkling of what is behind the writing. The Jews conversely were the priestly people of rencentiment par excellence, with an innate genius in matters of popular morality: one need only compare those peoples with related gifts, say, the Chinese or the Germans, with the Jews in order to appreciate the difference between first- and fifth-rate. Which of these is in the ascendant at the moment, Rome or Judaea? But there is no room for doubt: consider before whom one bows today in Rome as before the epitome of all the highest values—and

* First Essay
not only in Rome, but over almost half the world, wherever man has been tamed or wants to be tamed—before three Jews, as one knows, and one Jewess (before Jesus of Nazareth, the fisherman Peter, the carpet-maker Paul, and the mother of the aforementioned Jesus, Mary). This is most remarkable: there is no doubt that Rome has been defeated. Admittedly, during the Renaissance there was a simultaneously glittering and sinister re-awakening of the classical ideal, of the noble mode of evaluation; beneath the weight of the new Judaicized Rome, which assumed the appearance of an ecumenical synagogue and called itself the ‘Church’, the old Rome itself moved like someone re-awakened from apparent death: but Judaea triumphed again immediately, thanks to a fundamentally plebeian (German and English) movement of ressentiment, known as the Reformation, as well as what necessarily arose from it, the restoration of the Church and the restoration also of the old, grave-like peace of classical Rome. In an even more decisive and profound sense than previously, Judaea triumphed once more over the classical ideal with the French Revolution: the last political nobility in Europe, that of France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, collapsed under the instincts of popular ressentiment—never before had a greater celebration, a noisier excitement been heard on earth! Admittedly, the most monstrous and unexpected thing happened in the middle of all this: the ideal of the ancients itself emerged in flesh and blood and with unheard-of splendour before the eyes and conscience of mankind. Against the old deceitful slogan of ressentiment—the prerogative of the greatest number—against the will to the belittlement, humiliation, levelling, decline, and twilight of man, the fearful and delightful slogan of the prerogative of the few rang out once more, stronger, simpler, more insistent than ever! Like a last gesture in the other direction, Napoleon* appeared, the most individual and most belatedly born man ever to have existed, and in him the incarnation of the problem of the noble ideal as such—consider what a problem it is, Napoleon, this synthesis of the inhuman and the superhuman...
—Was that the end of it? Was that greatest of all ideal oppositions then placed \textit{ad acta}\textsuperscript{*} for all time? Or only postponed, indefinitely postponed?... Will the old flame not inevitably flare up again at some time in an even more fearful way, after much lengthier preparation? Moreover, is this not the very thing which we should desire with all our strength? should even will? should even promote?... Anyone who, like my reader, starts to reflect at this point and to pursue his thoughts will find no early end to them—reason enough for me to come to an end, assuming that my \textit{aim} has long since become sufficiently clear, the aim of that dangerous slogan written on the body of my last book: ‘Beyond Good and Evil’... This at the very least does \textit{not} mean ‘Beyond Good and Bad’. —

Note: I take the opportunity afforded by this essay to give public and formal expression to a wish which I have previously mooted only in occasional conversations with academics: that some philosophy faculty or another might render outstanding service to the promotion of the \textit{historical} study of \textit{morality} through offering a series of academic prizes—perhaps this book might serve to give a powerful impetus in this very direction. Should this possibility be pursued, the following question might be suggested: it merits the attention of philologists and historians as much as that of philosophers by profession—

‘What indications for the direction of further research does linguistics, and in particular the study of etymology, provide for the history of the development of moral concepts?’

—On the other hand, it is admittedly just as necessary to secure the interest of physiologists and physicians in the exploration of this problem (of the \textit{value} of previous evaluations): here too it might be left to the specialist philosophers to act as spokesmen and mediators in this matter, once they have largely succeeded in reshaping the original relationship of mutual aloofness and suspicion which obtains between the disciplines of philosophy, physiology, and medicine into the most amicable and fruitful exchange. In fact, all tables of commandments, all ‘Thou shalt(s)’ known to history or ethnological research, certainly require \textit{physiological} investigation and interpretation\textsuperscript{*} prior to psychological examination. Equally, all await a critique from the medical
sciences. The question: what is the value of this or that table of commandments and 'morality'? should be examined from the most varied perspectives; in particular, the question of its value to what end? cannot be examined too closely. For example, something possessing clear value for the greatest possible survival capacity of a race (or for increasing its powers of adaptation to a certain climate or for the preservation of the greatest number) would not have anything like the same value if what was at issue were the development of a stronger type. The welfare of the greatest number and the welfare of the few represent opposed points of view on value: to hold the former as of intrinsically higher value may be left to the naïveté of English biologists... From now on, all disciplines have to prepare the future task of the philosopher: this task being understood as the solution of the problem of value, the determination of the hierarchy of values.—