



On the Genealogy of Morals

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PREFACE

I

We are unknown to ourselves, we men of knowledge — and with good reason. We have never sought ourselves — how could it happen that we should ever *find* ourselves? It has rightly been said: “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” [Matthew 6:21]; *our* treasure is where the beehives of our knowledge are. We are constantly making for them, being by nature winged creatures and honey-gatherers of the spirit; there is one thing alone we really care about from the heart — “bringing something home.” Whatever else there is in life, so-called “experiences” — which of us has sufficient earnestness for them? Or sufficient time? Present experience has, I am afraid, always found us “absent-minded”: we cannot give our hearts to it — not even our ears! Rather, as one divinely preoccupied and immersed in himself into whose ear the bell has just boomed with all its strength the twelve beats of noon suddenly starts up and asks himself: “what really was that which just struck?” so we sometimes

I

rub our ears *afterward* and ask, utterly surprised and disconcerted, “what really was that which we have just experienced?” and moreover: “who *are* we really?” and, afterward as aforesaid, count the twelve trembling bell-strokes of our experience, our life, our *being* — and alas! miscount them. — So we are necessarily strangers to ourselves, we do not comprehend ourselves, we *have* to misunderstand ourselves, for us the law “Each is furthest from himself” applies to all eternity — we are not “men of knowledge” with respect to ourselves.

3

Because of a scruple particular to me that I am loth to admit to — for it is concerned with *morality*, with all that has been hitherto celebrated on earth as morality — a scruple that entered my life so early, so uninvited, so irresistibly, so much in conflict with my environment, age, precedents, and descent that I might almost have the right to call it my “*a priori*” — my curiosity as well as my suspicions were bound to halt quite soon at the question of where our good and evil really *originated*. In fact, the problem of the origin of evil pursued me even as a boy of thirteen: at an age in which you have “half childish trifles, half God in your heart” [Goethe’s *Faust*, lines 3781f.], I devoted to it my first childish literary trifle, my first philosophical effort — and as for the “solution” of the problem I posed at that time, well, I gave the honor to God, as was only fair, and made him the *father* of evil. Was *that* what my “*a priori*” and the alas! so anti-Kantian, enigmatic “categorical imperative” which spoke through it and to which I have since listened more and more

2

closely, and not merely listened?

Fortunately I learned early to separate theological prejudice from moral prejudice and ceased to look for the origin of evil *behind* the world. A certain amount of historical and philological schooling, together with an inborn fastidiousness of taste in respect to psychological questions in general, soon transformed my problem into another one: under what conditions did man devise these value judgments good and evil? *and what value do they themselves possess?* Have they hitherto hindered or furthered human prosperity? Are they a sign of distress, of impoverishment, of the degeneration of life? Or is there revealed in them, on the contrary, the plenitude, force, and will of life, its courage, certainty, future?

Thereupon I discovered and ventured divers answers; I distinguished between ages, peoples, degrees of rank among individuals; I departmentalized my problem; out of my answers there grew new questions, inquiries, conjectures, probabilities — until at length I had a country of my own, a soil of my own, an entire discrete, thriving, flourishing world, like a secret garden the existence of which no one suspected. — Oh how *fortunate* we are, we men of knowledge, provided only that we know how to keep silent long enough!

5

Even then my real concern was something much more important than hypothesis-mongering, whether my own or other people’s, on the origin of morality (or more precisely: the latter concerned me solely for the sake of a goal to which

3

it was only one means among many). What was at stake was the *value* of morality — and over this I had to come to terms almost exclusively with my great teacher Schopenhauer, to whom that book of mine, the passion and the concealed contradiction of that book, addressed itself as if to a contemporary (— for that book, too, was a “polemic”). What was especially at stake was the value of the “unegoistic,” the instincts of pity, self-abnegation, self-sacrifice, which Schopenhauer had gilded, deified, and projected into a beyond for so long that at last they became for him “value-in-itself,” on the basis of which he *said No* to life and to himself. But it was against precisely *these* instincts that there spoke from me an ever more fundamental mistrust, an ever more corrosive skepticism! It was precisely here that I saw the *great* danger to mankind, its sublimest enticement and seduction — but to what? to nothingness? — it was precisely here that I saw the beginning of the end, the dead stop, a retrospective weariness, the will turning *against* life, the tender and sorrowful signs of the ultimate illness: I understood the ever spreading morality of pity that had seized even on philosophers and made them ill, as the most sinister symptom of a European culture that had itself become sinister, perhaps as its by-pass to a new Buddhism? to a Buddhism for Europeans? to — *nihilism*?

For this overestimation of and predilection for pity on the part of modern philosophers is something new: hitherto philosophers have been at one as to the *worthlessness* of pity. I name only Plato, Spinoza, La Rochefoucauld, and Kant — four spirits as different from one another as possible, but united in one thing: in their low estimation of pity.

This problem of the *value* of pity and of the morality of pity (— I am opposed to the pernicious modern effeminacy of feeling —) seems at first to be merely something detached, an isolated question mark; but whoever sticks with it and *learns* how to ask questions here will experience what I experienced — a tremendous new prospect opens up for him, a new possibility comes over him like a vertigo, every kind of mistrust, suspicion, fear leaps up, his belief in morality, in all morality, falters — finally a new demand becomes audible. Let us articulate this *new demand*: we need a *critique* of moral values, *the values of these values themselves must first be called in question* — and for that there is needed a knowledge of the conditions and circumstances in which they grew, under which they evolved and changed (morality as consequence, as symptom, as mask, as tartufferie, as illness, as misunderstanding; but also morality as cause, as remedy, as stimulant, as restraint, as poison), a knowledge of a kind that has never yet existed or even been desired. One has taken the *value* of these “values” as given, as factual, as beyond all question; one has hitherto never doubted or hesitated in the slightest degree in supposing “the good man” to be of greater value than “the evil man,” of greater value in the sense of furthering the advancement and prosperity of man in general (the future of man included). But what if the reverse were true? What if a symptom of regression were inherent in the “good,” likewise a danger, a seduction, a poison, a narcotic, through which the present was possibly living *at the expense of the future*? Perhaps more comfortably, less dangerously, but

at the same time in a meaner style, more basely? — So that precisely morality would be to blame if the *highest power and splendor* actually possible to the type man was never in fact attained? So that precisely morality was the danger of dangers?

7

Let it suffice that, after this prospect had opened up before me, I had reasons to look about me for scholarly, bold, and industrious comrades (I am still looking). The project is to traverse with quite novel questions, and as though with new eyes, the enormous, distant, and so well hidden land of morality — of morality that has actually existed, actually been lived; and does this not mean virtually to *discover* this land for the first time? [...]

8

If this book is incomprehensible to anyone and jars on his ears, the fault, it seems to me, is not necessarily mine. It is clear enough, assuming, as I do assume, that one has first read my earlier writings and has not spared some trouble in doing so: for they are, indeed, not easy to penetrate. Regarding my *Zarathustra*, for example, I do not allow that anyone knows the book who has not at some time been profoundly wounded and at some time profoundly delighted by every word in it; for only then may he enjoy the privilege of reverentially sharing in the halcyon element out of which that book was born and in its sunlight clarity, remoteness,

6

breadth, and certainty. In other cases, people find difficulty with the aphoristic form: this arises from the fact that today this form is *not taken seriously enough*. An aphorism, properly stamped and molded, has not been “deciphered” when it has simply been read; rather, one has then to begin its *exegesis*, for which is required an art of exegesis. I have offered in the third essay of the present book an example of what I regard as “exegesis” in such a case — an aphorism is prefixed to this essay, the essay itself is a commentary on it. To be sure, one thing is necessary above all if one is to practice reading as an *art* in this way, something that has been unlearned most thoroughly nowadays — and therefore it will be some time before my writings are “readable” — something for which one has almost to be a cow and in any case *not* a “modern man”: *rumination*.

Sils-Maria, Upper Engadine,
July 1887

7

FIRST ESSAY: "GOOD AND EVIL," "GOOD AND
BAD"

6

To this rule that a concept denoting political superiority always resolves itself into a concept denoting superiority of soul it is not necessarily an exception (although it provides occasions for exceptions) when the highest caste is at the same time the *priestly* caste and therefore emphasizes in its total description of itself a predicate that calls to mind its priestly function. It is then, for example, that "pure" and "impure" confront one another for the first time as designations of station; and here too there evolves a "good" and a "bad" in a sense no longer referring to station. One should be warned, moreover, against taking these concepts "pure" and "impure" too ponderously or broadly, not to say symbolically: all the concepts of ancient man were rather at first incredibly uncouth, coarse, external, narrow, straightforward, and altogether *unsymbolical* in meaning to a degree that we can scarcely conceive. The "pure one" is from the beginning merely a man who washes himself, who forbids himself certain foods that produce skin ailments, who does not sleep with the dirty women of the lower strata, who has an aversion to blood — no more, hardly more! On the other hand, to be sure, it is clear from the whole nature of an essentially priestly aristocracy why antithetical valuations could in precisely this instance soon become dangerously deepened, sharpened, and internalized; and indeed they finally tore chasms between man and man that a very Achilles of a free

8

spirit would not venture to leap without a shudder. There is from the first something *unhealthy* in such priestly aristocracies and in the habits ruling in them which turn them away from action and alternate between brooding and emotional explosions, habits which seem to have as their almost invariable consequences that intestinal morbidity and neurasthenia which has afflicted priests at all times; but as to that which they themselves devised as a remedy for this morbidity — must one not assert that it has ultimately proved itself a hundred times more dangerous in its effects than the sickness it was supposed to cure? Mankind itself is still ill with the effects of this priestly naïveté in medicine! Think, for example, of certain forms of diet (abstinence from meat), of fasting, of sexual continence, of flight "into the wilderness" [...]: add to these the entire antisensualistic metaphysics of the priests that makes men indolent and overrefined, their autohypnosis in the manner of fakirs and Brahmins — Brahma used in the shape of a glass knob and a fixed idea — and finally the only-too-comprehensible satiety with all this, together with the radical cure for it, *nothingness* (or God — the desire for a *unio mystica* [mystic union] with God is the desire of the Buddhist for nothingness, Nirvana — and no more!). For with the priests *everything* becomes more dangerous, not only cures and remedies, but also arrogance, revenge, acuteness, profligacy, love, lust to rule, virtue, disease — but it is only fair to add that it was on the soil of this *essentially dangerous* form of human existence, the priestly form, that man first became *an interesting animal*, that only here did the human soul in a higher sense acquire *depth* and become *evil* — and these are the two basic respects in which man has hith-

9

erto been superior to other beasts!

7

One will have divined already how easily the priestly mode of valuation can branch off from the knightly-aristocratic and then develop into its opposite; this is particularly likely when the priestly caste and the warrior caste are in jealous opposition to one another and are unwilling to come to terms. The knightly-aristocratic value judgments presupposed a powerful physicality, a flourishing, abundant, even overflowing health, together with that which serves to preserve it: war, adventure, hunting, dancing, war games, and in general all that involves vigorous, free, joyful activity. The priestly-noble mode of valuation presupposes, as we have seen, other things: it is disadvantageous for when it comes to war! As is well known, the priests are the *most evil enemies* — but why? Because they are the most impotent. It is because of their impotence that in them hatred grows to monstrous and uncanny proportions, to the most spiritual and poisonous kind of hatred. The truly great haters in world history have always been priests; likewise the most ingenious [*Geistreich*] haters: other kinds of spirit [*Geist*] hardly come into consideration when compared with the spirit of priestly vengefulness. Human history would be altogether too stupid a thing without the spirit that the impotent have introduced into it — let us take at once the most notable example. All that has been done on earth against “the noble,” “the powerful,” “the masters,” “the rulers,” fades into nothing compared with what the *Jews* have done against them; the Jews, that priestly peo-

IO

ple, who in opposing their enemies and conquerors were ultimately satisfied with nothing less than a radical revaluation of their enemies' values, that is to say, an act of the *most spiritual revenge*. For this alone was appropriate to a priestly people, the people embodying the most deeply repressed [*Zurückgetretensten*] priestly vengefulness. It was the Jews who, with awe-inspiring consistency, dared to invert the aristocratic value-equation (good = noble = powerful = beautiful = happy = beloved of God) and to hang on to this inversion with their teeth, the teeth of the most abysmal hatred (the hatred of impotence), saying “the wretched alone are the good; the poor, impotent, lowly alone are the good; the suffering, deprived, sick, ugly alone are pious, alone are blessed by God, blessedness is for them alone — and you, the powerful and noble, are on the contrary the evil, the cruel, the lustful, the insatiable, the godless to all eternity; and you shall be in all eternity the unblessed, accursed, and damned!” . . . One knows *who* inherited this Jewish revaluation . . . In connection with the tremendous and immeasurably fateful initiative provided by the Jews through this most fundamental of all declarations of war, I recall the proposition I arrived at on a previous occasion (*Beyond Good and Evil*, section 195) — that with the Jews there began *the slave revolt in morality*: that revolt which has a history of two thousand years behind it and which we no longer see because it — has been victorious.

8

But you do not comprehend this? You are incapable of

II

seeing something that required two thousand years to achieve victory? — There is nothing to wonder at in that: all *protracted* things are hard to see, to see whole. *That*, however, is what has happened: from the trunk of that tree of vengefulness and hatred, Jewish hatred — the profoundest and sublimest kind of hatred, capable of creating ideals and reversing values, the like of which has never existed on earth before — there grew something equally incomparable, a *new love*, the profoundest and sublimest kind of love — and from what other trunk could it have grown?

One should not imagine it grew up as the denial of that thirst for revenge, as the opposite of Jewish hatred! No, the reverse is true! That love grew out of it as its crown, as its triumphant crown spreading itself farther and farther into the purest brightness and sunlight, driven as it were into the domain of light and the heights in pursuit of the goals of that hatred — victory, spoil, and seduction — by the same impulse that drove the roots of that hatred deeper and deeper and more and more covetously into all that was profound and evil. This Jesus of Nazareth, the incarnate gospel of love, this “Redeemer” who brought blessedness and victory to the poor, the sick, and the sinners — was he not this seduction in its most uncanny and irresistible form, a seduction and bypath to precisely those *Jewish* values and new ideals? Did Israel not attain the ultimate goal of its sublime vengefulness precisely through the bypath of this “Redeemer,” this ostensible opponent and disintegrator of Israel? Was it not part of the secret black art of truly *grand* politics of revenge, of a farseeing, subterranean, slowly advancing, and premeditated revenge, that Israel must itself deny the real instrument of its revenge

before all the world as a mortal enemy and nail it to the cross, so that “all the world,” namely all the opponents of Israel, could unhesitatingly swallow just this bait? And could spiritual subtlety imagine any *more dangerous* bait than this? Anything to equal the enticing, intoxicating, overwhelming, and undermining power of that symbol of the “holy cross,” that ghastly paradox of a “God on the cross,” that mystery of an unimaginable ultimate cruelty and self-crucifixion of God *for the salvation of man?*

What is certain, at least, is that *sub hoc signo* Israel, with its vengefulness and revaluation of all values, has hitherto triumphed again and again over all other ideals, over all *nobler* ideals. —

Latin: “under this sign” (originally referring to the Christian cross; here, used ironically)

9

“But why are you talking about *nobler* ideals! Let us stick to the facts: the people have won — or ‘the slaves’ or ‘the mob’ or ‘the herd’ or whatever you like to call them — if this has happened through the Jews, very well! in that case no people ever had a more world-historic mission. ‘The masters’ have been disposed of; the morality of the common man has won. One may conceive of this victory as at the same time a blood-poisoning (it has mixed the races together) — I shan’t contradict; but this intoxication has undoubtedly been *successful*. The ‘redemption’ of the human race (from ‘the masters,’ that is) is going forward; everything is visibly becoming Judaized, Christianized, mob-ized (what do the words matter!). The progress of this poison through the entire body of mankind seems irresistible, its pace and tempo may from now

Latin: "one asks"

on even grow slower, subtler, less audible, more cautious — there is plenty of time. — To this end, does the church today still have any *necessary* role to play? Does it still have the right to exist? Or could one do without it? *Quaeritur*. It seems to hinder rather than hasten this progress. But perhaps that is its usefulness.—Certainly it has, over the years, become something crude and boorish, something repellent to a more delicate intellect, to a truly modern taste. Ought it not to become at least a little more refined?—Today it alienates rather than seduces.— Which of us would be a free spirit if the church did not exist? It is the church, and not its poison, that repels us.—Apart from the church, we, too, love the poison.—”

Most translations of Nietzsche leave *ressentiment* in French, meaning “resentment”—it is your frustration with your inability to act. You are too weak to achieve what you want, but you blame the world and the strength of others instead. In its extreme form—what Nietzsche calls “slave morality”—you blame the very idea of achievement itself, claiming that the highest value is instead found in resignation, acceptance, turning the other cheek, and so on.

This is the epilogue of a “free spirit” to my speech; an honest animal, as he has abundantly revealed, and a democrat, moreover; he had been listening to me till then and could not endure to listen to my silence. For at this point I have much to be silent about.

10

The slave revolt in morality begins when *ressentiment* itself becomes creative and gives birth to values: the *ressentiment* of natures that are denied the true reaction, that of deeds, and compensate themselves with an imaginary revenge. While every noble morality develops from a triumphant affirmation of itself, slave morality from the outset says No to what is “outside,” what is “different,” what is “not itself”; and *this* No is its creative deed. This inversion of the value-positing eye — this *need* to direct one’s view outward

14

instead of back to oneself — is of the essence of *ressentiment*; in order to exist, slave morality always first needs a hostile external world; it needs, physiologically speaking, external stimuli in order to act at all — its action is fundamentally reaction.

[...]

While the noble man lives in trust and openness with himself (*gennaios* [high-born, noble, high-minded] “of noble descent” underlines the nuance “upright” and probably also “naïve”), the man of *ressentiment* is neither upright nor naïve nor honest and straightforward with himself. His soul *squints*; his spirit loves hiding places, secret paths and back doors, everything covert entices him as *his* world, *his* security, *his* refreshment; he understands how to keep silent, how not to forget, how to wait, how to be provisionally self-deprecating and humble. A race of such men of *ressentiment* is bound to become eventually *cleverer* than any noble race; it will also honor cleverness to a far greater degree: namely, as a condition of existence of the first importance; while with nobler men cleverness can easily acquire a subtle flavor of luxury and subtlety — for here it is far less essential than the perfect functioning of the regulating *unconscious* instincts or even that a certain imprudence, perhaps a bold recklessness whether in the face of danger or of the enemy, or that enthusiastic impulsiveness in anger, love, reverence, gratitude, and revenge by which noble souls have at all times recognized one another. *Ressentiment* itself, if it should appear in the noble man, consummates and exhausts itself in an immediate reac-

15

tion, and therefore does not *poison*: on the other hand, it fails to appear at all on countless occasions on which it inevitably appears in the weak and impotent.

To be incapable of taking one's enemies, one's accidents, even one's misdeeds seriously for very long — that is the sign of strong, full natures in whom there is an excess of the power to form, to mold, to recuperate and to forget (a good example of this in modern times is Mirabeau, who had no memory for insults and vile actions done him and was unable to forgive simply because he — forgot). Such a man shakes off with a single *sbrug* many vermin that eat deep into others; here alone genuine "love of one's enemies" is possible — supposing it to be possible at all on earth. How much reverence has a noble man for his enemies! — and such reverence is a bridge to love. — For he desires his enemy for himself, as his mark of distinction; he can endure no other enemy than one in whom there is nothing to despise and *very much* to honor! In contrast to this, picture "the enemy" as the man of *ressentiment* conceives him — and here precisely is his deed, his creation: he has conceived "the evil enemy," "*the Evil One*," and this in fact is his basic concept, from which he then evolves, as an afterthought and pendant, a "good one" — himself!

11

This, then, is quite the contrary of what the noble man does, who conceives the basic concept "good" in advance and spontaneously out of himself and only then creates for himself an idea of "bad"! This "bad" of noble origin and that "evil" out of the cauldron of unsatisfied hatred — the former

16

an after-production, a side issue, a contrasting shade, the latter on the contrary the original thing, the beginning, the distinctive *deed* in the conception of a slave morality — how different these words "bad" and "evil" are, although they are both apparently the opposite of the same concept "good." But it is *not* the same concept "good": one should ask rather precisely *who* is "evil" in the sense of the morality of *ressentiment*. The answer, in all strictness, is: *precisely* the "good man" of the other morality, precisely the noble, powerful man, the ruler, but dyed in another color, interpreted in another fashion, seen in another way by the venomous eye of *ressentiment*.

Here there is one thing we shall be the last to deny: he who knows these "good men" only as enemies knows only *evil enemies*, and the same men who are held so sternly in check *inter pares* by custom, respect, usage, gratitude, and even more by mutual suspicion and jealousy, and who on the other hand in their relations with one another show themselves so resourceful in consideration, self-control, delicacy, loyalty, pride, and friendship — once they go outside, where the strange, the *stranger* is found, they are not much better than uncaged beasts of prey. There they savor a freedom from all social constraints, they compensate themselves in the wilderness for the tension engendered by protracted confinement and enclosure within the peace of society, they go *back* to the innocent conscience of the beast of prey, as triumphant monsters who perhaps emerge from a disgusting [*Scheusslichen*] procession of murder, arson, rape, and torture, exhilarated and undisturbed of soul, as if it were no more than a student's prank, convinced they have provided the poets with a lot more material for song and praise. One cannot fail to see

17

Honoré Gabriel Riqueti, Comte de Mirabeau (1749-1791), a French Revolutionary statesman and writer.

at the bottom of all these noble races the beast of prey, the splendid *blond beast* prowling about avidly in search of spoil and victory; this hidden core needs to erupt from time to time, the animal has to get out again and go back to the wilderness: the Roman, Arabian, Germanic, Japanese nobility, the Homeric heroes, the Scandinavian Vikings — they all shared this need.

It is the noble races that have left behind them the concept “barbarian” wherever they have gone; even their highest culture betrays a consciousness of it and even a pride in it (for example, when Pericles says to his Athenians in his famous funeral oration “our boldness has gained access to every land and sea, everywhere raising imperishable monuments to its goodness *and wickedness*”). This “boldness” of noble races, mad, absurd, and sudden in its expression, the incalculability, even incredibility of their undertakings — Pericles specially commends the *rathymia* [original meaning: *ease of mind, without anxiety*; also: *carelessness, remissness, frivolity*.] of the Athenians — their indifference to and contempt for security, body, life, comfort, their hair-raising [*Entsetzliche*] cheerfulness and profound joy in all destruction, in all the voluptuousness of victory and cruelty — all this came together, in the minds of those who suffered from it, in the image of the “barbarian,” the “evil enemy,” perhaps as the “Goths,” the “Vandals.” The deep and icy mistrust the German still arouses today whenever he gets into a position of power is an echo of that inextinguishable horror with which Europe observed for centuries that raging of the blond Germanic beast (although between the old Germanic tribes and us Germans there exists hardly a conceptual relationship, let alone one of blood).

I once drew attention to the dilemma in which Hesiod found himself when he concocted his succession of cultural epochs and sought to express them in terms of gold, silver, bronze: he knew no way of handling the contradiction presented by the glorious but at the same time terrible and violent world of Homer except by dividing one epoch into two epochs, which he then placed one behind the other — first the epoch of the heroes and demigods of Troy and Thebes, the form in which that world had survived in the memory of the noble races who were those heroes’ true descendants; then the bronze epoch, the form in which that same world appeared to the descendants of the downtrodden, pillaged, mistreated, abducted, enslaved: an epoch of bronze, as aforesaid, hard, cold, cruel, devoid of feeling or conscience, destructive and bloody.

Supposing that what is at any rate believed to be the “truth” really is true, and the *meaning of all culture* is the reduction of the beast of prey “man” to a tame and civilized animal, a *domestic animal*, then one would undoubtedly have to regard all those instincts of reaction and *ressentiment* through whose aid the noble races and their ideals were finally confounded and overthrown as the actual *instruments of culture*; which is not to say that the *bearers* of these instincts themselves represent culture. Rather is the reverse not merely probable — no! today it is *palpable*! These bearers of the oppressive instincts that thirst for reprisal, the descendants of every kind of European and non-European slavery, and especially of the entire pre-Aryan populace — they represent the *regression* of mankind! These “instruments of culture” are a disgrace to man and rather an accusation and counterargu-

ment against “culture” in general! One may be quite justified in continuing to fear the blond beast at the core of all noble races and in being on one’s guard against it: but who would not a hundred times sooner fear where one can also admire than *not* fear but be permanently condemned to the repellent sight of the ill-constituted, dwarfed, atrophied, and poisoned? And is that not *our* fate? What today constitutes *our* antipathy to “man”? — for we *suffer* from man, beyond doubt.

Not fear; rather that we no longer have anything left to fear in man; that the maggot “man” is swarming in the foreground; that the “tame man,” the hopelessly mediocre and insipid man, has already learned to feel himself as the goal and zenith, as the meaning of history, as “higher man” — that he has indeed a certain right to feel thus, insofar as he feels himself elevated above the surfeit of ill-constituted, sickly, weary and exhausted people of which Europe is beginning to stink today, as something at least relatively well-constituted, at least still capable of living, at least affirming life.

12

At this point I cannot suppress a sigh and a last hope. What is it that I especially find utterly unendurable? That I cannot cope with, that makes me choke and faint? Bad air! Bad air! The approach of some ill-constituted thing; that I have to smell the entrails of some ill-constituted soul!

How much one is able to endure: distress, want, bad weather, sickness, toil, solitude. Fundamentally one can cope with everything else, born as one is to a subterranean life of

20

struggle; one emerges again and again into the light, one experiences again and again one’s golden hour of victory — and then one stands forth as one was born, unbreakable, tensed, ready for new, even harder, remoter things, like a bow that distress only serves to draw tauter.

But grant me from time to time — if there are divine goddesses in the realm between good and evil — grant me the sight, but *one* glance of something perfect, wholly achieved, happy, mighty, triumphant, something still capable of arousing fear! Of a man who justifies *man*, of a complementary and redeeming lucky hit on the part of man for the sake of which one may still *believe in man*!

For this is how things are: the diminution and leveling of European man constitutes *our* greatest danger, for the sight of him makes us weary. — We can see nothing today that wants to grow greater, we suspect that things will continue to go down, down, to become thinner, more good-natured, more prudent, more comfortable, more mediocre, more indifferent, more Chinese, more Christian — there is no doubt that man is getting “better” all the time.

Here precisely is what has become a fatality for Europe — together with the fear of man we have also lost our love of him, our reverence for him, our hopes for him, even the will to him. The sight of man now makes us weary — what is nihilism today if it is not *that*? — We are weary of *man*.

13

But let us return: the problem of the *other* origin of the “good,” of the good as conceived by the man of *ressentiment*,

21

demands its solution.

That lambs dislike great birds of prey does not seem strange: only it gives no grounds for reproaching these birds of prey for bearing off little lambs. And if the lambs say among themselves: “these birds of prey are evil; and whoever is least like a bird of prey, but rather its opposite, a lamb — would he not be good?” there is no reason to find fault with this institution of an ideal, except perhaps that the birds of prey might view it a little ironically and say: “*we* don’t dislike them at all, these good little lambs; we even love them: nothing is more tasty than a tender lamb.”

To demand of strength that it should *not* express itself as strength, that it should *not* be a desire to overcome, a desire to throw down, a desire to become master, a thirst for enemies and resistances and triumphs, is just as absurd as to demand of weakness that it should express itself as strength. A quantum of force is equivalent to a quantum of drive, will, effect — more, it is nothing other than precisely this very driving, willing, effecting, and only owing to the seduction of language (and of the fundamental errors of reason that petrified in it) which conceives and misconceives all effects as conditioned by something that causes effects, by a “subject,” can it appear otherwise. For just as the popular mind separates the lightning from its flash and takes the latter for an *action*, for the operation of a subject called lightning, so popular morality also separates strength from expressions of strength, as if there were a neutral substratum behind the strong man, which was *free* to express strength or not to do so. But there is no such substratum; there is no “being” behind doing, effecting, becoming; “the doer” is merely a fic-

tion added to the deed — the deed is everything. The popular mind in fact doubles the deed; when it sees the lightning flash, it is the deed of a deed: it posits the same event first as cause and then a second time as its effect. Scientists do no better when they say “force moves,” “force causes,” and the like — all its coolness, its freedom from emotion notwithstanding, our entire science still lies under the misleading influence of language and has not disposed of that little changeling, the “subject” (the atom, for example, is such a changeling, as is the Kantian “thing-in-itself”); no wonder if the submerged, darkly glowering emotions of vengefulness and hatred exploit this belief for their own ends and in fact maintain no belief more ardently than the belief that *the strong man is free* to be weak and the bird of prey to be a lamb — for thus they gain the right to make the bird of prey *accountable* for being a bird of prey.

When the oppressed, downtrodden, outraged exhort one another with the vengeful cunning of impotence: “let us be different from the evil, namely good! And he is good who does not outrage, who harms nobody, who does not attack, who does not requite, who leaves revenge to God, who keeps himself hidden as we do, who avoids evil and desires little from life, like us, the patient, humble, and just” — this, listened to calmly and without previous bias, really amounts to no more than: ‘we weak ones are, after all, weak; it would be good if we did nothing *for which we are not strong enough*’; but this dry matter of fact, this prudence of the lowest order which even insects possess (posing as dead, when in great danger, so as not to do “too much”), has, thanks to the counterfeit and self-deception of impotence, clad itself in the os-

tentatious garb of the virtue of quiet, calm resignation, just as if the weakness of the weak — that is to say, their *essence*, their effects, their sole ineluctable, irremovable reality — were a voluntary achievement, willed, chosen, a *deed*, a *meritorious* act. This type of man *needs* to believe in a neutral independent “subject,” prompted by an instinct for self-preservation and self-affirmation in which every lie is sanctified. The subject (or, to use a more popular expression, the *soul*) has perhaps been believed in hitherto more firmly than anything else on earth because it makes possible to the majority of mortals, the weak and oppressed of every kind, the sublime self-deception that interprets weakness as freedom, and their being thus-and-thus as a *merit*.

14

Would anyone like to take a look into the secret of how *ideals are made* on earth? Who has the courage? — Very well! Here is a point we can see through into this dark workshop. But wait a moment or two, Mr. Rash and Curious: your eyes must first get used to this false iridescent light. — All right! Now speak! What is going on down there? Say what you see, man of the most perilous kind of inquisitiveness — now I am the one who is listening.

“I see nothing but I hear the more. There is a soft, wary, malignant muttering and whispering coming from all the corners and nooks. It seems to me one is lying; a saccharine sweetness clings to every sound. Weakness is being lied into something *meritorious*, no doubt of it — so it is just as you

24

said” —

— Go on!

— “and impotence which does not requite into ‘goodness of heart’; anxious lowliness into ‘humility’; subjection to those one hates into ‘obedience’ (that is, to one of whom they say he commands this subjection — they call him God). The inoffensiveness of the weak man, even the cowardice of which he has so much, his lingering at the door, his being ineluctably compelled to wait, here acquire flattering names, such as ‘patience,’ and are even called virtue itself; his inability for revenge is called unwillingness to revenge, perhaps even forgiveness (‘for *they* know not what they do — we alone know what *they* do!’). They also speak of ‘loving one’s enemies’ — and sweat as they do so.”

— Go on!

— “They are miserable, no doubt of it, all these mutters and nook counterfeiters, although they crouch warmly together — but they tell me their misery is a sign of being chosen by God; one beats the dog one likes best; perhaps this misery is also a preparation, a testing, a schooling, perhaps it is even more — something that will one day be made good and recompensed with interest, with huge payments of gold, no! of happiness. This they call ‘bliss.’”

— Go on!

— “Now they give me to understand that they are not merely better than the mighty, the lords of the earth whose spittle they have to lick (*not* from fear, not at all from fear! but because God has commanded them to obey the authorities) — that they are not merely better but are also ‘better off,’ or at least will be better off someday. But enough!

25

enough! I can't take any more. Bad air! Bad air! This workshop where *ideals are manufactured* — it seems to me it stinks of so many lies.”

— “No! Wait a moment! You have said nothing yet of the masterpiece of these black magicians, who make whiteness, milk, and innocence of every blackness — haven't you noticed their perfection if refinement, their boldest, subtlest, most ingenious, most mendacious artistic stroke? Attend to them! These cellar rodents full of vengefulness and hatred — what have they made of revenge and hatred? Have you heard these words uttered? If you trusted simply to their words, would you suspect you were among men of *ressentiment*? . . .

— “I understand; I'll open my ears again (oh! oh! oh! and *color* my nose). Now I can really hear what they have been saying all along: ‘We good men — *we are the just*’ — what they desire they call, not retaliation, but ‘the triumph of *justice*’; what they hate is not their enemy, no! they hate ‘injustice,’ they hate ‘godlessness’; what they believe in and hope for is not the hope of revenge, the intoxication of sweet revenge (— ‘sweeter than honey’ Homer called it), but the victory of God, of the *just* God, over the godless; what there is left for them to love on earth is not their brothers in hatred but their ‘brothers in love,’ as they put it, all the good and just on earth.”

— And what do they call that which serves to console them for all the suffering of life — their phantasmagoria of anticipated future bliss?

— “What? Do I hear aright? They call that ‘the Last Judgment,’ the coming of *their* kingdom, of the ‘Kingdom of God’ — meanwhile, however, they live ‘in faith,’ ‘in love,’ ‘in

hope.”

—Enough! Enough!

15

In faith in what? In love of what? In hope of what? — These weak people — some day or other *they* too intend to be the strong, there is no doubt of that, some day *their* “kingdom” too shall come — they term it “the kingdom of God,” of course, as aforesaid: for one is so very humble in all things! To experience *that* one needs to live a long time, beyond death — indeed one needs eternal life, so as to be eternally indemnified in the “kingdom of God” for this earthly life “in faith, in love, in hope.” Indemnified for what? How indemnified?

Dante, I think, committed a crude blunder when, with a terror-inspiring ingenuity, he placed above the gateway of his hell the inscription “I too was created by eternal love” — at any rate, there would be more justification for placing above the gateway to the Christian Paradise and its “eternal bliss” the inscription “I too was created by eternal *hate*” — provided a truth may be placed above the gateway to a lie! For *what* is it that constitutes the bliss of this Paradise?

We might even guess, but it is better to have it expressly described for us by an authority not to be underestimated in such matters, Thomas Aquinas, the great teacher and saint. “*Beati in regno coelesti,*” he says, meek as a lamb, “*videbunt poenas damnatorum, ut beatitudo illis magis complacet.*”

[...]

“The blessed in the kingdom of heaven will see the punishments of the damned, in order that their bliss be more delightful for them.”

Let us conclude. The two *opposing* values “good and bad,” “good and evil” have been engaged in a fearful struggle on earth for thousands of years; and though the latter value has certainly been on top for a long time, there are still places where the struggle is as yet undecided. One might even say that it has risen ever higher and thus become more and more profound and spiritual: so that today there is perhaps no more decisive mark of a “*higher nature*,” a more spiritual nature, than that of being divided in this sense and a genuine battleground of these opposed values.

The symbol of this struggle, inscribed in letters legible across all human history, is “Rome against Judea, Judea against Rome”: — there has hitherto been no greater event than *this* struggle, *this* question, *this* deadly contradiction. Rome felt the Jew to be something like anti-nature itself, its antipodal monstrosity as it were: in Rome the Jew stood “*convicted* of hatred for the whole human race”; and rightly, provided one has a right to link the salvation and future of the human race with the unconditional dominance of aristocratic values, Roman values.

How, on the other hand, did the Jews feel about Rome? A thousand signs tell us; but it suffices to recall the Apocalypse of John, the most wanton of all literary outbursts that vengeance has on its conscience. (One should not underestimate the profound consistency of the Christian instinct when it signed this book of hate with the name of the disciple of love, the same disciple to whom it attributed that amorous-enthusiastic Gospel: there is a piece of truth in this,

however much literary counterfeiting might have been required to produce it.) For the Romans were the strong and noble, and nobody stronger and nobler has yet existed on earth or ever been dreamed of: every remnant of them, every inscription gives delight, if only one divines *what* it was that was there at work. The Jews, on the contrary, were the priestly nation of *ressentiment par excellence*, in whom there dwelt an unequaled popular-moral genius: one only has to compare similarly gifted nations — the Chinese or the Germans, for instance — with the Jews, to sense which is of the first and which of the fifth rank.

Which of them has won *for the present*, Rome or Judea? But there can be no doubt: consider to whom one bows down in Rome itself today, as if they were the epitome of all the highest values — and not only in Rome but over almost half the earth, everywhere that man has become tame or desires to become tame: *three Jews*, as is known, and *one Jewess* (Jesus of Nazareth, the fisherman Peter, the rug weaver Paul, and the mother of the aforementioned Jesus, named Mary). This is very remarkable: Rome has been defeated beyond all doubt.

There was, to be sure, in the Renaissance an uncanny and glittering reawakening of the classical ideal, of the noble mode of evaluating all things; Rome itself, oppressed by the new superimposed Judaized Rome that presented the aspect of an ecumenical synagogue and was called the “church,” stirred like one awakened from seeming death: but Judea immediately triumphed again, thanks to that thoroughly plebeian (German and English) *ressentiment* movement called the Reformation, and to that which was bound to arise

from it, the restoration of the church — the restoration too of the ancient sepulchral repose of classical Rome.

With the French Revolution, Judea once again triumphed over the classical ideal, and this time in an even more profound and decisive sense: the last political noblesse in Europe, that of the *French* seventeenth and eighteenth century, collapsed beneath the popular instincts of *ressentiment* — greater rejoicing, more uproarious enthusiasm had never been heard on earth! To be sure, in the midst of it there occurred the most tremendous, the most unexpected thing: the ideal of antiquity itself stepped *incarnate* and in unheard-of splendor before the eyes and conscience of mankind — and once again, in opposition to the mendacious slogan of *ressentiment*, “supreme rights of the majority,” in opposition to the will to the lowering, the abasement, the leveling and the decline and twilight of mankind, there sounded stronger, simpler, and more insistently than ever the terrible and rapturous counterslogan “supreme rights of the few”! Like a last signpost to the *other* path, Napoleon appeared, the most isolated and late-born man there has ever been, and in him the problem of the *noble ideal as such* made flesh — one might well ponder *what* kind of problem it is: Napoleon, this synthesis of the *inhuman* and *superhuman*.

17

Was that the end of it? Had that greatest of all conflicts of ideals been placed *ad acta* [Disposed of] for all time? Or only adjourned, indefinitely adjourned?

Must the ancient fire not some day flare up much more

30

terribly, after much longer preparation? More: must one not desire it with all one’s might? even will it? even promote it?

Whoever begins at this point, like my readers, to reflect and pursue his train of thought will not soon come to the end of it — reason enough for me to come to an end, assuming it has long since been abundantly clear what my *aim* is, what the aim of that dangerous slogan is that is inscribed at the head of my last book *Beyond Good and Evil*.— At least this does *not* mean “Beyond Good and Bad.”—



31