



Ecce Homo

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

Musean Translation

MOUSEIA



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Translated by Michael Berardi

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THIS EDITION

A complete machine-assisted Musean translation directly from the German of the 1908 Insel edition, including its concluding poem. This early edition's readings and omissions are retained, not replaced with later critical restorations.

TRANSLATOR

Michael Berardi

THE WORK

Written 1888 (published 1908) · Philosophical autobiography

SOURCE

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GAPS AND UNCERTAINTIES

The 1908 edition retains early editorial omissions; no modern manuscript-final reconstruction is claimed.

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Preface



Ecce Homo

How One Becomes—What One Is

- ¹ Foreseeing that before long I must confront humanity with the heaviest demand ever laid upon it, I find it indispensable to say *who I am*. At bottom, people ought to know: I have not left myself “without testimony.” Yet the disproportion between the greatness of my task and the *smallness* of my contemporaries has found expression in the fact that I have neither been heard nor even seen. I live on my own credit; perhaps it is merely a prejudice that I am alive?... I need only speak to some “educated person” who comes to the Upper Engadin in summer to convince myself that I do *not* live... Under these circumstances there is a duty against which my habits, and still more the pride of my instincts, revolt: to say, *Hear me! For I am such and such a person. Above all, do not mistake me for someone else!*
- ² I am, for instance, by no means a bogeyman, a monster of morality—I am even the opposite in nature to the kind of person hitherto revered as virtuous. Between ourselves, it seems to me that precisely this is a source of my pride. I am a disciple of the philosopher Dionysus; I would rather be a satyr than a saint. But just read this book. Perhaps I have succeeded—perhaps this book had no other purpose—in expressing that opposition cheerfully and with goodwill toward humanity. The last thing *I* would promise would be to “improve”

humanity. I erect no new idols; let the old ones learn what it means to have legs of clay. To *overthrow* idols—my word for ideals—is rather more in my line of work. Reality has been robbed of its value, its meaning, its truthfulness to the very extent that an ideal world has been *lied into being*... The “true world” and the “apparent world”—in plain terms, the world *invented by lies* and reality... The *lie* of the ideal has hitherto been the curse upon reality; through it humanity itself has become mendacious and false down to its deepest instincts—to the point of worshiping the *opposite* values to those that alone could guarantee its flourishing, its future, its high *right* to a future.

³ Whoever knows how to breathe the air of my writings knows that it is the air of the heights, a *bracing* air. One must be made for it; otherwise there is no small danger of catching cold in it. The ice is near, the solitude immense—but how peacefully all things lie in the light! How freely one breathes! How much one feels *beneath* oneself! Philosophy, as I have understood and lived it hitherto, is a voluntary life among ice and high mountains—a seeking-out of everything strange and questionable in existence, of everything morality has so far placed under its ban. From the long experience such wandering *in the forbidden* gave me, I learned to regard the causes of moralizing and idealizing very differently from what might be wished: the *bidden* history of philosophers, the psychology of their great names, came to light for me. How much truth does a spirit *bear*, how much truth does it *dare*? That became for me, more and more, the true measure of value. Error—belief in the ideal—is not blindness; error is *cowardice*... Every achievement, every step forward in knowledge, *follows* from courage, from hardness toward oneself, from cleanliness toward oneself... I do not refute ideals; I merely put on gloves before them... We strive toward the *forbidden*: under this sign my philosophy will one day triumph, for hitherto truth alone has been forbidden on principle.—

⁴ Among my writings, my *Zarathustra* stands apart. With it I have given humanity the greatest gift it has yet received. This book, with a voice that carries across millennia, is not only the loftiest book there is, the true book of mountain air—the whole fact of humanity lies at an immense distance *beneath* it—it is also

the *deepest*, born of the innermost wealth of truth: an inexhaustible well into which no bucket descends without coming up filled with gold and goodness. No “prophet” speaks here, none of those gruesome hybrids of sickness and will to power whom people call founders of religions. Above all, one must correctly *bear* the tone that comes from this mouth, this halcyon tone, so as not to do pitiable injustice to the meaning of its wisdom. “It is the stillest words that bring the storm; thoughts that come on doves’ feet guide the world—”

“The figs fall from the trees; they are good and sweet: and as they fall, their red skins split.

“I am a north wind to ripe figs.

“Thus, like figs, these teachings fall to you, my friends: now drink their juice and their sweet flesh!

“Autumn is about us, and clear sky and afternoon—”

No fanatic speaks here; this is no “preaching”; no *faith* is demanded here: out of an infinite fullness of light and depth of happiness, drop by drop, word by word, it falls—a tender slowness is the pace of these discourses. Such things reach only the most select; to be a listener here is a privilege without equal; no one can choose at will to have ears for Zarathustra... Yet is Zarathustra not, for all that, a *seducer*?... But what does he himself say as he returns for the first time to his solitude? Precisely the opposite of what any “sage,” “saint,” “world-redeemer,” or other decadent would say in such a case... Not only does he speak differently; he also *is* different...

“Now I go alone, my disciples! You too now go away, and alone! So I will it.

“Go away from me and defend yourselves against Zarathustra! And better still: be ashamed of him! Perhaps he deceived you.

“The person of knowledge must not only love his enemies; he must also be able to hate his friends.

“One repays a teacher badly by always remaining only a pupil. And why will you not pluck at my wreath?

“You revere me: but what if one day your reverence *topples*? Take care that a statue does not strike you dead!

“You say you believe in Zarathustra? But what does Zarathustra matter! You are my believers: but what do all believers matter!

“You had not yet sought yourselves when you found me.

“So it is with all believers; hence all belief amounts to so little.

“Now I bid you lose me and find yourselves; and only *when you have all denied me* will I return to you...”

Friedrich Nietzsche

Birthday Reflection



On this perfect day, when everything ripens and not only the grape turns brown, a shaft of sunlight has just fallen upon my life: I looked back, I looked out: never have I seen such an abundance of things, and such good ones, all at once. Not in vain have I buried my forty-fourth year today; I *was permitted* to bury it—what was life in it is saved, is immortal. The first book of the *Revaluation of All Values*, the *Songs of Zarathustra*, the *Twilight of the Idols*, my attempt to philosophize with a hammer—all gifts of this year, even of its final quarter! *How could I fail to be grateful to my whole life?—*

And so I tell myself
my life.

Why I Am So Wise



- ¹ The good fortune of my existence, perhaps its uniqueness, lies in its fate: to put it as a riddle, as my father I have already died; as my mother I still live and grow old. This double descent, as it were from the highest and lowest rungs on the ladder of life, at once a decadent and a *beginning*—this, if anything, explains that neutrality, that freedom from taking sides in relation to the whole problem of life, which perhaps distinguishes me. I have a finer scent for the signs of ascent and decline than any human being has ever possessed; in this I am the teacher par excellence—I know both; I am both.—My father died at thirty-six: he was delicate, lovable, and sickly, like a creature destined only for a passing visit—more a kindly remembrance of life than life itself. At the age when his life began its descent, mine did too: in my thirty-sixth year I reached the lowest point of my vitality—I still lived, yet could not see three steps ahead. At that time—it was 1879—I resigned my professorship at Basel, lived through the summer like a shadow in St. Moritz, and the following winter, the most sunless of my life, *as* a shadow in Naumburg. This was my lowest ebb: “The Wanderer and His Shadow” came into being meanwhile. Without doubt I understood shadows then... In the winter that followed, my first winter in Genoa, that sweetening and spiritualization almost inseparable from an extreme poverty of blood and muscle brought forth “Dawn”. The perfect brightness and cheerfulness, even exuberance of spirit, reflected in that work are compatible in me not

only with the profoundest physiological weakness, but even with an excess of pain. Amid the torments of an unbroken three-day headache, accompanied by laborious vomiting of mucus, I possessed a dialectical clarity par excellence and thought things through with great composure—things for which, in healthier circumstances, I am not climber enough, not refined enough, not *cold* enough. My readers perhaps know to what extent I regard dialectic as a symptom of decadence, for instance in the most celebrated case: that of Socrates.—All morbid disturbances of the intellect, even that half-stupor which fever brings in its wake, have remained entirely foreign to me to this day; I first had to learn their nature and frequency from scholarly books. My blood runs slowly. No one has ever been able to detect a fever in me. A doctor who had long treated me for nervous illness finally said, “No! There is nothing wrong with your nerves; it is only I who am nervous.” No localized degeneration whatever can be demonstrated; no organically caused stomach ailment, however profound the weakness of the gastric system resulting from general exhaustion. The eye trouble too, at times perilously close to blindness, was only a consequence, not a cause: with every increase in vitality, my eyesight also improved.—A long, all too long succession of years means recovery for me—unfortunately, it also means relapse, decline, the recurrence of a kind of decadence. Need I say, after all this, that I am *experienced* in questions of decadence? I have spelled it out forward and backward. Even that filigree art of grasping and comprehending in general, those fingers for nuances, that psychology of “seeing around corners,” and whatever else is mine, was learned only then: it is the true gift of that time, when everything in me grew more refined, observation itself as much as all the organs of observation. To look from the sick person’s perspective toward *healthier* concepts and values, and then, conversely, from the fullness and self-assurance of *rich* life down into the secret labor of the instinct of decadence—that was my longest exercise, my true experience; if I became a master in anything, it was in this. Now it is in my hands; I have the hand for it: *to shift perspectives*. That is the first reason why a “revaluation of values” may perhaps be possible for me alone.—

² Apart from being a decadent, I am also its opposite. Among other things, my proof is that I have always instinctively chosen the *right* remedies against bad conditions, whereas the decadent as such always chooses the remedies harmful to him. As a whole I was healthy; as an aspect, as a specialty, I was decadent. That energy for absolute isolation and release from familiar conditions, that compulsion against myself to stop allowing myself to be cared for, waited on, *doctored*—that betrays an absolute instinctive certainty about *what* was then needed above all! I took myself in hand; I made myself healthy again: the condition for this—every physiologist will admit it—is *that one is fundamentally healthy*. A typically sickly creature cannot become healthy, still less make itself healthy; for someone typically healthy, by contrast, being sick can even become an energetic *stimulus* to life, to more life. That, indeed, is how that long period of illness appears to me *now*: I discovered life anew, as it were, myself included; I tasted all good and even little things as others could not easily taste them—I made my philosophy out of my will to health, to *life*... For mark this: the years of my lowest vitality were those in which I *ceased* to be a pessimist; the instinct of self-restoration *forbade* me a philosophy of poverty and discouragement... And how, at bottom, does one recognize the *well-constituted person*! By the pleasure such a person gives our senses: he is carved from a wood at once hard, delicate, and fragrant. He relishes only what agrees with him; his liking, his pleasure, ends where the measure of what benefits him is exceeded. He divines remedies against injuries; he turns misfortunes to his advantage; what does not kill him makes him stronger. From everything he sees, hears, experiences, he instinctively gathers *his* sum: he is a principle of selection; he lets much fall away. He is always in *his own* company, whether he associates with books, people, or landscapes: he honors by *choosing*, by *admitting*, by *trusting*. He reacts slowly to every kind of stimulus, with that slowness bred into him by long caution and a deliberate pride—he examines the approaching stimulus; he is far from going out to meet it. He believes neither in “misfortune” nor in “guilt”: he comes to terms with himself, with others; he knows how to *forget*—he is strong enough that everything *must* turn out for his best.—Well then, I am the *opposite* of a decadent, for I have just described *myself*.

³ This *double* sequence of experiences, this access to apparently separate worlds, repeats itself in my nature in every respect—I am a double; I have the “second” sight as well as the first. *And* perhaps the third as well... My very descent permits me a vision beyond all merely local, merely nationally conditioned perspectives; it costs me no effort to be a “good European.” On the other hand, I am perhaps more German than Germans of today, mere Germans of the Reich, could still be—I, the last *antipolitical* German. And yet my ancestors were Polish noblemen: from them I carry much racial instinct in my body, who knows? Perhaps even the *liberum veto* in the end. When I consider how often I am addressed as a Pole while traveling, and by Poles themselves, how seldom I am taken for a German, it might seem that I belong only among the *speckled* Germans. But my mother, Franziska Oehler, is in any case something very German; so too my paternal grandmother, Erdmuthe Krause. The latter spent her whole youth in good old Weimar, not without connections to Goethe’s circle. Her brother, Professor of Theology Krause in Königsberg, was called to Weimar as general superintendent after Herder’s death. It is not impossible that her mother, my great-grandmother, appears under the name “Muthgen” in the young Goethe’s diary. She married Superintendent Nietzsche in Eilenburg as her second husband; on the day of the great war year 1813 when Napoleon entered Eilenburg with his general staff, October 10, she gave birth. As a Saxon she was a great admirer of Napoleon; it could be that I still am too. My father, born in 1813, died in 1849. Before taking up the pastorate of the community of Röcken near Lützen, he lived for several years at Altenburg Castle, teaching the four princesses there. His pupils were the Queen of Hanover, the Grand Duchess Constantine, the Grand Duchess of Oldenburg, and Princess Therese of Saxe-Altenburg. He was full of deep reverence for the Prussian King Friedrich Wilhelm IV, from whom he also received his pastorate; the events of 1848 distressed him beyond measure. Born on that king’s birthday, October 15, I naturally received the Hohenzollern names *Friedrich* Wilhelm. The choice of that day had at least one advantage: throughout my childhood my birthday was a holiday.—I consider it a great privilege to have had such a father; it even seems to me that this explains everything else I possess by way of privilege—life,

the great Yes to life, *not* included. Above all, it takes no intention on my part, only a little waiting, to enter involuntarily into a world of lofty and delicate things: there I am at home; only there is my deepest passion set free. That I almost paid for this privilege with my life is certainly no unfair bargain.—To understand anything of my Zarathustra, one must perhaps be conditioned much as I am—with one foot *beyond* life...

- ⁴ I have never understood the art of turning people against me—for that too I thank my incomparable father—not even when it seemed to me of great value. Indeed, however unchristian it may appear, I am not even prejudiced against myself. Turn my life this way and that, and only rarely, at bottom only once, will you discover traces of someone's having borne me ill will—perhaps, however, rather too many traces of *good* will... Even my experiences with those with whom everyone has bad experiences speak without exception in their favor; I tame every bear; I make even buffoons behave. In the seven years when I taught Greek in the highest class of the Basel Pädagogium, I never had occasion to impose a punishment; even the idlest boys worked hard for me. I am always a match for chance; I must be unprepared to be master of myself. Whatever the instrument, however out of tune—as out of tune as only the instrument “human being” can become—I would have to be ill if I could not coax something worth hearing from it. And how often I have heard from the “instruments” themselves that they had never heard themselves sound *so*... Most beautifully, perhaps, from Heinrich von Stein, who died unforgivably young: once, after carefully obtaining permission, he appeared for three days in Sils-Maria, announcing to everyone that he was *not* coming for the Engadin. This excellent man, who with all the headlong simplicity of a Prussian Junker had waded into Wagner's swamp—and Dühring's too!—was as if transformed during those three days by a whirlwind of freedom, like someone suddenly lifted to *his own* height and given wings. I kept telling him it was the good air up here, that everyone felt the same, that one was not six thousand feet above Bayreuth for nothing—but he would not believe me... If, despite this, many wrongs great and small have been done me, it was not “will,” least of all *ill* will, that caused

them: I might sooner have complained—as I have just suggested—of the good will that has caused no little mischief in my life. My experiences give me the right to distrust the so-called “selfless” drives in general, the whole of that “love of one’s neighbor” ever ready with advice and action. In itself I regard it as weakness, as a particular case of the inability to resist stimuli—only among decadents does *pity* pass for a virtue. I reproach the compassionate with readily losing shame, reverence, and a delicate sense of distances; with pity’s smelling of the rabble in an instant and looking indistinguishably like bad manners; with compassionate hands sometimes intruding with downright destructive force into a great destiny, a solitude among wounds, a *privilege* of bearing grave guilt. I count the overcoming of pity among the *noble* virtues: in “Zarathustra’s Temptation” I invented a case in which a great cry of distress reaches him, in which pity assails him like a final sin and seeks to estrange him *from himself*. To remain master here, to keep the *height* of one’s task free from the much lower and more shortsighted impulses at work in so-called selfless actions—that is the trial, perhaps the final trial a Zarathustra must undergo—his true *proof* of strength...

- 5 In yet another respect I am simply my father once again, as it were his continued life after an all too early death. Like anyone who has never lived among his equals and to whom the concept of “retaliation” is as inaccessible as, say, the concept of “equal rights,” I forbid myself, when some small or *very great* folly is committed against me, every countermeasure, every protective measure—and naturally every defense, every “justification.” My kind of retaliation consists in sending a clever response after a stupidity as quickly as possible: perhaps that way it can still catch up with it. To speak in a parable: I send a pot of preserves to be rid of a *sour* affair... Let someone do me an injury and I “repay” him, be sure of that: before long I find an opportunity to express my thanks to the “evil-doer”—sometimes even for the evil deed—or to *ask* something of him, which can be more binding than giving something. It also seems to me that the rudest word, the rudest letter, is more good-natured, more honorable, than silence. Those who remain silent almost always lack refinement and courtesy of heart:

silence is an objection; swallowing things down necessarily makes for a bad character—it spoils even the stomach. All silent people are dyspeptic.—Clearly, I would not have rudeness undervalued; it is by far the most *humane* form of disagreement and, amid modern coddling, one of our foremost virtues.—If one is rich enough for it, it is even good fortune to be in the wrong. A god who came to earth ought to do nothing but wrong: to take upon himself not the punishment but the *guilt* would first be divine.

- 6 Freedom from resentment, understanding resentment—who knows how greatly, in the end, I am indebted to my long illness for this too! The problem is not exactly simple: one must have lived it from within strength and from within weakness. If anything at all must be held against being sick, against being weak, it is that the true healing instinct, the human instinct of *defense and arms*, grows weary in that condition. One knows how to be rid of nothing, how to cope with nothing, how to repel nothing—everything wounds. People and things draw importunately near; experiences strike too deep; memory is a festering wound. Being sick *is* a kind of resentment itself.—Against this the sick person has only one great remedy—I call it *Russian fatalism*: that fatalism without revolt with which a Russian soldier, when the campaign grows too hard, finally lies down in the snow. No longer to take anything at all, take it upon oneself, *take it into oneself*—no longer to react at all... The great wisdom of this fatalism, which is not always merely the courage to die, lies in reducing the metabolism, slowing it down, a kind of will to hibernation, as a means of preserving life under the most life-threatening circumstances. A few steps further in this logic, and one has the fakir who sleeps for weeks in a grave... Because one would exhaust oneself too quickly *if* one reacted at all, one ceases to react altogether: that is the logic. And nothing burns one out more quickly than the affects of resentment. Vexation, morbid vulnerability, impotence to revenge oneself, the desire, the thirst for revenge, the mixing of poison in every sense—this is assuredly the most harmful way for the exhausted to react: it entails a rapid expenditure of nervous energy, a morbid increase in harmful secretions, of bile into the stomach, for instance. Resentment is what is forbidden *in itself*

to the sick person—*his* evil: unfortunately, also his most natural inclination.—That profound physiologist Buddha understood this. His “religion,” which might better be called a *hygiene*, so as not to confuse it with such pitiable things as Christianity, made its effect depend on victory over resentment: to free the soul *from that*—the first step toward recovery. “Hostility is not ended by hostility; hostility is ended by friendship”: this stands at the beginning of Buddha’s teaching—thus speaks *not* morality, thus speaks physiology.—Resentment, born of weakness, harmful to no one more than to the weak person himself—in the other case, where a rich nature is presupposed, an *expendable* feeling, a feeling that to remain master of is almost the proof of wealth. Whoever knows the earnestness with which my philosophy has taken up the struggle against feelings of revenge and rancor, right into the doctrine of “free will”—the struggle against Christianity is only one particular instance of this—will understand why I bring to light here precisely my personal conduct, my *instinctive certainty* in practice. In times of decadence I *forbade* myself those feelings as harmful; as soon as life was again rich and proud enough for them, I forbade them as *beneath* me. That “Russian fatalism” of which I spoke showed itself in me in my clinging tenaciously for years to almost unbearable situations, places, lodgings, and company, once chance had provided them—it was better than changing them, than *feeling* them to be changeable—than rebelling against them... To be disturbed in this fatalism, to be violently awakened, I took as a mortal offense at the time—in truth, it was mortally dangerous each time as well.—To accept oneself like a destiny, not to wish oneself “different”—in such conditions that is *great wisdom* itself.

- 7 War is another matter. By nature I am warlike. To attack belongs among my instincts. To be *able* to be an enemy, to be an enemy—this perhaps presupposes a strong nature; in any case it is a condition of every strong nature. It needs resistance, consequently it *seeks* resistance: the *aggressive* passion belongs as necessarily to strength as the feelings of revenge and rancor belong to weakness. Woman, for instance, is vengeful: this is conditioned by her weakness, as is her susceptibility to the distress of others.—The strength of an attacker has a kind

of *measure* in the opposition he needs; every growth betrays itself in seeking a mightier opponent—or problem: for a warlike philosopher also challenges problems to a duel. The task is *not* to become master over resistance in general, but over opponents against whom one must bring all one's strength, agility, and mastery of weapons—over *equal* opponents... Equality before the enemy—the first prerequisite for an *honorable* duel. Where one despises, one *cannot* wage war; where one commands, where one sees something *beneath* oneself, one *must not* wage war.—My practice in war can be summed up in four propositions. First: I attack only causes that are victorious—under some circumstances I wait until they are victorious. Second: I attack only causes against which I would find no allies, where I stand alone—where I compromise myself alone... I have never taken a public step that did not compromise me: that is *my* criterion of right action. Third: I never attack persons—I use a person only as a powerful magnifying glass with which to make visible a general but insidious and elusive state of distress. Thus I attacked David Strauss—or more precisely, the *success* of a senile book among German “culture”—I caught that culture in the act... Thus I attacked Wagner—or more precisely, the falseness, the hybridity of instinct in our “culture,” which confuses the sophisticated with the rich, the latecomers with the great. Fourth: I attack only things where every personal difference is excluded, where every background of bad experiences is absent. On the contrary, attacking is with me a proof of goodwill, sometimes of gratitude. I honor, I distinguish, by linking my name with that of a cause, a person: whether for or against makes no difference to me. If I wage war on Christianity, I have the right to do so because I have experienced no misfortunes or hindrances from that quarter—the most earnest Christians have always been well disposed toward me. I myself, an opponent of Christianity as a matter of obligation, am far from holding against an individual what is the doom of millennia.

- ⁸ May I dare to suggest one final trait in my nature that causes me no small difficulty in dealings with people? I possess an utterly uncanny sensitivity in the instinct for cleanliness, so that I perceive physiologically—*smell*—the proximity

ty, or what am I saying, the innermost being, the “entrails” of every soul... In this sensitivity I have psychological antennae with which I touch and grasp every secret: the great quantity of *hidden* filth at the bottom of many a nature, perhaps conditioned by bad blood but whitewashed by upbringing, becomes apparent to me almost at the first contact. If I have observed correctly, such natures, intolerable to my cleanliness, also sense the caution of my disgust: they become no more fragrant for that... Just as I have always been accustomed—an extreme honesty with myself is the condition of my existence; under unclean conditions I perish—I am, as it were, perpetually swimming, bathing, and splashing in water, in some perfectly transparent and shining element. That makes dealing with people no small trial of patience for me; my humanity consists *not* in sharing the feeling of what a human being is, but in *enduring* the fact that I share that feeling... My humanity is a constant self-overcoming.—But I need *solitude*, which is to say recovery, return to myself, the breath of a free, light, playful air... My whole Zarathustra is a dithyramb on solitude, or, if I have been understood, on *purity*... Fortunately, not on *pure folly*... Whoever has eyes for colors will call it diamond-like.—*Disgust* at human beings, at the “rabble,” was always my greatest danger... Will you hear the words in which Zarathustra speaks of *redemption* from disgust?

“What happened to me? How did I redeem myself from disgust?

“Who rejuvenated my eye? How did I fly to the height where no rabble sits beside the well?

“Did my disgust itself create wings for me and powers to divine springs? Truly, I had to fly to the highest to find the wellspring of delight again!—

“Oh, I found it, my brothers! Here in the highest the wellspring of delight gushes for me! And there is a life from which no rabble drinks!

“Almost too violently you flow for me, wellspring of delight! And often you empty the cup again by wanting to fill it.

“And I must still learn to approach you more modestly: all too violently my heart still streams toward you:

“—my heart, on which my summer burns, that short, hot, melancholy, overblessed summer: how my summer-heart longs for your coolness!

“Gone is the hesitant affliction of my spring! Gone are the snowflakes of my malice in June! Wholly summer I became, and summer noon—

“—a summer in the highest, with cold springs and blissful stillness: oh, come, my friends, that the stillness may grow more blissful still!

“For this is *our* height and our home: too high and steep we dwell here for all the unclean and their thirst.

“Cast only your pure eyes into the wellspring of my delight, my friends! How could it grow clouded by that? With *its own* purity it shall laugh back at you.

“On the tree of the future we build our nest; eagles shall bring us solitary ones food in their beaks!

“Truly, no food of which the unclean might partake!

“They would think they were eating fire and burn their mouths.

“Truly, no dwellings do we hold ready here for the unclean! An ice cave our happiness would be called by their bodies and their spirits!

“And like strong winds we wish to live above them, neighbors to the eagles, neighbors to the snow, neighbors to the sun: thus live strong winds.

“And like a wind I will one day blow among them and with my spirit take the breath from their spirit: thus wills my future.

“Truly, a strong wind is Zarathustra to all lowlands; and this is the counsel he gives his enemies and everything that spits and spews: beware of spitting *against* the wind!...”

Why I Am So Clever



¹ Why do I know a little *more*? Why am I so clever at all? I have never thought about questions that are not questions—I have not squandered myself.—Genuinely *religious* difficulties, for instance, are outside my experience. It has entirely escaped me in what sense I am supposed to be “sinful.” I likewise lack a reliable criterion for what a pang of conscience is: from what one *bears* about it, a pang of conscience seems to me nothing worthy of respect... I would not want to abandon an action *after the fact*; I would prefer, as a matter of principle, to leave the bad outcome, the *consequences*, out of the question of value. When the outcome is bad, it is all too easy to lose the *right* view of what one did: a pang of conscience seems to me a kind of “*evil eye*.” To hold something in all the greater honor within oneself when it fails, *because* it failed—that is rather more in keeping with my morality.—“God,” “immortality of the soul,” “redemption,” “the beyond”: all concepts to which I have given neither attention nor time, not even as a child—perhaps I was never childish enough for that?—I know atheism neither as a conclusion nor, still less, as an event: with me it is instinctively self-evident. I am too curious, too *questioning*, too high-spirited to put up with a bludgeoning answer. God is a bludgeoning answer, an offense against the delicacy of us thinkers—at bottom, even a bludgeoning *prohibition* addressed to us: you shall not think!... A quite different question interests me, one on which the “salvation of humanity” depends more than on any

theological curiosity: the question of *nutrition*. For practical use, one can formulate it like this: “How must *you*, in particular, nourish yourself to attain your maximum of strength, of vigor in the Renaissance style, of virtue free of moraine?”—My experiences here have been as bad as possible; I am astonished that I heard this question so late, learned “reason” from these experiences so late. Only the utter worthlessness of our German education—its “idealism”—goes some way toward explaining why, in precisely this matter, I was backward to the point of saintliness. This “education,” which teaches us from the outset to lose sight of *realities* in pursuit of thoroughly dubious, so-called ideal goals, “classical education,” for example—as if the attempt to unite “classical” and “German” in a single concept were not doomed from the outset! More than that, it is amusing—just imagine a “classically educated” native of Leipzig!—In fact, until my most mature years I always ate *badly*—in moral terms, “impersonally,” “selflessly,” “altruistically,” for the salvation of cooks and other fellow Christians. Through Leipzig cooking, for example, at the same time as my first study of Schopenhauer (1865), I very earnestly denied my “will to live.” To ruin one’s stomach into the bargain, for the sake of inadequate nourishment—the cooking in question seemed to me to solve this problem with astonishing success. (They say that 1866 brought a change in this respect—.) But German cooking in general—what does it not have on its conscience! Soup *before* the meal (still called “in the German style” in Venetian cookbooks of the 16th century); meat boiled to exhaustion, vegetables made fatty and floury; the degeneration of flour-based dishes into paperweights! Add to this the downright bestial need to wash it all down among the old Germans—and by no means just the *old* ones—and one understands the origins of the *German spirit* too: in afflicted bowels... The German spirit is an indigestion; it cannot cope with anything.—But the *English* diet, which, compared with the German and even the French, is a kind of “return to nature,” namely to cannibalism, also runs profoundly counter to my own instinct; it seems to me to give the spirit *heavy* feet—Englishwomen’s feet... The best cooking is that of *Piedmont*.—Alcoholic drinks do me harm; one glass of wine or beer a day is quite enough to make my life a “vale of tears”—my antipodes live in Munich. Granted that I understood

this rather late, I have actually *experienced* it from childhood on. As a boy I believed that drinking wine, like smoking tobacco, was at first merely a vanity of young men, and later a bad habit. Perhaps Naumburg wine bears some of the blame for this *tart* judgment. To believe that wine *cheers* people, I would have to be a Christian—that is, believe what is, for me in particular, an absurdity. Strangely enough, despite this extreme susceptibility to being put out of sorts by *small*, heavily diluted doses of alcohol, I become almost a sailor when it comes to *strong* doses. Even as a boy I had my courage in this respect. To write a long Latin treatise in a single night's vigil and then copy it out as well, my pen fired by the ambition to match my model Sallust in rigor and concision, and to pour a few grogs of the heaviest caliber over my Latin—even when I was a pupil at venerable Schulpforta, this in no way contradicted my physiology, nor perhaps Sallust's either—however much it contradicted venerable Schulpforta... Later, toward the middle of life, I did, of course, come down ever more firmly *against* any "spirituous" drink: an opponent of vegetarianism from experience, just like Richard Wagner, who converted me, I cannot urge complete abstinence from alcohol earnestly enough upon all the *more spiritual* natures. *Water* will do... I prefer places where one can draw from flowing fountains everywhere (Nice, Turin, Sils); a little glass follows me around like a dog. In wine, *truth*: it seems that here too I am at odds with the whole world over the concept of "truth"—with me the spirit hovers over the *water*... A few more pointers from my morality. A substantial meal is easier to digest than one that is too small. The first prerequisite for good digestion is that the stomach as a whole should go into action. One must *know* the size of one's stomach. For the same reason, those protracted meals that I call interrupted sacrificial feasts, the set-menu meals, are to be avoided.—No eating between meals, no coffee: coffee darkens the spirits. *Tea* is beneficial only in the morning. Little, but potent; tea is very harmful and leaves one ailing all day if it is even one degree too weak. Everyone has a measure here, often within the narrowest and most delicate limits. In a very irritating climate, tea is inadvisable as a start: a cup of thick, defatted cocoa should be allowed to make the start an hour beforehand.—*Sit* as little as possible; put no faith in any thought that was not born outdoors and in free

movement—one in which the muscles too do not celebrate a festival. All prejudices come from the bowels.—The sedentary backside—I have said it once before—the true *sin* against the Holy Spirit.—

- ² Closely related to the question of nutrition is the question of *place* and *climate*. No one is free to live everywhere; and someone who has great tasks to accomplish, tasks that call upon all his strength, has a very narrow choice indeed. The influence of climate on *metabolism*, its slowing or speeding up, reaches so far that a mistake in place and climate can not only estrange someone from his task but withhold it from him altogether: he never catches sight of it. His animal vigor has never grown great enough to attain that freedom which overflows into the most spiritual sphere, where someone recognizes: I alone can do *this*... The slightest sluggishness of the bowels, once it has become a bad habit, is quite enough to turn a genius into something mediocre, something “German”; the German climate alone is sufficient to discourage even strong and heroically constituted bowels. The tempo of metabolism stands in an exact relation to the mobility or lameness of the spirit’s *feet*; the “spirit” itself is, after all, only a form of this metabolism. Assemble the places where there are and have been people of spirit, where wit, refinement, malice have been part of happiness, where genius has almost inevitably made itself at home: they all have exceptionally dry air. Paris, Provence, Florence, Jerusalem, Athens—these names prove something: genius is *conditioned* by dry air, by clear skies—that is, by rapid metabolism, by the possibility of continually replenishing great, even tremendous quantities of strength. I have a case in mind in which a spirit endowed for greatness and freedom became narrow, withdrawn, a specialist and a sourpuss, simply through a lack of instinctive subtlety in matters of climate. And I myself could ultimately have become such a case, had illness not forced me to see reason, to reflect on the reason inherent in reality. Now that long practice has taught me to read the effects of climate and weather in myself as on a very fine and reliable instrument, and even on a short journey, say from Turin to Milan, I register physiologically the change in degrees of humidity, I think with horror of the *uncanny* fact that, apart from the last 10 years, the years of mortal dan-

ger, my life has always been spent in the wrong places, places downright *forbidden* to me. Naumburg, Schulpforta, Thuringia in general, Leipzig, Basel, Venice—so many places of disaster for my physiology. If I have no welcome memory at all of my entire childhood and youth, it would be foolish to invoke so-called “moral” causes here—for example, the undeniable lack of *adequate* company: for that lack persists today as it always has, without preventing me from being cheerful and brave. Rather, ignorance in matters of physiology—the accursed “idealism”—is the true calamity in my life, its superfluous and stupid element, something from which no good has grown, for which there is no compensation, no counterbalance. The consequences of this “idealism” explain to me all the mistakes, all the great instinctual aberrations and “modesties” that led me away from the *task* of my life: that I became a philologist, for example—why not at least a physician, or something else that opens one’s eyes? In my Basel years my whole spiritual diet, including the division of my day, was a completely senseless misuse of exceptional powers, without any supply of strength remotely sufficient to cover the expenditure, without even a thought for expenditure and replenishment. Every finer sense of self was lacking, every *safeguard* of a commanding instinct; it was a putting oneself on a level with just anyone, a “selflessness,” a forgetting of one’s distance—something I never forgive myself. When I was almost at the end, *because* I was almost at the end, I began to reflect on this fundamental unreason of my life—“idealism.” Only *illness* brought me to reason.—

- 3 The choice of food; the choice of climate and place—the third thing in which one must make no mistake at any price is the choice of *one’s own* kind of *recreation*. Here too, depending on the degree to which a spirit is unique, the bounds of what is permissible—that is, *useful*—to it grow narrower and narrower. In my case all *reading* belongs among my recreations: consequently among the things that release me from myself, that let me stroll through other people’s fields of knowledge and souls—things I no longer take seriously. Reading gives me recreation precisely from *my* seriousness. In times of deep work one sees no books around me: I would take care not to let anyone speak,

let alone think, in my presence. And that, after all, would be reading... Has anyone actually observed that, in that deep tension to which pregnancy condemns the spirit and, at bottom, the whole organism, chance, every kind of stimulus from outside, acts too violently, “strikes home” too deeply? One must avoid chance, stimuli from outside, as much as possible; a kind of walling oneself in is among the first acts of instinctive wisdom in spiritual pregnancy. Shall I allow an *alien* thought to climb secretly over the wall?—And that, after all, would be reading... The time of work and fruitfulness is followed by the time of recreation: come along, you pleasant, you spirited, you clever books!—Will they be German books?... I have to count back half a year to catch myself with a book in my hand. What was it again?—An excellent study by Victor Brochard, *les Sceptiques Grecs*, in which good use is also made of my Laertiana. The skeptics, the only *honorable* type among that tribe of philosophers with their two to five layers of ambiguity!... Otherwise I almost always take refuge in the same books, a small number at bottom, the books *proven* for me in particular. Perhaps it is not in my nature to read much or widely: a reading room makes me ill. Nor is it in my nature to love much or widely. Caution, even hostility toward new books, belongs to my instinct rather more than “tolerance,” “generosity of heart,” and other forms of “love of one’s neighbor”... It is to a small number of older French writers that I keep returning: I believe only in French culture and regard everything else in Europe that calls itself “culture” as a misunderstanding, not to speak of German culture... The few instances of high culture I found in Germany were all of French origin, above all Mrs. Cosima Wagner, by far the foremost voice in matters of taste that I have heard.—That I do not read Pascal but *love* him, as Christianity’s most instructive victim, slowly murdered, first bodily, then psychologically, the whole logic of this most horrifying form of inhuman cruelty; that I have something of Montaigne’s mischievous exuberance in my spirit—who knows? perhaps in my body too; that my artist’s taste defends the names Molière, Corneille, and Racine, not without fury at a savage genius like Shakespeare: all this does not, in the end, prevent even the very latest French writers from being charming company for me. I simply cannot see in what century of history one could fish out a collection of psy-

chologists as curious and at the same time as delicate as those in present-day Paris: I name, by way of example—for their number is by no means small—the gentlemen Paul Bourget, Pierre Loti, Gyp, Meilhac, Anatole France, Jules Lemaître, or, to single out one of the strong race, a true Latin for whom I have a particular fondness, Guy de Maupassant. Between ourselves, I prefer *this* generation even to their great teachers, who have all been spoiled by German philosophy (Mr. Taine, for example, by Hegel, to whom he owes his misunderstanding of great people and ages). Wherever Germany reaches, it *spoils* culture. Only the war “redeemed” the spirit in France... Stendhal, one of the loveliest accidents of my life—for everything that marks an epoch in it has come to me by chance, never by recommendation—is quite priceless with his anticipatory psychologist’s eye, with his grasp of facts that recalls the proximity of the greatest man of fact (from the claw, Napoleon—); finally, not least as an *honest* atheist—a scarce and scarcely discoverable species in France, with all due respect to Prosper Mérimée... Perhaps I am even jealous of Stendhal? He took from me the best atheist’s joke, the one that I above all could have made: “God’s only excuse is that he does not exist”... I myself have said somewhere: what has been the greatest objection to existence so far? *God*...

- ⁴ *Heinrich Heine* gave me my highest conception of the lyric poet. I search in vain through all the realms of the millennia for music as sweet and passionate. He possessed that divine malice without which I cannot conceive of perfection—I assess the value of people, of races, by how essential they find it to understand the god as inseparable from the satyr.—And how he handles German! One day it will be said that Heine and I were by far the foremost artists of the German language—at an incalculable distance from everything mere Germans have done with it.—I must be deeply related to *Byron’s* Manfred: I found all these abysses within me—at thirteen I was ripe for this work. I have no word, only a look, for those who dare utter the word Faust in the presence of Manfred. The Germans are *incapable* of any conception of greatness: Schumann is the proof. In fury at this saccharine Saxon, I expressly composed a counter-overture to Manfred, of which Hans von Bülow said that he had never seen anything like it

on music paper: it was the rape of Euterpe.—When I seek my highest formula for *Shakespeare*, I find only this: he conceived the type of Caesar. One does not divine such a thing—one is it or one is not. The great poet draws *only* from his own reality—to the point where afterward he can no longer bear his work... When I have glanced into my Zarathustra, I pace up and down the room for half an hour, unable to master an unbearable spasm of sobbing.—I know no reading more heartrending than Shakespeare: what must a person have suffered to have such a need to be a buffoon!—Does one *understand* Hamlet? Not doubt, but *certainty* is what drives one mad... But one must be deep, an abyss, a philosopher, to feel this way... We are all afraid of the truth... And, let me confess it: I am instinctively sure and certain that Lord Bacon is the author—the torturer of his own animal self—of this uncanniest kind of literature: what do I care about the pitiable chatter of American muddleheads and shallow minds? But the power to achieve the mightiest reality of vision is not merely compatible with the mightiest power for action, for monstrous action, for crime—*it actually presupposes it*... We know far too little about Lord Bacon, the first realist in every great sense of the word, to know all that he did, what he wanted, what he experienced within himself... And to the devil with you, gentlemen critics! Suppose I had christened my Zarathustra with someone else's name, Richard Wagner's, for example: the acumen of two millennia would not have sufficed to guess that the author of "Human, All Too Human" is the visionary of Zarathustra...

- 5 Here, where I speak of the recreations of my life, I need a word to express my gratitude for what has given me by far the deepest and most heartfelt recreation in it. This was, without any doubt, my more intimate association with Richard Wagner. I set little store by the rest of my human relationships; at no price would I give up the days at Tribschen from my life, days of trust, of cheerfulness, of sublime accidents—of *deep* moments... I do not know what others experienced with Wagner: no cloud ever passed across *our* sky.—And this brings me back once more to France—I have no arguments, only a contemptuous curl of the lip left for Wagnerians and all their kind who believe they honor

Wagner by finding him like *themselves*... Being as I am, in my deepest instincts a stranger to everything German, so that the mere proximity of a German slows my digestion, my first contact with Wagner was also the first time in my life I could breathe freely: I felt and revered him as a *foreign land*, as an opposite, as a living protest against all “German virtues.”—We who were children in the swamp air of the fifties are necessarily pessimists about the concept “German”; we cannot be anything but revolutionaries—we will admit no state of affairs in which the sanctimonious hypocrite has the upper hand. It is entirely indifferent to me whether today he changes his colors, dresses in scarlet and puts on hussar uniforms... Well then! Wagner was a revolutionary—he ran away from the Germans... As an *artist*, one has no home in Europe except Paris; the delicacy in all five artistic senses that Wagner’s art presupposes, the fingers sensitive to nuance, the psychological morbidity, are found only in Paris. Nowhere else is there this passion in questions of form, this seriousness about staging—it is the quintessential Parisian seriousness. In Germany there is no conception at all of the tremendous ambition that lives in the soul of a Parisian artist. The German is good-natured—Wagner was anything but good-natured... But I have already said enough (in “Beyond Good and Evil,” S. 256f.) about where Wagner belongs, where he has his closest kin: it is French late Romanticism, that high-flying and uplifting kind of artist such as Delacroix, such as Berlioz, with a foundation of sickness, of incurability in their nature, all fanatics of *expression*, virtuosos through and through... Who was Wagner’s first *intelligent* follower at all? Charles Baudelaire, the same man who first understood Delacroix, that typical decadent in whom a whole generation of artists recognized itself—perhaps he was also the last... What have I never forgiven Wagner? That he *condescended* to the Germans—that he became a German of the Reich... Wherever Germany reaches, it *spoils* culture.—

- ⁶ All things considered, I could not have endured my youth without Wagner’s music. For I was *condemned* to Germans. When one wants to escape an unbearable pressure, one needs hashish. Well then, I needed Wagner. Wagner is the supreme antidote to everything German—poison, I do not deny it... From the

moment there was a piano score of *Tristan*—my compliments, Mr. von Bülow!—I was a Wagnerian. I saw Wagner's earlier works as beneath me—still too vulgar, too "German"... But to this day I seek a work of equally dangerous fascination, of an infinity as terrifying and sweet as *Tristan's*—I seek in vain through all the arts. All the strangeness of Lionardo da Vinci is stripped of its magic at the first note of *Tristan*. This work is unquestionably Wagner's unsurpassed achievement; he recovered from it with the *Meistersinger* and the *Ring*. To grow healthier—that is a *regression* in a nature like Wagner's... I count it a piece of good fortune of the first rank to have lived at the right time, and precisely among Germans, so as to be *ripe* for this work: that is how far the psychologist's curiosity goes in me. The world is poor for anyone who has never been sick enough for this "voluptuous bliss of hell": one is permitted, almost obliged, to use a mystic's formula here.—I think I know better than anyone the tremendous things Wagner can do, the fifty worlds of unfamiliar rapture for which no one but he had wings; and being as I am, strong enough to turn even the most questionable and dangerous things to my advantage and grow stronger through them, I call Wagner the great benefactor of my life. What makes us akin—that we have suffered more deeply, even from one another, than people of this century could suffer—will forever bring our names together again; and as surely as Wagner among Germans is nothing but a misunderstanding, so surely am I one and will always remain one.—Two centuries of psychological and artistic discipline *first*, my Germanic gentlemen!... But that cannot be made up for.—

- ⁷ One more word for the most discerning ears: what I actually want from music. That it be cheerful and deep, like an afternoon in October. That it be distinctive, exuberant, tender, a sweet little woman of malice and grace... I will never allow that a German *could* know what music is. Those called German musicians, the greatest above all, are *foreigners*, Slavs, Croats, Italians, Netherlanders—or Jews; otherwise, Germans of the strong race, *extinct* Germans, like Heinrich Schütz, Bach, and Handel. I myself am still Pole enough to give up the rest of music for Chopin: for three reasons I make an exception for Wagner's *Siegfried-Idyll*, perhaps also for a few things by Liszt, who has the

noble orchestral accents beyond all other musicians; finally, for everything that has grown beyond the Alps—on *this* side... I could not do without Rossini, still less without *my* South in music, the music of my Venetian maestro Pietro Gasti. And when I say beyond the Alps, I really mean only Venice. When I seek another word for music, I find only the word Venice. I cannot distinguish tears from music—I cannot think of happiness, of the *South*, without a shudder of apprehension.

By the bridge I stood
lately in the brown night.
From afar came singing;
in golden drops it welled
over the trembling surface.
Gondolas, lights, music—
drunkenly it floated out into dusk...

My soul, a stringed instrument,
sang to itself, invisibly touched,
a gondola song with it in secret,
trembling with many-colored bliss.
—Was anyone listening to it?...

- ⁸ In all this—in the choice of food, of place and climate, of recreation—an instinct of self-preservation commands, expressing itself most unequivocally as an instinct of *self-defense*. Not to see many things, not to hear them, not to let them approach one—the first act of wisdom, the first proof that one is not an accident but a necessity. The common word for this instinct of self-defense is *taste*. Its imperative commands not only that one say No where Yes would be a “selflessness,” but also that one *say No as little as possible*. To separate oneself, to part from whatever would make a No necessary again and again. The reason for this is that defensive expenditures, however small, when they become the rule, the habit, bring about an extraordinary and wholly unnecessary impoverishment. Our *great* expenditures are the small ones we make most often. Warding

off, not letting things approach, is an expenditure—let us not deceive ourselves about this—a strength *squandered* on negative purposes. Merely through the constant need for defense, one can become too weak to defend oneself any longer.—Suppose I stepped out of my house and found, instead of quiet, aristocratic Turin, the German small town: my instinct would have to bar the way, to repel everything assailing it from this flattened and cowardly world. Or I might find the German metropolis, this vice made architecture, where nothing grows, where every single thing, good and bad, has been dragged in. Would I not have to become a *hedgehog*?—But to have spines is a waste, a double luxury indeed, when one is free to have no spines but open hands...

Another act of wisdom and self-defense consists in *reacting as seldom as possible* and withdrawing from situations and conditions in which one would be condemned, as it were, to hang up one's "freedom," one's initiative, and become a mere reagent. I take dealings with books as an illustration. The scholar who at bottom does nothing but "pore over" books—the philologist, at a modest estimate, some 200 a day—eventually loses the capacity to think for himself altogether. If he is not poring, he is not thinking. He *responds* to a stimulus (—a thought he has read) when he thinks—in the end he merely reacts. The scholar spends all his strength in saying Yes and No, in criticizing what has already been thought—he himself no longer thinks... His instinct of self-defense has become brittle; otherwise he would defend himself against books. The scholar—a decadent.—I have seen it with my own eyes: gifted natures, richly and freely endowed, already in their thirties "read to ruin," mere matches that must be struck to give off sparks—"thoughts."—Early in the morning, at daybreak, in all one's freshness, in the dawn of one's strength, to read *a book*—that is what I call vicious!—

- ⁹ At this point it can no longer be avoided: I must give the real answer to the question of *how one becomes what one is*. And with that I touch upon the masterstroke in the art of self-preservation—of *selfishness*... Suppose, namely, that the task, the calling, the *destiny* of the task lies far beyond the average measure: then no danger would be greater than catching sight of oneself *with* this task.

Becoming what one is presupposes that one has not the remotest inkling of *what* one is. From this perspective, even life's *missteps* have their own meaning and value, the temporary byways and wrong turns, the delays, the "modesties," the seriousness squandered on tasks that lie beyond the task. Here a great wisdom, even the highest wisdom, finds expression: where "know yourself" would be a recipe for ruin, forgetting oneself, *misunderstanding* oneself, making oneself smaller, narrower, more mediocre becomes reason itself. In moral terms: love of one's neighbor, living for others and other things, *can* be the protective measure that preserves the most adamant selfhood: this is the exceptional case in which, against my rule and conviction, I take the side of the "selfless" drives: here they work in the service of *selfishness*, *self-discipline*.—One must keep the whole surface of consciousness—consciousness is a surface—clear of any of the great imperatives. Beware even of every grand word, every grand attitude! All are dangers that the instinct may "understand itself" too soon.—Meanwhile the organizing "idea," the one called to rule, grows and grows in the depths—it begins to command, it slowly leads back from byways and wrong turns, it prepares *individual* qualities and capabilities that will one day prove indispensable as means to the whole—it trains all the *serving* capacities in succession before letting anything be heard of the dominant task, of "goal," "purpose," "meaning."—Seen from this side, my life is simply marvelous. For the task of a *reevaluation of values*, perhaps more capacities were needed than have ever dwelt together in a single individual, above all opposing capacities that must not be allowed to hinder or destroy one another. An order of rank among capacities; distance; the art of separating without making enemies; mixing nothing, "reconciling" nothing; a tremendous multiplicity that is nevertheless the opposite of chaos—this was the precondition, the long secret labor and artistry of my instinct. Its *higher guardianship* proved so strong that in no case did I even suspect what was growing within me—that all my abilities suddenly *sprang forth* one day, ripe, in their final perfection. I have no memory of ever having exerted myself—no trace of *struggle* can be found in my life; I am the opposite of a heroic nature. To "will" something, to "strive" for something, to have a "goal," a "wish" in view—all this is outside my experience. Even at this moment I look

out upon my future—a *wide* future!—as upon a smooth sea: no longing ripples over it. I do not in the least want anything to be different from what it is; I myself do not want to become different... But that is how I have always lived. I have had no wish. Someone who, after his forty-fourth year, can say that he has never exerted himself for *honors*, for *women*, for *money*!—Not that I have lacked them... Thus one day I was a university professor—I had never remotely thought of such a thing, for I was barely 24 years old. Thus, two years earlier, one day I was a philologist: in the sense that my *first* philological work, my beginning in every sense, was requested for publication by my teacher Ritschl for his “Rheinisches Museum” (*Ritschl*—I say it with reverence—the only scholar of genius I have set eyes on to this day. He possessed that pleasant corruption which distinguishes us Thuringians and with which even a German becomes likable: we prefer the back routes even in reaching the truth. With these words I would by no means wish to have underrated my fellow countryman from nearer home, the *clever* Leopold von Ranke...).

- 10 I will be asked why I have related all these small things, things indifferent by conventional judgment; I am harming myself by doing so, all the more if I am destined to stand for great tasks. Answer: these small things—nutrition, place, climate, recreation, the whole casuistry of selfishness—are more important, beyond all conception, than everything people have taken to be important until now. Here, precisely, one must begin to *relearn*. What humanity has so far seriously considered are not even realities, mere imaginings, more strictly speaking, *lies* born of the bad instincts of sick natures, harmful in the deepest sense—all the concepts “God,” “soul,” “virtue,” “sin,” “the beyond,” “truth,” “eternal life”... Yet people have sought the greatness of human nature, its “divinity,” in them... All questions of politics, of social order, of education have been falsified to their very foundations by taking the most harmful people for great people—by teaching contempt for the “small” things, meaning the fundamental concerns of life itself... If I now compare myself with those people hitherto honored as the *foremost* human beings, the difference is palpable. I do not even count these supposedly “foremost” among human beings at all—to me they are

humanity's rejects, offspring of sickness and vengeful instincts: nothing but baleful, fundamentally incurable monsters who take revenge on life... I want to be their opposite: my privilege is to have the highest sensitivity to every sign of healthy instincts. There is no morbid trait in me; even in times of severe illness I have not become morbid; one searches my nature in vain for a trace of fanaticism. No one will be able to point to any moment of my life when I struck a presumptuous or grandiloquent pose. Grandiose posturing does *not* belong to greatness; anyone who needs poses at all is *false*... Beware all picturesque people!—Life has become easy for me, easiest when it demanded the hardest things of me. Anyone who saw me during the seventy days of this autumn, when, without interruption, I did nothing but things of the first rank that no one can imitate—or show me how to do—with a responsibility for all the millennia after me, will have perceived no trace of tension in me, but all the more an overflowing freshness and cheerfulness. I have never eaten with more pleasant feelings, never slept better.—I know no other way of dealing with great tasks than *play*: as a sign of greatness, this is an essential prerequisite. The slightest constraint, the gloomy face, any harsh note in the throat are all objections to a person—how much more to his work!... One must have no nerves... To *suffer* from solitude is also an objection—I have only ever suffered from “multitude”... At an absurdly early age, at seven, I already knew that no human word would ever reach me: has anyone ever seen me saddened by it?—To this day I have the same affability toward everyone; I even treat the lowliest with every distinction: in all this there is not a grain of arrogance, of secret contempt. Anyone I despise *divines* that I despise him: by my mere existence I outrage everything that has bad blood in its veins... My formula for greatness in a human being is *love of fate*: that one wants nothing to be different, not forward, not backward, not for all eternity. Not merely to bear what is necessary, still less to conceal it—all idealism is mendacity in the face of what is necessary—but to *love* it...

Why I Write Such Good Books



¹ I am one thing, my writings another.—Before I speak of the writings themselves, let me touch on the question of their being understood or *not* understood. I do so as casually as decency permits: for this question is not yet timely at all. I myself am not yet timely; some are born posthumously.—One day there will be a need for institutions in which people live and teach as I understand living and teaching; perhaps special chairs will even be established for the interpretation of Zarathustra. But it would utterly contradict me to expect ears *and hands for my* truths today: that people do not hear me today, that they do not know how to receive anything from me, is not merely understandable; to me it even seems right. I do not want to be mistaken for someone else—and that means not mistaking myself for someone else.—To say it again, there is little evidence of “ill will” in my life; I could scarcely recount a single case even of literary “ill will.” On the other hand, far too much of *sheer stupidity!*... It seems to me one of the rarest distinctions a person can confer upon himself to take up a book of mine—I even assume he takes off his shoes to do so, to say nothing of boots... When Dr. Heinrich von Stein once complained in all sincerity that he did not understand a word of my Zarathustra, I told him that this was as it should be: to have understood six sentences from it—that is, to have *lived* them—would raise him to a higher order of mortals than “modern” people could

reach. With *this* feeling of distance, how *could* I so much as wish to be read by the “moderns” I know!—My triumph is precisely the reverse of Schopenhauer’s—I say, “I am not read; I will not be read.”—Not that I would underrate the pleasure I have several times derived from the *innocence* with which my writings have been rejected. Just this summer, at a time when my weighty, all-too-weighty literature might perhaps have thrown all the rest of literature off balance, a professor at the University of Berlin benevolently gave me to understand that I really ought to try a different form: no one read anything like this.—In the end it was not Germany but Switzerland that supplied the two extreme cases. An essay by Dr. V. Widmann in the *Bund* on Beyond Good and Evil, entitled “Nietzsche’s Dangerous Book,” and an overall account of my books by Mr. Karl Spitteler, likewise in the *Bund*, mark an extreme in my life—I take care not to say of what... The latter treated my Zarathustra, for example, as an *advanced exercise in style*, expressing the wish that I might later see to the content as well; Dr. Widmann conveyed his respect for the courage with which I strove to abolish all decent feelings.—By a small trick of chance, every sentence here was a truth turned on its head, with a consistency I admired: at bottom one had only to “revalue all values” to hit the nail on the head about me, and even remarkably well—instead of hitting my head with a nail... So let me try all the harder to explain.—In the end, no one can hear more in things, books included, than he already knows. What we have no access to through lived experience, we have no ear for. Now let us imagine an extreme case: a book speaks of nothing but experiences entirely beyond the possibility of frequent or even infrequent experience—it is the *first* language for a new range of experiences. In this case, quite simply, nothing is heard, accompanied by the acoustic illusion that where nothing is heard, *nothing is there*... This, after all, is my usual experience and, if you like, the *originality* of my experience. Whoever thought he had understood something of me had fashioned something out of me in his own image—not infrequently my opposite, an “idealist,” for example; whoever had understood nothing of me denied that I deserved any consideration at all.—The word “*overman*,” designating a type of supreme human flourishing, in contrast to “modern” people, to “good” people, to Christians and

nihilists—a word that, in the mouth of Zarathustra, the *destroyer* of morality, becomes a very thought-provoking word—has almost everywhere been understood, in perfect innocence, in the sense of those values whose opposite is embodied in the figure of Zarathustra: that is, as the “idealistic” type of a higher kind of human being, half “saint,” half “genius”... Other learned cattle have suspected me of Darwinism on its account: people have even recognized in it that “hero worship” I so maliciously rejected, the cult of that great unwitting and unwilling counterfeiter, Carlyle. Anyone into whose ear I whispered that he should look for a Cesare Borgia rather than a Parsifal could not believe his ears.—I must be forgiven for having no curiosity whatever about reviews of my books, especially in newspapers. My friends and my publishers know this and do not speak to me of such things. In one particular case I once saw everything that had been perpetrated against a single book—it was *Beyond Good and Evil*; I could give an entertaining account of it. Would anyone believe that the *Nationalzeitung*—a Prussian newspaper, I should mention for my foreign readers; I myself, with your permission, read only the *Journal des Débats*—quite seriously contrived to understand the book as a “sign of the times,” as the genuine, authentic *Junker philosophy* for which the *Kreuzzeitung* merely lacked the courage?...

- ² This was said for Germans: for everywhere else I have readers—nothing but *select* intelligences, proven characters schooled in high positions and duties; I even have genuine geniuses among my readers. In Vienna, in St. Petersburg, in Stockholm, in Copenhagen, in Paris and New York—everywhere I have been discovered: I have *not* been discovered in Europe’s flatland, Germany... And, to confess it, I take still greater pleasure in those who do not read me, people who have never heard either my name or the word philosophy; yet wherever I go, here in Turin for example, every face brightens and grows kinder at the sight of me. What has flattered me most so far is that old market women will not rest until they have picked out the sweetest of their grapes for me. One must be a philosopher *to that extent*... It is not for nothing that the Poles are called the French among the Slavs. A charming Russian woman will not mistake for an

instant where I belong. I cannot manage to become solemn; at most I become embarrassed... To think German, to feel German—I can do anything, but *that* is beyond my powers... My old teacher Ritschl even maintained that I conceived my philological treatises like a Parisian novelist—absurdly gripping. In Paris itself people marvel at “all my audacities and subtleties”—the phrase is Monsieur Taine’s; I fear that even in the highest forms of the dithyramb, something of that salt is found mixed into me which never becomes stupid—“German”—wit... I cannot do otherwise. God help me! Amen.—We all know, some even from experience, what a long-eared ass is. Well then, I dare to claim that I have the smallest ears. This interests the little women more than a little—it seems to me they feel better understood by me?... I am the supreme *anti-ass*, and thus a monster of world-historical proportions—I am, in Greek and not only in Greek, the *Antichrist*...

- 3 I have some idea of my privileges as a writer; in particular cases I have also been shown how thoroughly familiarity with my writings “spoils” the taste. Other books simply become unbearable, philosophical books least bearable of all. It is a distinction beyond compare to enter this noble and delicate world—one absolutely must not be German to do so; in the end it is a distinction one must have earned. But anyone akin to me in the *height* of his willing experiences true ecstasies of learning here: for I come from heights no bird has ever reached in flight; I know abysses into which no foot has yet strayed. I have been told that it is impossible to put down a book of mine—that I even disturb a night’s rest... There is simply no prouder and at the same time more refined kind of book: here and there they attain the highest that can be attained on earth, cynicism; they must be conquered with the most delicate fingers as much as with the bravest fists. Every infirmity of soul bars one from them once and for all, even any dyspepsia: one must have no nerves, one must have a cheerful belly. It is not merely the poverty of a soul, its stuffy backroom air, that bars one, but far more the cowardice, the uncleanness, the secret vengefulness in the bowels: a word from me drives every bad instinct into the face. Among my acquaintances I have several experimental animals through whom I bring home to myself the

different, instructively different reactions to my writings. Those who want nothing to do with their content—my so-called friends, for example—become “impersonal” about them: they congratulate me on having come “so far” again—and there is progress, too, they say, in the greater cheerfulness of the tone... The thoroughly vicious “spirits,” the “beautiful souls,” those who are liars through and through, have absolutely no idea what to do with these books—and therefore see them as *beneath* them, the beautiful consistency of all “beautiful souls.” The cattle among my acquaintances—mere Germans, with your permission—give me to understand that they are not always of my opinion, but sometimes they are... I have heard this even about Zarathustra... Likewise, any “femininity” in a person, even in a man, closes the gate to me: such a person will never enter this labyrinth of audacious insights. One must never have spared oneself, one must have *hardness* among one’s habits, to be in good spirits and cheerful among nothing but hard truths. When I imagine the picture of a perfect reader, it always becomes a monster of courage and curiosity, with something supple, cunning, cautious besides, a born adventurer and discoverer. Finally: I could find no better way of saying to whom alone I speak, at bottom, than Zarathustra’s way: to *whom* alone does he want to tell his riddle?

“To you, bold seekers, tempters, and whoever has ever embarked with cunning
sails upon terrible seas—
to you, drunk with riddles, glad of twilight, whose soul is lured by flutes into
every treacherous abyss:
—for you do not want to grope along a thread with a cowardly hand; and
where you can *divine*, you hate to *deduce*...”

- ⁴ Let me also say a general word about my *art of style*. To *communicate* a state, an inner tension of feeling, through signs, including the tempo of these signs—that is the meaning of every style; and since the multiplicity of inner states in me is extraordinary, I have many possibilities of style—the most multifarious art of style that any human being has ever commanded. Every style is *good* that truly communicates an inner state, that makes no mistake about the signs,

about the tempo of the signs, about the *gestures*—all the laws of the periodic sentence are an art of gesture. Here my instinct is infallible.—Good style *in itself*—sheer stupidity, mere “idealism”: like the “beautiful *in itself*,” the “good *in itself*,” the “thing *in itself*”... Always assuming that there are ears—that there are people capable and worthy of the same feeling, that those to whom one *may* communicate oneself are not lacking.—My Zarathustra, for example, is still looking for such people—ah, he will have to keep looking for a long time!—One must be *worthy* of hearing him... And until then there will be no one who comprehends the *art* lavished here: no one has ever had so many new, unheard-of artistic means to lavish, means truly created for the first time for this purpose. That anything like this was possible in the German language of all languages remained to be proved: I myself would previously have been the most vehement in denying it. Before me, no one knows what can be done with the German language—what can be done with language at all. The art of the *great* rhythm, the *grand style* of the periodic sentence, expressing a tremendous rise and fall of sublime, of superhuman passion, was first discovered by me; with a dithyramb like the last in the *third* Zarathustra, entitled “The Seven Seals,” I flew a thousand miles beyond what had been called poetry until then.

- 5 That a *psychologist* without equal speaks from my writings is perhaps the first insight a good reader reaches—a reader such as I deserve, who reads me as good old philologists read their Horace. The propositions on which basically everyone agrees—not to mention the commonplace philosophers, moralists, and other empty pots and cabbage heads—appear in my work as naïve blunders: for example, the belief that “unegoistic” and “egoistic” are opposites, when the ego itself is merely a “higher swindle,” an “ideal”... There are *neither* egoistic *nor* unegoistic actions: both concepts are psychological nonsense. Or the proposition “man strives for happiness”... Or the proposition “happiness is the reward of virtue”... Or the proposition “pleasure and displeasure are opposites”... Morality, humanity’s Circe, has falsified everything psychological through and through—*moralized* it—right down to the appalling nonsense that love is supposed to be something “unegoistic”... One must be firmly settled in *oneself*, one

must stand bravely on one's own two legs, or one *cannot* love at all. The little women, after all, know this only too well: they do not give a damn for selfless, merely objective men... May I venture the conjecture, in passing, that I *know* the little women? That belongs to my Dionysian dowry. Who knows? Perhaps I am the first psychologist of the Eternal Feminine. They all love me—an old story: except for the *ill-constituted* little women, the “emancipated,” who lack the capacity to bear children.—Fortunately I have no intention of letting myself be torn apart: the perfect woman tears apart when she loves... I know these lovable maenads... Ah, what a dangerous, stealthy, subterranean little beast of prey! And so pleasant with it!... A little woman running after her revenge would run down fate itself.—Woman is unspeakably more evil than man, and cleverer too; goodness in a woman is already a form of *degeneration*... In all so-called “beautiful souls” there is a physiological disorder at bottom—I do not say everything, or I would become medicynical. The struggle for *equal* rights is itself a symptom of sickness: every physician knows that.—The more woman a woman is, the more she fights tooth and nail against rights of any kind: the natural state, the eternal *war* between the sexes, gives her by far the foremost rank.—Have people had ears for my definition of love? It is the only one worthy of a philosopher. Love—war in its means, the deadly hatred of the sexes at its core.—Have people heard my answer to the question of how to *cure* a woman—“redeem” her? Make her pregnant. Woman needs children, man is always merely a means: thus spoke Zarathustra.—“The emancipation of woman”—that is the instinctive hatred of the *ill-constituted* woman, that is, the woman unfit to bear children, for the well-constituted woman—the struggle against “man” is always merely a means, a pretext, a tactic. By raising *themselves* up as “woman in herself,” as the “higher woman,” as a female “idealist,” they want to bring *down* the general level of woman's rank; there is no surer means of doing so than a university-preparatory education, trousers, and political rights as voting cattle. At bottom, the emancipated are the *anarchists* in the world of the “Eternal Feminine,” those who have come off badly, whose deepest instinct is revenge... A whole species of the most malignant “idealism”—which also occurs in men, incidentally, for example in Henrik Ibsen, that typical old maid—aims to *poison*

the good conscience, the naturalness of sexual love... And to leave no doubt about my attitude in this matter, as honorable as it is strict, I will give one more proposition from my moral code against *vice*: with the word vice I combat every kind of unnaturalness—or, if one loves fine words, idealism. The proposition runs: “The preaching of chastity is a public incitement to unnaturalness. Every contempt for sexual life, every defilement of it through the concept ‘unclean,’ is the crime against life itself—is the true sin against the holy spirit of life.” —

- ⁶ To give an idea of myself as a psychologist, I take a curious piece of psychology that occurs in *Beyond Good and Evil*—I forbid, incidentally, any conjecture about whom I am describing in this passage. “The genius of the heart, such as that great hidden one possesses, the tempter-god and born piper of consciences, whose voice knows how to descend into the underworld of every soul, who speaks not a word, casts not a glance, without some careful thought and subtle twist of enticement within it, whose mastery includes knowing how to appear—and not as what he is, but as what offers those who follow him *one more* compulsion to press ever closer to him, to follow him ever more inwardly and thoroughly... The genius of the heart, which silences everything loud and self-satisfied and teaches it to listen, which smooths rough souls and gives them a new longing to taste: to lie still like a mirror, so that the deep sky may be reflected upon them... The genius of the heart, which teaches the clumsy and overhasty hand to hesitate and grasp more delicately; which divines the hidden and forgotten treasure, the drop of goodness and sweet spirituality beneath murky, thick ice, and is a divining rod for every grain of gold long buried in a dungeon of mud and sand... The genius of the heart, from whose touch everyone goes away richer, not favored by grace and surprised, not gladdened and burdened as though by another’s goods, but richer in himself, newer to himself than before, broken open, breathed upon and sounded out by a thawing wind, perhaps more uncertain, tenderer, more fragile, more broken, but full of hopes that have no name as yet, full of new will and surging, full of new discontent and ebbing...”

The Birth of Tragedy



- ¹ To do justice to *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872), one will have to forget a few things. It *made its impact*, and even fascinated, through what was mistaken in it—through its application to *Wagnerism*, as though that were a symptom of *ascent*. For that very reason, this work was an event in Wagner’s life: only from then on were great hopes attached to the name Wagner. Even today I am reminded of this, sometimes in the middle of *Parsifal*: how it is really *I* who bear the responsibility for so lofty an opinion of this movement’s *cultural value* having gained the upper hand.—I have several times found the work cited as “The Rebirth of Tragedy out of the Spirit of Music”: people had ears only for a new formula for *Wagner’s* art, intention, task—and in the process failed to hear what was fundamentally valuable in the work. “The Greeks and Pessimism”: that would have been a less ambiguous title—as the first instruction in how the Greeks dealt with pessimism, by what means they *overcame* it... Tragedy itself is the proof that the Greeks were *not* pessimists: Schopenhauer went wrong here, as he went wrong in everything.—Taken up with some neutrality, *The Birth of Tragedy* looks very untimely: one would never dream that it was *begun* amid the thunder of the Battle of Wörth. I thought these problems through before the walls of Metz, on cold September nights, while tending the sick; one might sooner believe the work was fifty years older. It is politically indifferent—“un-German,” people would say today—it smells offensively Hegelian; only in a few

formulas does Schopenhauer's undertaker perfume cling to it. An "idea"—the opposition between Dionysian and Apollonian—translated into metaphysics; history itself as the unfolding of this "idea"; in tragedy, the opposition sublated into unity; seen through this lens, things that had never before looked each other in the face suddenly set opposite one another, illuminated and *comprehended* through one another... Opera, for example, and the Revolution... The book's two decisive *innovations* are, first, its understanding of the *Dionysian* phenomenon among the Greeks—it gives the first psychology of that phenomenon, it sees in it the one root of all Greek art. The other is its understanding of Socratism: Socrates recognized for the first time as an instrument of Greek dissolution, as a typical decadent. "Rationality" *against* instinct. "Rationality" at any price as a dangerous force, a force undermining life!—A deep, hostile silence about Christianity throughout the book: it is neither Apollonian nor Dionysian; it *negates* all *aesthetic* values—the only values *The Birth of Tragedy* recognizes: it is nihilistic in the deepest sense, while in the Dionysian symbol the furthest limit of *affirmation* is reached. Once, Christian priests are alluded to as a "treacherous breed of dwarfs," of "underground creatures"...

- 2 This beginning is remarkable beyond measure. I had *discovered* the only image and parallel history offers for my innermost experience—and in doing so had become the first to comprehend the marvelous phenomenon of the Dionysian. Likewise, my recognition of Socrates as a decadent furnished wholly unambiguous proof of how little the sureness of my psychological grasp would be endangered by any moral idiosyncrasy: morality itself as a symptom of decadence is an innovation, a singular achievement of the first rank in the history of knowledge. How high I had leaped, with both these insights, above the pitiful, shallow-headed chatter about optimism versus pessimism!—I was the first to see the true opposition: the *degenerating* instinct, which turns against life with subterranean vengefulness—with Christianity, Schopenhauer's philosophy, in a certain sense even Plato's philosophy, all idealism as typical forms—and a formula of *supreme affirmation* born of fullness, of overfullness, an unreserved yes even to suffering, even to guilt, even to everything questionable and strange in

existence... This ultimate, most joyful, exuberantly high-spirited yes to life is not only the highest insight; it is also the *deepest*, the insight most rigorously confirmed and sustained by truth and science. Nothing that exists is to be discounted, nothing is dispensable—the sides of existence rejected by Christians and other nihilists are even of an infinitely higher order in the hierarchy of values than what the instinct of decadence was permitted to approve, to *call good*. To comprehend this requires *courage* and, as its condition, a surplus of *strength*: for precisely as far as courage *may* venture forward, precisely in proportion to one's strength, one approaches truth. Knowledge, saying yes to reality, is as much a necessity for the strong as cowardice and *flight* from reality—the “ideal”—are for the weak, under the inspiration of weakness... They are not free to know: decadents *need* the lie—it is one of the conditions of their preservation. —Anyone who not only comprehends the word “Dionysian” but comprehends *himself* in the word “Dionysian” has no need to refute Plato or Christianity or Schopenhauer—he *smells the decay*...

- 3 To what extent I had thereby found the concept “tragic,” the definitive knowledge of what the psychology of tragedy is, I most recently expressed in *Twilight of the Idols*, page 139: “Saying yes to life even in its strangest and hardest problems; the will to life rejoicing in its own inexhaustibility through the *sacrifice* of its highest types—that is what I called Dionysian, that is what I understood as the bridge to the psychology of the *tragic* poet. *Not* to be rid of terror and pity, not to purge oneself of a dangerous emotion through a violent discharge—as Aristotle misunderstood it—but, beyond terror and pity, *to be, oneself*, the eternal joy of becoming—that joy which also encompasses the *joy in destruction*...” In this sense I have the right to understand myself as the first *tragic philosopher*—that is, the utmost opposite and antipode of a pessimistic philosopher. Before me there is no such translation of the Dionysian into a philosophical passion: *tragic wisdom* is missing—I have looked in vain for signs of it even among the *great* Greek philosophers, those of the two centuries *before* Socrates. A doubt remained in the case of *Heraclitus*, in whose proximity I feel altogether warmer, more at ease than anywhere else. The affirmation of passing away *and*

destroying, the decisive element in a Dionysian philosophy, saying yes to opposition and war, *becoming*, with a radical rejection even of the concept of “*being*”—in this I must in any event recognize what is closest to me of all that has been thought so far. The doctrine of “eternal recurrence,” that is, of the unconditional and infinitely repeated cycle of all things—this doctrine of Zarathustra’s *could*, after all, have been taught before. At least the Stoa, which inherited almost all its fundamental ideas from Heraclitus, bears traces of it.—

- 4 An immense hope speaks from this work. In the end, I have no reason whatever to withdraw my hope for a Dionysian future of music. Let us look a century ahead; let us suppose that my assault on two millennia of unnaturalness and desecration of humanity succeeds. That new party of life, which takes in hand the greatest of all tasks, the breeding of humanity to a higher level, including the merciless destruction of everything degenerating and parasitic, will again make possible on earth that *excess of life* from which the Dionysian state must also grow anew. I promise a *tragic* age: the highest art of saying yes to life, tragedy, will be reborn when humanity has behind it the consciousness of the hardest but most necessary wars, *without suffering from it*... A psychologist might add that what I heard in Wagnerian music in my youth had nothing whatever to do with Wagner; that when I described Dionysian music I was describing what *I* had heard—that I instinctively had to translate and transfigure everything into the new spirit I carried within me. The proof, *as strong as any proof can be*, is my work “Wagner in Bayreuth”: at every psychologically decisive point it speaks only of me—one may unhesitatingly put my name or the word “Zarathustra” wherever the text gives the word Wagner. The whole portrait of the *dithyrambic* artist is the portrait of the *preexistent* poet of Zarathustra, drawn with abysmal depth and without for a moment so much as touching Wagner’s reality. Wagner himself had some inkling of this; he did not recognize himself in the work.—Likewise, “the idea of Bayreuth” had been transformed into something that will be no riddle to those who know my Zarathustra: into that *great noon* when the most select consecrate themselves to the greatest of all tasks—who knows? The vision of a festival I shall yet live to

see... The passion of the first pages is world-historical; the *gaze* spoken of on the seventh page is the true Zarathustra gaze; Wagner, Bayreuth, the whole petty German wretchedness is a cloud in which an infinite mirage of the future is reflected. Even psychologically, all the decisive traits of my own nature are inscribed in Wagner's—the brightest and most fateful forces side by side, the will to power such as no human being has ever possessed, the unsparing courage in matters of the spirit, the boundless capacity to learn without crushing the will to act. Everything in this work is prophetic: the approaching return of the Greek spirit, the need for *counter-Alexanders* to *retie* the Gordian knot of Greek culture after it had been undone... Listen to the world-historical accent with which, on page 30, the concept of a “tragic disposition” is introduced: this work is nothing but world-historical accents. This is the strangest “objectivity” there can be: absolute certainty about what I *am* projected itself onto some chance reality—the truth about me spoke from a terrifying depth. On page 71 the *style* of Zarathustra is described and anticipated with incisive assurance; and no grander expression will ever be found for the *event* of Zarathustra, the act of an immense purification and consecration of humanity, than the one found on pages 43–46.—

The Untimely Meditations



- ¹ The four *Untimely Meditations* are warlike through and through. They prove that I was no “Jack the Dreamer,” that I take pleasure in drawing my sword—perhaps also that my wrist is dangerously free. The *first* attack (1873) was directed at German education and culture, on which I already looked down with merciless contempt. Without meaning, without substance, without a goal: mere “public opinion.” There is no more pernicious misunderstanding than to believe that the Germans’ great military success proves anything in favor of this culture—or even *its* victory over France... The *second* Untimely Meditation (1874) brings to light what is dangerous, what gnaws at life and poisons it, in the way we conduct scholarship—life made *sick* by this dehumanized machinery and mechanism, by the worker’s “*impersonality*,” by the false economy of the “division of labor.” The *end* is lost, culture—the means, the modern machinery of scholarship, *barbarizes*... In this essay the “historical sense,” the pride of this century, was recognized for the first time as a sickness, a typical sign of decline.—In the *third* and *fourth* Untimely Meditations, two images of the most unyielding *selfishness*, *self-discipline* are set against this, pointing toward a *higher* conception of culture, toward the restoration of the concept “culture”: untimely types in the highest degree, full of sovereign con-

tempt for everything around them that went by the names “Reich,” “education,” “Christianity,” “Bismarck,” “success”—Schopenhauer and Wagner, *or*, in a word, Nietzsche...

- ² Of these four assaults, the first had an extraordinary success. The uproar it provoked was magnificent in every sense. I had touched a victorious nation on its sore spot—that its victory was *not* an event in the history of culture, but perhaps, perhaps something quite different... The answer came from every side, and by no means only from the old friends of David Strauss, whom I had made ridiculous as the type of a German cultural philistine and self-satisfied man, in short as the author of his beer-bench gospel of “The Old Faith and the New” (the expression “cultural philistine” has remained in the language since my essay). These old friends, whom I had stabbed to the quick as Württembergers and Swabians by finding their wonder-beast, their Strauss, comical, answered as stolidly and coarsely as I could possibly have wished; the Prussian rejoinders were cleverer—they had more “Berlin blue” in them. A Leipzig paper, the notorious “Grenzboten,” produced the most indecent performance; I had difficulty keeping the indignant people of Basel from taking action. Only a few old gentlemen came out unconditionally on my side, for mixed and in part unfathomable reasons. Among them was Ewald in Göttingen, who gave it to be understood that my assault had proved fatal to Strauss. Likewise the old Hegelian Bruno Bauer, in whom, from then on, I had one of my most attentive readers. In his last years he liked to point to me, for instance by giving Mr. von Treitschke, the Prussian historiographer, a hint as to where he might find enlightenment about the concept of “culture” he had lost. The most thoughtful remarks about the essay and its author, and also the longest, came from an old pupil of the philosopher von Baader, a Professor Hoffmann in Würzburg. From the essay he foresaw a great destiny for me—to bring about a kind of crisis and supreme decision in the problem of atheism, whose most instinctive and uncompromising type he divined in me. Atheism was what led me to Schopenhauer.—By far the most widely heard and most bitterly felt response was the extraordinarily forceful and courageous advocacy of the otherwise so

mild Carl Hillebrand, that last *humane* German who knew how to wield a pen. His essay was read in the “Augsburger Zeitung”; today it can be read, in a somewhat more cautious form, in his collected writings. Here my essay was presented as an event, a turning point, a first return to self-awareness, the most auspicious of signs, as a genuine *return* of German seriousness and German passion in matters of the spirit. Hillebrand paid the highest tribute to the essay’s form, its mature taste, its consummate tact in distinguishing the person from the issue: he singled it out as the best polemical essay written in German—in the art of polemic, so dangerous for Germans in particular, so ill-advised for them. Unconditionally assenting, even sharpening what I had ventured to say about the degradation of language in Germany (today they play the purists and can no longer construct a sentence), sharing my contempt for this nation’s “foremost writers,” he ended by expressing his admiration for my *courage*—that “highest courage which puts precisely a people’s favorites in the dock”... The aftereffect of this essay on my life is quite simply beyond price. No one has tried to pick a quarrel with me since. They keep silent; in Germany they treat me with a somber caution: for years I have exercised an unconditional freedom of speech for which no one today, least of all in the “Reich,” has a *hand* free enough. My paradise is “in the shadow of my sword”... At bottom I had put a maxim of Stendhal’s into practice: he advises making one’s entrance into society with a *duel*. And what an opponent I had chosen! The foremost German free spirit!... In fact, an entirely *new* kind of free-spiritedness found its first expression here: to this day nothing is more alien or less akin to me than the whole European and American species of “freethinkers.” With them, as incorrigible shallow minds and buffoons of “modern ideas,” I am in an even deeper conflict than with any of their opponents. They too, in their way, want to “improve” humanity, in their own image; they would wage an implacable war against what I am, what I *want*, if they understood it—they all still believe in the “ideal”... I am the first *immoralist*—

³ I would not claim that the Untimely Meditations bearing the names Schopenhauer and Wagner could do much to help anyone understand either case, or even frame its psychological questions—with exceptions in detail, of course. Thus, for example, with profound instinctive certainty, the elemental quality in Wagner's nature is already identified here as an actor's gift that merely carries through its implications in his means and intentions. At bottom I meant to do something quite different from psychology with these essays—an unparalleled problem of education, a new conception of *self-discipline*, *self-defense* to the point of hardness, a path to greatness and to tasks of world-historical significance demanded its first expression. Broadly speaking, I seized two famous types, as yet wholly undefined, by the forelock, as one seizes an opportunity, in order to say something, to have a few more formulas, signs, means of expression at hand. This is, in the end, also suggested with perfectly uncanny sagacity on S. 93 of the third Untimely Meditation. In just this way Plato used Socrates, as a language of signs for Plato.—Now that I look back from some distance on the states to which these essays bear witness, I would not deny that at bottom they speak only of me. The essay "Wagner in Bayreuth" is a vision of my future; in "Schopenhauer as Educator," by contrast, my innermost history, my *becoming*, is inscribed. Above all, my *vow!*... *What* I am today, *where* I am today—at a height where I no longer speak with words but with lightning—oh, how far I still was from that then!—But I *saw* the land—I was not deceived for a moment about the path, the sea, the danger—and success! That great calm in making a promise, that happy gaze into a future that is not to remain a mere promise!—Here every word has been lived, deeply, inwardly; the most painful things are not missing; there are words in it that are positively blood-thirsty. But a wind of *great* freedom sweeps across it all; the wound itself does *not* count as an objection.—How I understand the philosopher, as a terrible explosive before which everything is in danger, how I set my concept of "philosopher" miles apart from a concept that still includes even a Kant, to say nothing of academic "ruminants" and other professors of philosophy: this essay offers an invaluable lesson on that, even granting that at bottom it is not "Schopenhauer as Educator" who speaks here, but his *opposite*, "Nietzsche as

Educator.”—Considering that my trade at the time was that of a scholar, and perhaps also that I *knew* my trade, a harsh piece of the psychology of the scholar that suddenly emerges in this essay is not without significance: it expresses the *feeling of distance*, the profound certainty about what can be my *task*, and what can be merely a means, an interlude, a sideline. My wisdom lies in having been many things and in many places in order to become one thing—to arrive at one thing. For a time I *had* to be a scholar too.

Human, All Too Human



With two sequels.

- ¹ “Human, All Too Human” is the monument to a crisis. It calls itself a book for free spirits: almost every sentence in it expresses a victory—with it I freed myself from what was *foreign* to my nature. Idealism is foreign to me: the title says, “Where you see ideal things, I see—human things, alas, only all-too-human things”... I know humanity *better*... The words “free spirit” are to be understood here in no other sense: a spirit that has *become free*, that has taken possession of itself again. The tone, the sound of the voice, has changed completely: the book will be found shrewd, cool, at times harsh and mocking. A certain intellectual temper, *noble* in taste, seems constantly to hold its own above a more passionate current underneath. In this connection it makes sense that the centenary of *Voltaire’s* death is, in effect, what excuses the book’s publication as early as 1878. For Voltaire, unlike everyone who wrote after him, is above all a great aristocrat of the spirit: precisely what I am too.—The name Voltaire on a work of mine—that really was progress—*toward myself*... A closer look discovers a merciless spirit that knows every hiding place where the ideal makes its home—where it has its dungeons and, as it were, its final refuge. With a torch in hand that gives no “wavering” light at all, a cutting brightness is cast into this *underworld* of the ideal. It is war, but war without gunpowder and smoke, without warlike postures, without grand emotion and contorted limbs

—all that would itself still be “idealism.” One error after another is calmly laid on ice; the ideal is not refuted—*it freezes to death*... Here, for example, “genius” freezes to death; around the next corner “the saint” freezes to death; beneath a thick icicle “the hero” freezes to death; finally “faith,” so-called “conviction,” freezes to death; “compassion” too cools off considerably—almost everywhere “the thing in itself” freezes to death...

- ² The beginnings of this book fall squarely within the weeks of the first Bayreuth Festival; a deep estrangement from everything surrounding me there is one of its preconditions. Anyone with some idea of the visions that had already crossed my path can guess how I felt when one day I woke up in Bayreuth. Just as though I were dreaming... Where was I? I recognized nothing; I scarcely recognized Wagner. In vain I leafed through my memories. Tribschen—a distant island of the blessed: not a shadow of resemblance. Those incomparable days when the foundation stone was laid, the little company of people who *belonged* there, who celebrated them and whose touch for delicate things left nothing to be desired: not a shadow of resemblance. *What had happened?*—Wagner had been translated into German! The Wagnerian had become master of Wagner!—*German* art! The *German* master! *German* beer!... We others, who know only too well that Wagner’s art speaks only to refined artists and to a cosmopolitan taste, were beside ourselves to find Wagner hung about with German “virtues.”—I think I know the Wagnerian; I have “lived through” three generations, from the late lamented Brendel, who confused Wagner with Hegel, to the “idealists” of the Bayreuther Blätter, who confuse Wagner with themselves—I have heard every sort of confession from “beautiful souls” about Wagner. A kingdom for one intelligent word!—Truly, a hair-raising company! Nohl, Pohl, *rigmarole* with grace to infinity! Not a single monstrosity is missing, not even the anti-Semite.—Poor Wagner! Where had he ended up!—If only he had at least gone among swine! But among Germans!... In the end, for the instruction of posterity, an authentic Bayreuth devotee ought to be stuffed, or better still preserved in spirits, since spirit is what is lacking—with the caption: this is what the “spirit” looked like on whose strength the “Reich” was founded... Enough:

midway through I left for a few weeks, very abruptly, despite a charming Parisian woman's efforts to console me; I excused myself to Wagner with only a fatalistic telegram. In Klingenbrunn, a place hidden deep in the forests of the Bohemian Forest, I carried my melancholy and my contempt for Germans about with me like a sickness—and from time to time wrote a sentence in my pocket notebook under the general title "The Plowshare": nothing but *hard* pieces of psychology, which may perhaps still be found in "Human, All Too Human."

- ³ What was decided in me then was not, for instance, a break with Wagner—I sensed that my instinct had gone astray altogether, and the individual mistake, whether called Wagner or the Basel professorship, was merely a sign of it. An *impatience* with myself seized me; I realized that it was high time to call *myself* back to mind. All at once it became terribly clear to me how much time had already been wasted—how useless, how arbitrary my entire existence as a philologist looked beside my task. I was ashamed of this *false* modesty... Ten years behind me in which the *nourishment* of my spirit had, in the strictest sense, come to a standstill, in which I had learned nothing useful, in which I had forgotten an absurd amount over a jumble of dusty scholarship. To crawl through ancient writers on meter with painstaking precision and bad eyes—that was what I had come to!—I looked on myself with pity, so thin, so starved: *realities* were simply absent from my knowledge, and "idealities" were not worth a damn!—A positively burning thirst seized me: from then on I have in fact pursued nothing but physiology, medicine, and the natural sciences—even to historical studies proper I returned only when my *task* imperiously compelled me. It was then, too, that I first divined the connection between an occupation chosen against one's instinct, a so-called "vocation" to which one is *least* of all called—and the need to *numb* the feeling of desolation and hunger with a narcotic art—for example, Wagner's art. Looking about more carefully, I discovered that a great many young men are in the same distress: one offense against nature virtually *compels* a second. In Germany, in the "Reich," to speak unambiguously, all too many are condemned to decide prematurely and then,

beneath a burden they can no longer throw off, to *waste away*... These people crave Wagner as an *opiate*—they forget themselves, they are rid of themselves for a moment... What am I saying! *Five to six hours!*—

⁴ At that time my instinct decided inexorably against any further yielding, going along, mistaking myself. Any kind of life, the most unfavorable conditions, sickness, poverty—everything seemed preferable to that unworthy “selflessness” into which I had first fallen through ignorance, through *youth*, and in which I had later remained stuck through inertia, through a so-called “sense of duty.”—Here, in a way I cannot sufficiently admire, and just in time, that *bad* inheritance from my father came to my aid—at bottom, a predestination to an early death. Sickness *slowly disentangled me*: it spared me every rupture, every violent and offensive step. I lost no one’s goodwill then and gained much more. Sickness likewise gave me the right to a complete reversal of all my habits; it permitted, it *commanded* me to forget; it gave me the gift of being *forced* to lie still, to be idle, to wait and be patient... But that is what thinking means!... My eyes alone put an end to all bookwormishness—in plain language, philology: I was delivered from the “book”; for years I read nothing—the *greatest* kindness I have ever done myself!—That deepest self, as though buried, as though silenced under a continual *compulsion* to listen to other selves (and that is what reading means!), awoke slowly, shyly, uncertainly—but at last *it spoke again*. Never have I found so much happiness in myself as in the sickest and most painful times of my life: one need only look at “Dawn” or, say, “The Wanderer and His Shadow” to understand what this “return to myself” was: itself a supreme kind of *recovery!*... The other recovery merely followed from it.—

⁵ *Human, All Too Human*, this monument to a rigorous self-discipline with which I abruptly put an end to all the “higher humbug,” “idealism,” “beautiful feeling,” and other femininities imported into me, was written down in all its essentials in Sorrento; it received its conclusion, its definitive form, during a winter in Basel, under incomparably less favorable conditions than those in Sorrento. At bottom Mr. *Peter Gast*, then a student at the University of Basel and very devoted to me, has the book on his conscience. I dictated, my head

bandaged and aching; he transcribed, he also corrected—at bottom he was the actual writer, while I was merely the author. When the finished book finally reached my hands—to the profound amazement of a gravely ill man—I sent two copies to Bayreuth, among other places. Through a miracle of meaning in chance, a handsome copy of the text of *Parsifal* reached me at the same time, with Wagner’s dedication to me: “To his dear friend Friedrich Nietzsche, Richard Wagner, church councilor.”—This crossing of the two books—I felt as though I heard an ominous sound in it. Did it not sound like *swords* crossing?... At any rate we both felt it so: for we both kept silent.—Around this time the first issues of the Bayreuther Blätter appeared: I understood *what* it had been high time for.—Incredible! Wagner had become pious...

- ⁶ How I thought of myself then (1876), with what tremendous certainty I held my task and its world-historical significance in hand, is attested by the entire book, but above all by one very explicit passage: except that, with my instinctive cunning, here again I avoided the little word “I,” and this time bathed not Schopenhauer or Wagner but one of my friends, the distinguished Dr. Paul Rée, in a world-historical radiance—fortunately an animal much too subtle to... *Others* were less subtle: I have always recognized the hopeless cases among my readers, for example the typical German professor, by their belief that this passage obliged them to understand the whole book as a higher Réalism... In truth it contained a contradiction of five or six propositions of my friend’s: on this point, consult the preface to *On the Genealogy of Morality*. The passage reads: What, then, is the central proposition reached by one of the boldest and coldest thinkers, the author of the book “*On the Origin of Moral Sensations*” (read: Nietzsche, the first *immoralist*), through his incisive and penetrating analyses of human action? “The moral human being stands no closer to the intelligible world than the physical human being—for there is no intelligible world...” This proposition, grown hard and sharp beneath the hammer blows of historical knowledge (read: *revaluation of all values*), may perhaps one day, in some future—1890!—serve as the ax laid to the root of humanity’s “meta-physical need”—whether more as a blessing or a curse to humanity, who could

say? But in any case as a proposition of the most momentous consequences, fruitful and fearful at once, looking into the world with that *double vision* possessed by all great insights...

Dawn



Thoughts on Morality as a Prejudice.

- ¹ With this book my campaign against *morality* begins. Not that it has the slightest smell of gunpowder about it—quite different and much sweeter scents will be noticed, provided one has some delicacy in one’s nostrils. Neither heavy nor even light artillery: if the book’s effect is negative, its means are all the less so, means from which that effect follows like a conclusion, *not* like a cannon shot. That one takes leave of the book with a shy wariness toward everything hitherto honored and even worshiped under the name of morality does not contradict the fact that there is not a negative word in the whole book, not an attack, not a malice—that instead it lies in the sun, round, happy, like a sea creature basking among rocks. In the end I myself was this sea creature: almost every sentence in the book was thought out, *hatched*, in that tangle of rocks near Genoa where I was alone and still shared secrets with the sea. Even now, when I happen to touch this book, almost every sentence becomes an edge I can grasp to draw something incomparable back up from the depths: its whole skin trembles with delicate shivers of memory. No small part of its distinctive art lies in holding fast, for a little while, things that flit past lightly and without a sound, moments I call divine lizards—not with the cruelty of that young Greek god who simply skewered the poor little lizard, but still with something pointed, with the pen... “There are so many dawns that have not yet shone”—this *Indian* inscription

stands on the door to this book. Where does its author *seek* that new morning, that delicate red, still undiscovered, with which another day—ah, a whole succession, a whole world of new days!—begins? In a *revaluation of all values*, in a release from all moral values, in saying Yes and placing trust in everything that has hitherto been forbidden, despised, cursed. This *Yes-saying* book pours out its light, its love, its tenderness over nothing but bad things; it gives them back their “soul,” their good conscience, their exalted right and *prerogative* to exist. Morality is not attacked; it simply no longer comes into consideration... This book ends with an “Or?”—it is the only book that ends with an “Or?”...

- ² My task, to prepare a moment of humanity’s supreme self-reflection, a *great noon*, when it looks back and looks ahead, when it steps out from the rule of chance and priests and, *as a whole*, for the first time poses the question Why? To what end?—this task follows necessarily from the insight that humanity is not of itself on the right path, that it is *not* divinely governed at all, that instead the instinct of negation, of corruption, the instinct of decadence, has exerted its seductive power precisely under cover of humanity’s holiest conceptions of value. The question of the origin of moral values is therefore for me a question of the *first rank*, because it determines humanity’s future. The demand that one should *believe* everything is fundamentally in the best of hands, that a book, the Bible, gives definitive reassurance about divine guidance and wisdom in humanity’s fate, is, translated back into reality, the will to keep the truth about the pitiable opposite from coming to light: namely, that humanity has hitherto been in the *worst* of hands, that it has been governed by those who have fared badly, the cunningly vengeful, the so-called “saints,” those slanderers of the world and defilers of humanity. The decisive sign revealing that the priest (including the *hidden* priests, the philosophers) has become master not merely within a particular religious community but altogether, that the morality of decadence, the will to the end, passes for *morality itself*, is the unconditional value everywhere accorded to the unselfish, and the hostility everywhere shown to the selfish. Whoever disagrees with me on this point I consider *infected*... But the whole world disagrees with me... For a physiologist, such an opposition of

values leaves no room for doubt. If the smallest organ within an organism slackens in the slightest degree in asserting its self-preservation, the replenishment of its strength, its “egoism,” with complete certainty, the whole degenerates. The physiologist demands the *excision* of the degenerating part; he denies all solidarity with what is degenerating; nothing is further from him than compassion for it. But the priest *wants* precisely the degeneration of the whole, of humanity: that is why he *preserves* what is degenerating—at this price he rules over humanity... What meaning do those lying concepts, morality’s *auxiliary* concepts, “soul,” “spirit,” “free will,” “God,” have, if not to ruin humanity physiologically?... When seriousness is diverted from the body’s self-preservation and increase of strength, *that is, from life*, when anemia is fashioned into an ideal, contempt for the body into “salvation of the soul,” what is that but a *prescription* for decadence?—The loss of gravity, resistance to the natural instincts, in a word, “selflessness”—that is what has hitherto been called *morality*... With “Dawn” I first took up the struggle against the morality of self-abnegation.—

The Gay Science



(“la gaya scienza”).

“Dawn” is a Yes-saying book, deep but bright and kind. The same holds again, and in the highest degree, for the *gaya scienza*: in almost every sentence, profundity and impishness tenderly hold hands. A poem expressing gratitude for the most wonderful January I have ever lived through—the whole book is its gift—betrays clearly enough the depths out of which “science” here became *joyful*:

You who with your spear of flame
Split the ice within my soul,
So now, roaring, to the sea
Of its highest hope it speeds:
Ever brighter, ever healthier,
Free in the most loving compulsion—
So it praises your wonders,
Januarius, loveliest of all!—

What “highest hope” means here—who could doubt it after seeing the diamond beauty of Zarathustra’s first words flash out at the close of the fourth book?—Or after reading the granite sentences at the end of the third book, in which a destiny *for all time* first formulates itself? The *Songs of Prince Outlaw*, written for the most part in Sicily, recall quite explicitly the Provençal concep-

tion of the “gaya scienza,” that unity of *singer*, *knight*, and *free spirit* by which the wondrous early culture of the Provençals stands apart from all equivocal cultures; the very last poem in particular, “*To the Mistral*,” an exuberant dance song in which, if you please, one dances right over morality, is pure Provençalism.—

Thus Spoke Zarathustra



A Book for Everyone and No One.

- ¹ I shall now tell the story of Zarathustra. The work's fundamental conception, the *thought of eternal recurrence*, this highest formula of affirmation that can possibly be attained, dates from August 1881: it was thrown down on a sheet of paper, with the inscription: "6000 feet beyond humanity and time." That day I was walking through the woods beside Lake Silvaplana; I stopped near Surlei, at a mighty block of stone towering up like a pyramid. Then this thought came to me.—Counting back a few months from that day, I find, as a foretoken, a sudden and profoundly decisive change in my taste, above all in music. Perhaps the whole of Zarathustra may be reckoned as music;—certainly a rebirth in the art of *hearing* was a prerequisite for it. In Recoaro, a little mountain spa near Vicenza, where I spent the spring of 1881, I discovered, together with my maestro and friend Peter Gast, himself also "reborn," that the phoenix of music was flying past us with lighter, more radiant plumage than it had ever shown before. But counting forward from that day to the sudden delivery in February 1883, under the most improbable circumstances—the concluding passage, the very one from which I quoted a few sentences in the *Foreword*, was finished at precisely the sacred hour in which Richard Wagner died in Venice—gives eighteen months of pregnancy. This exact figure of eighteen months might suggest, among Buddhists at least, that I am fundamentally

a female elephant.—The intervening period includes “The Gay Science,” with its hundred signs that something incomparable is approaching; at the end it even gives the opening of Zarathustra itself, and in the next-to-last piece of the fourth book it gives Zarathustra’s fundamental thought.—This same intervening period also includes that *Hymn to Life* (for mixed chorus and orchestra), whose score appeared two years ago with E. W. Fritsch in Leipzig: a perhaps not insignificant symptom of my condition that year, when the supremely *Yes-saying* pathos, which I call tragic pathos, dwelt in me to the highest degree. One day it will be sung in my memory.—The text, let me expressly state, since a misunderstanding about it is in circulation, is not mine: it is the astonishing inspiration of a young Russian woman with whom I was then friends, Miss Lou von Salomé. Anyone able to find any meaning at all in the poem’s final words will divine why I preferred and admired it: they have greatness. Pain is *not* held to be an objection to life: “If you have no happiness left to give me, well then! *You still have your torment...*”

Perhaps my music, too, has greatness at this point. (The oboe’s final note is C-sharp, not C. A printer’s error.)—The following winter I lived in that charmingly quiet bay of Rapallo near Genoa, which cuts into the coast between Chiavari and the promontory of Portofino. My health was not the best; the winter was cold and excessively rainy; a little inn right beside the sea, so that the high surf made sleep impossible at night, offered in almost every respect the opposite of what one could wish. Nevertheless, and almost in proof of my proposition that everything decisive comes into being “nevertheless,” it was in this winter and these adverse circumstances that my Zarathustra came into being.—In the mornings I climbed southward along the magnificent road toward Zoagli, past pines and with a wide view over the sea; in the afternoons, whenever my health permitted, I walked around the entire bay from Santa Margherita all the way beyond to Portofino. This place and this landscape have grown still closer to my heart through the great love Emperor Friedrich the Third felt for them; by chance I was on this coast again in the autumn of 1886,

when he visited this little forgotten world of happiness for the last time.—On these two walks the whole of the first Zarathustra came to me, above all Zarathustra himself, as a type: more precisely, *he fell upon me...*

- ² To understand this type, one must first be clear about his physiological prerequisite: it is what I call *great health*. I know no better, no more *personal* way of explaining this concept than I have already given in one of the concluding sections of the fifth book of “The Gay Science.” “We new, nameless, hard-to-understand ones,” it says there, “we premature births of a future still unproven—for a new end we also need a new means, namely a new health, stronger, shrewder, tougher, more daring, more cheerful than any health has been before. Whoever’s soul thirsts to have lived through the whole compass of values and desirable things to date, and sailed around every coast of this ideal ‘Mediterranean’; whoever wants to know, from the adventures of his own most personal experience, how a conqueror and discoverer of the ideal feels, and likewise an artist, a saint, a lawgiver, a sage, a scholar, a devout man, a divinely aloof one of the old style: he needs one thing above all for this, *great health*—a health one not only has but also continually acquires and must acquire, because one gives it up again and again, must give it up... And now, after we have long been on our way in this fashion, we Argonauts of the ideal, more courageous perhaps than is wise, and often enough shipwrecked and injured, but, as I said, healthier than anyone would like to permit us, dangerously healthy, healthy again and again—it seems to us that, as our reward, we have before us a still undiscovered country whose boundaries no one has yet surveyed, a beyond to all the lands and corners of the ideal so far, a world so overflowing with beauty, strangeness, things questionable, terrible, and divine, that our curiosity and our thirst for possession alike have gone beyond themselves—ah, that nothing can satisfy us anymore!... After such vistas, and with such a ravenous hunger in knowledge and conscience, how could we still content ourselves with *the human being of today*? It is bad enough, but unavoidable, that we look on at his worthiest goals and hopes with a seriousness we can barely sustain, and perhaps no longer even look on... Another ideal runs ahead of us, a strange, tempting ideal, rich in dan-

ger, to which we would persuade no one, because we do not lightly concede to anyone *the right to it*: the ideal of a spirit who naively, that is, involuntarily and out of overflowing fullness and power, plays with everything hitherto called holy, good, untouchable, divine; for whom the highest thing by which the people rightly measure value would already signify danger, decline, abasement, or at least recreation, blindness, a temporary forgetting of oneself; the ideal of a human-superhuman well-being and benevolence that will often enough appear *inhuman*, for example when it takes its place beside all earthly seriousness to date, beside all solemnity hitherto found in gesture, word, sound, gaze, morality, and task, as their most incarnate, involuntary parody—and with which, for all that, perhaps *great seriousness* first arises, the real question mark is first set down, the soul's destiny turns, the hand of the clock moves, tragedy *begins*...”

- 3 At the end of the nineteenth century, does anyone have a clear idea of what the poets of strong ages called *inspiration*? If not, I shall describe it.—With the slightest remnant of superstition in oneself, one would indeed scarcely know how to reject the notion that one was merely the incarnation, merely the mouthpiece, merely the medium of overwhelming powers. The concept of revelation, in the sense that suddenly, with inexpressible certainty and subtlety, something becomes *visible*, audible, something that shakes and overturns one to the very depths, simply describes the facts. One hears, one does not seek; one takes, one does not ask who gives; a thought flashes up like lightning, necessarily, its form unhesitating—I have never had a choice. An ecstasy whose tremendous tension sometimes breaks into a flood of tears, in which one's pace involuntarily now rushes, now slows; a complete being-outside-onself with the most distinct awareness of countless delicate shudders and thrills running down to one's toes; a depth of happiness in which the most painful and darkest things do not act as opposites, but as something entailed, something called forth, as a *necessary* color within such an excess of light; an instinct for rhythmic relationships that spans vast expanses of forms—the length, the need for a *wide-spanning* rhythm, is almost the measure of inspiration's force, a kind of counterbalance to its pressure and tension... Everything happens involuntarily in the

highest degree, but as in a storm of the feeling of freedom, of being unconditioned, of power, of divinity... The involuntary nature of the image, of the metaphor, is the strangest thing; one no longer has any idea what is image, what is metaphor; everything offers itself as the nearest, truest, simplest expression. It really seems, to recall something Zarathustra says, as though things themselves approached and offered themselves as metaphors (“here all things come caressingly to your speech and flatter you: for they want to ride on your back. On every metaphor you ride here to every truth. Here the words and word-shrines of all being spring open for you; all being here wants to become word, all becoming wants to learn from you how to speak—”). This is *my* experience of inspiration; I do not doubt that one must go back thousands of years to find anyone entitled to tell me, “It is mine as well.” —

- ⁴ A few weeks later I lay ill in Genoa. Then came a melancholy spring in Rome, where I accepted life—it was not easy. At bottom, this most indecent place on earth for the poet of Zarathustra, a place I had not chosen of my own free will, vexed me beyond measure; I tried to get away—I wanted to go to *Aquila*, the antithesis of Rome, founded in enmity toward Rome, as I shall one day find a place, in memory of an atheist and enemy of the Church in the fullest sense, one of my closest kin, the great Hohenstaufen emperor Friedrich the Second. But fatality lay over it all: I had to return. At last I contented myself with the Piazza Barberini, after my search for an *anti-Christian* district had worn me out. I fear that once, to escape bad smells as far as possible, I inquired at the Palazzo del Quirinale itself whether they might have a quiet room for a philosopher.—On a loggia high above the square I have named, from which one looks out over Rome and hears the fountain rushing far below, that loneliest song ever written was composed, the *Night Song*; around this time a melody of inexpressible melancholy was always hovering about me, whose refrain I found again in the words “dead of immortality...” In the summer, having returned home to the sacred spot where the first lightning flash of the Zarathustra thought had shone for me, I found the second Zarathustra. Ten days sufficed; in no case, neither with the first nor with the third and last, did I need more.

The following winter, under the halcyon sky of Nice, which then shone into my life for the first time, I found the third Zarathustra—and was finished. Scarcely a year for the whole. Many hidden spots and heights in the landscape of Nice are consecrated for me by unforgettable moments; that decisive passage entitled “On Old and New Tablets” was composed during the most arduous climb from the station to the marvelous Moorish crag-top eyrie of Eza—my muscular agility was always greatest when my creative power flowed most richly. The *body* is inspired: let us leave the “soul” out of it... I could often be seen dancing; in those days I could be out in the mountains for seven, eight hours without any notion of fatigue. I slept well, I laughed a great deal—I possessed perfect vigor and patience.

- ⁵ Apart from these ten-day works, the years during and above all *after* Zarathustra were a state of distress without equal. One pays dearly for being immortal: one dies for it several times while still alive.—There is something I call the resentment of greatness: everything great, a work, a deed, turns at once, as soon as it is accomplished, *against* the one who accomplished it. Precisely because he did it, he is now *weak*—he can no longer endure his deed, can no longer look it in the face. To have something *behind* one that one should never have dared to will, something in which the knot in humanity’s destiny is tied—and now to have it *upon* one!... It almost crushes one... The resentment of greatness!—Another thing is the dreadful silence one hears around oneself. Solitude has seven skins; nothing passes through them anymore. One comes among people, greets friends: fresh desolation, no glance returns the greeting. At best, a kind of revolt. I experienced such a revolt, in very different degrees, but from almost everyone close to me; it seems that nothing offends more deeply than suddenly letting a distance be felt—the *noble* natures who cannot live without reverence are rare.—A third thing is the skin’s absurd sensitivity to small pricks, a kind of helplessness before everything small. This seems to me to result from the tremendous expenditure of all defensive forces that every *creative* deed, every deed out of one’s own deepest, innermost, lowest depths, presupposes. The *small* defensive capacities are, as it were, unhinged by it; no

strength flows into them anymore.—I venture also to suggest that one digests less well, moves reluctantly, is all too susceptible to feelings of cold, and to mistrust—to the mistrust that in many cases is merely a mistaken identification of the cause. In such a state I once felt the nearness of a herd of cows through the return of gentler, more benevolent thoughts, before I even saw it: *that* has warmth in it...

- ⁶ This work stands entirely alone. Let us leave the poets aside: perhaps nothing has ever been done out of an equal abundance of strength. My concept ‘Dionysian’ here became *the highest deed*; measured against it, all the rest of human doing appears poor and conditional. That a Goethe, a Shakespeare would not know how to breathe for a single moment in this tremendous passion and height; that Dante, held against Zarathustra, is merely a believer, not one who first *creates* truth, a *world-ruling* spirit, a destiny; that the poets of the Veda are priests, not even worthy to unfasten the soles of a Zarathustra’s shoes—all this is the least of it and gives no idea of the distance, of the *azure* solitude in which this work lives. Zarathustra has an eternal right to say: “I draw circles around me and holy boundaries; ever fewer climb with me up ever higher mountains—I build a mountain range of ever holier mountains.” Add together the spirit and goodness of all great souls: all together they would be incapable of producing a single discourse of Zarathustra’s. The ladder he climbs up and down is immense; he has seen farther, willed farther, been *capable* of more than any human being. With every word he contradicts, this most Yes-saying of all spirits; in him all opposites are bound into a new unity. The highest and the lowest forces of human nature, the sweetest, most frivolous, and most terrible, flow from a single spring with immortal certainty. Until then one does not know what height is, what depth is; still less does one know what truth is. Not a moment of this revelation of truth had already been anticipated, divined by any of the greatest. Before Zarathustra there is no wisdom, no exploration of the soul, no art of speech; here the nearest, most everyday things speak of unheard-of matters. The aphorism trembling with passion; eloquence become music; lightning bolts hurled ahead toward futures never yet divined. The

mightiest power of metaphor that has ever existed is poverty and play beside this return of language to the nature of imagery.—And how Zarathustra descends and says the kindest things to everyone! How he touches even his adversaries, the priests, with tender hands, and suffers with them from them!—Here at every moment the human being is overcome, the concept ‘overman’ here became the highest reality—everything hitherto called great in humanity lies infinitely far *beneath* him. The halcyon quality, the light feet, the omnipresence of malice and high spirits, and everything else typical of the Zarathustra type, have never been dreamed of as essential to greatness. Precisely in this compass of space, in this openness to opposites, Zarathustra feels himself to be the *highest kind of all that exists*; and when one hears how he defines it, one will give up looking for his equal.

“—the soul that has the longest ladder and can descend the deepest,
the most encompassing soul, which can run and wander and roam farthest
within itself,
the most necessary soul, which plunges with delight into chance,
the soul that is, which *wills* to enter becoming, the soul that has, which *wills* to
enter willing and longing—,
the soul that flees itself, which catches up with itself in the widest circles,
the wisest soul, to which folly speaks most sweetly,
the soul that loves itself most, in which all things have their flowing and
counterflowing and ebb and flood——”

But that is the concept of Dionysus himself.—Another reflection leads to the same point. The psychological problem in the Zarathustra type is how someone who says No, who *does* No, to an unheard-of degree, to everything to which people have hitherto said Yes, can nevertheless be the opposite of a No-saying spirit; how the spirit bearing the heaviest destiny, a fateful task, can nevertheless be the lightest and most beyond—Zarathustra is a dancer—; how someone who has the hardest, most terrible insight into reality, who has thought the ‘most abysmal thought,’ nevertheless finds in it no objection to

existence, not even to its eternal recurrence—but rather one more reason *to be himself* the eternal Yes to all things, ‘the tremendous, unbounded saying of Yes and Amen’... ‘Into all abysses I still carry my blessing Yes-saying’... *But that is the concept of Dionysus once again.*

- 7 What language will such a spirit speak when speaking only with itself? The language of the *dithyramb*. I am the inventor of the dithyramb. Listen to how Zarathustra speaks with himself *Before Sunrise* (III, 18): such emerald happiness, such divine tenderness had no tongue before me. Even the deepest melancholy of such a Dionysus becomes a dithyramb; as evidence I take the *Night Song*—the immortal lament of being condemned, through an excess of light and power, through his *sunlike nature*, not to love.

“It is night: now all the leaping fountains speak aloud.

And my soul too is a leaping fountain.

It is night: now only do all the songs of lovers awaken.

And my soul too is the song of a lover.

There is something unappeased, unappeasable in me, that longs to speak aloud.

A longing for love is in me, itself speaking the language of love.

I am light: ah, if only I were night! But this is my solitude, that I am encircled by light.

Ah, if I were dark and of the night! How I would suck at the breasts of light!

And you yourselves I would bless, you little sparkling stars and glowworms above!—and be blissful in your gifts of light.

But I live in my own light; I drink back into myself the flames that break from me.

I do not know the happiness of one who receives; and often I dreamed that stealing must be more blissful still than receiving.

This is my poverty, that my hand never rests from giving; this is my envy, that I see waiting eyes and the nights of longing lit up.

Oh, unhappiness of all who give! Oh, darkening of my sun! Oh, longing to be longed for! Oh, ravenous hunger in satiety!

They take from me: but do I still touch their souls?

A gulf lies between giving and receiving; and the smallest gulf is the last to be bridged.

A hunger grows out of my beauty: I would hurt those upon whom I shine; I would rob those to whom I give—thus I hunger for malice.

Drawing back my hand when their hand is already stretching toward it; like the waterfall that hesitates even in its plunge—thus I hunger for malice.

Such revenge my abundance devises; such treachery wells up from my solitude.

My happiness in giving died in giving; my virtue grew weary of itself in its abundance!

Whoever always gives is in danger of losing shame; whoever always distributes has calluses on hand and heart from all that distributing.

My eye no longer overflows at the shame of those who ask; my hand has grown too hard for the trembling of hands filled with gifts.

Where have the tears of my eye gone, and the down on my heart? Oh, solitude of all who give! Oh, silence of all who shine!

Many suns circle in empty space: to everything dark they speak with their light—to me they are silent.

Oh, this is the hostility of light toward what shines: mercilessly it follows its courses.

Unjust in its deepest heart toward what shines, cold toward suns—thus every sun follows its course.

Like a storm the suns follow their courses; they obey their inexorable will: that is their coldness.

Oh, only you, you dark ones, you creatures of the night, draw warmth from what shines! Oh, only you drink milk and refreshment from the udders of light!

Ah, ice surrounds me; my hand burns against what is icy! Ah, thirst is in me, yearning for your thirst.

It is night: ah, that I must be light! And thirst for what is of the night! And solitude!

It is night: now my longing bursts out of me like a spring—I long for speech.

It is night: now all the leaping fountains speak aloud.
And my soul too is a leaping fountain.
It is night: now all the songs of lovers awaken.
And my soul too is the song of a lover.—”

- ⁸ Nothing like this has ever been composed, ever felt, ever *suffered*: thus a god suffers, a Dionysus. The answer to such a dithyramb of the sun’s solitude in the light would be Ariadne... Who besides me knows what Ariadne is!... No one until now had the solution to all such riddles; I doubt that anyone ever even saw riddles here.—Zarathustra once defines his task—it is mine too—with such rigor that one cannot mistake its *meaning*: he says Yes to the point of justifying, of redeeming, even everything past.

“I walk among people as among fragments of the future: that future which I behold.

And this is all my composing and striving: to compose into one and gather together what is fragment and riddle and dreadful chance.

And how could I endure being human if the human being were not also a poet, a solver of riddles, and a redeemer of chance?

To redeem those who are past and transform every ‘It was’ into a ‘Thus I willed it!’—that alone would I call redemption.”

Elsewhere he defines as rigorously as possible what “the human being” alone can be for him—not an object of love, still less of pity—Zarathustra has mastered even the *great disgust* at humanity: the human being is for him an unformed thing, a material, an ugly stone that needs the sculptor.

“To will no more, to value no more, to create no more: oh, may this great weariness always remain far from me!
Even in knowing I feel only my will’s delight in begetting and becoming; and if there is innocence in my knowledge, it is because a *will to begetting* is in it. Away from God and gods this will lured me: what would there be to create if gods—existed?
But toward the human being it drives me again and again, my ardent creative will; thus it drives the hammer toward the stone.
Ah, you people, in the stone an image sleeps for me, the image of images! Ah, that it must sleep in the hardest, ugliest stone!
Now my hammer rages cruelly against its prison.
Pieces of stone scatter: what do I care!
I will complete it, for a shadow came to me—the stillest and lightest of all things once came to me!
The beauty of the overman came to me as a shadow: what do I care any longer—for the gods!...”

I emphasize one final point of view; the marked line gives occasion for it. For a *Dionysian* task, the hardness of the hammer, the *pleasure even in destroying*, is decisively among the preconditions. The imperative “become hard!”, the deepest certainty *that all creators are hard*, is the true distinguishing mark of a Dionysian nature.—

Beyond Good and Evil



Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future.

- ¹ The task for the years that followed was mapped out as rigorously as possible. Once the Yes-saying part of my task was accomplished, its No-saying, *No-doing* half came next: the revaluation of the values hitherto accepted, the great war—the conjuring of a day of decision. This included a slow search for kindred spirits, for those who, out of strength, would offer me their hand *in the work of destruction*.—From that point on, all my writings are fishhooks: perhaps I understand fishing as well as anyone?... If nothing was *caught*, the fault is not mine. *There were no fish...*
- ² In all essentials this book (1886) is a *critique of modernity*, not excluding modern science, modern art, or even modern politics, together with pointers toward an opposing type, as little modern as possible: a noble, Yes-saying type. In this latter sense the book is a *school for the gentleman*, the concept understood more spiritually *and radically* than ever before. You must have courage in your very bones merely to endure it; you must not have learned to be afraid... All the things the age takes pride in are felt as contradictions of this type, almost as bad manners: its celebrated “objectivity,” for example, its “compassion for all who suffer,” its “historical sense,” with its subservience to foreign tastes, its groveling before little facts, its “scientific spirit.”—If you consider that this book comes *after* Zarathustra, you may also guess the dietary regimen to which it owes its

existence. The eye, spoiled by an immense compulsion to see *far*—Zarathustra is more farsighted even than the tsar—is forced here to focus sharply on what is nearest, on the age, on *what surrounds us*. In every respect, above all in its form, you will find the same *deliberate* turning away from the instincts that made a Zarathustra possible. Refinement of form, of intention, of the art of *silence*, comes to the fore; psychology is practiced with an avowed harshness and cruelty—the book lacks a single good-natured word... All this is restorative: who, in the end, can guess *what* kind of restoration such a lavish outpouring of goodness as Zarathustra makes necessary?... To speak theologically—listen, for I rarely speak as a theologian—it was God himself who, as a serpent, lay down beneath the tree of knowledge at the end of his day's work: this was how he recovered from being God... He had made everything too beautiful... The devil is merely God's idleness on every seventh day...

On the Genealogy of Morality



A Polemic.

The three essays that make up this Genealogy are perhaps, in expression, intention, and the art of surprise, the most uncanny things yet written. Dionysus, as everyone knows, is also the god of darkness.—Each time a beginning *designed* to mislead: cool, scientific, even ironic, deliberately a foreground, deliberately keeping us waiting. Gradually, greater unease; isolated flashes of lightning; very unpleasant truths sounding from afar in a muffled rumble—until at last a furious tempo is reached, where everything drives forward under immense tension. At the end, each time, amid utterly terrifying detonations, a *new* truth becomes visible between thick clouds.—The truth of the *first* essay is the psychology of Christianity: the birth of Christianity from the spirit of resentment, *not*, as people tend to believe, from “the Spirit”—a countermovement in its very essence, the great uprising against the rule of *noble* values. The *second* essay gives the psychology of *conscience*: it is *not*, as people tend to believe, “the voice of God in man”—it is the instinct of cruelty turning backward once it can no longer discharge itself outward. Cruelty as one of the oldest foundations of culture, one without which culture cannot be conceived, is brought to light here for the first time. The *third* essay answers the question of where the immense *power* of the ascetic ideal, the priestly ideal, comes from, although it is the *harmful* ideal above all others, a will bent on bringing things to an end, an ideal of decadence. Answer: *not* because God is at work behind the priests, as people

tend to believe, but for want of anything better—because it has been the only ideal so far, because it had no competitor. “For man would rather will nothingness than *not* will”... Above all, there was no *counterideal*—until *Zarathustra*.—I have been understood. Three decisive preliminary studies by a psychologist toward a revaluation of all values.—This book contains the first psychology of the priest.

Twilight of the Idols



How to Philosophize with a Hammer.

- ¹ This work of not even 150 pages, cheerful and fateful in tone, a laughing demon—the work of so few days that I hesitate to name their number—is an exception among books altogether: nothing is richer in substance, more independent, more subversive—or more wicked. Anyone who wants a quick sense of how, before me, everything stood on its head should begin with this work. What the title page calls an *idol* is quite simply what has been called truth until now. *Twilight of the Idols*—in plain language: the old truth is coming to an end...
- ² There is no reality, no “ideality,” that this work does not touch (—touch: what a cautious euphemism!...). Not only the *eternal* idols, but the very newest, and therefore the most decrepit. “Modern ideas,” for example. A great wind blows through the trees, and fruit falls everywhere—truths. It has all the lavishness of an overabundant autumn: you stumble over truths, even trample some to death—there are too many... But whatever comes into your hands is no longer anything questionable: these are decisions. I am the first to hold the measure of “truths” in my hand; I am the first who *can* decide. As though a *second consciousness* had grown within me, as though “the will” had lit a lamp inside me to illuminate the *sloping* track down which it had run until now... The *sloping* track—they called it the path to “truth”... All “dark striving” is at an end; it was

precisely the *good* man who was least aware of the right path... And in all seriousness, no one before me knew the right path, the path *upward*: only with me are there once again hopes, tasks, paths to prescribe for culture—I *am their bearer of glad tidings*... That also makes me a destiny.—

- ³ Immediately after finishing the work just mentioned, without losing even a day, I attacked the immense task of the *revaluation*, with a sovereign feeling of pride beyond compare, certain at every moment of my immortality, engraving sign after sign on bronze tablets with the sureness of a destiny. The preface was written on September 3, 1888: when I stepped outside that morning after writing it, I found before me the most beautiful day the Upper Engadin had ever shown me—transparent, glowing with color, embracing every contrast, every middle ground between ice and the South.—Not until September 20 did I leave Sils-Maria, detained by floods, at last the only guest left anywhere in this wonderful place, to which my gratitude means to give the gift of an immortal name. After an eventful journey, which even put my life in danger in flooded Como, where I arrived only deep into the night, I reached Turin on the afternoon of the 21st, my *proven* place, my residence from now on. I took the same lodgings I had occupied in the spring, via Carlo Alberto 6^{III}, opposite the mighty Palazzo Carignano, where Vittorio Emanuele was born, looking out over the Piazza Carlo Alberto and beyond it to the hills. Without hesitation, without letting myself be distracted for a moment, I returned to work: only the last quarter of the work remained to be done. On September 30, a great victory; the seventh day; a god's idleness along the Po. On that same day I also wrote the *preface* to *Twilight of the Idols*, whose proofs I had corrected for recreation during September.—I have never experienced such an autumn, nor ever thought anything like it possible on earth—a Claude Lorrain extended into infinity, each day of the same unbridled perfection.—

The Case of Wagner



A Musician's Problem.

- ¹ To do this work justice, you must suffer from the fate of music as from an open wound.—*What* do I suffer from when I suffer from the fate of music? From music's having been robbed of its world-transfiguring, Yes-saying character—from its having become the music of decadence, no longer the flute of Dionysus... But if you feel the cause of music in this way as your *own* cause, as the history of your *own* suffering, you will find this work full of consideration and mild beyond measure. To be cheerful in such cases, and good-naturedly join in mocking yourself—to speak *severely* with a laugh, where speaking the truth sincerely would justify any harshness—is humanity itself. Who really doubts that, old artilleryman that I am, I have it in my power to bring up my *heavy* guns against Wagner?—I kept everything decisive in this matter to myself—I have loved Wagner.—Ultimately, an attack on a subtler “unknown,” whom another person would hardly guess, lies within the meaning and course of my task—oh, I have quite other “unknowns” to expose than a Cagliostro of music—but still more so an attack on the German nation, which in matters of the spirit grows ever more sluggish and poorer in instinct, ever *more honest*, and with an enviable appetite continues to feed on opposites, swallowing “faith” as readily as the scientific spirit, “Christian love” as readily as antisemitism, the will to power (to the “empire”) as readily as the gospel of the humble, without

indigestion... This refusal to take sides between opposites! This neutrality and “selflessness” of the stomach! This fair-mindedness of the German *palate*, which grants equal rights to everything—which finds everything tasty... Beyond all doubt, the Germans are idealists... When I last visited Germany, I found German taste busy granting equal rights to Wagner and The Trumpeter of Säckingen; I myself witnessed the founding in Leipzig, in honor of one of the truest and most German musicians in the old sense of the word German, no mere imperial German, the master *Heinrich Schütz*, of a Liszt Society, for the cultivation and propagation of *cunningly Lisztian* church music... Beyond all doubt, the Germans are idealists...

- ² But nothing here shall stop me from being blunt and telling the Germans a few hard truths: *who else will?*—I am speaking of their indecency in matters of history. Not only have German historians entirely lost the *grand perspective* on the course and values of culture, not only are they all buffoons of politics (or of the church—): they have actually *outlawed* this grand perspective. First you must be “German,” must belong to the “race,” and then you can decide on every value and disvalue in history—you lay them down... “German” is an argument, “Germany, Germany above all” a principle; the Germanic peoples are the “moral world order” in history; in relation to the Roman Empire, the bearers of freedom; in relation to the eighteenth century, the restorers of morality, of the “categorical imperative”... There is an imperial-German historiography; there is, I fear, even an antisemitic one—there is a *court* historiography, and Mr. von Treitschke is not ashamed... Recently an idiot’s judgment on history, a statement by the Swabian aesthete Vischer, fortunately now deceased, made the rounds of the German newspapers as a “truth” to which every German *must say Yes*: “The Renaissance *and* the Reformation, only the two together make a whole—the aesthetic rebirth *and* the moral rebirth.”—Statements like this exhaust my patience, and I feel the desire, indeed I feel it as a duty, to tell the Germans for once just *what* they already have on their conscience. *They have all the great crimes against culture of four centuries on their conscience!*... And always for the same reason: their innermost *cowardice* before reality, which is

also cowardice before truth; their dishonesty, which has become instinct in them; their “idealism”... The Germans robbed Europe of the harvest, of the meaning of its last *great* age, the age of the Renaissance, at a moment when a higher order of values, when the noble, life-affirming values that guarantee a future, had triumphed at the very seat of the opposing values, the *values of decline—even in the instincts of those who sat there!* Luther, that disastrous monk, restored the church and, what is a thousand times worse, Christianity, at the moment *when it was going under*... Christianity, that *denial of the will to life* become religion... Luther, an impossible monk who, because of his “impossibility,” attacked the church and—consequently!—restored it... Catholics would have reason to hold Luther festivals, to write Luther plays... Luther—and the “moral rebirth”! To the devil with all psychology!—Beyond doubt, the Germans are idealists.—Twice, just when an honest, unambiguous, thoroughly scientific way of thinking had been achieved through immense courage and self-overcoming, the Germans contrived to find secret paths back to the old “ideal,” reconciliations between truth and the “ideal,” at bottom formulas for a right to reject science, for a right to *lie*. Leibniz and Kant—these two greatest obstacles to Europe’s intellectual integrity!—Finally, when on the bridge between two centuries of decadence an overwhelming force of genius and will appeared, strong enough to make Europe a unity, a political *and economic* unity, for the purpose of governing the earth, the Germans, with their “wars of liberation,” robbed Europe of the meaning, the miracle of meaning, in Napoleon’s existence. They thereby have on their conscience everything that followed, everything that exists today: nationalism, that most *culture-hostile* disease and unreason there is, that *national neurosis* from which Europe suffers, that perpetuation of Europe’s fragmentation into petty states, of *petty* politics: they robbed Europe itself of its meaning, of its *reason*—they drove it into a dead end.—Does anyone but me know a *way* out of this dead end?... A task great enough to *bind* the nations together again?...

3 And finally, why should I not put my suspicion into words? In my case too, the Germans will once again try everything to bring forth a mouse from a monstrous destiny. So far they have discredited themselves over me; I doubt they will do better in the future.—Ah, how I long to be a *bad* prophet here!... My natural readers and listeners are already Russians, Scandinavians, and Frenchmen—will they be so more and more?—The Germans are inscribed in the history of knowledge with nothing but dubious names; they have never produced anything but “unconscious” counterfeits (—Fichte, Schelling, Schopenhauer, Hegel, Schleiermacher deserve this word as much as Kant and Leibniz; they are all mere Schleiermachers, makers of veils—): they shall never have the honor of seeing the first *honest* spirit in the history of the spirit, the spirit in which truth sits in judgment on four millennia of counterfeiting, counted as one with the German spirit. The “German spirit” is *my* bad air: I find it hard to breathe near this uncleanness in psychological matters, become instinct, which every word, every expression of a German betrays. They have never undergone a seventeenth century of harsh self-examination as the French did—a La Rochefoucauld, a Descartes are a hundred times superior in integrity to the foremost Germans—to this day they have had no psychologist. But psychology is almost the measure of a race’s *cleanliness* or *uncleanliness*... And if you are not even clean, how could you have *depth*? With a German, almost as with a woman, you never get to the bottom: *he has none*. That is all. But that does not even make him shallow.—What is called “deep” in Germany is precisely this instinctive uncleanness toward oneself of which I have just been speaking: one *wants* to remain unclear about oneself. Might I propose the word “German” as international currency for *this* psychological depravity?—At this moment, for example, the German emperor calls freeing the slaves in Africa his “Christian duty”: among us *other* Europeans that would simply be called “German”... Have the Germans produced even one book with depth? They lack even a concept of what is deep in a book. I have met scholars who thought Kant deep; at the Prussian court, I fear, they think Mr. von Treitschke deep. And when I occasionally praise Stendhal as a deep psychologist, I have had German university professors ask me to spell the name...

⁴ And why should I not go to the very end? I like to make a clean sweep. It is even part of my ambition to be regarded as the foremost despiser of the Germans. I expressed my *distrust* of the German character at the age of twenty-six (dritte Unzeitgemäße S. 71)—the Germans are impossible for me. Whenever I imagine a kind of person contrary to all my instincts, he always turns out to be a German. The first thing I look for when I “probe a person’s kidneys” is whether he has a feeling for distance in his body, whether he sees rank, degree, order everywhere between one person and another, whether he *distinguishes*: that makes a gentleman; in every other case he belongs irretrievably under that broad-hearted, ah! so good-natured concept of the rabble. But the Germans are rabble—ah! they are so good-natured... You lower yourself by associating with Germans: the German *levels everyone*... Except for my dealings with a few artists, above all Richard Wagner, I have not spent one good hour with Germans... Suppose the deepest spirit of all millennia appeared among Germans: some goose who saved the Capitol would imagine that her very unattractive soul counted for at least as much... I cannot endure this race, with whom one is always in bad company, who have no fingers for nuances—woe is me! I am a nuance—who have no wit in their feet and cannot even walk... Ultimately the Germans have no feet at all, only legs... The Germans have no conception of how vulgar they are, but that is the very summit of vulgarity—they are not even *ashamed* of being merely German... They have their say about everything, they consider themselves the deciding authority; I fear they have even passed judgment on me... My whole life is the requisite proof of these propositions. In vain do I search it for a sign of tact, of delicacy toward me. From Jews, yes; never yet from Germans. My nature is to be mild and well-disposed toward everyone—I have a *right* to make no distinctions—: that does not stop me from keeping my eyes open. I make no exceptions, least of all for my friends—I hope, in the end, that this has not diminished my humanity toward them! There are five or six things I have always made a point of honor.—Nonetheless, it remains true that for years I have felt almost every letter that reaches me to be a piece of cynicism: there is more cynicism in goodwill toward me than in any hatred... I tell every one of my friends to his face that he has

never thought it sufficiently worth the trouble to *study* any of my writings: from the smallest signs I can tell they do not even know what is in them. And as for my Zarathustra, which of my friends has seen more in it than an illicit and fortunately quite inconsequential piece of presumption?... Ten years: and no one in Germany has made it a matter of conscience to defend my name against the absurd silence beneath which it lay buried. A foreigner, a Dane, was the first to have sufficient delicacy of instinct *and courage* for this, the first to feel indignant at my supposed friends... At what German university would lectures on my philosophy be possible today, such as those given last spring in Copenhagen by Dr. Georg Brandes, who thereby proved himself a psychologist once again?—I myself have never suffered from all this; the *necessary* does not wound me; love of fate is my innermost nature. But this does not prevent me from loving irony, even world-historical irony. And so, about two years before the crushing lightning bolt of the *revaluation*, which will send the earth into convulsions, I sent The Case of Wagner out into the world: the Germans were to have one more chance to wrong me for all eternity and *immortalize themselves!* There is just enough time left!—Has that been achieved?—To my delight, my Germanic gentlemen! My compliments...

Why I Am a Destiny



¹ I know my fate. One day my name will be linked to the memory of something monstrous—a crisis unlike any on earth, the deepest collision of conscience, a decision conjured up *against* everything hitherto believed, demanded, held sacred. I am no human being, I am dynamite.—And for all that, there is nothing of a founder of religion in me—religions are affairs of the rabble; I need to wash my hands after contact with religious people... I *want* no “believers”; I think I am too malicious to believe in myself; I never speak to masses... I have a horrifying fear that one day I will be *canonized*; you will guess why I am publishing this book *beforehand*: it is meant to prevent people from making mischief with me... I do not want to be a saint; I would rather be a buffoon... Perhaps I am a buffoon... And nonetheless, or rather *not* nonetheless—for nothing yet has been more mendacious than saints—truth speaks out of me.—But my truth is *terrible*: for until now the *lie* has been called truth.—*Revaluation of all values*: that is my formula for an act of humanity’s highest self-examination, become flesh and genius in me. My fate decrees that I must be the first *decent* human being, that I know myself to stand in opposition to the mendacity of millennia... I was the first to *discover* truth, because I was the first to sense the lie as a lie—to *smell* it... My genius is in my nostrils... I contradict as no one has ever contradicted, and yet I am the opposite of a No-saying spirit. I am a *bearer of glad tidings* such as there has never been; I know tasks of such a

height that the concept for them has been lacking until now; only with me are there hopes again. For all that, I am necessarily also the man of doom. For when truth enters into battle with the lie of millennia, we will have upheavals, a convulsion of earthquakes, a shifting of mountain and valley such as no one has ever dreamed of. The concept of politics will then be wholly absorbed into a war of spirits; all the power structures of the old society will be blown into the air—they all rest on the lie: there will be wars unlike any on earth before. Only with me is there *great politics* on earth.—

- 2 DO you want a formula for such a destiny *that becomes human*?—It is in my Zarathustra.

“—and whoever wants to be a creator in good and evil must first be a destroyer and break values.

Thus the highest evil belongs to the highest goodness: but this is creative goodness.”

I am by far the most terrible human being there has ever been; this does not rule out my becoming the most beneficial. I know the joy of *destroying* to a degree commensurate with my *power* to destroy—in both I obey my Dionysian nature, which cannot separate No-doing from Yes-saying. I am the first *immoralist*: that makes me the *destroyer* par excellence.—

- 3 NO one has asked me—they should have asked me—what the name *Zarathustra* means precisely in my mouth, in the mouth of the first immoralist: for what makes that Persian so immensely unique in history is precisely the opposite of this. Zarathustra was the first to see in the struggle of good and evil the true wheel in the machinery of things—the translation of morality into metaphysics, as force, cause, end in itself, is *his* work. But this question would, at bottom, already be the answer. Zarathustra *created* this most fateful error, morality: consequently he must also be the first to *recognize* it. Not only does he have longer and greater experience here than any other thinker—indeed, all history is the experimental refutation of the proposition of the so-called “moral world order”—: more importantly, Zarathustra is more truthful than any other

thinker. His teaching, and his alone, holds truthfulness to be the highest virtue—which means the opposite of the *cowardice* of the “idealist,” who flees from reality; Zarathustra has more courage in his body than all thinkers put together. To speak the truth and *shoot well with arrows*: that is Persian virtue.—Am I understood?... The self-overcoming of morality through truthfulness, the self-overcoming of the moralist into his opposite—into *me*—that is what the name Zarathustra means in my mouth.

- ⁴ AT bottom, my word *immoralist* contains two negations. For one thing, I negate a type of human being hitherto regarded as the highest: the *good*, the *benevolent*, *beneficent*; for another, I negate a kind of morality that has gained currency and dominion as morality itself—the morality of decadence, more plainly, *Christian* morality. One would be justified in regarding the second contradiction as the more decisive, since, on the grand scale, I already regard the overvaluation of goodness and benevolence as a consequence of decadence, a symptom of weakness, incompatible with an ascending and Yes-saying life: negation *and destruction* are conditions of Yes-saying.—For now I will stay with the psychology of the good person. To assess what a type of human being is worth, you must reckon the price of maintaining it—you must know its conditions of existence. The condition of existence of the good is the *lie*—: in other words, the *will* at any price not to see how reality is fundamentally constituted, namely *not* in such a way as to call forth benevolent instincts at all times, still less in such a way as to submit at all times to interference from shortsighted, good-natured hands. To regard *distress* of every kind as an objection, as something one must *abolish*, is the supreme foolishness; on the grand scale, it is a true calamity in its consequences, a destiny of stupidity—almost as stupid as the will to abolish bad weather would be—out of pity for poor people, perhaps... In the great economy of the whole, the terrible things in reality (in the passions, in the desires, in the will to power) are necessary to an incalculably greater degree than that form of petty happiness called “goodness”; one must even be indulgent to grant the latter any place at all, since it depends on instinctive mendacity. I will have ample occasion to demonstrate the immeasurably

uncanny consequences, for the whole of history, of *optimism*, that offspring of the best of men. Zarathustra, the first to grasp that the optimist is as decadent as the pessimist, and perhaps more harmful, says: “*Good people never speak the truth. The good taught you false shores and certainties; in the lies of the good you were born and sheltered. Through the good, everything is falsified and twisted to its very foundations.*” Fortunately, the world is not built to suit instincts that would let nothing but good-natured herd animals find their narrow happiness in it; to demand that everything become a “good person,” a herd animal, blue-eyed, benevolent, a “beautiful soul”—or altruistic, as Mr. Herbert Spencer wishes—would mean robbing existence of its *great* character, castrating humanity and reducing it to a wretched Chinese affair.—*And this has been attempted!... This is precisely what was called morality...* In this sense Zarathustra calls the good now “the last men,” now the “beginning of the end”; above all, he feels them to be *the most harmful kind of human being*, because they assert their existence at the expense of *truth* as well as at the expense of the *future*.

—“The good—they cannot *create*, they are always the beginning of the end

—

—they crucify the one who writes *new* values on new tablets; they sacrifice the future to themselves; they crucify the whole human future!

—The good—they have always been the beginning of the end...

—and whatever harm the slanderers of the world may do, *the harm done by the good is the most harmful harm.*”

- 5 ZARATHUSTRA, the first psychologist of the good, is—consequently—a friend of the evil. If a decadent kind of human being has risen to the rank of the highest kind, this could only have happened at the expense of its opposite, the strong kind, certain of life. If the herd animal shines in the radiance of the purest virtue, the exceptional human being must have been devalued into evil. If mendacity at any price claims the word “truth” for its own way of seeing, the genuinely truthful person must be found under the worst names. Zarathustra leaves no doubt here: he says that it was precisely his knowledge of the good,

the “best,” that made him feel horror at humanity itself; from *this* aversion his wings grew, “to soar away into distant futures”—he does not conceal that *his* type of human being, a relatively superhuman type, is superhuman precisely in relation to the *good*, that the good and the just would call his overman a *devil*...

“You highest human beings my eye has encountered, this is my doubt about you and my secret laughter: I guess you would call my overman—a devil! So alien are your souls to greatness that the overman would be *terrible* to you in his goodness...”

Here, and nowhere else, one must make a beginning in order to grasp what Zarathustra *wants*: the kind of human being he envisages apprehends reality *as it is*: it is strong enough to do so—it is not estranged from reality, not removed from it, it *is reality itself*, it also has within itself all that is terrible and questionable in reality; *only through this can a human being have greatness*...

6 BUT I have chosen the word *immoralist* as my badge, my badge of honor, in yet another sense: I am proud to have this word that sets me apart from all humanity. No one yet has felt *Christian* morality to be *beneath* him; that would require a height, a far reach of vision, a psychological depth and abyssal reach quite unheard of until now. Christian morality has hitherto been the Circe of all thinkers—they stood in her service.—Who before me descended into the caves from which the poisonous breath of this kind of ideal—the *slandering of the world!*—wells up? Who dared even to suspect *that* they are caves? Who among philosophers before me was a *psychologist* at all, rather than his opposite, a “higher swindler,” an “idealist”? Before me there was no psychology at all.—To be the first here can be a curse; in any case it is a destiny: for *one is also the first to despise*... *Disgust* at humanity is my danger...

7 HAVE I been understood?—What sets me apart, what places me to one side against all the rest of humanity, is having *discovered* Christian morality. That is why I needed a word containing the sense of a challenge to everyone. Not to have opened one’s eyes here sooner seems to me the greatest uncleanness humanity has on its conscience: self-deception become instinct, a fundamental will *not* to see any event, any causality, any reality, counterfeiting in psychologi-

cal matters to the point of criminality. Blindness to Christianity is the *crime above all crimes*—the crime *against life*... The millennia, the peoples, the first and the last, the philosophers and the old women—excepting five or six moments of history, myself as the seventh—in this respect they are all worthy of one another. The Christian has hitherto been *the* “moral being,” a curiosity beyond compare—and, *as* a “moral being,” more absurd, more mendacious, more vain, more frivolous, *more harmful to himself* than even the greatest despiser of humanity could have dreamed. Christian morality—the most malicious form of the will to lie, humanity’s true Circe: what has *corrupted* it. It is *not* error as error that horrifies me at this sight, *not* the millennia-long lack of “goodwill,” of discipline, of decency, of courage in matters of the spirit, betrayed by its victory: it is the lack of nature, the utterly appalling fact that *what is contrary to nature* itself received the highest honors as morality and remained hanging over humanity as law, as categorical imperative!... To go so far astray, *not* as an individual, *not* as a people, but as humanity!... That people were taught to despise the very first instincts of life; that a “soul,” a “spirit” was *fabricated* to disgrace the body; that people are taught to feel something unclean in the precondition of life, in sexuality; that the principle of evil is sought in the deepest necessity for thriving, in *strict* selfishness (—even the word is slanderous!—); that, conversely, the typical badge of decline and of contradiction among the instincts, the “selfless,” the loss of a center of gravity, “depersonalization” and “love of one’s neighbor” (—*addiction* to one’s neighbor!), are seen as the *higher* value—what am I saying!—as *value in itself*!... What! Could humanity itself be decadent? Has it always been?—What is certain is that only decadent values have been *taught* to it as the highest values. The morality of self-renunciation is the morality of decline above all others, the fact “*I am perishing*” translated into the imperative “*you shall all perish*”—and *not only* into the imperative!... This sole morality taught until now, the morality of self-renunciation, betrays a will to the end; at the deepest level it *negates* life.—Here the possibility would remain open that it is not humanity that is degenerating, but only that parasitic kind of human being, the *priest*, who by means of morality has lied his way up into the position of determining humanity’s values

—who divined in Christian morality his means to *power*... And indeed, this is *my* insight: the teachers, the leaders of humanity, theologians all, were also all decadents: *hence* the revaluation of all values into hostility to life, *hence* morality... *Definition of morality*: morality—the idiosyncrasy of decadents, with the ulterior motive of *taking revenge on life*—and with success. I attach importance to *this* definition.

- 8 HAVE I been understood?—I have just said not a word that I had not already said five years ago through the mouth of Zarathustra.—The *discovery* of Christian morality is an event without equal, a real catastrophe. Whoever throws light on it is an overwhelming force, a destiny—he breaks the history of humanity in two. One lives *before* him, one lives *after* him... The lightning bolt of truth struck precisely what had stood highest until then: whoever grasps *what* was destroyed there may look to see whether he has anything left in his hands at all. Everything hitherto called “truth” is recognized as the most harmful, most insidious, most subterranean form of the lie; the holy pretext of “improving” humanity, as the cunning means to *suck dry* life itself, to make it anemic. Morality as *vampirism*... Whoever discovers morality also discovers the worthlessness of all values people believe or have believed in; he sees nothing venerable anymore in the most revered types of human being, even those declared *holy*; he sees in them the most fateful kind of monstrosities, fateful *because they fascinate*... The concept “God” invented as the counterconcept to life—in it everything harmful, poisonous, slanderous, the whole deadly hostility to life brought into one terrible unity! The concept “beyond,” “true world,” invented to devalue the *only* world there is—to leave no goal, no reason, no task for our earthly reality! The concept “soul,” “spirit,” finally even “immortal soul,” invented to despise the body, to make it sick—“holy”—to treat with appalling frivolity all the things that deserve seriousness in life: questions of food, housing, mental diet, treatment of illness, cleanliness, weather! Instead of health, the “salvation of the soul”—which means a cycle of madness between spasms of penance and the hysteria of redemption! The concept “sin” invented, together with its accompanying instrument of torture, the concept “free will,”

to confuse the instincts, to make distrust of the instincts second nature! In the concept of the “selfless,” the “self-denying,” the very badge of decadence—being *lured* by the harmful, no longer being *able* to find one’s own advantage, self-destruction—made into the sign of value as such, into “duty,” into “holiness,” into the “divine” in humanity! Finally—it is the most terrible thing—in the concept of the *good* person, taking the side of everything weak, sick, ill-formed, suffering from itself, everything *that ought to perish*—thwarting the law of *selection*, making an ideal out of opposition to the proud and well-formed person, the Yes-saying person, the person certain of the future and guaranteeing the future—who is now called *the evil one*... And all this was believed *as morality!*—*Crush the infamous thing!*—

⁹ HAVE I been understood?—*Dionysus against the Crucified*...

Fame and Eternity



¹ HOW long have you been sitting
on your misfortune?
Take care! You will yet hatch me
an egg,
a basilisk's egg,
out of your long lament.

Why does Zarathustra creep along the mountain?—

Suspicious, ulcerous, gloomy,
long lying in wait—,
but suddenly, a lightning flash,
bright, terrible, a blow
struck skyward from the abyss:
—the mountain's own entrails
shudder...

Where hatred and lightning bolt
became one, a *curse*—,
Zarathustra's wrath now haunts the mountains,
a thundercloud, he creeps upon his way.

Let anyone with one last blanket crawl beneath it!
To bed with you, you tender creatures!
Now thunder rolls across the vaults,
now every beam and wall is trembling,
now lightning flashes and sulfur-yellow truths—
Zarathustra *curses*...

² THIS coin with which
all the world pays,
fame—,
I handle this coin with gloves,
with disgust I tread it *under* me.

Who wants to be paid?
Those who can be bought...
Whoever is *for sale* reaches
with greasy hands
for this common tinny clatter, fame!

—*Do* you want to buy them?
They can all be bought.
But offer plenty!
Jingle a full purse!
—otherwise you *strengthen* them,
otherwise you strengthen their *virtue*...

They are all virtuous.
Fame and virtue—that rhymes.
As long as the world lives,
it pays for virtue's prattle
with fame's rattle—,
the world *lives* on this noise...

Before all the virtuous
I want to be guilty,
to be called guilty of every great guilt!
Before all the trumpets of fame
my ambition turns to a worm—,
among such people I long
to be the *lowest*...

This coin with which
all the world pays,
fame—,
I handle this coin with gloves,
with disgust I tread it *under* me.

3 SILENCE!—
Of great things—I *see* great things!—
one should be silent
or speak greatly:
speak greatly, my enraptured wisdom!

I look up—
there seas of light are rolling:
—oh night, oh silence, oh deathly silent tumult!...
I see a sign—,
from the farthest distances
a constellation sinks slowly toward me, sparkling...

4 HIGHEST star of being!
Tablet of eternal images!
You come to me?—
What no one has beheld,
your silent beauty—,
what? It does not flee my gaze?

Shield of necessity!
Tablet of eternal images!
—but you know it well:
what everyone hates,
what *I* alone love,
that you are *eternal*!
that you are *necessary*!
My love is kindled
eternally by necessity alone.

Shield of necessity!
Highest star of being!
—which no wish reaches,
which no No defiles,
eternal Yes of being,
eternally I am your Yes:
for I love you, oh eternity!——