97

To become moral is not in itself moral. – Subjection to morality can be slavish or vain or self-interested or resigned or gloomily enthusiastic or an act of despair, like subjection to a prince: in itself it is nothing moral.

98

Mutation of morality. – There is a continual moiling and toiling going on in morality – the effect of *successful crimes* (among which, for example, are included all innovations in moral thinking).

99

Wherein we are all irrational. – We still draw the conclusions of judgments we consider false, of teachings in which we no longer believe – our feelings make us do it.

100

Awakening from a dream. – Wise and noble men once believed in the music of the spheres: wise and noble men still believe in the 'moral significance of existence'. But one day this music of the spheres too will no longer be audible to them! They will awaken and perceive that their ears had been dreaming.

101

Suspicious. – To admit a belief merely because it is a custom – but that means to be dishonest, cowardly, lazy! – And so could dishonesty, cowardice and laziness be the preconditions of morality?

102

The oldest moral judgments. – What really are our reactions to the behaviour of someone in our presence? – First of all, we see what there is in it *for us* – we regard it only from this point of view. We take *this* effect as the *intention* behind the behaviour – and finally we ascribe the harbouring of such intentions as a *permanent* quality of the person whose behaviour we are observing and thenceforth call him, for instance, 'a harmful person'. Threefold error! Threefold primeval blunder! Perhaps inherited from the animals and their power of judgment! Is the *origin of all morality* not to be sought in the detestable petty conclusions: 'what harms *me* is something *evil* (harmful in itself); what is useful *to me* is something *good* (beneficent and advantageous in itself); what harms me *once or several times* is the inimical as such and in itself; what is useful to me *once or several times* is the friendly as such and in itself'. *O pudenda origo!* Does that not mean; to imagine that the paltry, occasional, often chance *relationship* of

another with ourself is his *essence* and most essential being, and to assert that with the whole world and with himself he is capable only of those relationships we have experienced with him once or several times? And does there not repose behind this veritable folly the most immodest of all secret thoughts: that, because good and evil are measured according to our reactions, we ourselves must constitute the principle of the good? –

103

There are two kinds of deniers of morality. – 'To deny morality' – this can mean, *first*: to deny that the moral motives which men *claim* have inspired their actions really have done so – it is thus the assertion that morality consists of words and is among the coarser or more subtle deceptions (especially self-deceptions) which men practise, and is perhaps so especially in precisely the case of those most famed for virtue. *Then* it can mean: to deny that moral judgments are based on truths. Here it is admitted that they really are motives of action, but that in this way it is *errors* which, as the basis of all moral judgment, impel men to their moral actions. This is *my* point of view: though I should be the last to deny that *in very many cases* there is some ground for suspicion that the other point of view – that is to say, the point of view of La Rochefoucauld and others who think like him – may also be justified and in any event of great general application. – Thus I deny morality as I deny alchemy, that is, I deny their premises: but I do *not* deny that there have been alchemists who believed in these premises and acted in accordance with them. – I also deny immorality: *not* that countless people *feel* themselves to be immoral, but there is any *true* reason so to feel. It goes without saying that I do not deny – unless I am a fool – that many actions called immoral ought to be avoided and resisted, or that many called moral ought to be done and encouraged – but I think the one should be encouraged and the other avoided *for other reasons than hitherto.* We have to *learn to think differently* – in order at last, perhaps very late on, to attain even more: *to feel differently.*

104

Our evaluations. – All actions may be traced back to evaluations, all evaluations are either *original* or *adopted* – the latter being by far the most common. Why do we adopt them? From fear – that is to say, we consider it more advisable to pretend they are our own – and accustom ourself to this pretence, so that at length it becomes our own nature. Original evaluation: that is to say, to assess a thing

according to the extent to which it pleases or displeases us alone and no one else – something excessively rare! – But must our evaluation of another, in which there lies the motive for our generally availing ourselves of *his* evaluation, at least not proceed from *us*, be our *own* determination? Yes, but we arrive at it as *children*, and rarely learn to change our view; most of us are our whole lives long the fools of the way we acquired in childhood of judging our neighbours (their minds, rank, morality, whether they are exemplary or reprehensible) and of finding it necessary to pay homage to their evaluations.

105

Pseudo-egoism. – Whatever they may think and say about their 'egoism', the great majority nonetheless do nothing for their ego their whole life long: what they do is done for the phantom of their ego which has formed itself in the heads of those around them and has been communicated to them; – as a consequence they all of them dwell in a fog of impersonal, semi-personal opinions, and arbitrary, as it were poetical evaluations, the one for ever in the head of someone else, and the head of this someone else again in the heads of others: a strange world of phantasms – which at the same time knows how to put on so sober an appearance! This fog of habits and opinions lives and grows almost independently of the people it envelops; it is in this fog that there lies the tremendous effect of general judgments about 'man' – all these people, unknown to themselves, believe in the bloodless abstraction 'man', that is to say, in a fiction; and every alteration effected to this abstraction by the judgments of individual powerful figures (such as princes and philosophers) produces an extraordinary and grossly disproportionate effect on the great majority – all because no individual among this majority is capable of setting up a real ego, accessible to him and fathomed by him, in opposition to the general pale fiction and thereby annihilating it.

106

Against the definitions of the goal of morality. – Everywhere today the goal of morality is defined in approximately the following way: it is the preservation and advancement of mankind; but this definition is an expression of the desire for a formula, and nothing more. Preservation *of what?* is the question one immediately has to ask. Advancement *to what?* Is the essential thing – the answer to this *of what?* and *to what?* – not precisely what is left out of the formula? So what, then, can it contribute to any teaching of what our duty is that is not already, if

of course, unhesitatingly exercise the right to arbitrariness and folly – they issue *commands* even where the questions 'how am I to act? to what end am I to act?' are hardly possible or at least extremely difficult to answer. – And if the *reason* of mankind is of such extraordinarily slow growth that it has often been denied that it has grown at all during the whole course of mankind's existence, what is more to blame than this solemn presence, indeed omnipresence, of moral commands which absolutely prohibit the utterance of *individual* questions as to How? and To what end? Have we not been brought up to *feel pathetically* and to flee into the dark precisely when reason ought to be taking as clear and cold a view as possible! That is to say, in the case of all our higher and weightier affairs.

108

A few theses. – *Insofar* as the individual is seeking happiness, one ought not to tender him any prescriptions as to the path to happiness: for individual happiness springs from one's own unknown laws, and prescriptions from without can only obstruct and hinder it. – The prescriptions called 'moral' are in truth directed against individuals and are in no way aimed at promoting their happiness. They have just as little to do with the 'happiness and welfare of mankind' – a phrase to which is it in any case impossible to attach any distinct concepts, let alone employ them as guiding stars on the dark ocean of moral aspirations. – It is not true, as prejudice would have it, that morality is more favourable to the evolution of reason than immorality is. – It is not true that the *unconscious goal* in the evolution of every conscious being (animal, man, mankind, etc) is its 'highest happiness': the case, on the contrary, is that every stage of evolution possesses a special and incomparable happiness neither higher nor lower but simply its own. Evolution does not have happiness in view, but evolution and nothing else. – Only if mankind possessed a universally recognised *goal* would it be possible to propose 'thus and thus is the *right* course of action': for the present there exists no such goal. It is thus irrational and trivial to impose the demands of morality upon mankind. – To *recommend* a goal to mankind is something quite different: the goal is then thought of as something which *lies in our own discretion*; supposing the recommendation appealed to mankind, it could in pursuit of it also *impose* upon itself a moral law, likewise at its own discretion. But up to now the moral law has been supposed to stand *above* our own likes and dislikes: one did

not want actually to *impose* this law upon oneself, one wanted to *take* it from somewhere or *discover* it somewhere or *have it commanded to one* from somewhere.

109

Self-mastery and moderation and their ultimate motive. – I find no more than six essentially different methods of combating the vehemence of a drive. First, one can avoid opportunities for gratification of the drive, and through long and ever longer periods of non-gratification weaken it and make it wither away. Then, one can impose upon oneself strict regularity in its gratification: by thus imposing a rule upon the drive itself and enclosing its ebb and flood within firm time-boundaries, one has then gained intervals during which one is no longer troubled by it – and from there one can perhaps go over to the first method. Thirdly, one can deliberately give oneself over to the wild and unrestrained gratification of a drive in order to generate disgust with it and with disgust to acquire a power over the drive: always supposing one does not do like the rider who rode his horse to death and broke his own neck in the process – which, unfortunately, is the rule when this method is attempted. Fourthly, there is the intellectual artifice of associating its gratification in general so firmly with some very painful thought that, after a little practice, the thought of its gratification is itself at once felt as very painful (as, for example, when the Christian accustoms himself to associating the proximity and mockery of the Devil with sexual enjoyment or everlasting punishment in Hell with a murder for revenge, or even when he thinks merely of the contempt which those he most respects would feel for him if he, for example, stole money; or, as many have done a hundred times, a person sets against a violent desire to commit suicide a vision of the grief and self-reproach of his friends and relations and therewith keeps himself suspended in life: – henceforth these ideas within him succeed one another as cause and effect). The same method is also being employed when a man's pride, as for example in the case of Lord Byron or Napoleon, rises up and feels the domination of his whole bearing and the ordering of his reason by a single affect as an affront: from where there then arises the habit and desire to tyrannise over the drive and make it as it were gnash its teeth. ('I refuse to be the slave of any appetite', Byron wrote in his diary.) Fifthly, one brings about a dislocation of one's quanta of strength by imposing on oneself a particularly difficult and strenuous labour, or by deliberately subjecting oneself to a new

stimulus and pleasure and thus directing one's thoughts and plays of physical forces into other channels. It comes to the same thing if one for the time being favours another drive, gives it ample opportunity for gratification and thus makes it squander that energy otherwise available to the drive which through its vehemence has grown burdensome. Some few will no doubt also understand how to keep in check the individual drive that wanted to play the master by giving all the other drives he knows of a temporary encouragement and festival and letting them eat up all the food the tyrant wants to have for himself alone. Finally, sixth: he who can endure it and finds it reasonable to weaken and depress his *entire* bodily and physical organisation will naturally thereby also attain the goal of weakening an individual violent drive: as he does, for example, who, like the ascetic, starves his sensuality and thereby also starves and ruins his vigour and not seldom his reason as well. – Thus: avoiding opportunities, implanting regularity into the drive, engendering satiety and disgust with it and associating it with a painful idea (such as that of disgrace, evil consequences or offended pride), then dislocation of forces and finally a general weakening and exhaustion – these are the six methods: *that* one *desires* to combat the vehemence of a drive at all, however, does not stand within our own power; nor does the choice of any particular method; nor does the success or failure of this method. What is clearly the case is that in this entire procedure our intellect is only the blind instrument of *another drive* which is a *rival* of the drive whose vehemence is tormenting us: whether it be the drive to restfulness, or the fear of disgrace and other evil consequences, or love. While 'we' believe we are complaining about the vehemence of a drive, at bottom it is one drive *which is complaining about another*; that is to say: for us to become aware that we are suffering from the *vehemence* of a drive presupposes the existence of another equally vehement or even more vehement drive, and that a *struggle* is in prospect in which our intellect is going to have to take sides.

110

That which sets itself up in opposition. – One can observe the following process in oneself, and I wish it might often be observed and confirmed. There arises in us the scent of a kind of *pleasure* we have not known before, and as a consequence there arises a new *desire*. The question now is: *what* is it that *sets itself up in opposition* to this desire. If it is things and considerations of the common sort, or

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The striving for distinction. – The striving for distinction keeps a constant eye on the next man and wants to know what his feelings are: but the empathy which this drive requires for its gratification is far from being harmless or sympathetic or kind. We want, rather, to perceive or divine how the next man outwardly or inwardly *suffers* from us, how he loses control over himself and surrenders to the impressions our hand or even merely the sight of us makes upon him; and even when he who strives after distinction makes and wants to make a joyful, elevating or cheering impression, he nonetheless enjoys this success not inasmuch as he has given joy to the next man or elevated or cheered him, but inasmuch as he has *impressed* himself on the soul of the other, changed its shape and ruled over it at his own sweet will. The striving for distinction is the striving for domination over the next man, though it be a very indirect domination and only felt or even dreamed. There is a long scale of degrees of this secretly desired domination, and a complete catalogue of them would be almost the same thing as a history of culture, from the earliest, still grotesque barbarism up to the grotesqueries of over-refinement and morbid idealism. The striving for distinction brings with it *for the next man* – to name only a few steps on the ladder: torment, then blows, then terror, then fearful astonishment, then wonderment, then envy, then admiration, then elevation, then joy, then cheerfulness, then laughter, then derision, then mockery, then ridicule, then giving blows, then imposing torment: – here at the end of the ladder stands the *ascetic* and martyr, who feels the highest enjoyment by himself enduring, as a consequence of his drive for distinction, precisely that which, on the first step of the ladder, his counterpart the *barbarian* imposes on others on whom and before whom he wants to distinguish himself. The triumph of the ascetic over himself, his glance turned inwards which beholds man split asunder into a sufferer and a spectator, and henceforth gazes out into the outer world only in order to gather as it were wood for his own pyre, this final tragedy of the drive for distinction in which there is only one character burning and consuming himself – this is a worthy conclusion and one appropriate to the commencement: in both cases an unspeakable happiness at the *sight of torment*! Indeed, happiness, conceived of as the liveliest feeling of power, has perhaps been nowhere greater on earth than in the souls of superstitious ascetics. The Brahmins give expression to this in the story of King Visvamitra, who derived such strength from *practising penance* for a

thousand years that he undertook to construct a new *Heaven*. I believe that in this whole species of inner experience we are now incompetent novices groping after the solution of riddles: they knew more about these infamous refinements of self-enjoyment 4,000 years ago. The creation of the world: perhaps it was then thought of by some Indian dreamer as an ascetic operation on the part of a god! Perhaps the god wanted to banish himself into active and moving nature as into an instrument of torture, in order thereby to feel his bliss and power doubled! And supposing it was a god of love: what enjoyment for such a god to create *suffering* men, to suffer divinely and superhumanly from the ceaseless torment of the sight of them, and thus to tyrannise over himself! And even supposing it was not only a god of love, but also a god of holiness and sinlessness: what deliriums of the divine ascetic can be imagined when he creates sin and sinners and eternal damnation and a vast abode of eternal affliction and eternal groaning and sighing! – It is not altogether impossible that the souls of Dante, Paul, Calvin and their like may also once have penetrated the gruesome secrets of such voluptuousness of power – and in face of such souls one can ask: is the circle of striving for distinction really at an end with the ascetic? Could this circle not be run through again from the beginning, holding fast to the basic disposition of the ascetic and at the same time that of the pitying god? That is to say, doing hurt to others in order thereby to hurt *oneself*, in order then to triumph over oneself and one's pity and to revel in an extremity of power! – Excuse these extravagant reflections on all that may have been possible on earth through the psychical extravagance of the lust for power!

114

On the knowledge acquired through suffering. – The condition of sick people who suffer dreadful and protracted torment from their suffering and whose minds nonetheless remain undisturbed is not without value for the acquisition of knowledge – quite apart from the intellectual benefit which accompanies any profound solitude, any unexpected and permitted liberation from duties. He who suffers intensely looks *out* at things with a terrible coldness: all those little lying charms with which things are usually surrounded when the eye of the healthy regards them do not exist for him; indeed, he himself lies there before himself stripped of all colour and plumage. If until then he has been living in some perilous world of fantasy, this supreme sobering-up through pain is the means of extricating him

118

What is our neighbour! – What do we understand to be the boundaries of our neighbour: I mean that with which he as it were engraves and impresses himself into and upon us? We understand nothing of him except the *change in us* of which he is the cause – our knowledge of him is like hollow space *which has been shaped*. We attribute to him the sensations his actions evoke in us, and thus bestow upon him a false, inverted positivity. According to our knowledge of ourself we make of him a satellite of our own system: and when he shines for us or grows dark and we are the ultimate cause in both cases – we nonetheless believe the opposite! World of phantoms in which we live! Inverted, upsidedown, empty world, yet dreamed of as *full* and *upright*!

119

Experience and invention. – However far a man may go in self-knowledge, nothing however can be more incomplete than his image of the totality of *drives* which constitute his being. He can scarcely name even the cruder ones: their number and strength, their ebb and flood, their play and counterplay among one another, and above all the laws of their *nutriment* remain wholly unknown to him. This nutriment is therefore a work of chance: our daily experiences throw some prey in the way of now this, now that drive, and the drive seizes it eagerly; but the coming and going of these events as a whole stands in no rational relationship to the nutritional requirements of the totality of the drives: so that the outcome will always be twofold – the starvation and stunting of some and the overfeeding of others. Every moment of our lives sees some of the polyp-arms of our being grow and others of them wither, all according to the nutriment which the moment does or does not bear with it. Our experiences are, as already said, all in this sense means of nourishment, but the nourishment is scattered indiscriminately without distinguishing between the hungry and those already possessing a superfluity. And as a consequence of this chance nourishment of the parts, the whole, fully grown polyp will be something just as accidental as its growth has been. To express it more clearly: suppose a drive finds itself at the point at which it desires gratification – or exercise of its strength, or discharge of its strength, or the saturation of an emptiness – these are all metaphors –: it then regards every event of the day with a view to seeing how it can employ it for the attainment of its goal; whether a man is moving, or

resting or angry or reading or speaking or fighting or rejoicing, the drive will in its thirst as it were taste every condition into which the man may enter, and as a rule will discover nothing for itself there and will have to wait and go on thirsting: in a little while it will grow faint, and after a couple of days or months of non-gratification it will wither away like a plant without rain. Perhaps this cruelty perpetrated by chance would be more vividly evident if all the drives were as much in earnest as is *hunger*, which is not content with *dream food*; but most of the drives, especially the so-called moral ones, *do precisely this* – if my supposition is allowed that the meaning and value of our *dreams* is precisely to *compensate* to some extent for the chance absence of 'nourishment' during the day. Why was the dream of yesterday full of tenderness and tears, that of the day before yesterday humorous and exuberant, an earlier dream adventurous and involved in a continuous gloomy searching? Why do I in this dream enjoy indescribable beauties of music, why do I in another soar and fly with the joy of an eagle up to distant mountain peaks? These inventions, which give scope and discharge to our drives to tenderness or humorousness or adventurousness or to our desire for music and mountains – and everyone will have his own more striking examples to hand – are interpretations of nervous stimuli we receive while we are asleep, *very free*, very arbitrary interpretations of the motions of the blood and intestines, of the pressure of the arm and the bedclothes, of the sounds made by church bells, weather-cocks, night-revellers and other things of the kind. That this text, which is in general much the same on one night as on another, is commented on in such varying ways, that the inventive reasoning faculty *imagines* today a *cause* for the nervous stimuli so very different from the cause it imagined yesterday, though the stimuli are the same: the explanation of this is that today's prompter of the reasoning faculty was different from yesterday's – a different *drive* wanted to gratify itself, to be active, to exercise itself, to refresh itself, to discharge itself – today this drive was at high flood, yesterday it was a different drive that was in that condition. – Waking life does not have this *freedom* of interpretation possessed by the life of dreams, it is less inventive and unbridled – but do I have to add that when we are awake our drives likewise do nothing but interpret nervous stimuli and, according to their requirements, posit their 'causes'? that there is no *essential* difference between waking and dreaming? that when we compare very different stages of culture we even find that freedom of waking interpretation in the one is in no way inferior to

the freedom exercised in the other while dreaming? that our moral judgments and evaluations too are only images and fantasies based on a physiological process unknown to us, a kind of acquired language for designating certain nervous stimuli? that all our so-called consciousness is a more or less fantastic commentary on an unknown, perhaps unknowable, but felt text? – Take some trifling experience. Suppose we were in the market place one day and we noticed someone laughing at us as we went by: this event will signify this or that to us according to whether this or that drive happens at that moment to be at its height in us – and it will be a quite different event according to the kind of person we are. One person will absorb it like a drop of rain, another will shake it from him like an insect, another will try to pick a quarrel, another will examine his clothing to see if there is anything about it that might give rise to laughter, another will be led to reflect on the nature of laughter as such, another will be glad to have involuntarily augmented the amount of cheerfulness and sunshine in the world – and in each case a drive has gratified itself, whether it be the drive to annoyance or to combativeness or to reflection or to benevolence. This drive seized the event as its prey: why precisely this one? Because, thirsty and hungry, it was lying in wait. – One day recently at eleven o'clock in the morning a man suddenly collapsed right in front of me as if struck by lightning, and all the women in the vicinity screamed aloud; I myself raised him to his feet and attended to him until he had recovered his speech – during this time not a muscle of my face moved and I felt nothing, neither fear nor sympathy, but I did what needed doing and went coolly on my way. Suppose someone had told me the day before that tomorrow at eleven o'clock in the morning a man would fall down beside me in this fashion – I would have suffered every kind of anticipatory torment, would have spent a sleepless night, and at the decisive moment instead of helping the man would perhaps have done what he did. For in the meantime all possible drives would have *had time* to imagine the experience and to comment on it. – What then are our experiences? Much *more* that which we put into them than that which they already contain! Or must we go so far as to say: in themselves they contain nothing? To experience is to invent? –

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To reassure the sceptic. – 'I have no idea how I am *acting*! I have no idea how I *ought to act*!' – you are right, but be sure of this: *you will be acted*

of motives': – something quite invisible to us of which we would be quite unconscious. I have calculated the consequences and the outcomes and in doing so have set *one* very essential motive in the battle-line – but I have not set up this battle-line itself, nor can I even see it: the struggle itself is hidden from me, and likewise the victory as victory; for, though I certainly learn what I finally *do*, I do not learn which motive has therewith actually proved victorious. *But we are accustomed* to *exclude* all these unconscious processes from the accounting and to reflect on the preparation for an act only to the extent that it is conscious: and we thus confuse conflict of motives with comparison of the possible consequences of different actions – a confusion itself very rich in consequences and one highly fateful for the evolution of morality!

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Purposes? Will? – We have accustomed ourselves to believe in the existence of two realms, the realm of *purposes* and *will* and the realm of *chance*; in the latter everything happens senselessly, things come to pass without anyone's being able to say why or wherefore. – We stand in fear of this mighty realm of the great cosmic stupidity, for in most cases we experience it only when it falls like a slate from the roof on to that other world of purposes and intentions and strikes some treasured purpose of ours dead. This belief in the two realms is a primeval romance and fable: we clever dwarfs, with our will and purposes, are oppressed by those stupid, arch-stupid giants, chance accidents, overwhelmed and often trampled to death by them – but in spite of all that we would not like to be without the harrowing poetry of their proximity, for these monsters often arrive when our life, involved as it is in the spider's web of purposes, has become too tedious or too filled with anxiety, and provide us with a sublime diversion by for once *breaking* the web – not that these irrational creatures would do so intentionally! Or even notice they had done so! But their coarse bony hands tear through our net as if it were air. – The Greeks called this realm of the incalculable and of sublime eternal narrow-mindedness Moira, and set it around their gods as the horizon beyond which they could neither see nor exert influence: it is an instance of that secret defiance of the gods encountered among many peoples – one worships them, certainly, but one keeps in one's hand a final trump to be used against them; as when the Indians and Persians think of them as being dependent on the *sacrifice* of mortals, so that in the last resort mortals can let the

gods go hungry or even starve them to death; or when the harsh, melancholy Scandinavian creates the notion of a coming 'twilight of the gods' and thus enjoys a silent revenge in retaliation for the continual fear his evil gods produce in him. Christianity, whose basic feeling is neither Indian nor Persian nor Greek nor Scandinavian, acted differently: it bade us to worship the *spirit of power* in the dust and even to kiss the dust itself – the sense of this being that that almighty 'realm of stupidity' was not as stupid as it looked, that it was *we*, rather, who were stupid in failing to see that behind it there stood our dear God who, though his ways were dark, strange and crooked, would in the end 'bring all to glory'. This new fable of a loving god who had hitherto been mistaken for a race of giants or for Moira and who himself span out purposes and nets more refined even than those produced by our own understanding – so that they *had* to seem incomprehensible, indeed unreasonable to it – this fable represented so bold an inversion and so daring a paradox that the ancient world, grown over-refined, could not resist it, no matter how mad and *contradictory* the thing might sound; for, between ourselves, there was a contradiction in it: if our understanding cannot divine the understanding and the purposes of God, whence did it divine this quality of its understanding? and this quality of God's understanding? – In more recent times men have in fact come seriously to doubt whether the slate that falls from the roof was really thrown down by 'divine love' – and have again begun to go back to the old romance of giants and dwarfs. Let us therefore *learn*, because it is high time we did so: in our supposed favoured realm of purposes and reason the giants are likewise the rulers! And our purposes and our reason are not dwarfs but giants! And our nets are just as often and just as roughly broken *by us ourselves* as they are by slates from the roof! And all is not purpose that is called purpose, and even less is all will that is called will! And if you want to conclude from this: 'so there is only one realm, that of chance accidents and stupidity?' – one will have to add: yes, perhaps there is only one realm, perhaps there exists neither will nor purposes, and we have only imagined them. Those iron hands of necessity which shake the dice-box of chance play their game for an infinite length of time: so that there *have* to be throws which exactly resemble purposiveness and rationality of every degree. *Perhaps* our acts of will and our purposes are nothing but just such throws – and we are only too limited and too vain to comprehend our extreme limitedness: which consists in the fact that we ourselves shake the dice-box with iron hands, that we ourselves in

our most intentional actions do no more than play the game of necessity. Perhaps! – To get out of this *perhaps* one would have to have been already a guest in the underworld and beyond all surfaces, sat at Persephone's table and played dice with the goddess herself.

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Fashions in morality. – How the overall moral judgments have shifted! The great men of antique morality, Epictetus for instance, knew nothing of the now normal glorification of thinking of others, of living for others; in the light of our moral fashion they would have to be called downright immoral, for they strove with all their might *for* their *ego* and *against* feeling with others (that is to say, with the sufferings and moral frailties of others). Perhaps they would reply to us: 'If you are so boring or ugly an object to yourself, by all means think of others more than of yourself! It is right you should!'

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The echo of Christianity in morality. – *'On n'est bon que par la pitié: il faut donc qu'il y ait quelque pitié dans tous nos sentiments'* – thus says morality today! And why is that? – That men today feel the sympathetic, disinterested, generally useful social actions to be the *moral* actions – this is perhaps the most general effect and conversion which Christianity has produced in Europe: although it was not its intention nor contained in its teaching. But it was the residuum of Christian states of mind left when the very much antithetical, strictly egoistic fundamental belief in the 'one thing needful', in the absolute importance of eternal *personal* salvation, together with the dogmas upon which it rested, gradually retreated and the subsidiary belief in 'love', in 'love of one's neighbour', in concert with the tremendous practical effect of ecclesiastical charity, was thereby pushed into the foreground. The more one liberated oneself from the dogmas, the more one sought as it were a *justification* of this liberation in a cult of philanthropy: not to fall short of the Christian ideal in this, but where possible to outdo it, was a secret spur with all French freethinkers from Voltaire up to Auguste Comte: and the latter did in fact, with his moral formula *vivre pour autrui*, outchristian Christianity. In Germany it was Schopenhauer, in England John Stuart Mill who gave the widest currency to the teaching of the sympathetic affects and of pity or the advantage of others as the principle of behaviour: but they themselves were no more than an echo – those teachings have shot up with a mighty impetus everywhere and in the crudest and subtlest forms together from about the time of the French Revolution onwards,

every socialist system has placed itself as if involuntarily on the common ground of these teachings. There is today perhaps no more firmly credited prejudice than this: that one *knows* what really constitutes the moral. Today it seems *to do everyone good* when they hear that society is on the way to *adapting* the individual to general requirements, and that *the happiness and at the same time the sacrifice of the individual* lies in feeling himself to be a useful member and instrument of the whole: except that one is at present very uncertain as to where this whole is to be sought, whether in an existing state or one still to be created, or in the nation, or in a brotherhood of peoples, or in new little economic communalities. At present there is much reflection, doubt, controversy over this subject, and much excitement and passion; but there is also a wonderful and fair-sounding unanimity in the demand that the ego has to deny itself until, in the form of adaptation to the whole, it again acquires its firmly set circle of rights and duties – until it has become something quite novel and different. What is wanted – whether this is admitted or not – is nothing less than a fundamental remoulding, indeed weakening and abolition of the *individual*: one never tires of enumerating and indicting all that is evil and inimical, prodigal, costly, extravagant in the form individual existence has assumed hitherto, one hopes to manage more cheaply, more safely, more equitably, more uniformly if there exist only *large bodies and their members*. Everything that in any way corresponds to this body- and membership-building drive and its ancillary drives is felt to be *good*, this is the *moral undercurrent* of our age; individual empathy and social feeling here play into one another's hands. (Kant still stands outside this movement: he expressly teaches that we must be insensible towards the suffering of others if our beneficence is to possess moral value – which Schopenhauer, in a wrath easy to comprehend, calls *Kantian insipidity*.)

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'No longer to think of oneself'. – Let us reflect seriously upon this question: why do we leap after someone who has fallen into the water in front of us, even though we feel no kind of affection for him? Out of pity: at that moment we are thinking only of the other person – thus says thoughtlessness. Why do we feel pain and discomfort in common with someone spitting blood, though we may even be ill-disposed towards him? Out of pity: at that moment we are not thinking of ourself – thus says the same thoughtlessness. The truth is:

in the feeling of pity – I mean in that which is usually and misleadingly called pity – we are, to be sure, not consciously thinking of ourself but are doing so *very strongly unconsciously*; as when, if our foot slips – an act of which we are not immediately conscious – we perform the most purposive counter-motions and in doing so plainly employ our whole reasoning faculty. An accident which happens to another offends us: it would make us aware of our impotence, and perhaps of our cowardice, if we did not go to assist him. Or it brings with it in itself a diminution of our honour in the eyes of others or in our own eyes. Or an accident and suffering incurred by another constitutes a signpost to some danger to us; and it can have a painful effect upon us simply as a token of human vulnerability and fragility in general. We repel this kind of pain and offence and requite it through an act of pity; it may contain a subtle self-defence or even a piece of revenge. That at bottom we are thinking very strongly of ourselves can be divined from the decision we arrive at in every case in which we *can* avoid the sight of the person suffering, perishing or complaining: we decide *not* to do so if we can present ourselves as the more powerful and as a helper, if we are certain of applause, if we want to feel how fortunate we are in contrast, or hope that the sight will relieve our boredom. It is misleading to call the *Leid* (suffering) we may experience at such a sight, and which can be of very varying kinds, *Mit-Leid* (pity), for it is under all circumstances a suffering which he who is suffering in our presence is *free* of: it is our own, as the suffering he feels is his own. But it is *only this suffering of our own* which we get rid of when we perform deeds of pity. But we never do anything of this kind out of *one* motive; as surely as we want to free ourselves of suffering by this act, just as surely do we give way to an *impulse to pleasure* with the same act – pleasure arises at the sight of a contrast to the condition we ourselves are in; at the notion that we can help if only we want to; at the thought of the praise and recognition we shall receive if we do help; at the activity of helping itself, insofar as the act is successful and as something achieved step by step in itself gives delight to the performer; especially, however, at the feeling that our action sets a limit to an injustice which arouses our indignation (the discharge of one's indignation is itself refreshing). All of this, and other, much more subtle things in addition, constitute 'pity': how coarsely does language assault with its one word so polyphonous a being! – That pity, on the other hand, is the *same kind of thing* as the suffering at the sight of which it arises, or that it possesses an especially subtle,

penetrating understanding of suffering, are propositions contradicted by *experience*, and he who glorifies pity precisely on account of these two qualities *lacks* adequate experience in this very realm of the moral. This is what I have to conclude when I see all the incredible things Schopenhauer had to say of pity: he who wanted in this way to force us to believe in his great innovation that pity – which he had observed so imperfectly and described so badly – is the source of each and every moral action, past and future – and precisely on account of the faculties he had *invented* for it. – What in the end distinguishes men without pity from those with it? Above all – to offer only a rough outline here too – they lack the susceptible imagination for fear, the subtle capacity to scent danger; nor is their vanity so quickly offended if something happens that they could have prevented (the cautiousness of their pride tells them not to involve themselves needlessly in the things of others, indeed they love to think that each should help himself and play his own cards). They are, in addition, mostly more accustomed to enduring pain than are men of pity; and since they themselves have suffered, it does not seem to them so unfair that others should suffer. Finally, they find that being soft-hearted is painful to them, just as maintaining a stoic indifference is painful to men of pity; they load that condition with deprecations and believe it to threaten their manliness and the coldness of their valour – they conceal their tears from others and wipe them away, angry with themselves. They are a *different* kind of egoists from the men of pity; – but to call them in an exceptional sense *evil*, and men of pity *good*, is nothing but a moral fashion which is having its day: just as the opposite fashion had its day, and a long day too!

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To what extent one has to guard against pity. – Pity (*Mitleiden*), insofar as it really causes suffering (*Leiden*) – and this is here our only point of view – is a weakness, like every losing of oneself through a *harmful* affect. It *increases* the amount of suffering in the world: if suffering is here and there indirectly reduced or removed as a consequence of pity, this occasional and on the whole insignificant consequence must not be employed to justify its essential nature, which is, as I have said, harmful. Supposing it was dominant even for a single day, mankind would immediately perish of it. In itself, it has as little a good character as any other drives: only where it is demanded and commended – and this happens where one fails to grasp that it is