

Selections from
Human, All Too Human:
A Book for Free Spirits

Volume One

Preface (1886)

1

I have been told often enough and always with an expression of great surprise, that all my writings, from the *Birth of Tragedy* to the most recently published Prelude to a *Philosophy of the Future*,¹ have something that distinguishes them and unites them together: they all of them, I have been given to understand, contain snares and nets for unwary birds and in effect a persistent invitation to the overturning of habitual evaluations and valued habits. What? *Everything* only — human, all too human? It is with this sigh that one emerges from my writings, not without a kind of reserve and mistrust even in regard to morality, not a little tempted and emboldened, indeed, for once to play the advocate of the worst things: as though they have perhaps been only the worst slandered? My writings have been called a schooling in suspicion, even more in contempt, but fortunately also in courage, indeed in audacity. And in fact I myself do not believe that anyone has ever before looked into the world with an equally profound degree of suspicion, and not merely as an occasional devil's advocate, but, to speak theologically, just as much as an enemy and indicter of God; and anyone who could divine something of the consequences that lie in that profound suspiciousness, something of the fears and frosts of the isolation to which that unconditional *disparity of view* condemns him who is infected with it, will also understand how often, in an effort to recover from myself, as it were to induce a temporary self-forgetting, I have sought shelter in this or that — in some piece of admiration or enmity or scientificity or frivolity or stupidity; and why, where I could not find what I *needed*, I had artificially to enforce, falsify and invent a suitable fiction for myself (— and what else have poets ever done? and to what end does art exist in the world at all?). What I again and again needed most for my cure and self-restoration, however, was the belief that I was *not* thus isolated, not alone in *seeing* as I did — an enchanted surmising of relatedness and identity in eye and desires, a reposing in a trust of friendship, a blindness in concert with another without suspicion or question-marks, a pleasure in foregrounds, surfaces, things close and closest, in everything possessing colour, skin and apparitionality. Perhaps, in this regard I might be reproached with having employed a certain amount of 'art', a certain amount of false-coinage: for example, that I knowingly-willfully closed my eyes before Schopenhauer's blind will to morality at a time when I was already sufficiently clear-sighted about morality; likewise that I deceived myself over Richard Wagner's incurable romanticism, as though it were a beginning and not an end; likewise over the Greeks, likewise over the Germans and their future — and perhaps a whole long list could be made of such likewises? — Supposing, however, that all this were true and that I was reproached with it with good reason, what do *you* know, what *could* you know, of how much cunning in self-preservation, how much reason and higher safeguarding, is contained in such self-deception — or of how much falsity I shall *require* if I am to continue to permit myself the luxury of *my* truthfulness?.. . Enough, I am still living; and life is, after all, not a product of morality: it *wants* deception, it *lives* on deception . . . but there you are, I am already off again, am I not, and doing what I have always done, old immoralist and bird-catcher that I am — speaking unmorally, extra- morally, 'beyond good and evil'? —



Nietzsche in 1875

¹ The subtitle of *Beyond Good and Evil*, published in 1886.

1

Chemistry of concepts and sensations. — Almost all the problems of philosophy once again pose the same form of question as they did two thousand years ago: how can something originate in its opposite, for example rationality in irrationality, the sentient in the dead, logic in unlogic, disinterested contemplation in covetous desire, living for others in egoism, truth in error? Metaphysical philosophy has hitherto surmounted this difficulty by denying that the one originates in the other and assuming for the more highly valued thing a miraculous source in the very kernel and being of the ‘thing in itself. Historical philosophy, on the other hand, which can no longer be separated from natural science, the youngest of all philosophical methods, has discovered in individual cases (and this will probably be the result in every case) that there are no opposites, except in the customary exaggeration of popular or metaphysical interpretations, and that a mistake in reasoning lies at the bottom of this antithesis: according to this explanation there exists, strictly speaking, neither an unegoistic action nor completely disinterested contemplation; both are only sublimations, in which the basic element seems almost to have dispersed and reveals itself only under the most painstaking observation. All we require, and what can be given us only now the individual sciences have attained their present level, is a chemistry of the moral, religious and aesthetic conceptions and sensations, likewise of all the agitations we experience within ourselves in cultural and social intercourse, and indeed even when we are alone: what if this chemistry would end up by revealing that in this domain too the most glorious colours are derived from base, indeed from despised materials? Will there be many who desire to pursue such researches? Mankind likes to put questions of origins and beginnings out of its mind: must one not be almost inhuman to detect in oneself a contrary inclination?

2

Family failing of philosophers. — All philosophers have the common failing of starting out from man as he is now and thinking they can reach their goal through an analysis of him. They involuntarily think of ‘man’ as an *aeterna veritas*,² as something that remains constant in the midst of all flux, as a sure measure of things. Everything the philosopher has declared about man is, however, at bottom no more than a testimony as to the man of a *very limited* period of time. Lack of historical sense is the family failing of all philosophers; many, without being aware of it, even take the most recent manifestation of man, such as has arisen under the impress of certain religions, even certain political events, as the fixed form from which one has to start out. They will not learn that man has become, that the faculty of cognition has become; while some of them would have it that the whole world is spun out of this faculty of cognition. Now, everything *essential* in the development of mankind took place in primeval times, long before the four thousand years we more or less know about; during these years mankind may well not have altered very much. But the philosopher here sees ‘instincts’ in man as he now is and assumes that these belong to the unalterable facts of mankind and to that extent could provide a key to the understanding of the world in general: the whole of teleology is constructed by speaking of the man of the last four millennia as of an *eternal* man towards whom all things in the world have had a natural relationship from the time he began. But everything has become: there *are no eternal facts*, just as there are no absolute truths. Consequently what is needed from now on is historical philosophizing, and with it the virtue of modesty.

3

Estimation of unpretentious truths. — It is the mark of a higher culture to value the little unpretentious truths which have been discovered by means of rigorous method more highly than the errors handed down by metaphysical and artistic ages and men, which blind us and make us happy. At first the former are regarded with scorn, as though the two things could not possibly be accorded equal rights: they stand there so modest, simple, sober, so apparently discouraging, while the latter are so fair, splendid, intoxicating (*berauschend*),

² *aeterna veritas*: something everlastingly true

perhaps indeed enrapturing. Yet that which has been attained by laborious struggle, the certain, enduring and thus of significance for any further development of knowledge is nonetheless the higher; to adhere to it is manly and demonstrates courage, simplicity and abstemiousness. Gradually not only the individual but all mankind will be raised to this manliness, when they have finally become accustomed to valuing viable, enduring knowledge more highly and lost all faith in inspiration and the acquisition of knowledge by miraculous means. — Worshipers of *form*, with their standards of the beautiful and sublime, will, to be sure, at first have good ground for mockery once estimation of unpretentious truths and the scientific spirit begins to dominate: but only because either their eye has not yet discovered the charm of the *simplest* form or because those raised in that spirit are as yet very far from being thoroughly permeated by it, so that they still thoughtlessly imitate old forms (and do so badly, as does everyone to whom a thing no longer matters very much). Formerly the spirit was not engaged in rigorous thinking, its serious occupation was the spinning out of forms and symbols. That has now changed; serious occupation with the symbolic has become a mark of a lower culture. As our arts themselves grow ever more intellectual, our senses more spiritual, and as for example we now adjudge what is pleasant sounding quite differently from the way we did a hundred years ago: so the forms of our life will grow ever more *spiritual*, perhaps to the eye of earlier ages *uglier*, but only because it is incapable of seeing how the realm of inner, spiritual beauty is continually growing deeper and wider, and to what extent we may all now accord the eye of insight greater value than the fairest structure or the sublimest edifice.

4

Astrology and what is related to it. — It is probable that the objects of the religious, moral and aesthetic sensations belong only to the surface of things, while man likes to believe that here at least he is in touch with the world's heart; the reason he deludes himself is that these things produce in him such profound happiness and unhappiness, and thus he exhibits here the same pride as in the case of astrology. For astrology believes the starry firmament revolves around the fate of man; the moral man, however, supposes that what he has essentially at heart must also constitute the essence and heart of things.

5

Misunderstanding of the dream. — The man of the ages of barbarous primordial culture believed that in the dream he was getting to know a *second real world*: here is the origin of all metaphysics. Without the dream one would have had no occasion to divide the world in two. The dissection into soul and body is also connected with the oldest idea of the dream, likewise the postulation of a life of the soul, thus the origin of all belief in spirits, and probably also of the belief in gods. 'The dead live on, *for* they appear to the living in dreams': that was the conclusion one formerly drew, throughout many millennia.

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Dream and culture. — The function of the brain that sleep encroaches upon most is the memory: not that it ceases altogether — but it is reduced to a condition of imperfection such as in the primeval ages of mankind may have been normal by day and in waking. Confused and capricious as it is, it continually confuses one thing with another on the basis of the most fleeting similarities: but it was with the same confusion and capriciousness that the peoples composed their mythologies, and even today travelers observe how much the savage is inclined to forgetfulness, how his mind begins to reel and stumble after a brief exertion of the memory and he utters lies and nonsense out of mere enervation. But in dreams we all resemble this savage; failure to recognize correctly and erroneously supposing one thing to be the same as another is the ground of the false conclusions of which we are guilty in dreams; so that, when we clearly recall a dream, we are appalled to discover so much folly in ourselves. — The perfect clarity of all the images we see in dreams which is the precondition of our unquestioning belief in their reality again reminds us of conditions pertaining to earlier mankind, in whom hallucination was extraordinarily common and sometimes seized hold

on whole communities, whole peoples at the same time. Thus: in sleep and dreams we repeat once again the curriculum of earlier mankind.³

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Logic of the dream. — In sleep our nervous system is continually agitated by a multiplicity of inner events, almost all our organs are active, our blood circulate vigorously, the position of the sleeper presses on individual limbs, his bedcovers influence his sensibilities in various ways, his stomach digests and its motions disturb other organs, his intestines are active, the position of his head involves unusual muscular contortions, his feet, unshod and not pressing against the floor, produce an unfamiliar feeling, as does the difference in the way his whole body is clad—all this, through its unusualness and to a differing degree each day, excites the entire system up to the functioning of the brain; and so there are a hundred occasions for the mind to be involved in puzzlement and to look for *grounds* for this excitation: the dream is the *seeking and positing of the causes* of this excitement of the sensibilities, that is to say the supposed causes. If, for example, you tie two straps about your feet you may well dream that your feet are coiled round by snakes: this is first a hypothesis, then a belief, with an accompanying pictorial representation and the supposition: ‘these snakes must be the *causa* of those sensations that I, the sleeper, feel’ — thus the sleeper’s mind judges. The immediate past he has thus inferred becomes through his aroused imagination the present to him. Everyone knows from experience how quickly a dreamer entwines with his dream a sound that strongly impinges upon him from without, the ringing of bells or the firing of cannon, for example; that is to say, he accounts for the sound in terms of the dream, so that he *believes* he experiences the cause of the sound first, then the sound itself. — But how does it come about that the dreamer’s mind always blunders like this, when the same mind is accustomed to be so sober, cautious and so sceptical with regard to hypotheses while it is awake? — so that the first plausible hypothesis for explaining a sensation that occurs to him is at once accepted as the truth? (For in dreams we believe in the dream as though it were reality, that is to say we regard our hypothesis as completely proved.) — In my opinion, the conclusions man still draws in dreams to the present day for many millennia mankind also drew *when awake*: the first *causa* that entered the mind as an explanation of anything that required explaining satisfied it and was accounted truth. (According to travelers’ tales savages still do this today.) In the dream this piece of primeval humanity continues to exercise itself, for it is the basis upon which higher rationality evolved and continues to evolve in every human being: the dream takes us back again to remote stages of human culture and provides us with a means of understanding them better. We now find dream-thinking⁴ so easy because it is in precisely this imaginative and agreeable form of explanation by means of the first plausible idea that strikes us that we have been so well drilled over such enormous periods of human evolution. To this extent the dream is a relaxation for the brain, which has had enough of the strenuous demands in the way of thinking such as are imposed by our higher culture during the day. — A related occurrence which stands as portal and entrance-hall of the dream can actually be observed in full wakefulness. If we close our eyes, the brain produces a host of light-impressions and colours, probably as a kind of after-play and echo of those effects of light which crowd in upon it during the day. Now, however, the reason (in alliance with the imagination) at once assembles these in themselves formless colour-impressions into definite figures, shapes, landscapes, moving groups. What is actually occurring is again a kind of inferring of the cause from the effect; the mind asks where these light-impressions and colours come from and supposes these shapes and figures are their causes: it regards them as occasioning these lights and colours because, by day and with eyes open, it is accustomed to finding

³ In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, ch. VII (B), Freud writes: ‘We can guess how much to the point is Nietzsche’s assertion that in dreams “some primeval relic of humanity is at work which we can now scarcely reach any longer by a direct path”; and we may expect that the analysis of dreams will lead us to a knowledge of man’s archaic heritage, of what is psychologically innate in him.’

⁴ dream-thinking: *Traumdenken*

that every colour, every light-impression does in fact have a cause that occasions it. Here, then, the imagination is continually providing the mind with images borrowed from the sight-impressions of the day, and this is precisely the way in which it fashions the dream- fantasy: — that is to say, the supposed cause is inferred from the effect and introduced *after* the effect: and all with extraordinary rapidity, so that, as with a conjurer, a confusion of judgement can here arise and successive events appear as simultaneous events or even with the order of their occurrence reversed. — These facts show us *how late* more rigorous logical thinking, a clear perception of the nature of cause and effect, must have been evolved if our faculties of reason and understanding even now involuntarily grasp at those primitive forms of conclusion and inference and we still live about half of our life in this condition. — The poet and the artist, too, *foists upon* his moods and states of mind causes which are certainly not the true ones; to this extent he recalls an earlier humanity and can aid us to an understanding of it.

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Appearance and thing in itself. — Philosophers are accustomed to station themselves before life and experience — before that which they call the world of appearance (*Erscheinung*)— as before a painting that has been unrolled once and for all and unchangeably depicts the same scene: this scene, they believe, has to be correctly interpreted, so as to draw a conclusion as to the nature of the being that produced the picture: that is to say, as to the nature of the thing in itself, which it is customary to regard as the sufficient reason⁵ for the existence of the world of appearance. As against this, more rigorous logicians, having clearly identified the concept of the metaphysical as that of the unconditioned, consequently also unconditioning, have disputed any connection between the unconditioned (the metaphysical world) and the world we know: so that what appears in appearance is precisely *not* the thing in itself, and no conclusion can be drawn from the former as to the nature of the latter. Both parties, however, overlook the possibility that this painting — that which we humans call life and experience — has gradually *become*, is indeed still fully in course of *becoming*, and should thus not be regarded as a fixed object on the basis of which a conclusion as to the nature of its originator (the sufficient reason) may either be drawn or pronounced undrawable. Because we have for millennia made moral, aesthetic, religious demands on the world, looked upon it with blind desire, passion or fear, and abandoned ourselves to the bad habits of illogical thinking, this world has gradually become so marvelously variegated, frightful, meaningful, soulful, it has acquired colour — but we have been the colourists: it is the human intellect that has made appearance (*Erscheinung*) appear (*erscheinen*) and transported its erroneous basic conceptions into things. Late, very late — it has reflected on all this: and now the world of experience and the thing in itself seem to it so extraordinarily different from one another and divided apart that it rejects the idea that the nature of one can be inferred from the nature of the other — or invites us in a chillingly mysterious fashion to *abandon* our intellect, our personal will: so as to attain to the real by *becoming real* oneself. Others again have assembled all the characteristic traits of our world of appearance — that is to say, the idea of the world spun out of intellectual errors we have inherited — and, *instead of indicting the intellect as the guilty party*, have charged the essence of things with being the cause of the very uncanny character this world in fact possesses and have preached redemption from being. — With all these conceptions the steady and laborious process of science, which will one day celebrate its greatest triumph in a *history of the genesis of thought*, will in the end decisively have done; for the outcome of this history may well be the conclusion: That which we now call the world is the outcome of a host of errors and fantasies which have gradually arisen and grown entwined with one another in the course of the overall evolution of the organic being, and are now inherited by us as the accumulated treasure of the entire past— as treasure: for the value of our humanity depends upon it. Rigorous science is capable of detaching us from

⁵ The principle of sufficient reason's various formulations include 'every existent has a ground' and 'every event has a cause'; Schopenhauer discussed the history and justification of the principle in *The Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason* (1813).

this ideational world only to a limited extent — and more is certainly not to be desired — inasmuch as it is incapable of making any essential inroad into the power of habits of feeling acquired in primeval times: but it can, quite gradually and step by step, illuminate the history of the genesis of this world as idea — and, for brief periods at any rate, lift us up out of the entire proceeding. Perhaps we shall then recognize that the thing in itself is worthy of Homeric laughter: that it appeared to be so much, indeed everything, and is actually empty, that is to say empty of significance.

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Advantages of psychological observation. — That reflection on the human, all too human — or, as the learned expression has it: psychological observation — is among the expedients by means of which one can alleviate the burden of living, that practice in this art lends presence of mind in difficult situations and entertainment in tedious circumstances, that one can, indeed, pluck useful maxims from the thorniest and most disagreeable stretches of one's own life and thereby feel a little better: that was believed, that was known — in former centuries. Why has it been forgotten by this century, in which, at least in Germany, indeed in all Europe, poverty in psychological observation is apparent through a hundred signs? Not especially in novels, novellas or philosophical writings — these are the work of exceptional men; it is already more evident, however, in assessments made of public events and personalities: but the art of psychological dissection and computation is lacking above all in the social life of all classes, in which, while there may be much talk about people, there is none at all about *man*. But why is the richest and most inoffensive material for conversation neglected in this way? Why does one not even read the great masters of the psychological maxim any more? — for it can be said without any exaggeration that it is hard to find any educated person in Europe who has read Larocheffoucauld⁶ or those related to him in style and spirit, and very much harder to find one who has read them and does not revile them. Even this uncommon reader, however, will probably derive much less pleasure from them than the form they employ ought to give him; for even the most refined head is not in a position to appreciate the art of polishing maxims as it ought to be appreciated if he himself is not drawn to it and has not competed in it. In the absence of such practical instruction, one takes the creation and shaping of maxims to be easier than it is, one does not feel intensely enough the charm and sense of achievement in it. That is why present-day readers of maxims find relatively little to satisfy them, indeed hardly more than a mouthful of pleasantries; so that it is with them as it usually is with observers of cameos: who praise because they cannot love, and are quick to admire but even quicker to go away.

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Unaccountability and innocence. — The complete unaccountability of man for his actions and his nature is the bitterest draught the man of knowledge has to swallow if he has been accustomed to seeing in accountability and duty the patent of his humanity. All his evaluations, all his feelings of respect and antipathy have thereby become disvalued and false: his profoundest sentiment, which he accorded to the sufferer, the hero, rested upon an error; he may no longer praise, no longer censure, for it is absurd to praise and censure nature and necessity. As he loves a fine work of art but does not praise it since it can do nothing for itself, as he stands before the plants, so must he stand before the actions of men and before his own. He can admire their strength, beauty, fullness, but he may not find any merit in them: the chemical process and the strife of the elements, the torment of the sick man who yearns for an end to his sickness, are as little merits as are those states of distress and psychic convulsions which arise when we are torn back and forth by conflicting motives until we finally choose the most powerful of them — as we put it (in truth, however, until the most powerful motive chooses us). But all these motives, whatever exalted names we may give them, have grown up out of the same roots as those we believe evilly poisoned; between good and evil actions there is no difference in kind, but at the most one of degree. Good actions are sublimated evil ones;

⁶ Larocheffoucauld: François, Duc de Larocheffoucauld (1613—80): French writer and aphorist.

evil actions are coarsened, brutalized good ones. It is the individual's sole desire for self-enjoyment (together with the fear of losing it) which gratifies itself in every instance, let a man act as he can, that is to say as he must: whether his deeds be those of vanity, revenge, pleasure, utility, malice, cunning, or those of sacrifice, sympathy, knowledge. Degrees of intelligent judgement decide whether each person will let his desire draw him; every society, every individual always has present an order of rank of things considered good, according to which he determines his own actions and judges those of others. But this standard is continually changing, many actions are called evil but are only stupid, because the degree of intelligence which decided for them was very low. Indeed, in a certain sense *all* present actions are stupid, for the highest degree of human intelligence which can now be attained will certainly be exceeded in the future: and then all our actions and judgements will seem in retrospect as circumscribed and precipitate as the actions and judgements of still existing primitive peoples now appear to us. To perceive all this can be very painful, but then comes a consolation: such pains are birth-pangs. The butterfly wants to get out of its cocoon, it tears at it, it breaks it open: then it is blinded and confused by the unfamiliar light, the realm of freedom. It is in such men as are *capable* of that suffering—how few they will be!—that the first attempt will be made to see whether mankind could *transform itself from a moral to a knowing mankind*. The sun of a new gospel is casting its first beam on the topmost summits in the soul of every individual: there the mists are gathering more thickly than ever, and the brightest glitter and the gloomiest twilight lie side by side. Everything is necessity—thus says the new knowledge; and this knowledge itself is necessity. Everything is innocence: and knowledge is the path to insight into this innocence. If pleasure, egoism, vanity are *necessary* for the production of the moral phenomena and their finest flower, the sense for truth and justice in knowledge; if error and aberration of the imagination was the only means by which mankind was able gradually to raise itself to this degree of self-enlightenment and self-redemption— who could venture to denigrate those means? Who could be despondent when he becomes aware of the goal to which those paths lead? It is true that everything in the domain of morality has become and is changeable, unsteady, everything is in flux: but *everything is also flooding forward*, and towards one goal. Even if the inherited habit of erroneous evaluation, loving, hating does continue to rule in us, under the influence of increasing knowledge it will grow weaker: a new habit, that of comprehending, not-loving, not-hating, surveying is gradually implanting itself in us on the same soil and will in thousands of years' time perhaps be strong enough to bestow on mankind the power of bringing forth the wise, innocent (conscious of innocence) man as regularly as it now brings forth— *not his antithesis but necessary preliminary*— the unwise, unjust, guilt-conscious man.

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Poets as alleviators of life.— Insofar as they want to alleviate the life of men, poets either turn their eyes away from the toilsome present or they procure for the present new colours through a light which they direct upon it from the past. To be able to do this, they themselves have to be in many respects backward-looking creatures: so that they can be employed as bridges to quite distant ages and conceptions, to dead or dying religions and cultures. They are, in fact, always and necessarily *epigones*. There are, to be sure, several things to be said against their means of alleviating life: they soothe and heal only provisionally, only for a moment; they even hinder men from working for a real improvement in their conditions by suspending and discharging in a palliative way the very passion which impels the discontented to action.

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Art dangerous to the artist.— When art seizes violently on an individual it draws him back to the conceptions of those ages in which art flourished most mightily, and then it effects a retrogression in him. The artist acquires increasing reverence for sudden excitations, believes in gods and demons, instils a soul into nature, hates the science, becomes changeable of mood as were the men of antiquity and longs for an overthrowing of everything unfavourable to art, and he does this with all the vehemence and unreasonableness of a child. The artist is in himself already a retarded being, inasmuch as he has halted at games that pertain to youth and childhood: to this there is now added his gradual retrogression to earlier

times. Thus there at last arises a violent antagonism between him and the men of his period, of his own age, and his end is gloomy; just as, according to the tales told in antiquity, Homer and Aeschylus at last lived and died in melancholia.

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Self-overestimation in the belief in artists and philosophers. — We all think that a work of art, an artist, is proved to be of high quality if it seizes hold on us and profoundly moves us. But for this to be so our *own high quality* in judgement and sensibility would first have to have been proved: which is not the case. Who in the realm of the plastic arts has moved and enraptured more than Bernini, who has produced a mightier effect than that post-Demosthenes rhetor who introduced the Asiatic style and caused it to predominate for two centuries? Such a predomination over entire centuries proves nothing in regard to the quality or lasting validity of a style; that is why one should never be too firm in one's faith in any artist: for such a faith is not only faith in the veracity of our sensibility but also in the infallibility of our judgement, while our judgement or sensibility, or both of them, can themselves be too coarse or too refined, exaggerated or gross. The blessings and raptures conferred by a philosophy or a religion likewise prove nothing in regard to their truth: just as little as the happiness the madman enjoys from his *idée fixe* proves anything in regard to its rationality.

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What is left of art. — It is true, certain metaphysical presuppositions bestow much greater value upon art, for example when it is believed that the character is unalterable and that all characters and actions are a continual expression of the nature of the world: then the work of the artist becomes an image of the *everlastingly steadfast*, while with our conceptions the artist can bestow upon his images validity only for a time, because man as a whole has become and is changeable and even the individual man is not something firm and steadfast. — The same would be so in the case of another metaphysical presupposition: supposing our visible world were only appearances as the metaphysicians assume, then art would come to stand quite close to the real world, for there would then be only too much similarity between the world of appearance and the illusory world of the artist; and the difference remaining would even elevate the significance of art above the significance of nature, because art would represent the uniform, the types and prototypes of nature. — These presuppositions are, however, false: after this knowledge what place still remains for art? Above all, it has taught us for thousands of years to look upon life in any of its forms with interest and pleasure, and to educate our sensibilities so far that we at last cry: 'life, however it may be, is good!'⁷ This teaching imparted by art to take pleasure in life and to regard the human life as a piece of nature, as the object of regular evolution, without being too violently involved in it — this teaching has been absorbed into us, and it now reemerges as an almighty requirement of knowledge. One could give up art, but would not thereby relinquish the capacity one has learned from it: just as one has given up religion but not the enhancement of feeling and exaltations one has acquired from it. As the plastic arts and music are the measure of the wealth of feelings we have actually gained and obtained through religion, so if art disappeared the intensity and multifariousness of the joy in life it has implanted would still continue to demand satisfaction. The scientific man is the further evolution of the artistic.

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Future of science. — Science bestows upon him who labours and experiments in it much satisfaction, upon him who *learns* its results very little. As all the important truths of science must gradually become common and everyday, however, even this little satisfaction will cease: just as we have long since ceased to take pleasure in learning the admirable two- times-table. But if science provides us with less and less pleasure,

⁷ The closing line of Goethe's 'Der Bräutigam' 'Wie es auch sei, das Leben, es ist gut.'

and deprives us of more and more pleasure through casting suspicion on the consolations of metaphysics, religion and art, then that mightiest source of joy to which mankind owes almost all its humanity will become impoverished. For this reason a higher culture must give to man a double-brain, as it were two brain-ventricles, one for the perceptions of science, the other for those of non-science: lying beside one another, not confused together, separable, capable of being shut off; this is a demand of health. In one domain lies the power-source, in the other the regulator: it must be heated with illusions, onesidednesses, passions, the evil and perilous consequences of overheating must be obviated with the aid of the knowledge furnished by science. — If this demand of higher culture is not met, then the future course of human evolution can be foretold almost with certainty: interest in truth will cease the less pleasure it gives: because they are associated with pleasure, illusion, error and fantasy will regain step by step the ground they formerly held: the ruination of science, a sinking back into barbarism, will be the immediate consequence; mankind will have to begin again at the weaving of its tapestry, after having, like Penelope, unwoven it at night. But who can guarantee to us that it will always find the strength for it?

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On the alleviation of life. — A principal means of alleviating one's life is to idealize everything that occurs in it; but first, however, one has to make clear to oneself from the art of painting what idealizing means. The painter desires that the viewer shall not observe too precisely, too sharply, he compels him to retreat a certain distance and view the painting from there; he is obliged to presuppose that the viewer will be some quite definite distance from the picture; he must, indeed, even assume an equally definite degree of sharpness of eyesight in his viewer! He must be in no way irresolute in such matters. Everyone who wants to idealize his life must therefore not desire to see it too precisely, he must always banish his view of it back to a certain distance away. This artifice was understood by, for example, Goethe.

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The Wanderer. — He who has attained to only some degree of freedom of mind cannot feel other than a wanderer on the earth — though not as a traveler *to* a final destination: for this destination does not exist. But he will watch and observe and keep his eyes open to see what is really going on in the world; for this reason he may not let his heart adhere too firmly to any individual thing; within him too there must be something wandering that takes pleasure in change and transience. Such a man will, to be sure, experience bad nights, when he is tired and finds the gate of the town that should offer him rest closed against him; perhaps in addition the desert will, as in the Orient, reach right up to the gate, beasts of prey howl now farther off, now closer to, a strong wind arise, robbers depart with his beasts of burden. Then dreadful night may sink down upon the desert like a second desert, and his heart grow weary of wandering. When the morning sun then rises, burning like a god of wrath, and the gate of the town opens to him, perhaps he will behold in the faces of those who dwell there even more desert, dirt, deception, insecurity than lie outside the gate — and the day will be almost worse than the night. Thus it may be that the wanderer shall fare; but then, as recompense, there will come the joyful mornings of other days and climes, when he shall see, even before the light has broken, the Muses come dancing by him in the mist of the mountains, when afterwards, if he relaxes quietly beneath the trees in the equanimity of his soul at morning, good and bright things will be thrown down to him from their tops and leafy hiding-places, the gifts of all those free spirits who are at home in mountain, wood and solitude and who, like him, are, in their now joyful, now thoughtful way, wanderers and philosophers. Born out of the mysteries of dawn, they ponder on how, between the tenth and the twelfth stroke of the clock, the day could present a face so pure, so light-filled, so cheerful and transfigured: — they seek the *philosophy of the morning*.

Volume Two

Part One: Assorted Opinions and Maxims

5

An original sin of philosophers. — Philosophers have at all times appropriated the propositions of the examiners of men (moralists) and *ruined* them, inasmuch as they have taken them for unqualified propositions and sought to demonstrate the absolute validity of what these moralists intended merely as approximate signposts or even as no more than truths possessing tenancy only for a decade — and through doing so thought to elevate themselves above the latter. Thus we find pieces of popular wisdom originating with the moralists employed to buttress Schopenhauer's celebrated doctrines of the primacy of the will over the intellect, of the unalterability of the character and of the negativity of pleasure — all of which are, in the sense in which he understands them, errors. Even the word 'will', which Schopenhauer remoulded as a common designation for many different human states and inserted into a gap in the language — greatly to his own advantage insofar as he was a moralist, since he was now at liberty to speak of the 'will' as Pascal had spoken of it— even Schopenhauer's 'will' has, in the hands of its originator through the philosopher's rage for generalization turned out to be a disaster for science: for this will has been turned into a metaphor when it is asserted that all things in nature possess will; finally, so that it can be pressed into the service of all kinds of mystical mischief it has been misemployed towards a reification — and all the modish philosophers speak of it and seem to know for certain that all things possess *one* will and, indeed, *are* this one will (which, from the description they give of this all-one-will, is as good as wanting to make God out to be the *stupid Devil*).

13

Knowledge occasionally harmful. — The utility of the unconditional search for the true is continually being demonstrated in so many ways that we are obliged to accept unconditionally the subtler and rarer harm the individual has to suffer as a consequence of it. We cannot prevent the chemist from occasionally poisoning or burning himself in the course of his experiments. — What applies to the chemist also applies to our entire culture: from which, by the way, it clearly emerges how much attention the latter has to pay to the provision of ointments to counter burning and to the constant availability of antidotes to poison.

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Alleged 'real reality'. — When he describes the various professions —e.g. that of the general, the silk-weaver, the seaman — the poet poses as *knowing* of these things to the very bottom; indeed, when it comes to the conflict of human actions and destinies he acts as though he had been present at the weaving of the whole nexus of the world; to this extent he is a deceiver. And he practises his deception only before those who *do not know* — and that is why his deception is successful: the latter commend him for his profound and genuine knowledge and in the end induce in him the delusion that he really does know these things as well as do the individuals he is describing, indeed as well as the great world-spider itself. Thus at last the deceiver becomes honest and believes in his own veracity. People of sensibility, indeed, even tell him to his face that he possesses a *higher* truth and veracity — for they are for a time tired of reality and accept the poetic dream as a beneficent relaxation and night for head and heart. What this dream shows them now seems to them more *valuable*, because, as remarked, they find it more beneficent: and men have always believed that that which seems more valuable is the truer and more real. Poets *conscious* of possessing this power deliberately set out to discredit that which is usually called reality and transform it into the uncertain, apparent, spurious, sinful, suffering, deceptive; they employ all the doubts that exist as to the limitations of knowledge, all the extravagances of scepticism, to spread a wrinkled veil of uncertainty over things: in order that after this darkening their sorcery and soul-magic shall be unhesitatingly taken for the path to 'true truth', to 'real reality'.

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Twice unjust. — We sometimes promote truth through a twofold injustice, namely when, being unable to see both sides of a thing at the same time, we see and represent them one after the other, but in such a way that we always misjudge or deny the other side in the delusion that what we are seeing is the whole truth.

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The poet as signpost to the future. — That poetic power available to men of today which is not used up in the depiction of life ought to be dedicated, not so much to the representation of the contemporary world or to the reanimation and imaginative reconstruction of the past, but to signposting the future: — not, though, as if the poet could, like a fabulous economist, figuratively anticipate the kind of conditions nations and societies would prosper better under and how they could then be brought about, What he will do, rather, is emulate the artists earlier times who imaginatively developed the existing images of the gods and *imaginatively develop* a fair image of man; he will scent out those cases in which, in the *midst* of our modern world and reality and without any artificial withdrawal from or warding off of this world, the great and beautiful soul is still possible, still able to embody itself in the harmonious and well-proportioned and thus acquire visibility, duration and the status of a model, and in so doing through the excitation of envy and emulation help to create the future. The poems of such poets will be distinguished by the fact that they appear to be secluded and secured against the fire and breath of the *passions*: the incorrigible error, the shattering of the entire human instrument, mocking laughter and gnashing of teeth, and everything tragic and comic in the old customary sense will be experienced as a tedious, archaisizing coarsening of the human image when confronted with his new art. Strength, goodness, mildness, purity and an involuntary inborn moderation in the characters and their actions: a level ground which it is repose and joy to the feet to walk upon: countenances and events mirroring a luminous sky: knowledge and art blended to a new unity: the spirit dwelling together with its sister, the soul, without presumptuousness or jealousy and evoking from what divides them not impatience and contention but a graceful seriousness: — all this would make up the general and all-embracing golden ground upon which alone the tender *distinctions* between the different embodied ideals would then constitute the actual *painting* — that of the ever increasing elevation of man. — Many a path to this poetry of the future starts out from *Goethe*: but it requires good path-finders and above all a much greater power than present-day poets— that is to say the innocuous depictees of the semi-animal and of immaturity and abnormality confused with force and naturalness — possess.

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Against the art of works of art. — Art is above and before all supposed to *beautify* life, thus make us ourselves endurable, if possible pleasing to others: with this task in view it restrains us and keeps us within bounds, creates social forms, imposes on the unmannerly rules of decency, cleanliness, politeness, of speaking and staying silent at the proper time. Then, art is supposed to *conceal* or *reinterpret* everything ugly, those painful, dreadful, disgusting things which, all efforts notwithstanding, in accord with the origin of human nature again and again insist on breaking forth: it is supposed to do so especially in regard to the passions and psychical fears and torments, and in the case of what is ineluctably or invincibly ugly to let the *meaning* of the thing shine through. After this great, indeed immense task of art, what is usually termed art, *that of the work of art*, is merely an *appendage*. A man who feels within himself an excess of such beautifying, concealing and reinterpreting powers will in the end seek to discharge this excess in works of art as well; so, under the right circumstances, will an entire people. — Now, however, we usually start with art where we should end with it, cling hold of it by its tail and believe that the art of the work of art is true art out of which life is to be improved and transformed— fools that we are! If we begin the meal with the dessert and cram ourselves with sweet things, is it any wonder if we spoil our stomach, and even our appetite, for the good, strengthening, nourishing meals to which art invites us!

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What we desire of art. — One man wants to enjoy his own nature by means of art, another wants with its aid to get above and away from his nature for a time. In accordance with both needs there exists a twofold species of art and artist.

Part Two: The Wanderer and his Shadow

9

Where the theory of freedom of will originated. — Over one man *necessity* stands in the shape of his passions, over another as the habit of hearing and obeying, over a third as a logical conscience, over a fourth as caprice and a mischievous pleasure in escapades. These four will, however, seek the *freedom* of their will precisely where each of them is most firmly fettered: it is as if the silkworm sought the freedom of its will in spinning. How does this happen? Evidently because each considers himself most free where his *feeling of living* is greatest; thus, as we have said, in passion, in duty, in knowledge, in mischievousness respectively. That through which the individual human being is strong, wherein he feels himself animated, he involuntarily thinks must also always be the element of his freedom: he accounts dependence and dullness, independence and the feeling of living as necessarily coupled. — Here an experience in the social-political domain has been falsely transferred to the farthest metaphysical domain: in the former the strong man is also the free man; the lively feeling of joy and sorrow, high hope, boldness in desire, powerfulness in hatred is the property of the rulers and the independent, while the subjected man, the slave, lives dull and oppressed. — The theory of freedom of will is an invention of *ruling* classes.

14

Man, the comedian of the world. — Let us hope there really are more spiritual beings than men are, so that all the humour shall not go to waste that lies in the fact that man regards himself as the goal and purpose of the existence of the whole universe and that mankind will not seriously rest satisfied with itself as anything less than the accomplisher of a universal mission. If a god created the world then he created men as the *apes of god*, so as always to have on hand something to cheer him up in his all-too- protracted eternities. The music of the spheres encompassing the earth would then no doubt be the mocking laughter of all other creatures encompassing man. That bored immortal tickles his favourite animal with *pain*, so as to take pleasure in the proud and tragic way this vainest of all creatures displays and interprets his sufferings and in his spiritual inventiveness in general — as the inventor of this inventor. For he who devised man for his amusement possessed more spirit than man, and more enjoyment of spirit. Yet even here, where we are for once willing to see our humanity humiliated, our vanity is playing a trick on us, inasmuch as we men would like to be something quite incomparable and miraculous at least in *possessing* this vanity. Our uniqueness in the universe! alas, it is all too improbable an idea! The astronomers, to whom there is sometimes given a horizon that really is free of the earth, give us to understand that the drop of *life* in the universe is without significance for the total character of the tremendous ocean of becoming and passing away: that uncounted stars possess similar conditions for the production of life as the earth does — very many thus do, though they constitute only a handful compared with the limitless number which have never experienced the eruption of life or have long since recovered from it; that measured against the duration of their existence life on each of these stars has been a moment, a sudden flickering up, with long, long spaces of time afterwards — and thus in no sense the goal and ultimate objective of their existence. Perhaps the ant in the forest imagines it is the goal and objective of the forest just as firmly as we do when in our imagination we almost involuntarily associate the destruction of mankind with the destruction of the earth: indeed, we are being modest if we halt at that and do not organize a general twilight of the gods and the universe for the funeral rites of the last man. Even the most unprejudiced astronomer himself can hardly imagine the earth without life other than as the luminous and floating grave-mound of mankind.

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The means to real peace. — No government nowadays admits that it maintains an army so as to satisfy occasional thirsts for conquest; the army is supposed to be for defence. That morality which sanctions self-protection is called upon to be its advocate. But that means to reserve morality to oneself and to accuse one's neighbour of immorality, since he has to be thought of as ready for aggression and conquest if our own state is obliged to take thought of means of self-defence; moreover, when our neighbour denies any thirst for aggression just as heatedly as our state does, and protests that he too maintains an army only for reasons of legitimate self-defence, our declaration of why we require an army declares our neighbour a hypocrite and cunning criminal who would be only too happy to *pounce upon* a harmless and unprepared victim and subdue him without a struggle. This is how all states now confront one another: they presuppose an evil disposition in their neighbour and a benevolent disposition in themselves. This presupposition, however, is a piece of *inhumanity* as bad as, if not worse than, a war would be; indeed, fundamentally it already constitutes an invitation to and cause of wars, because, as aforesaid, it imputes immorality to one's neighbour and thereby seems to provoke hostility and hostile acts on his part. The doctrine of the army as a means of self-defence must be renounced just as completely as the thirst for conquest. And perhaps there will come a great day on which a nation distinguished for wars and victories and for the highest development of military discipline and thinking, and accustomed to making the heaviest sacrifices on behalf of these things, will cry of its own free will: '*we shall shatter the sword*' — and demolish its entire military machine down to its last foundations. To *disarm while being the best armed*, out of an elevation of sensibility — that is the means to *real* peace, which must always rest on a disposition for peace: whereas the so-called armed peace such as now parades about in every country is a disposition to fractiousness which trusts neither itself nor its neighbour and fails to lay down its arms half out of hatred, half out of fear. Better to perish than to hate and fear, *and twofold better to perish than to make oneself hated and feared* — this must one day become the supreme maxim of every individual state! — As is well known, our liberal representatives of the people lack the time to reflect on the nature of man: otherwise they would know that they labour in vain when they work for a 'gradual reduction of the military burden'. On the contrary, it is only when this kind of distress is at its greatest that the only kind of god that can help here will be closest at hand. The tree of the glory of war can be destroyed only at a single stroke, by a lightning-bolt: lightning, however, as you well know, comes out of a cloud and from on high. —

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Can property be reconciled with justice? — If there is a strong feeling that the possession of property is unjust — and the hand of the great clock has again come round to this point — two ways of remedying the situation are proposed: firstly an equal distribution, then the abolition of property and its reversion to the community. The latter remedy is especially beloved of our socialists, who bear a grudge against that Jew of antiquity for saying: thou shalt not steal. In their view the seventh commandment should read rather: thou shalt not possess. — Attempts to act in accordance with the first recipe were often made in antiquity, always only on a small scale, to be sure, yet with a lack of success from which we too can still gain instruction. 'Equal allotment of land' is easily said, yet how much acrimony is produced by the divisions and separations this necessitates, by the loss of ancient valued property, how much reverence is injured and sacrificed! One digs up morality when one digs up boundary-stones. And how much more acrimony among the new owners, how much jealousy and enviousness, since two allotments of land have never been truly equal, and even if such a thing were possible human envy of one's neighbour would still not believe in their equality. And for how long would this equality, unhealthy and poisoned at the roots as it is, endure! Within a few generations inheritance would here have divided one allotment among five people, there given one person five allotments: and if stern laws of inheritance obviated such improper arrangements there would still be equal allotment of land, to be sure, but at the same time an abundance of the unprovided-for and discontested who possessed nothing except feelings of envy towards their neighbours and relations and a desire that all things should be overturned. — If, however, one wishes to follow the *second* recipe and restore property to the *community*, with the individual as no more than a temporary tenant, then one will destroy the land. For upon

that which he possesses only in passing man bestows no care or self-sacrifice, he merely exploits it like a robber or a dissolute squanderer. When Plato opines that with the abolition of property egoism too will be abolished the reply to him is that, in the case of man at any rate, the departure of egoism would also mean the departure of the four cardinal virtues — for it has to be said that the foulest pestilence could not do so much harm to mankind as would be done him if his vanity disappeared. Without vanity and egoism — what are the human virtues? Which is not intended remotely to imply that these are merely names and masks of such virtues. Plato's utopian basic tune, continued on in our own day by the socialists, rests upon a defective knowledge of man: he lacked a history of the moral sensations, an insight into the origin of the good and useful qualities of the human soul. Like the whole of antiquity he believed in good and evil as in white and black: thus in a radical difference between good and evil men, good and bad qualities. — If property is henceforth to inspire more confidence and become more moral, we must keep open all the paths to the accumulation of *moderate* wealth through work, but prevent the sudden or unearned acquisition of riches; we must remove from the hands of private individuals and companies all those branches of trade and transportation favourable to the accumulation of *great* wealth, thus especially the trade in money — and regard those who possess too much as being as great a danger to society as those who possess nothing.

* * *

Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Human, All Too Human*. Translated by R.J. Hollingdale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.