



## Will to Power

2

*What we are most subtle in.*—Because for many thousands of years one thought that *things* (nature, tools, property of all kinds) were also alive and animate, with the power to cause harm and to evade human purposes, the feeling of impotence has been much greater and much more common among men than it would otherwise have been: for one needed to secure oneself against things, just as against men and animals, by force, constraint, flattering, treaties, sacrifices—and here is the origin of most superstitious practices, that is to say, of a considerable, *perhaps preponderant* and yet wasted and useless constituent of all the activity hitherto pursued by man!—But because the feeling of impotence and fear was in a state of almost continuous stimulation so strongly and for so long, the *feeling of power* has evolved to such a degree of *subtlety* that in this respect man is now a match for the most delicate goldbalance. It has become his strongest propensity; the means discovered for creating this feeling almost constitute the history of culture.

[D 23]

## 3

*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 [ . . . ]

[D 113]

## 4

*Danae and God in gold.*—Whence comes this immoderate impatience which nowadays turns a man into a criminal under circumstances which would be more compatible with an opposite tendency? For if one man employ false weights, another burns his house down after he has insured it for a large sum, a third counterfeits false coins, if three-quarters of the upper classes indulge in permitted fraud and have the stock exchange and

speculations on their conscience: what drives them? Not actual need, for they are not so badly off, perhaps they even eat and drink without a care—but they are afflicted day and night by a fearful impatience at the slow way with which their money is accumulating and by an equally fearful pleasure in and love of accumulated money. In this impatience and this love, however, there turns up again that fanaticism of the *lust for power* which was in former times inflamed by the belief one was in possession of the truth and which bore such beautiful names that one could thenceforward venture to be inhuman *with a good conscience* (to burn Jews, heretics and good books and exterminate entire higher cultures such as those of Peru and Mexico). The means employed by the lust for power have changed, but the same volcano continues to glow, the impatience and the immoderate love demand their sacrifice: and what one formerly did 'for the sake of God' one now does for the sake of money, that is to say, for the sake of that which *now* gives the highest feeling of power and good conscience.

[D 204]

## 5

*Effect of happiness.*—The first effect of happiness is the *feeling of power*: this wants to *express itself*, either to us ourselves, or to other men, or to ideas or imaginary beings. The most common modes of expression are: to bestow, to mock, to destroy—all three out of a common basic drive.

[D 356]

## 6

*On the theory of the feeling of power.*—By doing good and doing ill one exercises one's power upon others—more one does not want! By *doing ill* upon those to whom we first have to make our power palpable [. . .] By *doing good* and well-wishing upon those who are in some way already dependent upon us [. . .] Whether we make a sacrifice in doing good or ill does not alter the ultimate value of our actions; even if we stake our life, as the martyr does for the sake of his Church—it is a sacrifice to *our* desire for power or for the purpose of preserving our feeling of power. He who feels 'I am in possession of the truth', how many possessions does he not let go in order to rescue this sensation! What does he not throw overboard in order to remain 'aloft'—that is to say, *above* others who lack the 'truth'! Certainly, the condition in which we do ill is seldom as pleasant, as unmixedly pleasant, as that in which we do good—it is a sign that we still lack power [. . .]

[GS 13]

## 7

What urges you on and arouses your ardour, you wisest of men, do you call it 'will to truth'?

[. . .] it is a will to power; and that is so even when you talk of good and evil and of the assessment of values.

You want to create the world before which you can kneel: this is your ultimate hope and intoxication. [. . .]

Where I found a living creature, there I found will to power; and even in the will of the servant I found the will to be master.

The will of the weaker persuades it to serve the stronger; its will wants to be master over those weaker still: this delight alone it is unwilling to forgo. [. . .]

And life itself told me this secret: 'Behold,' it said, 'I am that *wibich must overcome itself again and again*.

'To be sure, you call it will to procreate or impulse towards a goal, towards the higher, more distant, more manifold: but all this is one and one secret.

'I would rather perish than renounce this one thing; and truly, where there is perishing and the falling of leaves, behold, there life sacrifices itself—for the sake of power! [. . .]

'And you too, enlightened man, are only a path and footstep of my will: truly, my will to power walks with the feet of your will to truth!

'He who shot the doctrine of "will to existence" at truth certainly did not hit the truth: this will—does not exist!

'For what does not exist cannot will; but that which is in existence, how could it still want to come into existence?

'Only where life is, there is also will: not will to life, but—so I teach you—will to power!

'The living creature values many things higher than life itself; yet out of this evaluation itself speaks—the will to power! [. . .]

[Z II Of *Self-Overcoming*]

## 8

[. . .] [W]hat formerly happened with the Stoics still happens today as soon as a philosophy begins to believe in itself. It always creates the world in its own image, it

cannot do otherwise; philosophy is this tyrannical drive itself, the most spiritual will to power, to 'creation of the world', to *causa prima*.

[BGE 9]

## 9

Physiologists should think again before postulating the drive to self-preservation as the cardinal drive in an organic being. A living thing desires above all to *vent* its strength—life as such is will to power—: self-preservation is only one of the indirect and most frequent consequences of it. [ . . . ]

[BGE 13]

## 10

All psychology has hitherto remained anchored to moral prejudices and timidities: it has not ventured into the depths. To conceive it as morphology and the *development-theory of the will to power*, as I conceive it—has never yet so much as entered the mind of anyone else [ . . . ]

[BGE 23]

## 11

Granted that nothing is 'given' as real except our world of desires and passions, that we can rise or sink to no other 'reality' than the reality of our drives—for thinking is only the relationship of these drives to one another: is it not permitted to make the experiment and ask the question whether this which is given does not *suffice* for an understanding even of the so-called mechanical (or 'material') world? I do not mean as a deception, an 'appearance', an 'idea' (in the Berkeleyan and Schopenhauerian sense),

but as possessing the same degree of reality as our emotions themselves—as a more primitive form of the world of emotions in which everything still lies locked in mighty unity and then branches out and develops in the organic process [ . . . ] as a kind of instinctual life in which all organic functions, together with self-regulation, assimilation, nourishment, excretion, metabolism, are still synthetically bound together—as an *antecedent form of life*: [ . . . ] In the end, the question is whether we really recognize will as *efficient*, whether we believe in the causality of will: if we do—and fundamentally believe in *this* is precisely our belief in causality itself—then we *have* to make the experiment of positing causality of will hypothetically as the only one. 'Will' can of course operate only on 'will'—and not on 'matter' (not on 'nerves', for example—): enough, one must venture the hypothesis that wherever 'effects' are recognized, will is operating upon will—Granted finally that one succeeded in explaining our entire instinctual life as the development and ramification of *one* basic form of will—as will to power, as is *my* theory—; granted that one could trace all organic functions back to this will to power and could also find in it the solution to the problem of procreation and nourishment—they are *one* problem—one would have acquired the right to define *all* efficient force unequivocally as: *will to power*. The world seen from within, the world described and defined according to its 'intelligible character'—it would be 'will to power' and nothing else.

[BGE 36]

## 12

To refrain from mutual injury, mutual violence, mutual exploitation, to equate one's own will with that of another: this may in a certain rough sense become good manners between individuals if the conditions for it are present (namely if their strength and value standards are in fact similar and they both belong to *one* body). As soon as there is a desire to take this principle further, however, and if possible even as the *fundamental principle of society*, it at once reveals itself for what it is: as the will to the *denial* of life, as the principle of dissolution and decay. One has to think this matter thoroughly through to the bottom and resist all sentimental weakness: life itself is *essentially* appropriation, injury, overpowering of the strange and weaker, suppression, severity, imposition of one's own forms, incorporation and, at the least and mildest, exploitation—but why should one always have to employ precisely those words which have from of old been stamped with a slanderous intention? Even that body within which [ . . . ] individuals treat one another as equals [ . . . ] must, if it is a living and not a decaying body, [ . . . ] want to grow, expand, draw to itself, gain ascendancy—not out of any morality or immorality, but because it *lives*, and because life *is* will to power. On no point, however, is the common European consciousness more reluctant to learn than it is here; everywhere one enthuses, even under scientific disguises, about coming states of society in which there will be 'no more exploitation'—that sounds to my ears like promising a life in which there will be no organic functions. 'Exploitation' does not pertain to a corrupt or imperfect or primitive society: it pertains to the *essence* of the living thing as a fundamental organic function, it is a

consequence of the intrinsic will to power which is precisely the will of life.—Granted this is a novelty as a theory—as a reality it is the *primordial fact* of all history: let us be at least that honest with ourselves!

[BGE 259]

## 13

[ . . . ] To want to preserve oneself is the expression of a state of distress, a limitation of the actual basic drive of life, which aims at *extension of power* and in obedience to this will often enough calls self-preservation into question and sacrifices it. [ . . . ] in nature the *rule* is not the state of distress, it is superfluity, prodigality, even to the point of absurdity. The struggle for existence is only an *exception*, a temporary restriction of the will of life; the struggle, great and small, everywhere turns on ascendancy, on growth and extension, in accordance will the will to power, which is precisely the will of life.

[GS 349 (1887)]

## 14

[ . . . ] No matter how well one may have understood the *utility* of some physiological organ (or of a legal institution, a social custom, a political usage, a form in the arts or in the religious cult) one has not therewith understood anything in regard to its origin [ . . . ] all objectives, all utilities are only *signs* that a will to power has become master of something less powerful and has imprinted upon it the sense of a function; and the entire history of a 'thing', an organ, a usage can in this way be a continuing chain of signs of ever new interpretations and arrangements whose causes themselves do not have to be connected with one another but rather in some cases merely follow

and replace one another by chance. [ . . . ] Things are no different even within an individual organism: with every essential growth of the whole the 'meaning' of the individual organs is shifted—in some cases their partial destruction or a reduction in their numbers [ . . . ] can be a sign of increasing strength and perfection. I mean to say: even a partial *becoming useless*, an atrophying and degeneration, a loss of meaning and purposiveness, in short death, is among the conditions of actual *progressus*; and this always appears in the form of a will and way to *greater power*, and is always carried through at the expense of numerous smaller powers. [ . . . ]

[GM 2.12]

## 15

What is good?—All that heightens the feeling of power, the will to power, power itself in man.

What is bad?—All that proceeds from weakness.

What is happiness?—The feeling that power *increases*—that a resistance is overcome. [ . . . ]

[A 2]

## The Destroyer

He who has to be a creator always has to destroy.

[Z I *Of a Thousand and One Goals*]

And let everything that can break upon our truths—break! There is many a house still to build!

[Z II *Of Self-Overcoming*]

“What are you really doing, erecting an ideal or knocking one down?” I may perhaps be asked. [ . . . ] If a temple is to be erected *a temple must be destroyed*: that is the law [ . . . ]!

[GM 2:24]

I am not a man, I am dynamite.

[EH *Why I Am A Destiny* 1]

would *in itself* be possible—but who is strong enough for it?—that is, to wed the bad conscience to all the *unnatural* inclinations, all those aspirations to the beyond, to that which runs counter to sense, instinct, nature, animal, in short all ideals hitherto, which are one and all hostile to life and ideals that slander the world. To whom should one turn today with *such* hopes and demands?

[GM 2.24]

147

[. . .] The peculiar, withdrawn attitude of the philosopher, world-denying, hostile to life, suspicious of the senses, [. . .] which has [. . .] become virtually the *philosopher's pose par excellence*—it is above all a result of the emergency conditions under which philosophy arose and survived at all; for the longest time philosophy would not have been *possible at all* on earth without ascetic wraps and cloak, without an ascetic self-misunderstanding. To put it vividly: the *ascetic priest* provided until the most modern times the repulsive and gloomy caterpillar form in which alone the philosopher could live and creep about.

[. . .] Has that many-colored and dangerous winged creature, the "spirit" which this caterpillar concealed, really been unfettered at last and released into the light, thanks to a sunnier, warmer, brighter world? Is there sufficient pride, daring, courage, self-confidence, available today, sufficient will of the spirit, will to responsibility, *freedom of will*, for "the philosopher" to be henceforth—*possible* on earth?—

[GM 3.10]

## Higher Humanity

### *The Higher Human (Superman)*

148

[. . .] We, however, *want to be those who* [. . .] give themselves their own law, those who create themselves! [. . .]  
[GS 335]

149

[. . .] *I teach you the Superman*. Man is something that should be overcome. What have you done to overcome him?

All creatures hitherto have created something beyond themselves: and do you want to be the ebb of this great tide, and return to the animals rather than overcome man?

What is the ape to men? A laughing-stock or a painful embarrassment. And just so shall man be to the Superman [. . .]

You have made your way from worm to man, and much in you is still worm. Once you were apes, and even now man is more of an ape than any ape. [. . .]

The Superman is the meaning of the earth. Let your will say: The Superman *shall be* the meaning of the earth! [ . . . ]

[Z I Prologue 3]

150

[ . . . ] Man is a rope, fastened between animal and Superman—a rope over an abyss. [ . . . ]

[Z I Prologue 4]

151

[ . . . ] And this is the great noontide: it is when man stands at the middle of his course between animal and Superman [ . . . ]

'All gods are dead: now we want the Superman to live'—let this be our last will one day at the great noontide!

[Z I Of the Bestowing Virtue 3]

152

[ . . . ] Once you said 'God' when you gazed upon distant seas; but now I have taught you to say 'Superman'.

[Z II On the Blissful Islands]

153

[ . . . ] You Higher Men, learn this from me: In the marketplace no one believes in Higher Men. And if you want to speak there, very well, do so! But the mob blink and say: 'We are all equal.'

'You Higher Men'—thus the mob blink—'there are no Higher Men, we are all equal, man is but man, before God—we are all equal!'

Before God! But now this God has died. And let us

not be equal before the mob. You Higher Men, depart from the marketplace!

[ . . . ] You Higher Men, this God was your greatest danger.

Only since he has lain in the grave have you again been resurrected. [ . . . ]

[ . . . ] now we desire—that the Superman shall live.

[Z IV Of the Higher Man 1,2]

154

The most cautious people ask today: 'How may man still be preserved?' Zarathustra, however, asks as the sole and first one to do so: 'How shall man be overcome?'

The Superman lies close to my heart, *he* is my paramount and sole concern—and *not* man: not the nearest, not the poorest, not the most suffering, not the best. [ . . . ]

That you have despised, you Higher Men, that makes me hope. For the great despisers are the great reverers.

That you have despaired, there is much honour in that. For you have not learned how to submit, you have not learned petty prudence.

For today the petty people have become lord and master: they all preach submission and acquiescence and prudence and diligence and consideration and the long *et cetera* of petty virtues. [ . . . ]

'How may man preserve himself best, longest, most agreeably?' With that—they are the masters of the present.

Overcome for me these masters of the present, O my brothers—these petty people: *they* are the Superman's greatest danger!

Overcome, you Higher Men, the petty virtues, the petty prudences, the sand-grain discretion, the ant-swarm

inanity, miserable ease, the 'happiness of the greatest number!'

And rather despair than submit. [ . . . ]

[Z IV *Of the Higher Man* 3]

155

One may conjecture that a spirit in whom the type 'free spirit' will one day become ripe and sweet to the point of perfection has had its decisive experience in a *great liberation* and that previously it was [ . . . ] a fettered spirit [ . . . ]. What fetters the fastest? What bonds are all but unbreakable? In the case of men of a high and select kind they will be their duties: that reverence proper to youth, that reserve and delicacy before all that is honoured and revered from of old, that gratitude for the soil out of which they have grown, for the hand which led them, for the holy place where they learned to worship—their supreme moments themselves will fetter them the fastest, lay upon them the most enduring obligation. The great liberation comes for those who are thus fettered suddenly, like the shock of an earthquake: the youthful soul is all at once convulsed, torn loose, torn away—[ . . . ] 'Better to die than to go on living here'—thus resounds the imperious voice and temptation: and this 'here', this 'at home' is everything it had hitherto loved! A sudden terror and suspicion of what it loved, a lightning-bolt of contempt for what it called 'duty', a rebellious arbitrary, volcanically erupting desire for travel, strange places, estrangement, coldness, soberness, frost, a hatred for love, perhaps a desecrating blow and glance *backwards* to where it formerly loved and worshipped, perhaps a hot blush of shame at what it has just done and at the same time an exultation *that* it has

done it, a drunken, inwardly exultant shudder which betrays that a victory has been won—a victory? over what? over whom? an enigmatic, question-packed, questionable victory, but the *first* victory nonetheless: such bad and painful things are part of the history of the great liberation. [ . . . ]

From this morbid isolation, from the desert of these years of temptation and experiment, it is still a long road to that. [ . . . ] *mature* freedom of spirit which is equally self-mastery and discipline of the heart and permits access to many and contradictory modes of thought—[ . . . to] that superfluity which grants to the free spirit the dangerous privilege of living *experimentally* and of being allowed to offer itself to adventure: the master's privilege of the free spirit! [ . . . ]

[ . . . ] If he has for long hardly dared to ask himself: 'why so apart so alone? renouncing everything I once revered? renouncing reverence itself? Why this hardness, this suspiciousness! . . . ?'—now he dares to ask it aloud and hears in reply something like an answer. 'You shall become master over yourself, master also over your virtues. Formerly *they* were your masters; but they must be only your instruments beside other instruments. [ . . . ] from now on the free spirit *knows* what 'you shall' he has obeyed, and he also knows what he now *can*, what only now he—*may* do . . .

[HA *Preface* 3–6 (1886)]

156

Jesus said to his Jews: 'The law was made for servants—love God as I love him, as his son! What have we sons of God to do with morality!—

[BGE 164]

157

[. . .] Another ideal runs ahead of us, a strange, seductive, dangerous ideal to which we do not want to convert anyone because we do not easily admit that anyone has a *right to it*: the ideal of a spirit who [. . .] from overflowing plenitude and power, plays with everything hitherto called holy, good, untouchable, divine; for whom the highest things by which the people reasonably enough take their standards would signify something like a danger, a corruption, a degradation, or at least a recreation, a blindness, a temporary self-forgetfulness; the ideal of a human-superhuman well-being and well-wishing which will often enough seem *inhuman*, for example when it is set beside the whole of earthly seriousness hitherto [. . .]

[GS 382 (1887)]

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[. . .] To be incapable of taking one's enemies, one's accidents, even one's misdeeds seriously for very long—that is the sign of strong, full natures in whom there is an excess of the power to form, to mold, to recuperate and to forget [. . .] Such a man shakes off with a *single shrug* many vermin that eat deep into others; here alone genuine "love of one's enemies" is possible—supposing it to be possible at all on earth. How much reverence has a noble man for his enemies!—and such reverence is a bridge to love. [. . .]

[GM 1.10]

159

[. . .] But some day, in a stronger age than this decaying, self-doubting present, he must yet come to us, the *redeeming* man of great love and contempt, the creative spirit whose compelling strength will not let him rest in

any aloofness or any beyond, whose isolation is misunderstood by the people as if it were flight *from* reality—while it is only his absorption, immersion, penetration *into* reality, so that, when he one day emerges again into the light, he may bring home the *redemption* of this reality: its redemption from the curse that the hitherto reigning ideal has laid upon it. This man of the future, who will redeem us not only from the hitherto reigning ideal but also from that which was bound to grow out of it, the great nausea, the will to nothingness, nihilism; this bell-stroke of noon and of the great decision that liberates the will again and restores its goal to the earth and his hope to man; this Antichrist and antinihilist; this victor over God and nothingness—*be must come one day*.—

[GM 2.24]

### The School of Self-Overcoming

160

*A kind of cult of the passions*.—[. . .] It [. . .] is up to us [. . .] to *take from* the passions their terrible character and thus prevent their becoming devastating torrents.—[. . .] let us [. . .] work honestly together on the task of transforming the passions [*Leidenschaften*] of mankind one and all into joys [*Freudenschaften*].

[WS 37]

161

*Overcoming of the passions*.—The man who has overcome his passions has entered into possession of the most fertile ground; like the colonist who has mastered

the forests and swamps. To *sow* the seeds of good spiritual works in the soil of the subdued passions is then the immediate urgent task. The overcoming itself is only a *means*, not a goal; if it is not so viewed, all kinds of weeds and devilish nonsense will quickly spring up in this rich soil now unoccupied, and soon there will be more rank confusion than there ever was before.

[WS 53]

## 162

*Preserver of the species.*—It is the strongest and most evil spirits who have up till now advanced mankind the most [. . .]—they have awoken again and again the sense of [. . .] joy in the new, daring, untried, they have compelled men to set opinion against opinion, model against model. Most of all by weapons, by overturning boundary stones, by wounding piety: but also by new religions and moralities! The same 'wickedness' is in every teacher and preacher of the new as makes a conqueror infamous [. . .] The new, however, is under all circumstances the evil, as that which wants to conquer and overturn the old boundary stones and the old pieties; and only the old is the good! The good men of every age are those who bury the old ideas in the depths of the earth and bear fruit with them, the agriculturalists of the spirit. But that land will at length become exhausted, and the ploughshare of evil must come again and again. [. . .] In truth [. . .], the evil impulses are just as useful, indispensable and preservative of the species as the good:—only their function is different.

[GS 4]

## 163

*Evil.*—Examine the lives of the best and most fruitful men and peoples, and ask yourselves whether a tree, if it is to grow proudly into the sky, can do without bad weather and storms: whether unkindness and opposition from without, whether some sort of hatred, envy, obstinacy, mistrust, severity, greed and violence do not belong to the *favouring* circumstances without which a great increase even in virtue is hardly possible. The poison which destroys the weaker nature strengthens the stronger—and he does not call it poison, either.

[GS 19]

## 164

*Preparatory men.*—I greet all the signs that a more manly, warlike age is coming, which will [. . .] *wage war* for the sake of ideas and their consequences. To that end many brave pioneers are needed now [. . .] men who know how to be silent, solitary, resolute, [. . .] who have an innate disposition to seek in all things that which must be *overcome* in them: men to whom cheerfulness, patience, simplicity and contempt for the great vanities belong just as much as do generosity in victory and indulgence towards the little vanities of the defeated: [. . .] men with their own festivals, their own work-days, their own days of mourning, accustomed to and assured in command and equally ready to obey when necessary, equally proud in the one case as in the other, equally serving their own cause: men more imperilled, men more fruitful, happier men! For believe me!—the secret of realizing the greatest fruitfulness and the greatest enjoyment of existence is: to *live dangerously!* Build your cities on the slopes of Vesuvius! Send your ships out into uncharted seas! Live in conflict with your equals and with your-

167

Every morality is, as opposed to *laissez aller*, a piece of tyranny against 'nature', likewise against 'reason': but that can be no objection to it unless one is in possession of some other morality which decrees that any kind of tyranny and unreason is impermissible. The essential and invaluable element in every morality is that it is a protracted constraint [. . .] [T]he strange fact is that all there is or has been on earth of freedom, subtlety, boldness, [. . .] whether in thinking itself, or in ruling, or in speaking and persuasion, [. . .] has evolved only by virtue of the 'tyranny of such arbitrary laws'; and, in all seriousness, there is no small probability that precisely this is 'nature' and 'natural'—and *not* that *laissez aller*! [. . .] The essential thing 'in heaven and upon earth' seems, to say it again, to be a protracted *obedience* in *one* direction: from out of that there always emerges and has always emerged in the long run something for the sake of which it is worthwhile to live on earth, for example virtue, art, music, dance, reason, spirituality—something transfiguring, refined, mad and divine. [BGE 188]

168

Whether it be hedonism or pessimism or utilitarianism or eudaemonism: all these modes of thought which assess the value of things according to *pleasure* and *pain*, that is to say according to attendant and secondary phenomena, are foreground modes of thought and naiveties which anyone conscious of *creative* powers and an artist's conscience will look down on with derision [. . .] You want if possible—and there is no madder 'if possible'—to *abolish suffering*, and we?—it really does seem that *we* would rather increase it and make it worse than it has ever

selves! Be robbers and ravagers as long as you cannot be rulers and owners, you men of knowledge! [. . .] [GS 283]

165

To those *who preach morals*.—I do not wish to promote any morality, but to those who do I give this advice: If you wish to deprive the best things and states of all honor and worth, then go on talking about them as you have been doing. Place them at the head of your morality and talk from morning to night of the happiness of virtue, the composure of the soul, of justice and imminent retribution. The way you are going about it, all these good things will eventually have popularity and the clamor of the streets on their side; but at the same time all the gold that was on them will have been worn off by so much handling, and all the gold *inside* will have turned to lead. Truly, you are masters of alchemy in reverse: the devaluation of what is most valuable. Why don't you make the experiment of trying another prescription to keep from attaining the opposite of your goal as you have done hitherto? *Deny* these good things, withdraw the mob's acclaim from them as well as their easy currency; make them once again concealed secrets of solitary souls; say *that morality is something forbidden*. That way you might win over for these things the kind of people who alone matter: I mean those who are *heroic*. [. . .] Hasn't the time come to say of morality what Master Eckhart said: "I ask God to rid me of God." [GS 292]

166

[. . .] Let us divinely strive *against* one another!  
[Z II Of the Tarantulas]

been! Wellbeing as you understand it—that is no goal, that seems to us an *end*. A state which soon renders man ludicrous and contemptible—which makes it *detractable* that he should perish! The discipline of suffering, of *great* suffering—do you not know that it is *this* discipline alone which has created every elevation of mankind hitherto? That tension of the soul in misfortune which cultivates its strength, its terror at the sight of great destruction, its inventiveness and bravery in undergoing, enduring, interpreting, exploiting misfortune, and whatever of depth, mystery, mask, spirit, cunning and greatness has been bestowed upon it—has it not been bestowed through suffering! [ . . . ]

[BGE 225]

## 169

[ . . . ] Every animal—therefore *la bête philosophe*, too—instinctively strives for an optimum of favorable conditions under which it can expend all its strength and achieve its maximal feeling of power; every animal abhors, just as instinctively and with a subtlety of discernment that is "higher than all reason," every kind of intrusion or hindrance that obstructs or could obstruct this path to the optimum [ . . . ] Thus the philosopher abhors *marriage* [ . . . ]. What great philosopher hitherto has been married? Heraclitus, Plato, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Kant, Schopenhauer—they were not; more, one cannot even *imagine* them married. A married philosopher belongs *in comedy*, that is my proposition—and as for that exception, Socrates—the malicious Socrates, it would seem, married *ironically*, just to demonstrate *this* proposition.

[ . . . ] Ascetic ideals reveal so many bridges to *independence* that a philosopher is bound to rejoice and clap

his hands when he hears that story of all those resolute men who one day said No to all servitude and went into some *desert*: even supposing they were merely strong asses and quite the reverse of a strong spirit.

What, then, is the meaning of the ascetic ideal in the case of a philosopher? My answer is—you will have guessed it long ago: the philosopher sees in it an optimum condition for the highest and boldest spirituality and smiles—he does *not* deny "existence," he rather affirms *his* existence and *only* his existence, and this perhaps to the point at which he is not far from harboring the impious wish: *pereat mundus, fiat philosophia, fiat philosophus, flamm!*

As you see, they are not unbiased witnesses and judges of the *value* of the ascetic ideal, these philosophers! They think of *themselves*—what is "the saint" to them! They think of what *they* can least do without: freedom from compulsion, disturbance, noise, from tasks, duties, worries; clear heads; the dance, leap, and flight of ideas; good air, thin, clear, open, dry, like the air of the heights through which all animal being becomes more spiritual and acquires wings; repose in all cellar regions; all dogs nicely chained up; no barking of hostility and shaggy-haired rancor; no gnawing worm of injured ambition; undemanding and obedient intestines, busy as windmills but distant; the heart remote, beyond, heavy with future, posthumous—all in all, they think of the ascetic ideal as the cheerful asceticism of an animal become fledged and divine, floating above life rather than in repose. [ . . . ]

We have seen how a certain asceticism, a severe and cheerful continence with the best will, belongs to the most favorable conditions of supreme spirituality, and is also among its most natural consequences [ . . . ]

[. . .] [Life wrestles in [. . .] and through [the ascetic ideal] with death and *against* death; the ascetic ideal is an artifice for the *preservation* of life. [. . .]

[GM 3.7, 8, 9, 13]

170

*From the military school of life.*—What does not kill me makes me stronger.

[T *Maxims and Arrows* 8]

171

[. . .] Learning to *see*—habituating the eye to repose, to patience, to letting things come to it; learning to defer judgement, to investigate and comprehend the individual case in all its aspects. This is the *first* preliminary schooling in spirituality: *not* to react immediately to a stimulus, but to have the restraining, stock-taking instincts in one's control. Learning to *see*, as I understand it, is almost what is called in unphilosophical language 'strong will-power': the essence of it is precisely *not* to 'will', the *ability* to defer decision. All unspirituality, all vulgarity, is due to the incapacity to resist a stimulus—one *has* to react, one obeys every impulse. In many instances, such a compulsion is already morbidity, decline, a symptom of exhaustion—almost everything which unphilosophical crudity designates by the name 'vice' is merely this physiological incapacity *not* to react.—[. . .]

[T *What the Germans Lack* 6]

172

[. . .] For what is freedom? That one has the will to self-responsibility. That one preserves the distance which divides us. That one has become more indifferent to hardship, toil, privation, even to life. That one is ready to

sacrifice men to one's cause, oneself not excepted. Freedom means that the manly instincts that delight in war and victory have gained mastery over the other instincts—for example, over the instinct for 'happiness'. The man *who has become free*—and how much more the *mind* that has become free—spurns the contemptible sort of well-being dreamed of by shopkeepers, Christians, cows, women, Englishmen, and other democrats. The free man is a *warrior*.—How is freedom measured, in individuals as in nations? By the resistance which has to be overcome, by the effort it costs to stay aloft. One would have to seek the highest type of free man where the greatest resistance is constantly being overcome [. . .] *First* principle: one must need strength, otherwise one will never have it. [. . .]

[T *Expeditions of an Untimely Man* 38]

### The Creative Will

173

*'Will a self.*—Active, successful natures act, not according to the dictum 'know thyself', but as if there hovered before them the commandment: *will* a self and thou shalt become a self. [. . .]

[AOM 366]

174

[. . .] Truly, men have given themselves all their good and evil. Truly, they did not take it, they did not find it, it did not descend to them as a voice from heaven.

Man first implanted values into things to maintain himself—he created the meaning of things, a human meaning! Therefore he calls himself: 'Man', that is: the evaluator.

Evaluation is creation: hear it, you creative men! Valuing is itself the value and jewel of all valued things. Only through evaluation is there value: and without evaluation the nut of existence would be hollow. Hear it, you creative men! [ . . . ]

[Z I *Of the Thousand and One Goals*]

175

The figs are falling from the trees, they are fine and sweet; and as they fall their red skins split. I am a north wind to ripe figs.

Thus, like figs, do these teachings fall to you, my friends: now drink their juice and eat their sweet flesh! It is autumn all around and clear sky and afternoon.

Behold, what abundance is around us! And it is fine to gaze out upon distant seas from the midst of superfluity.

Once you said 'God' when you gazed upon distant seas; but now I have taught you to say 'Superman'.

God is a supposition; but I want your supposing to reach no further than your creating will.

Could you *create* a god?—So be silent about all gods! But you could surely create the Superman.

Perhaps not yourselves, my brothers! But you could transform yourselves into forefathers and ancestors of the Superman: and let this be your finest creating! [ . . . ]

Willing liberates: that is the true doctrine of will and freedom—thus Zarathustra teaches you. [ . . . ]

This will lure me away from God and gods; for what would there be to create if gods—existed! [ . . . ]

[Z II *On the Blissful Islands*]

176

[ . . . ] Will—that is what the liberator and bringer of joy is called: thus I have taught you, my friends! But now learn this as well: The will itself is still a prisoner.

Willing liberates: but what is it that fastens in fetters even the liberator?

'It was': that is what the will's teeth-gnashing and most lonely affliction is called. Powerless against that which has been done, the will is an angry spectator of all things past.

The will cannot will backwards; that it cannot break time and time's desire—that is the will's most lonely affliction. [ . . . ]

Until the creative will says to [the past]: 'But I will it thus! Thus shall I will it!'

But has it ever spoken thus? [ . . . ]

[ . . . ] Who has taught it to will backwards, too? [Z II *Of Redemption*]

177

[ . . . ] Oh, that you would put from you all *half* willing [ . . . ]

Oh, that you understood my saying: 'Always do what you will—but first be such as *can will!*' [ . . . ]

[Z III *Of the Virtue that Makes Small* 3]

178

[ . . . ] And that is always the nature of weak men: they lose themselves on their way. And at last their weariness asks: 'Why have we ever taken any way? It is a matter of indifference!'

It sounds pleasant to *their* ears when it is preached: 'Nothing is worth while! You shall not will!' This, however, is a sermon urging slavery. [ . . . ]

Willing liberates: for willing is creating: thus I teach.  
And you should learn *only* for creating!

[Z III *Of Old and New Law-Tables* 16]

179

[. . .] Nothing more gladdening grows on earth, O  
Zarathustra, than an exalted, robust will: it is the earth's  
fairest growth. A whole landscape is refreshed by one  
such tree. [. . .]

[Z IV *The Greeting*]

180

[. . .] If we place ourselves at the end of this tremendous  
process [of the evolution of the inner life in the human  
animal, where the tree at last brings forth fruit, [. . .] then  
we discover that the ripest fruit is the *sovereign individual*,  
*ual*, like only to himself, liberated again from morality of  
custom, autonomous and supramoral [. . .] in short, the  
man who has his own independent, protracted will and  
the *right to make promises*—and in him a proud con-  
sciousness, quivering in every muscle, of *what* has at  
length been achieved and become flesh in him, a con-  
sciousness of his own power and freedom, a sensation of  
mankind come to completion. This emancipated individ-  
ual, with the actual *right* to make promises, this master of  
a *free* will, this sovereign man—how should he not be  
aware of his superiority over all those who lack the right  
to make promises and stand as their own guarantors  
[. . .]—and how this mastery over himself also necessarily  
gives him mastery over circumstances, over nature, and  
over all more short-willed and unreliable creatures? The  
“free” man, the possessor of a protracted and unbreak-  
able will, also possesses his *measure of value* [. . .] The  
proud awareness of the extraordinary privilege of

*responsibility*, the consciousness of this rare freedom, this  
power over oneself and over fate, has in his case pene-  
trated to the profoundest depths and become instinct, the  
dominating instinct. What will he call this dominating  
instinct, supposing he feels the need to give it a name?  
The answer is beyond doubt: this sovereign man calls it  
his *conscience*.

[GM 2.2]

### Healthy Selfishness

181

[. . .] For one thing is needful: that a human being attain  
his satisfaction with himself [. . .]; only then is a human  
being at all tolerable to behold. Whoever is dissatisfied  
with himself is always ready to revenge himself there-  
fore; we others will be his victims, if only by always hav-  
ing to stand his ugly sight. For the sight of the ugly  
makes men bad and gloomy.

[GS 290 *Portable* 99]

182

[. . .] And then it also happened—and truly, it happened  
for the first time!—that his teaching glorified *selfishness*,  
the sound, healthy selfishness that issues from a mighty  
soul—  
from a mighty soul, to which pertains the exalted  
body, the beautiful, victorious, refreshing body, around  
which everything becomes a mirror;  
the supple, persuasive body, the dancer whose  
image and epitome is the self-rejoicing soul. [. . .]  
Entirely hateful and loathsome to [my teaching] is  
he who will never defend himself, who swallows down

poisonous spittle and evil looks, the too-patient man who puts up with everything, is content with everything: for that is the nature of slaves.

Whether one be servile before gods and divine kicks, or before men and the silly opinions of men: it spits at slaves of *all* kinds, this glorious selfishness! [ . . . ]

And he who declares the Ego healthy and holy and selfishness glorious—truly, he, a prophet, declares too what he knows: *'Behold, it comes, it is near, the great noontide!'*

[Z III *Of the Three Evil Things* 2]

183

You creators, you Higher Men! One is pregnant only with one's own child.

Let nothing impose upon you, nothing persuade you! For who is *your* neighbour? And if you do things 'for your neighbour', still you do not create for him!

Unlearn this 'for', you creators: your very virtue wants you to have nothing to do with 'for' and 'for the sake of' and 'because'. You should stop your ears to these false little words.

This 'for one's neighbour' is the virtue only of petty people: [ . . . ] they have neither right to nor strength for *your* selfishness!

The prudence and providence of pregnancy is in your selfishness! What no one has yet seen, the fruit: that is protected and indulged and nourished by your whole love. [ . . . ]

[Z IV *Of the Higher Man* 11]

<sup>1</sup> Let the world perish, but let there be philosophy, the philosopher, me!

<sup>2</sup> Nietzsche's proposed solution to the problem of how to "will backwards," that is, of how to affirm the totality of the past, is found in the doctrines of eternal recurrence and love of fate. See the first two sections of chapter 8.