

## Notebook 34, April – June 1885

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In my youth I was unlucky: a very ambiguous man crossed my path. When I recognised him for what he is, namely a great actor who has no authentic relationship to anything (not even to music), I was so sickened and disgusted that I believed all famous people had been actors, otherwise they wouldn't have become famous, and that the chief thing in what I called 'artist' was the *theatrical* force.

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Our age feeds off, lives off the morality of previous ages.

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Pascal was offended by the idea that he could be influenced by the weather, by bright and serene skies. Now – the theory of *milieu* is the most comfortable one: *everything* exerts an influence, the result is man himself.

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Sense-perception happens without our awareness: whatever we become conscious of is a perception that has already been processed.

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He makes the great release *for himself*, without demanding it from others or even considering it his duty to communicate it to others and impose it on them.

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The problem of ‘belief’ is really: *whether instinct has more value than reasoning and why?*

Hidden behind the many disputes about ‘knowledge and belief’, Utilitarianism and intuitionism, is *this* question of *valuation*.

Socrates had naively placed himself on the side of reason, against instinct. (Yet fundamentally, he had in fact followed all moral instincts, only with the wrong motivation: *as if* motives originated in reason. Likewise Plato, etc.)

Without meaning to, Plato tried to reach the result that reason and instinct *want* the same thing. Likewise, up to the present day: Kant, Schopenhauer, the English.

In belief, the instinct of *obedience to the highest authority*, thus *one* instinct, takes precedence. The categorical imperative is a *wished-for* instinct, where reason and *this* instinct are one.

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If *I* have anything of a unity within me, it certainly doesn’t lie in the conscious ‘I’ and in feeling, willing, thinking, but somewhere else: in the sustaining, appropriating, expelling, watchful prudence of my whole organism, of which my conscious self is only a tool. Feeling, willing, thinking everywhere show only outcomes, the causes of which are entirely unknown to me: the way these outcomes succeed one another as if one succeeded *out of* its predecessor is probably just an illusion: in truth, the causes may be connected to one another in such a way that the final causes give me the *impression* of being associated, logically or psychologically. *I deny* that one intellectual or psychological phenomenon is the direct *cause* of another intellectual or psychological phenomenon – even if this seems to be so. *The true world of causes is hidden from us*: it is unutterably more complicated. The intellect and the senses are, above all, a *simplifying* apparatus. Yet our *erroneous*, miniaturised, *logicised* world of causes is the

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one we can live in. We are ‘knowers’ to the extent that we are able to satisfy our needs.

Studying the body gives some idea of the unutterable complication.

If our intellect did not have some *fixed* forms, living would be impossible. But that doesn’t prove anything about the truth of all logical facts.

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NB. A little more clear-headedness and a little good will, and one can no longer bear, for reasons of taste, to interpret one’s experiences to suit ‘the honour of God’ – I mean, to see everywhere the traces of his caring, warning, punishing, schooling. Just as a good philologist (and indeed any philologically trained scholar) is repulsed by false textual interpretations (e.g., those made by the Protestant preachers in the pulpits – which is why the learned professions no longer go to church –), in the same way, and not as a consequence of great ‘virtue’, ‘honesty’, etc., one’s taste is offended by the counterfeiting inherent in the religious interpretation of all experiences. –

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Our pleasure in simplicity, transparency, regularity, brightness, from which in the end a German ‘philosopher’ could extract something like a categorical imperative of logic and beauty – I admit that a strong *instinct* of this kind exists. It is so strong that it governs among all the activities of our senses, and reduces, regulates, assimilates, etc., for us the abundance of real perceptions (unconscious ones –), *presenting them to our consciousness* only in this trimmed form. This ‘logical’, this ‘artistic’ element is our continual occupation. *What* made this force so sovereign? Obviously the fact that without it, for sheer hubbub of impressions, no living being would live.

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*Critique of the instinct of causality*

The *belief* that an action happens in consequence of a motive was one gradually and instinctively generalised, in the days when everything that

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happened was imagined after the pattern of conscious, living beings. 'Everything happens because of a motive: the *causa finalis* is the *causa efficiens*<sup>36</sup> –

This belief is *erroneous*: purpose, motive are means of making something that happens comprehensible, practicable. The generalisation, too, was erroneous and illogical.

*No purpose.*

*No will.*

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*The chronological order reversed*

The 'external world' affects us: the effect is telegraphed into our brain, there arranged, given shape and traced back to its cause: then the cause is *projected*, and *only then does the fact enter our consciousness*. That is, the world of appearances *appears* to us as a cause only once 'it' has exerted its effect and the effect has been processed. That is, *we are constantly reversing the order of what happens*. – While 'I' see, it is already seeing something different. Similar to the case of pain.

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*Belief in the senses*. Is a fundamental fact of our intellect, which receives from the senses the raw material that it *interprets*. This way of treating the raw material offered by the senses is, considered *morally*, *not* guided by an intention to truth but as if by a will to overpower, assimilate, consume. Our constant functions are absolutely egoistic, machiavellian, unscrupulous, subtle. Commanding and obeying pushed to the extreme, and so that it can obey perfectly, the individual organ has much freedom.

The error in the belief in purposes.

Will – a superfluous assumption.

The chronological order reversed.

Critique of the belief in causality.

<sup>36</sup> Aristotle (Phys. II 3) distinguished four ways of speaking of a thing's cause: we may be referring to the matter it consists of, to its essential form, to what made it, or to its purpose. The standard Latin terminology translates the latter two as *causa efficiens* and *causa finalis*.

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Belief in the senses as a fundamental fact of what we are.

The central power – must not differ essentially from what it rules.

Properties are not explained by the history of their genesis. They must already be known. *Historical* explanation is the reduction to a sequence we are *used to*: by means of analogy.

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NB. Our era is sceptical in its most essential instincts: almost all the subtler scholars and artists are sceptics, even if they don't like to admit it to themselves. Pessimism and *No-saying* is only easier for the mind's indolence: our muggy era with its democratic air is above all indolent. Where the mind is more particular it says: 'I don't know' and 'I no longer trust myself or anyone else' and 'I no longer know which way to turn', and 'hope – that's an empty phrase for liars or for demagogic orators and artists'. Scepticism is the expression of a certain *physiological* constitution, one inevitably produced in the great crossing of many races: the many inherited valuations struggle with each other, hinder each other's growth. The force which loses most here is the *will*: therefore great fear of responsibility, because no one can vouch for himself. Hiding behind communities is the order of the day, 'you scratch my back and I'll cover yours'. Thus a herd-like species emerges: and anyone with a strong, domineering and audacious will is certain to come to rule in such times.

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*The human horizon.* One can think of the philosophers as those who make the most extreme efforts to *try* how far man can *raise* himself (especially Plato): how *far* his strength will reach. But they do this as individuals; perhaps the instinct of the Caesars, the founders of states, etc., was greater – those who think about how far man can be driven in *development* and under 'favourable circumstances'. But they did not sufficiently grasp what 'favourable circumstances' are. Great question: where the plant called 'man' has grown most magnificently up to now. That requires a comparative study of history.

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To be put at the very top: the *instincts*, too, have *become*; they prove nothing about the super-sensible, not even about the animal, not even about the typically human.

That the mind has become and is still becoming; that among countless ways of inferring and judging, the one now most familiar to us is somehow the most useful to us and has been passed down to us because the individuals who thought that way had better prospects: that this proves nothing about ‘true’ and ‘untrue’, — — —

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We *imagine* that what is commanding and highest resides in our consciousness. Ultimately we have a double brain: we encompass in the word ‘consciousness’ our capacity *itself* to *will, feel and think* something of our own willing, feeling and thinking.

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NB. Those law-giving and tyrannical spirits capable of *tying fast* the meaning of a concept, *holding fast* to it, men with that spiritual force of will, who know how to turn the most fluid thing, the spirit, to stone for long periods and almost to eternalise it, are commanding men in the highest sense. They say: ‘I want to be sure that such and such a thing is seen, I want it exactly *this way*, I want it *for this* and only for this.’ – Law-giving men of this kind were bound to exert the strongest influence in all ages; all the typical formations of man are owed to them: they are the sculptors – and the rest (the very great majority, in this case –) are, compared to them, only *clay*.

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The best-established movements of our mind, our regulated gymnastics in, e.g., ideas of time and space, or in the need for ‘justification’ – this *philosophical* habitus of the human mind is our real potency; thus, in

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many matters of the mind *we can no longer do otherwise*, which is referred to as ‘psychological necessity’. This necessity is one that has *become* – and it is downright childish to believe that *our* space, *our* time, *our* instinct for causality are something that could have meaning even apart from man.

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One owes the Christian church:

1. the intellectualisation of *cruelty*: the idea of hell, the tortures and inquisitions, the autos-da-fé, after all, represent great progress over the magnificent but semi-imbecilic butchery in the Roman arenas. Much intellect, much hidden design, has entered cruelty. – The church has invented many enjoyments –

2. its ‘intolerance’ made the European mind *refined* and *supple*. One sees immediately how in our democratic age, with the freedom of the press, thought becomes coarse. The Germans invented gunpowder – hats off to them! But they made up for it: they invented the press. The ancient polis<sup>37</sup> was of just the same disposition. The Roman Empire, in contrast, allowed much freedom of belief and unbelief: more than any empire allows today: immediately, the consequence was an enormous increase in the degeneracy, doltishness and crudeness of the mind. – Leibnitz and Abelard, Montaigne, Descartes and Pascal – how good they look! Seeing the supple audacity of such minds is an enjoyment one owes the church. – The intellectual pressure of the church is essentially the unbending severity with which concepts and valuations are treated as *fixed*, as *aeternae*.<sup>38</sup> Dante gives us pure enjoyment through this fact: that under an absolute regime one certainly need not be *narrowly restricted*. If there were restrictions, they were stretched across a tremendous space, thanks to Plato; and one could move within them like Bach within the forms of counterpoint, *very freely*. – Baco<sup>39</sup> and Shakespeare seem almost revolting when one has thoroughly learned to savour *this* ‘freedom under the law’. Likewise the most recent music in comparison to Bach and Handel.

<sup>37</sup> The ancient Greek city state.      <sup>38</sup> Eternal truths.

<sup>39</sup> Francis Bacon (1561–1626), politician and writer, a contemporary of Shakespeare’s.

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I take the democratic movement to be something inevitable: yet something that isn't inexorable but can be delayed. Overall, though, the rule of the herd instinct and of herd valuations, Epicureanism and benevolence increase of a piece: man becomes weak, but good and agreeable.

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That *my* valuation or condemnation of someone does not give another man the right to value or condemn the same way – unless he is my equal and of equal rank. The opposite way of thinking is that of the newspapers, which believe a valuation of people and things to be something 'in itself' that anyone can make use of as if it were *his own* property. This presupposes that *everyone is of equal rank*. – To be truthful is a distinction

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That man is a multiplicity of forces which stand in an order of rank, so that there are those which command, but what commands, too, must provide for those which obey everything they need to preserve themselves, and is thus itself *conditioned* by their existence. All these living beings must be related in kind, otherwise they could not serve and obey one another like this: what serves must, in some sense, also be an obeyer, and in more delicate cases the roles must temporarily switch so that what otherwise commands must, this once, obey. The concept of the 'individual' is false. In isolation, these beings do not exist: the centre of gravity is something changeable; the continual *generation* of cells, etc., produces a continual change in the number of these beings. And mere *addition* is no use at all. Our arithmetic is too crude for these relations, and is only an arithmetic of single elements.

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*The logic of our conscious thinking is only a crude and facilitated form of the thinking needed by our organism, indeed by the particular organs of our organism.* For example, a thinking-at-the-same-time is needed of which we have hardly an inkling. Or perhaps an artist of language does: reckoning



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back with the weight and the lightness of syllables, reckoning ahead, and at the same time looking for analogies between the weight of the thought and the phonetic, or physiological, conditions of the larynx: all this happens at the same time – though not *consciously*.

*Our feeling of causality* is something quite crude and isolated compared to our organism's real feelings of causality. In particular, 'before' and 'after' is a great piece of naivety.

Finally: we first had to acquire everything for *consciousness*: a sense of time, a sense of place, a sense of causality; it having long existed, and far more richly, without consciousness. And what we acquired was a certain simplest, plainest, most reduced form: our *conscious* willing, feeling, thinking is in the service of a much more comprehensive willing feeling thinking. – Really?

We are still growing continually, our sense of time and place, etc., is still developing.

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Nothing can be predicted, but with a certain heightening of the human type a *new* force may reveal itself of which we have previously known nothing. (Namely a synthesis of opposites?)

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For many people, abstract thinking is fatiguing work – for me, on good days, it is a feast, an intoxication.

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Just as there are many things a general doesn't want to know, and must not know if he is to keep hold of his overall view, so in our conscious mind there must be *above all* a drive to *exclude, to chase away*, a selecting drive – which allows only *certain* facts to be presented to it. Consciousness is the hand with which the organism reaches out furthest: it must be a firm hand. Our logic, our sense of time, sense of space are prodigious capacities to abbreviate, for the purpose of commanding. A concept is an invention which nothing corresponds to *wholly* but many things *slightly*: a proposition such as 'two things, being equal to a third thing, are themselves

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equal' assumes (1) things and (2) equalities – neither exists. Yet with this invented and rigid world of concepts and numbers, man gains a means of seizing by signs, as it were, huge quantities of facts and inscribing them in his memory. This apparatus of signs is man's superiority, precisely because it is at the furthest possible distance from the individual facts. The reduction of experiences to *signs*, and the ever greater quantity of things which can thus be grasped, is man's *highest strength*. Intellectuality as the capacity to be master of a huge number of facts in signs. *This intellectual world, this sign-world, is pure 'illusion and deception'*, as is every 'phenomenal thing' – and 'moral man' will probably be outraged! (Just as, in his calculations, Napoleon considered only man's most essential instincts and was entitled to ignore the exceptional ones, e.g., compassion – at the risk of miscalculating now and again.)

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I have often watched these German idealists, but they haven't watched me – they know nothing of what I know, don't even scent it, they go their sweet strolling way, their hearts are full of different desires from mine: they seek different air, different nourishment, different comfort. They look *upwards*, I look *outwards* – we never see the same thing.

– Dealing with them irks me. They may love cleanliness as far as their body is concerned, but their mind is unwashed, their 'consequently' smells tainted to me, they are indignant where I feel the rise of cheerful curiosity, they haven't cleaned out their ears when I am ready to sing my song.

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NB. The *emasculating* and perhaps *castrating*<sup>40</sup> effect of so much *praying* is another of those injuries done to the German character since the Reformation. It is always bad taste to ask much instead of giving much: the combination of meek servility and an often arrogant, vulgar importunity with which, e.g., St Augustine wallows before God in his Confessions reminds us that man may not be the only one of the animals to have religious feeling: the dog has a similar 'religious feeling' for man. – Communicating with God in prayer breeds the humiliating mood and attitude which still,

<sup>40</sup> *entmännlichend* and *entmannend*.