I. THE WILL TO POWER
AS KNOWLEDGE

1. Method of Inquiry

466 (Jan.-Fall 1888)

It is not the victory of science that distinguishes our nine-
teenth century, but the victory of scientific method over science.

467 (Spring-Fall 1887)

History of scientific method, considered by Auguste Comte
as virtually philosophy itself.

468 (Spring-Fall 1887)

The great methodologists: Aristotle, Bacon, Descartes, Auguste
Comte.

469 (Jan.-Fall 1888)

The most valuable insights are arrived at last; but the most
valuable insights are methods.

All the methods, all the presuppositions of our contemporary
science were for millennia regarded with the profoundest contempt;
on their account one was excluded from the society of respectable
people—one was considered as an “enemy of God,” as a reviler
of the highest ideal, as “possessed.”

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1 Much of the material in this part was utilized by Nietzsche in the
first chapter of Beyond Good and Evil, published in 1886, and in Twilight
of the Idols (completed in the early fall of 1888), especially in the chapter
"The Four Great Errors" and—some of the sections on the “true” and the
"apparent" world—in the chapters "Reason in Philosophy" and "How the
True World Finally Became a Fable." But there are also many ideas and
a great many formulations that were not included in any of the books
Nietzsche finished—presumably in most cases because Nietzsche was not
fully satisfied with his notes. What follows, then, does not represent his final
point of view; but some of his most interesting suggestions are to be found
only in these sections.
We have had the whole pathos of mankind against us—our conception of what “truth” should be, what service of truth should be, our objectivity, our method, our silent, cautious, mistrustful ways were considered perfectly contemptible—

At bottom, it has been an aesthetic taste that has hindered mankind most: it believed in the picturesque effect of truth, it demanded of the man of knowledge that he should produce a powerful effect on the imagination.

This looks as if an antithesis has been achieved, a leap made; in reality, the schooling through moral hyperbole prepared the way step by step for that milder of pathos that became incarnate in the scientific character—

The conscientiousness in small things, the self-control of the religious man were a preparatory school for the scientific character: above all, the disposition that takes problems seriously, regardless of the personal consequences—

2. The Epistemological Starting Point

470 (1885-1886)

Profound aversion to reposing once and for all in any one total view of the world. Fascination of the opposing point of view: refusal to be deprived of the stimulus of the enigmatic.

471 (1885-1886)

The presupposition that things are, at bottom, ordered so morally that human reason must be justified—is an ingenuous presupposition and a piece of naivété, the after-effect of belief in God’s veracity—God understood as the creator of things.— These concepts an inheritance from a former existence in a beyond—

472 (1883-1888)

Contradiction of the alleged “facts of consciousness.” Observation is a thousand times more difficult, error perhaps a condition of observation in general.
473 (1886-1887)

The intellect cannot criticize itself, simply because it cannot be compared with other species of intellect and because its capacity to know would be revealed only in the presence of "true reality," i.e., because in order to criticize the intellect we should have to be a higher being with "absolute knowledge." This presupposes that, distinct from every perspective kind of outlook or sensual-spiritual appropriation, something exists, an "in-itself."— But the psychological derivation of the belief in things forbids us to speak of "things-in-themselves."

474 (Nov. 1887-March 1888)

That a sort of adequate relationship subsists between subject and object, that the object is something that if seen from within would be a subject, is a well-meant invention which, I think, has had its day. The measure of that of which we are in any way conscious is totally dependent upon the coarse utility of its becoming-conscious: how could this nook-perspective of consciousness permit us to assert anything of "subject" and "object" that touched reality!—

475 (1885-1886)

Critique of modern philosophy: erroneous starting point, as if there existed "facts of consciousness"—and no phenomenализm in introspection.

476 (1884)

"Consciousness"—to what extent the idea of an idea, the idea of will, the idea of a feeling (known to ourselves alone) are totally superficial! Our inner world, too, "appearance"!

477 (Nov. 1887-March 1888)

I maintain the phenomenality of the inner world, too: everything of which we become conscious is arranged, simplified,
schematized, interpreted through and through—the actual process of inner “perception,” the causal connection between thoughts, feelings, desires, between subject and object, are absolutely hidden from us—and are perhaps purely imaginary. The “apparent inner world” is governed by just the same forms and procedures as the “outer” world. We never encounter “facts”: pleasure and displeasure are subsequent and derivative intellectual phenomena—

“Causality” eludes us; to suppose a direct causal link between thoughts, as logic does—that is the consequence of the crudest and clumsiest observation. Between two thoughts all kinds of affects play their game: but their motions are too fast, therefore we fail to recognize them, we deny them—

“Thinking,” as epistemologists conceive it, simply does not occur: it is a quite arbitrary fiction, arrived at by selecting one element from the process and eliminating all the rest, an artificial arrangement for the purpose of intelligibility—

The “spirit,” something that thinks: where possible even “absolute, pure spirit”—this conception is a second derivative of that false introspection which believes in “thinking”: first an act is imagined which simply does not occur, “thinking,” and secondly a subject-substratum in which every act of thinking, and nothing else, has its origin: that is to say, both the deed and the doer are fictions.

478 (March-June 1888)

One must not look for phenomenalism in the wrong place: nothing is more phenomenal (or, more clearly:) nothing is so much deception as this inner world which we observe with the famous “inner sense.”

We have believed in the will as cause to such an extent that we have from our personal experience introduced a cause into events in general (i.e., intention a cause of events—).

We believe that thoughts as they succeed one another in our minds stand in some kind of causal relation: the logician especially, who actually speaks of nothing but instances which never occur in reality, has grown accustomed to the prejudice that thoughts cause thoughts—

We believe—and even our philosophers still believe—that pleasure and pain are causes of reactions, that the purpose of
pleasure and pain is to occasion reactions. For millennia, pleasure and the avoidance of displeasure have been flatly asserted as the motives for every action. Upon reflection, however, we should concede that everything would have taken the same course, according to exactly the same sequence of causes and effects, if these states "pleasure and displeasure" had been absent, and that one is simply deceiving oneself if one thinks they cause anything at all: they are epiphenomena with a quite different object than to evoke reactions; they are themselves effects within the instituted process of reaction.

In summa: everything of which we become conscious is a terminal phenomenon, an end—and causes nothing; every successive phenomenon in consciousness is completely atomistic—And we have sought to understand the world through the reverse conception—as if nothing were real and effective but thinking, feeling, willing!—

479 (Jan.-Fall 1888)

The phenomenalism of the "inner world." Chronological inversion, so that the cause enters consciousness later than the effect.—We have learned that pain is projected to a part of the body without being situated there—we have learned that sense impressions naively supposed to be conditioned by the outer world are, on the contrary, conditioned by the inner world; that we are always unconscious of the real activity of the outer world—The fragment of outer world of which we are conscious is born after an effect from outside has impressed itself upon us, and is subsequently projected as its "cause"—

In the phenomenalism of the "inner world" we invert the chronological order of cause and effect. The fundamental fact of "inner experience" is that the cause is imagined after the effect has taken place—The same applies to the succession of thoughts:—we seek the reason for a thought before we are conscious of it; and the reason enters consciousness first, and then its consequence—Our entire dream life is the interpretation of complex feelings with a view to possible causes—and in such way that we are conscious of a condition only when the supposed causal chain associated with it has entered consciousness.

The whole of "inner experience" rests upon the fact that a
cause for an excitement of the nerve centers is sought and imagined—and that only a cause thus discovered enters consciousness: this cause in no way corresponds to the real cause—it is a groping on the basis of previous “inner experiences,” i.e., of memory. But memory also maintains the habit of the old interpretations, i.e., of erroneous causality—so that the “inner experience” has to contain within it the consequences of all previous false causal fictions. Our “outer world” as we project it every moment is indissolubly tied to the old error of the ground: we interpret it by means of the schematism of “things,” etc.

“Inner experience” enters our consciousness only after it has found a language the individual understands—i.e., a translation of a condition into conditions familiar to him—; “to understand” means merely: to be able to express something new in the language of something old and familiar. E.g., “I feel unwell”—such a judgment presupposes a great and late neutrality of the observer—; the simple man always says: this or that makes me feel unwell—he makes up his mind about his feeling unwell only when he has seen a reason for feeling unwell.— I call that a lack of philology; to be able to read off a text as a text without interposing an interpretation is the last-developed form of “inner experience”—perhaps one that is hardly possible—

480 (March-June 1888)

There exists neither “spirit,” nor reason, nor thinking, nor consciousness, nor soul, nor will, nor truth: all are fictions that are of no use. There is no question of “subject and object,” but of a particular species of animal that can prosper only through a certain relative rightness; above all, regularity of its perceptions (so that it can accumulate experience)—

Knowledge works as a tool of power. Hence it is plain that it increases with every increase of power—

The meaning of “knowledge”: here, as in the case of “good” or “beautiful,” the concept is to be regarded in a strict and narrow anthropocentric and biological sense. In order for a particular species to maintain itself and increase its power, its conception of reality must comprehend enough of the calculable and constant for it to base a scheme of behavior on it. The utility of preservation—not some abstract-theoretical need not to be deceived—stands
as the motive behind the development of the organs of knowledge—
they develop in such a way that their observations suffice for
our preservation. In other words: the measure of the desire for
knowledge depends upon the measure to which the will to power
grows in a species: a species grasps a certain amount of reality
in order to become master of it, in order to press it into service.

3. Belief in the “Ego.” The Subject

481 (1883-1888)

Against positivism, which halts at phenomena—“There are
only facts”—I would say: No, facts is precisely what there is not,
only interpretations. We cannot establish any fact “in itself”:
perhaps it is folly to want to do such a thing.

“Everything is subjective,” you say; but even this is inter-
pretation. The “subject” is not something given, it is something added
and invented and projected behind what there is.— Finally, is it
necessary to posit an interpreter behind the interpretation? Even
this is invention, hypothesis.

In so far as the word “knowledge” has any meaning, the
world is knowable; but it is interpretable otherwise, it has no mean-
ing behind it, but countless meanings.— “Perspectivism.”

It is our needs that interpret the world; our drives and their
For and Against. Every drive is a kind of lust to rule; each one
has its perspective that it would like to compel all the other drives
to accept as a norm.

482 (1886-1887)

We set up a word at the point at which our ignorance begins,
at which we can see no further, e.g., the word “I,” the word “do,”
the word “suffer”:—these are perhaps the horizon of our knowl-
edge, but not “truths.”

483 (1885)

Through thought the ego is posited; but hitherto one believed
as ordinary people do, that in “I think” there was something of
immediate certainty, and that this "I" was the given cause of thought, from which by analogy we understood all other causal relationships. However habitual and indispensble this fiction may have become by now—that in itself proves nothing against its imaginary origin: a belief can be a condition of life and nonetheless be false.²

484 (Spring-Fall 1887)

"There is thinking; therefore there is something that thinks": this is the upshot of all Descartes' argumentation. But that means positing as "true a priori" our belief in the concept of substance—that when there is thought there has to be something "that thinks" is simply a formulation of our grammatical custom that adds a doer to every deed. In short, this is not merely the substantiation of a fact but a logical-metaphysical postulate—Along the lines followed by Descartes one does not come upon something absolutely certain but only upon the fact of a very strong belief.

If one reduces the proposition to "There is thinking, therefore there are thoughts," one has produced a mere tautology: and precisely that which is in question, the "reality of thought," is not touched upon—that is, in this form the "apparent reality" of thought cannot be denied. But what Descartes desired was that thought should have, not an apparent reality, but a reality in itself.

485 (Spring-Fall 1887)

The concept of substance is a consequence of the concept of the subject: not the reverse! If we relinquish the soul, "the subject," the precondition for "substance" in general disappears. One acquires degrees of being, one loses that which has being.

Critique of "reality": where does the "more or less real," the gradation of being in which we believe, lead to?—

The degree to which we feel life and power (logic and coherence of experience) gives us our measure of "being," "reality," not-appearance.

The subject: this is the term for our belief in a unity underlying all the different impulses of the highest feeling of reality: we

²Cf. sections 487 and 493 and Beyond, section 4. This section, not in Nietzsche's handwriting, was evidently dictated.
understand this belief as the effect of one cause—we believe so firmly in our belief that for its sake we imagine "truth," "reality," "substantiality" in general.— "The subject" is the fiction that many similar states in us are the effect of one substratum: but it is we who first created the "similarity" of these states; our adjusting them and making them similar is the fact, not their similarity (—which ought rather to be denied—).

486 (1885-1886)

One would have to know what being is, in order to decide whether this or that is real (e.g., "the facts of consciousness"); in the same way, what certainty is, what knowledge is, and the like.— But since we do not know this, a critique of the faculty of knowledge is senseless: how should a tool be able to criticize itself when it can use only itself for the critique? It cannot even define itself!8

487 (1883-1886)

Must all philosophy not ultimately bring to light the preconditions upon which the process of reason depends?—our belief in the "ego" as a substance, as the sole reality from which we ascribe reality to things in general? The oldest "realism" at last comes to light: at the same time that the entire religious history of mankind is recognized as the history of the soul superstition. Here we come to a limit: our thinking itself involves this belief (with its distinction of substance, accident; deed, doer, etc.); to let it go means: being no longer able to think.

But that a belief, however necessary it may be for the preservation of a species, has nothing to do with truth, one knows from the fact that, e.g., we have to believe in time, space, and motion, without feeling compelled to grant them absolute reality.

488 (Spring-Fall 1887)

Psychological derivation of our belief in reason.— The concept "reality," "being," is taken from our feeling of the "subject." "The subject": interpreted from within ourselves, so that the ego counts as a substance, as the cause of all deeds, as a doer.

8 Cf. section 473.
The logical-metaphysical postulates, the belief in substance, accident, attribute, etc., derive their convincing force from our habit of regarding all our deeds as consequences of our will—so that the ego, as substance, does not vanish in the multiplicity of change.— But there is no such thing as will.—

We have no categories at all that permit us to distinguish a "world in itself" from a "world of appearance." All our categories of reason are of sensual origin: derived from the empirical world. "The soul," "the ego"—the history of these concepts shows that here, too, the oldest distinction ("breath," "life")—

If there is nothing material, there is also nothing immaterial. The concept no longer contains anything.

No subject "atoms." The sphere of a subject constantly growing or decreasing, the center of the system constantly shifting; in cases where it cannot organize the appropriate mass, it breaks into two parts. On the other hand, it can transform a weaker subject into its functionary without destroying it, and to a certain degree form a new unity with it. No "substance," rather something that in itself strives after greater strength, and that wants to "preserve" itself only indirectly (it wants to surpass itself—).

489 (1886-1887)

Everything that enters consciousness as "unity" is already tremendously complex: we always have only a semblance of unity.

The phenomenon of the body is the richer, clearer, more tangible phenomenon: to be discussed first, methodologically, without coming to any decision about its ultimate significance.

490 (1885)

The assumption of one single subject is perhaps unnecessary; perhaps it is just as permissible to assume a multiplicity of subjects, whose interaction and struggle is the basis of our thought and our consciousness in general? A kind of aristocracy of "cells" in which dominion resides? To be sure, an aristocracy of equals, used to ruling jointly and understanding how to command?

My hypotheses: The subject as multiplicity.

Pain intellectual and dependent upon the judgment "harmful": projected.
The effect always “unconscious”: the inferred and imagined cause is projected, follows in time.

Pleasure is a kind of pain.

The only force that exists is of the same kind as that of the will: a commanding of other subjects, which thereupon change.

The continual transitoriness and fleetingness of the subject.

“Mortal soul.”

Number as perspective form.

491 (1885-1886)

Belief in the body is more fundamental than belief in the soul: the latter arose from unscientific reflection on [the agonies of] the body (something that leaves it. Belief in the truth of dreams—).

492 (1885)

The body and physiology the starting point: why?— We gain the correct idea of the nature of our subject-unity, namely as regents at the head of a communality (not as “souls” or “life forces”), also of the dependence of these regents upon the ruled and of an order of rank and division of labor as the conditions that make possible the whole and its parts. In the same way, how living unities continually arise and die and how the “subject” is not eternal; in the same way, that the struggle expresses itself in obeying and commanding, and that a fluctuating assessment of the limits of power is part of life. The relative ignorance in which the regent is kept concerning individual activities and even disturbances within the communality is among the conditions under which rule can be exercised. In short, we also gain a valuation of not-knowing, of seeing things on a broad scale, of simplification and falsification, of perspectivity. The most important thing, however, is: that we understand that the ruler and his subjects are of the same kind, all feeling, willing, thinking—and that, wherever we see or divine movement in a body, we learn to conclude that there is a subjective, invisible life appertaining to it. Movement is symbolism for the eye; it indicates that something has been felt, willed, thought.

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*The words I have placed in brackets were interpolated by the German editors, on the basis of one of Nietzsche’s other notes.*
The danger of the direct questioning of the subject about the subject and of all self-reflection of the spirit lies in this, that it could be useful and important for one's activity to interpret oneself falsely. That is why we question the body and reject the evidence of the sharpened senses: we try, if you like, to see whether the inferior parts themselves cannot enter into communication with us.

4. Biology of the Drive to Knowledge.

Perspectivism

493 (1885)

Truth is the kind of error without which a certain species of life could not live. The value for life is ultimately decisive.⁶

494 (1885)

It is improbable that our "knowledge" should extend further than is strictly necessary for the preservation of life. Morphology shows us how the senses and the nerves, as well as the brain, develop in proportion to the difficulty of finding nourishment.

495

If the morality of "thou shalt not lie" is rejected, the "sense for truth" will have to legitimize itself before another tribunal:— as a means of the preservation of man, as will to power.

Likewise our love of the beautiful; it also is our shaping will. The two senses stand side-by-side; the sense for the real is the means of acquiring the power to shape things according to our wish. The joy in shaping and reshaping—a primeval joy! We can comprehend only a world that we ourselves have made.

496 (1884)

Of the multifariousness of knowledge. To trace one's own relationship to many other things (or the relationship of kind)— how should that be "knowledge" of other things! The way of knowing and of knowledge is itself already part of the conditions

¹Cf. sections 483 and 487; but also 172.
of existence: so that the conclusion that there could be no other kind of intellect (for us) than that which preserves us is precipitate: this actual condition of existence is perhaps only accidental and perhaps in no way necessary.

Our apparatus for acquiring knowledge is not designed for "knowledge."

497 (1884)

The most strongly believed a priori "truly" are for me—provisional assumptions; e.g., the law of causality, a very well acquired habit of belief, so much a part of us that not to believe in it would destroy the race. But are they for that reason truths? What a conclusion! As if the preservation of man were a proof of truth!

498 (1884).

To what extent even our intellect is a consequence of conditions of existence—: we would not have it if we did not need to have it, and we would not have it as it is if we did not need to have it as it is, if we could live otherwise.

499 (1885)

"Thinking" in primitive conditions (pre-organic) is the crystallization of forms, as in the case of crystal.— In our thought, the essential feature is fitting new material into old schemas (= Procrustes' bed), making equal what is new.

500 (1885-1886)

Sense perceptions projected "outside": "inside" and "outside"—does the body command here—?

The same equalizing and ordering force that rules in the idioplasma, rules also in the incorporation of the outer world: our sense perceptions are already the result of this assimilation and equalization in regard to all the past in us; they do not follow directly upon the "impression"—

501 (1886-1887)

All thought, judgment, perception, considered as comparison,
has as its precondition a "positing of equality," and earlier still a "making equal." The process of making equal is the same as the process of incorporation of appropriated material in the ameba.

"Memory" late, in so far as here the drive to make equal seems already to have been subdued: differentiation is preserved. Remembering as a process of classification and pigeonholing: who is active?

502 (1885)

One must revise one's ideas about memory: here lies the chief temptation to assume a "soul," which, outside time, reproduces, recognizes, etc. But that which is experienced lives on "in the memory"; I cannot help it if it "comes back," the will is inactive in this case, as in the coming of any thought. Something happens of which I become conscious: now something similar comes—who called it? roused it?

503 (1884)

The entire apparatus of knowledge is an apparatus for abstraction and simplification—directed not at knowledge but at taking possession of things: "end" and "means" are as remote from its essential nature as are "concepts." With "end" and "means" one takes possession of the process (one invents a process that can be grasped); with "concepts," however, of the "things" that constitute the process.

504 (1883-1888)

Consciousness—beginning quite externally, as coordination and becoming conscious of "impressions"—at first at the furthest distance from the biological center of the individual; but a process that deepens and intensifies itself, and continually draws nearer to that center.

505 (1885-1886)

Our perceptions, as we understand them: i.e., the sum of all those perceptions the becoming-conscious of which was useful
and essential to us and to the entire organic process—therefore not all perceptions in general (e. g., not the electric); this means: we have senses for only a selection of perceptions—those with which we have to concern ourselves in order to preserve ourselves. Consciousness is present only to the extent that consciousness is useful. It cannot be doubted that all sense perceptions are permeated with\(^6\) value judgments (useful and harmful—consequently, pleasant or unpleasant). Each individual color is also for us an expression of value (although we seldom admit it, or do so only after a protracted impression of exclusively the same color; e.g., a prisoner in prison, or a lunatic). Thus insects also react differently to different colors: some like [this color, some that],\(^7\) e.g., ants.

506 (1884)

First images—to explain how images arise in the spirit. Then words, applied to images. Finally concepts, possible only when there are words—the collecting together of many images in something nonvisible but audible (word). The tiny amount of emotion to which the “word” gives rise, as we contemplate similar images for which one word exists—this weak emotion is the common element, the basis of the concept. That weak sensations are regarded as alike, sensed as being the same, is the fundamental fact. Thus confusion of two sensations that are close neighbors, as we take note of these sensations; but who is taking note? Believing is the primal beginning even in every sense impression: a kind of affirmation the first intellectual activity! A “holding-true” in the beginning! Therefore it is to be explained: how “holding-true” arose! What sensation lies behind “true”?

507 (Spring-Fall 1887)

The valuation “I believe that this and that is so” as the essence of “truth.” In valuations are expressed conditions of preservation and growth. All our organs of knowledge and our senses are developed only with regard to conditions of preservation and

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\(^6\) Emphasis mine, to call attention to an exceptionally interesting statement. In the original the preceding sentence is emphasized, but in this one only “value judgments.”

\(^7\) The words I have placed in brackets were substituted for Nietzsche’s “them” by the German editors.
growth. Trust in reason and its categories, in dialectic, therefore the valuation of logic, proves only their usefulness for life, proved by experience—not that something is true.

That a great deal of belief must be present; that judgments may be ventured; that doubt concerning all essential values is lacking—that is the precondition of every living thing and its life. Therefore, what is needed is that something must be held to be true—not that something is true.

"The real and the apparent world"—I have traced this antithesis back to value relations. We have projected the conditions of our preservation as predicates of being in general. Because we have to be stable in our beliefs if we are to prosper, we have made the "real" world a world not of change and becoming, but one of being.

5. Origin of Reason and Logic

508 (1883-1888)

Originally a chaos of ideas. The ideas that were consistent with one another remained, the greater number perished—and are perishing.

509 (1883-1888)

The earthly kingdom of desires out of which logic grew: the herd instinct in the background. The assumption of similar cases presupposes "similar souls." For the purpose of mutual agreement and dominion.

510 (1883-1888)

On the origin of logic. The fundamental inclination to posit as equal, to see things as equal, is modified, held in check, by consideration of usefulness and harmfulness, by considerations of success: it adapts itself to a milder degree in which it can be satisfied without at the same time denying and endangering life. This whole process corresponds exactly to that external, mechanical process (which is its symbol) by which protoplasm makes what it appropriates equal to itself and fits it into its own forms and files.
511 (1885-1886)

Equality and similarity.
1. The coarser organ sees much apparent equality;
2. the spirit wants equality, i.e., to subsume a sense impression into an existing series: in the same way as the body assimilates inorganic matter.

Toward an understanding of logic:
the will to equality is the will to power—the belief that something is thus and thus (the essence of judgment) is the consequence of a will that as much as possible shall be equal.

512 (1885)

Logic is bound to the condition: assume there are identical cases. In fact, to make possible logical thinking and inferences, this condition must first be treated fictitiously as fulfilled. That is: the will to logical truth can be carried through only after a fundamental falsification of all events is assumed. From which it follows that a drive rules here that is capable of employing both means, firstly falsification, then the implementation of its own point of view: logic does not spring from will to truth.

513 (Fall 1886)

The inventive force that invented categories labored in the service of our needs, namely of our need for security, for quick understanding on the basis of signs and sounds, for means of abbreviation:—“substance,” “subject,” “object,” “being,” “becoming” have nothing to do with metaphysical truths.—

It is the powerful who made the names of things into law, and among the powerful it is the greatest artists in abstraction who created the categories.

514 (March-June 1888)

A morality, a mode of living tried and proved by long experience and testing, at length enters consciousness as a law, as dominating— And therewith the entire group of related values and states enters into it: it becomes venerable, unassailable, holy, true;
it is part of its development that its origin should be forgotten—
That is a sign it has become master—

Exactly the same thing could have happened with the categories of reason: they could have prevailed, after much groping and fumbling, through their relative utility—There came a point when one collected them together, raised them to consciousness as a whole—and when one commanded them, i.e., when they had the effect of a command—From then on, they counted as a priori, as beyond experience, as irrefutable. And yet perhaps they represent nothing more than the expediency of a certain race and species—their utility alone is their “truth”—

515 (March-June 1888)

Not “to know” but to schematize—to impose upon chaos as much regularity and form as our practical needs require.

In the formation of reason, logic, the categories, it was need that was authoritative: the need, not to “know,” but to subsume, to schematize, for the purpose of intelligibility and calculation—(The development of reason is adjustment, invention, with the aim of making similar, equal—the same process that every sense impression goes through!) No pre-existing “idea” was here at work, but the utilitarian fact that only when we see things coarsely and made equal do they become calculable and usable to us—Finality in reason is an effect, not a cause: life miscarries with any other kinds of reason, to which there is a continual impulse—it becomes difficult to survey—too unequal—

The categories are “truths” only in the sense that they are conditions of life for us: as Euclidean space is a conditional “truth.” (Between ourselves: since no one would maintain that there is any necessity for men to exist, reason, as well as Euclidean space, is a mere idiosyncracy of a certain species of animal, and one among many—)

The subjective compulsion not to contradict here is a biological compulsion: the instinct for the utility of inferring as we do infer is part of us, we almost are this instinct—But what naiveté to extract from this a proof that we are therewith in possession

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*MS: bedingt (conditioned); printed versions: bedingende (conditioning). The editors took their cue from Kant, not from Nietzsche’s next sentence.*
of a "truth in itself"!— Not being able to contradict is proof of an incapacity, not of "truth."

516 (Spring-Fall 1887; rev. Spring-Fall 1888)

We are unable to affirm and to deny one and the same thing: this is a subjective empirical law, not the expression of any "necessity" but only of an inability.

If, according to Aristotle, the law of contradiction is the most certain of all principles, if it is the ultimate and most basic, upon which every demonstrative proof rests, if the principle of every axiom lies in it; then one should consider all the more rigorously what presuppositions already lie at the bottom of it. Either it asserts something about actuality, about being, as if one already knew this from another source; that is, as if opposite attributes could not be ascribed to it. Or the proposition means: opposite attributes should not be ascribed to it. In that case, logic would be an imperative, not to know the true, but to posit and arrange a world that shall be called true by us.

In short, the question remains open: are the axioms of logic adequate to reality or are they a means and measure for us to create reality, the concept "reality," for ourselves?— To affirm the former one would, as already said, have to have a previous knowledge of being—which is certainly not the case. The proposition therefore contains no criterion of truth, but an imperative concerning that which should count as true.

Supposing there were no self-identical "A", such as is presupposed by every proposition of logic (and of mathematics), and the "A" were already mere appearance, then logic would have a merely apparent world as its condition. In fact, we believe in this proposition under the influence of ceaseless experience which seems continually to confirm it. The "thing"—that is the real substratum of "A"; our belief in things is the precondition of our belief in logic. The "A" of logic is, like the atom, a reconstruction of the thing—If we do not grasp this, but make of logic a criterion of true being, we are on the way to positing as realities all those hypostases: substance, attribute, object, subject, action, etc.; that is, to conceiving a metaphysical world, that is, a "real world" (—this, however, is the apparent world once more—).

The very first acts of thought, affirmation and denial, holding
true and holding not true, are, in as much as they presuppose, not only the habit of holdings things true and holding them not true, but a right to do this, already dominated by the belief that we can gain possession of knowledge, that judgments really can hit upon the truth;—in short, logic does not doubt its ability to assert something about the true-in-itself (namely, that it cannot have opposite attributes).

Here reigns the coarse sensualistic prejudice that sensations teach us truths about things—that I cannot say at the same time of one and the same thing that it is hard and that it is soft. (The instinctive proof "I cannot have two opposite sensations at the same time"—quite coarse and false.)

The conceptual ban on contradiction proceeds from the belief that we are able to form concepts, that the concept not only designates the essence of a thing but comprehends it,—In fact, logic (like geometry and arithmetic) applies only to fictitious entities that we have created. Logic is the attempt to comprehend the actual world by means of a scheme of being posited by ourselves; more correctly, to make it formulatable and calculable for us—

517 (Spring-Fall 1887)

In order to think and infer it is necessary to assume beings: logic handles only formulas for what remains the same. That is why this assumption would not be proof of reality: "beings" are part of our perspective. The "ego" as a being (—not affected by becoming and development).

The fictitious world of subject, substance, "reason," etc., is needed: there is in us a power to order, simplify, falsify, artificially distinguish. "Truth" is the will to be master over the multiplicity of sensations:—to classify phenomena into definite categories. In this we start from a belief in the "in-itself" of things (we take phenomena as real).

The character of the world in a state of becoming as incapable of formulation, as "false," as "self-contradictory." Knowledge and becoming exclude one another. Consequently, "knowledge" must be something else: there must first of all be a will to make knowable, a kind of becoming must itself create the deception of beings.
518 (1885-1886)

If our "ego" is for us the sole being, after the model of which we fashion and understand all being: very well! Then there would be very much room to doubt whether what we have here is not a perspective illusion—an apparent unity that encloses everything like a horizon. The evidence of the body reveals a tremendous multiplicity; it is allowable, for purposes of method, to employ the more easily studied, richer phenomena as evidence for the understanding of the poorer. Finally: supposing everything is becoming, then knowledge is possible only on the basis of belief in being.

519 (1883-1888)

If there "is only one being, the ego" and all other "being" is fashioned after its model—if, finally, belief in the "ego" stands or falls with belief in logic, i.e., the metaphysical truth of the categories of reason; if, on the other hand, the ego proves to be something in a state of becoming: then—

520 (1885)

Continual transition forbids us to speak of "individuals," etc; the "number" of beings is itself in flux. We would know nothing of time and motion if we did not, in a coarse fashion, believe we see what is at "rest" beside what is in motion. The same applies to cause and effect, and without the erroneous conception of "empty space" we should certainly not have acquired the conception of space. The principle of identity has behind it the "apparent fact" of things that are the same. A world in a state of becoming could not, in a strict sense, be "comprehended" or "known"; only to the extent that the "comprehending" and "knowing" intellect encounters a coarse, already-created world, fabricated out of mere appearances but become firm to the extent that this kind of appearance has preserved life—only to this extent is there anything like "knowledge"; i.e., a measuring of earlier and later errors by one another.
521 (Spring-Fall 1887)

On "logical semblance"—The concepts "individual" and "species" equally false and merely apparent. "Species" expresses only the fact that an abundance of similar creatures appear at the same time and that the tempo of their further growth and change is for a long time slowed down, so actual small continuations and increases are not very much noticed (—a phase of evolution in which the evolution is not visible, so an equilibrium seems to have been attained, making possible the false notion that a goal has been attained—and that evolution has a goal—).

The form counts as something enduring and therefore more valuable; but the form has merely been invented by us; and however often "the same form is attained," it does not mean that it is the same form—what appears is always something new, and it is only we, who are always comparing, who include the new, to the extent that it is similar to the old, in the unity of the "form." As if a type should be attained and, as it were, was intended by and inherent in the process of formation.

Form, species, law, idea, purpose—in all these cases the same error is made of giving a false reality to a fiction, as if events were in some way obedient to something—an artificial distinction is made in respect of events between that which acts and that toward which the act is directed (but this "which" and this "toward" are only posited in obedience to our metaphysical-logical dogmatism: they are not "facts").

One should not understand this compulsion to construct concepts, species, forms, purposes, laws ("a world of identical cases") as if they enabled us to fix the real world; but as a compulsion to arrange a world for ourselves in which our existence is made possible:—we thereby create a world which is calculable, simplified, comprehensible, etc., for us.

This same compulsion exists in the sense activities that support reason—by simplification, coarsening, emphasizing, and elaborating, upon which all "recognition," all ability to make oneself intelligible rests. Our needs have made our senses so precise that the "same apparent world" always reappears and has thus acquired the semblance of reality.

Our subjective compulsion to believe in logic only reveals that, long before logic itself entered our consciousness, we did
nothing but introduce its postulates into events: now we discover them in events—we can no longer do otherwise—and imagine that this compulsion guarantees something connected with "truth." It is we who created the "thing," the "identical thing," subject, attribute, activity, object, substance, form, after we had long pursued the process of making identical, coarse and simple. The world seems logical to us because we have made it logical.

522. (1886-1887)

Ultimate solution.— We believe in reason: this, however, is the philosophy of gray concepts. Language depends on the most naive prejudices.

Now we read disharmonies and problems into things because we think only in the form of language—and thus believe in the "eternal truth" of "reason" (e.g., subject, attribute, etc.)

We cease to think when we refuse to do so under the constraint of language; we barely reach the doubt that sees this limitation as a limitation.

Rational thought is interpretation according to a scheme that we cannot throw off.

6. Consciousness

523 (March-June 1888)

Nothing is more erroneous than to make of psychical and physical phenomena the two faces, the two revelations of one and the same substance. Nothing is explained thereby: the concept "substance" is perfectly useless as an explanation. Consciousness in a subsidiary role, almost indifferent, superfluous, perhaps destined to vanish and give way to a perfect automatism—

When we observe only the inner phenomena we may be compared with the deaf-and-dumb, who divine through movements of the lips the words they do not hear. From the phenomena of the inner sense we conclude the existence of invisible and other phenomena that we would apprehend if our means of observation were adequate and that one calls the nerve current.

We lack any sensitive organs for this inner world, so we sense

*Not a real sentence in the MS where this paragraph begins: "That an inner world, for which we lack . . ."
a thousandfold complexity as a unity; so we introduce causation where any reason for motion and change remains invisible to us—the sequence of thoughts and feelings is only their becoming-visible in consciousness. That this sequence has anything to do with a causal chain is completely unbelievable: consciousness has never furnished us with an example of cause and effect.

524 (Nov. 1887-March 1888)

The role of "consciousness."—It is essential that one should not make a mistake over the role of "consciousness": it is our relation with the "outer world" that evolved it. On the other hand, the direction or protection and care in respect of the co-ordination of the bodily functions does not enter our consciousness; any more than spiritual accumulation: that a higher court rules over these things cannot be doubted—a kind of directing committee on which the various chief desires make their votes and power felt. "Pleasure," "displeasure" are hints from this sphere; also the act of will; also ideas.

In summa: That which becomes conscious is involved in causal relations which are entirely withheld from us—the sequence of thoughts, feelings, ideas in consciousness does not signify that this sequence is a causal sequence; but apparently it is so, to the highest degree. Upon this appearance we have founded our whole idea of spirit, reason, logic, etc. (—none of these exist: they are fictitious syntheses and unities), and projected these into things and behind things!

Usually, one takes consciousness itself as the general sensorium and supreme court; nonetheless, it is only a means of communication: it is evolved through social intercourse and with a view to the interests of social intercourse—"Intercourse" here understood to include the influences of the outer world and the reactions they compel on our side; also our effect upon the outer world. It is not the directing agent, but an organ of the directing agent.

525 (1888)

My proposition compressed into a formula that smells of antiquity, Christianity, scholasticism, and other muskiness: in the concept "God as spirit," God as perfection is negated—
Where a certain unity obtains in the grouping of things, one has always posited spirit as the cause of this coordination: for which notion there is no ground whatever. Why should the idea of a complex fact be one of the conditions of this fact? or why should the notion of a complex fact have to precede it as its cause?

We shall be on our guard against explaining purposiveness in terms of spirit: there is no ground whatever for ascribing to spirit the properties of organization and systematization. The nervous system has a much more extensive domain; the world of consciousness is added to it. Consciousness plays no role in the total process of adaptation and systematization.

Physiologists, like philosophers, believe that consciousness increases in value in proportion as it increases in clarity: the clearest consciousness, the most logical and coldest thinking, is supposed to be of the first rank. However—by what measure is this value determined?—In regard to release of will, the most superficial, most simplified thinking is the most useful—it could therefore—etc. (because it leaves few motives over).

Precision in action is antagonistic to far-seeing providentiality, the judgments of which are often uncertain: the latter is led by the deeper instinct.

Principal error of psychologists: they regard the indistinct idea as a lower kind of idea than the distinct: but that which removes itself from our consciousness and for that reason becomes obscure can on that account be perfectly clear in itself. Becoming obscure is a matter of perspective of consciousness.

Tremendous blunders:
1. the absurd overestimation of consciousness, the transfor-
nation of it into a unity, an entity: "spirit," "soul," something that feels, thinks, wills—

2. spirit as cause, especially wherever purposiveness, system, co-ordination appear;

3. consciousness as the highest achieveable form, as the supreme kind of being, as "God";

4. will introduced wherever there are effects;

5. the "real world" as a spiritual world, as accessible through the facts of consciousness;

6. knowledge as uniquely the faculty of consciousness wherever there is knowledge at all.

*Consequences:*

every advance lies in an advance in becoming conscious; every regression in becoming unconscious; (—becoming unconscious was considered a falling back to the desires and senses —as becoming animal—)

one approaches reality, "real being," through dialectic; one distances oneself from it through the instincts, senses, mechanism—

to resolve man into spirit would mean to make him into God: spirit, will, goodness—all one;

all good must proceed from spirituality, must be a fact of consciousness;

any advance toward the better can only be an advance in becoming conscious.

7. Judgment. True—False

530 (1883-1888)

In the case of Kant, theological prejudice, his unconscious dogmatism, his moralistic perspective, were dominant, directing, commanding.

The *prōton pseudes*:\(^9\) how is the fact of knowledge possible? Is knowledge a fact at all? What is knowledge? If we do not know what knowledge is, we cannot possibly answer the question whether there is knowledge.— Very well! But if I do not already "know" whether there is knowledge, whether there can be knowledge, I cannot reasonably put the question "what is knowledge?" Kant

\(^9\) First falsehood or original error.