



TEXT #8

The Genealogy of Morals

Friedrich Nietzsche

Doubleday, 1887

<http://www2.southeastern.edu/Academics/Faculty/jbell/nietzschegenealogy.pdf>

XXII

Man, with his need for self-torture, his **sublimated** cruelty resulting from the cooping up of his animal nature within a **polity**, invented bad conscience in order to hurt himself, after the blocking of the more natural outlet of his cruelty. Then this guilt-ridden man seized upon religion in order to **exacerbate** his self-torture to the utmost. The thought of being

5 in God's debt became his new instrument of torture. He focused in God the last of the opposites he could find to his true and **inveterate** animal instincts, making these a sin against God (hostility, rebellion against the "Lord," the "Father," the "Creator"). He stretched himself upon the contradiction "God" and "Devil" as on a rack. He projected all his denials of self, nature, naturalness out of himself as **affirmations**, as true being,

10 **embodiment**, reality, as God (the divine Judge and Executioner), as **transcendence**, as eternity, as endless torture, as hell, as the **infinitude** of guilt and punishment. In such psychological cruelty we see an insanity of the will that is without parallel: man's will to find himself guilty, and **unredeemably** so; his will to believe that he might be punished to



all eternity without ever expunging his guilt; his will to poison the very foundation of

15 things with the problem of guilt and punishment and thus to cut off once and for all his escape from this **labyrinth** of obsession; his will to erect an ideal (God's holiness) in order to assure himself of his own absolute unworthiness. What a mad, unhappy animal is man! What strange notions occur to him; what perversities, what **paroxysms** of nonsense, what bestialities of idea burst from him, the moment his is prevented ever so little from being a

20 beast of action! ...All this is exceedingly curious and interesting, but dyed with such a dark, somber, **enervating** sadness that one must resolutely tear way one's gaze. Here no doubt, is sickness, the most terrible sickness that has wasted man thus far. And if one is still able to hear – but how few these days have ears to hear it! – in this night of torment and absurdity the cry *love* ring out, the cry of rapt longing, of redemption in love, he must turn

25 away with a shudder of invincible horror. ...Man harbors too much horror; the earth has been a lunatic asylum for too long.
