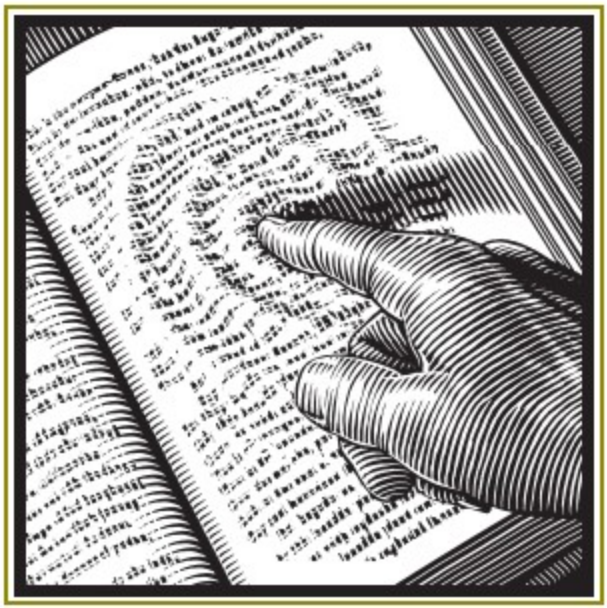
WRITINGS FROM AN UNBOUND EUROPE

THE SECOND BOOK



MUHAREM BAZDULJ

Translated from the Bosnian

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This book was translated in a somewhat unorthodox manner. Initial translations were produced for two of the stories by Nikola Petković and the rest by Oleg Andrić. Andrew Wachtel then revised all of the translations, which were sent to the author for his comments and approval.—A.W.

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TEARS IN TURIN

Shame.—*A beautiful horse stands there, scratches the soil, wheezes, and longs for someone to ride it and loves the one who usually rides it—but, oh, what a shame! Today he is not able to soar on the horse, being tired.—That is a shame of a tired philosopher faced with his own philosophy.*

The Dawn

There are cases in which we are like horses, we psychologists, and become restless: we see our own shadow wavering up and down before us. A psychologist must turn his eyes from himself to eye anything at all.

Twilight of the Idols

12.31.1888

Just as the sun began to draw golden hieroglyphs on the wall through the translucent fabric of the curtains, Nietzsche woke up. The bed was under a window, so Friedrich, lying on his side, was able to observe undisturbed the golden symbols' dance on the white wall across from the window, a dance that reminded him of the flickering of Midsummer's Eve fires. In the silence he heard only the uniform sound of his own breathing and the slow and regular beating of his heart (as always, his pulse was never more than sixty beats per minute, just as it usually was never less than that limit; his heart beat exactly once per second like some atomic clock, the temporal equivalent of one of those geometric bodies of exact dimensions made of a particular alloy that are kept in a special institute as prototypes of official

measurement units; thus if one kilogram is in fact the mass of an equilateral cylinder of a radius of thirty-nine millimeters made of an alloy of 90 percent platinum and 10 percent iridium kept in the International Bureau for Measurements and Weights in Sevres, then one second is the time during which Nietzsche's heart made one beat, and not, as it is claimed, the duration of 9192631770 periods of radiation corresponding to the transition between two hyperfine levels of the ground state of the cesium 133 atom—if this means anything at all). With his right hand he was massaging his forehead around the temples. Maybe he had a headache. Last night, as usual, he was bothered by insomnia, which almost every night was as quietly and unpretentiously persistent as the sound of a fountain. It returned eternally. That is why this morning, too, Nietzsche was lying wide awake and trying, apparently, to give his tired body a rest, a rest his brain did not want. It was as if his brain had an inkling of the rest it would not give his body. On a night table next to the bed were books stacked in straight towers, like floors of a high-rise. The letters on their spines formed some strange crossword, with the vertical letters making incomprehensible and mostly unpronounceable piles of consonants mixed with a few vowels, while the horizontal letters proffered the famous names of Dostoyevsky, Seneca, Stendhal, Kant, Thucidydes, Schiller, Heraclitus, Rousseau, Goethe, and Schopenhauer. On a desk by the wall, illuminated by the sun, were Nietzsche's papers and writings. He had written a lot in the past year, a year whose last hours were just passing. He had never liked this holiday, this so-called New Year, the grotesque tail of Christmas, *dies nefastus,* a day that in fact represents the day of the circumcision of the purported Messiah, his almost grotesque first spilling of blood. But today's day was nearly special even according to Nietzsche's personal calendar, the calendar he had invented in *The Antichrist* (which was on the desk among other writings), completed exactly three months ago, on September 30, 1888, according to—as he wrote—the false calendar. That day Nietzsche declared to be Salvation Day, the first day of the first year, making this thirty-first day of December of 1888 the second day of the third month of the first year. Nietzsche frowned while the thoughts of some mystic quasi-pythagorian analogy were probably going through his head. In fact, the day dearest to Friedrich, which he would pick as a starting point for his calendar (from which he—it is completely

logical—did start counting time in a way), was his birthday—October 15. That day was in some way his name day—luckily, not in a religious sense. October 15 was the birthday of the Prussian king Friedrich Wilhelm IV after whom Nietzsche was named. On the desk among the manuscripts, as a silent witness, his *Ecce Homo* was lying. Nietzsche probably knew by heart all the sentences he had written not so long ago. Maybe he was whispering them now in his bed. *As I was born on October 15, the birthday of the above-named king, I naturally received the Hohenzollern name* Friedrich Wilhelm. *There was at all events one advantage in the choice of this day: my birthday throughout my entire childhood was a public holiday.* If Nietzsche was really remembering his childhood birthdays, when he believed that his whole homeland was celebrating just his birthday, then he could not have missed an ironic detail connected to his birthday and the calendar he had established three months ago that had declared September 30 Salvation Day and the start of a new calculation of time. By establishing his own calendar he had made himself a kind of Julius Caesar (and he loved Caesar as can be witnessed by another of his works, *Twilight of the Idols,* lying on the desk between *The Antichrist* and *Ecce Homo*). Caesar's calendar was adjusted approximately fifteen days backward by Pope Gregory, but if Nietzsche's calendar could be adjusted, this could be done only by some antipope and Antigregory, and adjusted in the only possible way, fifteen days ahead, making New Year's day fall on his birthday—the Antichrist's birthday, instead of some Middle Eastern mess about the circumcision of a purported Messiah. Nietzsche smiled silently. In moments of silence and loneliness he always found most similar to himself the personalities he scorned the most in his writings, the personalities of the two greatest and most famous oral teachers (and that was probably their only feature completely opposite to his own, because Nietzsche was a *teacher* only in a written sense, but orally—while teaching at the University—he was only a lecturer; but even this difference between the oral preaching of his two greatest *impossibles* and his own leaning toward written prophecies was more a consequence of the times than their characters): with the dialectician and the *rabbi,* Socrates and Christ. He raised himself on his elbows just to reach a clock on the night table with books, to see the time. It was almost eleven. But still, Nietzsche lay down again. Forgetting, apparently, that he had

awakened at daybreak, he thought it might have been noon already, making this late morning moment too early for getting up. If he had already resigned himself to wait for noon in bed, then there was no reason not to do it. Again he smiled gently, as if he remembered that Russian novel in which the hero wakes up at the beginning of the novel and spends the whole first section lying lazily in bed. But Friedrich was not accustomed to lazy lying in bed. It must have been that some strange and undefined weakness enveloped him this morning, this day actually, because he was still prone even at half an hour after noon. But realizing the time, he immediately got up. Strangely, he was not hungry. He spent the next three hours—almost till dusk—sitting in a chair. This way his afternoon was the same as his morning, apart from his back being in a vertical position. Luckily, it was not cold although it was December. Such was Turin. (*The quiet and aristocratic city of Turin*—so he wrote in *Ecce Homo.*) When dusk fell in his room, Nietzsche decided to go out. The decision to eat something was more the fruit of his giving in to habit rather than to demands from his belly, his brain searched for food more than did his stomach. After having a quick meal, Nietzsche walked through the streets of Turin for a long time. Almost paradoxically, his tiredness diminished as he walked more. A light southern wind was bringing a puff of additional warmth to the already mild air, like the feeling of a burst of blood to the head of a man with fever. Nietzsche's forehead was beaded with sweat. But his heart was still working like a clock (and this comparison should not be considered colloquial but rather concrete and the most correct possible), and his breathing was just slightly quicker. At a street corner he stopped for a bit. He did not pause to rest (he didn't need to), nor because he was in thought (in his youth he had read somewhere that people with lower mental capabilities are incapable of thinking and walking at the same time, the start of any barely significant thinking stops them immediately; then with pleasure he remembered a fact he had noticed long ago, although without assigning to it any positive or negative meaning, the fact that he thought better and quicker while walking), he simply tried to separate the sensations of time and space, to put himself under the control of time while being motionless in space, as if by doing this the power of time over him would be higher, as if the sum of time and space within a person is always constant, bringing him closer to time

if he gives less control to space, and vice versa. Then he went to a particular spot, *his own spot* on the banks of Po. He had gone there for the first time when he completed *The Antichrist,* on the first day of the first year of his own calendar. For the last three months he had been coming here almost every time he went walking. He watched the water flowing. A river by day is not the same as by night. The sound of a river flowing in darkness is unreal and healing. He came back home fifteen minutes after ten o'clock and went straight to bed. Usually he went to bed later, trying to trick the insomnia. But this time he lay down early and, amazingly, fell asleep quickly. He did not want to be awake to hear the clock strike *twelve irrevocable chimes.*

1.1.1889

The first morning of the New Year was well under way when Nietzsche woke up. Amazed, he rubbed his sleepy eyes, trying to remember the last time he had slept this well, so deeply and for so long. It was almost ten o'clock. This time his body did not desire lazy lying but immediate rising. Nietzsche got up and began measuring the room with his steps, as if merely standing was not enough but rather it was necessary to emphasize his alertness and the pleasure caused by refreshing sleep. He yawned not in the nighttime but in the good-morning way, which expresses not sleepiness but ultimate escape from the gluey fingers of sleep—these two facial grimaces are identical, but identical in the same way that in ancient Egypt a hieroglyphic symbol could represent two diametrically opposite things. This was a good beginning to January, almost like the one that a few years back gave him *The Gay Science.* To that January he had dedicated a poem in which he thanked it for *crushing the ice of his soul with a flaming spear.* Maybe this would be a similar January. *Each month has its own special and direct, weather-independent influence on our bodily condition, even on the condition of our soul.*— Somewhere sometime he had read this forceful diagnosis, which he accepted as correct even before it proved itself a few times in his life. Even his intimate calendar almost did not disturb the internal structure of months. With a new beginning came a new sequence of months, but some natural events, such as the beginnings of the seasons, still fell around the twenty-second of the month, just as in the

false calendar. He stopped in the middle of the room almost out of breath. Walking in the room exhausted him, like a long walk in his cage exhausts a tiger. Then he opened a window and breathed good morning southern Piedmont air for a long time. The climate had always had a strong influence on his health and mood, and, consequently, on his writing. Who knows what would have happened to him had he always lived in his homeland, up there in the Teutonic cold? Good air makes a person feel fed and watered. This morning even the sky cheered up Nietzsche: clear, blue, bright, and crowded with birds. Leaving the window open, Nietzsche turned toward the interior of the room. He was looking at his desk. At the desk's edge lay sorted manuscripts of his completed works, and the rest of the heavy wooden surface was messily covered in handwritten papers with sketches of aphorisms and conceptual writings. They were lying there in heaps, more like fallen tree leaves than like leaves of paper, like an illustration of the magnificent Wordsworth-Huxley misunderstanding, that tragic and symbolic *meprise,* which occurred when Huxley, for the title of a novel, took a phrase Wordsworth had used in a poem in which he invited a friend into the bosom of nature, calling on him to forget about those barren leaves of old books; Huxley, therefore, named his novel *Barren Leaves,* but in its translation into foreign languages the novel is just about always called *Barren Tree Leaves.* But the unrelenting perfect linearity and continuity of time (despite its eternal return that confirms it, since a circle is more cruel and strict than a simple straight line and thus, through its everlasting repetition, confirms the basic clear and light *einmal ist keinmal* line of existence) did not allow Friedrich to think about this paradox that he would certainly have liked, and so the smile on his face was caused by a simpler and more easily guessed analogy, by the fact that both the wooden desk and the leaves of paper were made of the same material; only the age of this particular desk prevented the thought that the wood and the paper had been made from the same tree or maybe from two neighboring trees. Today Nietzsche was in a good and diligent frame of mind. He walked to the desk and began looking at and sorting the messy papers, attempting with a glance to read and decode a fragment of text written with his quick and hard-to-read handwriting, written when he was trying to keep up with a whole flood of his thoughts in those lucid moments when it seemed

that every drop that spilled from the pot that is his head had to be absorbed by paper or it would be irretrievably lost. He succeeded in sorting a heap of individual leaves into some kind of regular mass and put it aside. Happily and contentedly he began to flip through the pages of his completed manuscripts. He touched the pages of *Ecce Homo* gently, with, it seemed, the pleasant feeling that his writings justified their own existence. He turned over the pages, reading only the subtitles, as if flipping through a newspaper. The self-conscious pathetical-vain pomposity of these subtitles elicited a happy smile. He whispered slowly the rhetorical questions that headed the chapters: *Why I am so wise, Why I am so clever, Why I write such excellent books, Why I am fate.* In those phrases there was perhaps a grain of self-irony, or at least a hint that might eventually let one detect self-irony, but still this was his opinion and this was the easiest way to express it. Someone somewhere speaking about self-praise quoted a thought of Lord Bacon—*the wisest, brightest, and meanest of mankind*—who pointed out that even for self-commendation the ancient Latin praise of slander is valuable: *Semper aliquid haeret.* Maybe Nietzsche remembered Bacon because he had noticed his name on the pages he'd flipped and subconsciously glanced at: *We hardly know enough about Lord Bacon—the first realist in the highest sense of the word—to be sure of* everything *he did,* everything *he willed, and* everything *he experienced in himself.* The other names written on the manuscript's pages must have been noticed as well: Heine, Wagner, da Vinci, Bach, Ranke, Horace. Each name brought its own associations, the same way that smell and taste evoke their own recollections and stimulate memories. He liked to think that future poets and philosophers would consider him as significant as he considered a few of his own teachers. His time was not fond of him. He put *Ecce Homo* aside and took up the manuscript of *The Antichrist,* perhaps remembering one of the first sentences in that book, a sentence he had written while thinking about himself: *Some men are born posthumously.* In fact, resentment wafted from all his works due to the absence of tribute and admiration, resentment concealed by self-love and a pose of prior knowledge and expectation or almost prophetic presentiments about the fate accorded to his writing by the times he lived in, by the fairly unenviable and rather subdued level of reception of his works. Yet,

while still young, he had made *noncontemporaneity* his main goal. He was troubled most of all by the unreceptiveness of the times, but he always consoled himself with the firm belief—and on mornings like this one he believed it without a trace of suspicion—that his time would come, a time when *one day his name would be associated with the memory of something tremendous.* Already there were some sensible and prophetic souls who had not passed out from the thin mountain air of his writings. Recently he had mailed a short text about himself—an encoded life—at the request of the Danish professor Brandes. Perhaps that somewhat poetic curriculum vita had provoked him into writing *Ecce Homo,* a kind of autobiography. Brandes was not the only one who discerned his greatness. A small group of admirers scattered around the world, like some sensitive and tiny animals, apprehended the coming earthquake that would be caused by his thought, like rats they knew that the ship of contemporaneity should be abandoned, that weak and ornate yacht that has been trying for as long as possible to hide one unpleasant and uncorrectable fact—that it is sinking. He flipped through the pages and read the manuscripts till it became dark. Then he lit a lamp and sat quietly looking at the wall, probably thinking about his works in the swaying and shadowy, solemn and almost churchlike silence. Lately he could read and write under artificial light only with great difficulty. The letters were searching for the sun. He sat motionless for a long time; only his forehead would occasionally be covered with wrinkles like a sea covered with small waves stroked by a light wind. Sometimes his right hand would press his temples, covering his forehead with its span, like a kid measuring distance. When he glanced at the clock it was already nearly midnight. He lay down and, amazingly, again fell asleep quickly. His spirit sank into sleep at practically the same moment that his body sank into the bed. According to the Bible, King David always fell asleep this quickly.

1.2.1889

Nietzsche awoke at daybreak, amazed and happy. Again he had slept well and deeply. He was turning in bed, waking up. Lusciously, he rolled his tongue in satisfaction, like a dog. He was still in the thrall of yesterday's excellent mood, that almost physically

tangible height of self-consciousness and agitated satisfaction. Ideas, concepts, phrases, sentences—the totality of the mental architecture and rhetorical facade of his works stood under his view, and he was satisfied with the plasticity of that phenomenon, its picturesque appearance. Along with this vision, in the background, he saw a moving sequence of the events and situations of his life from the times that certain of his works were created. He recalled certain memories and relived them in the sweet-and-sour and distressingly painless way that occurs when a self from some past period splits from the present self and they feel only a slight identification with each other as if with some imaginary personality, a figment, a personality after all not so likeable, but which has some insignificant detail that allows for identification, let's say a similarity of lips or clothing, for example. But apparently all these things he recalled so indifferently today had made his works such as they are, and so they seemed significant to him. Although his mood was closer to yesterday's than to that of two days before, his behavior was, on the contrary, closer to that of two days ago than to yesterday's. Nietzsche lay awake in bed till nearly noon, not due to some weakness this time but rather due to the satisfaction of spiritual abundance, due to the enjoyment of idleness that is (as he himself wrote before) *what a true thinker desires the most.* Still he did not intend to spend the whole day lying down. He was an ascetic in his intimate pleasures, even though in recent months he had occasionally written true praises of indulgence (actually, mostly about simple animal indulgence, indulgence in the things he himself liked). His youthful character, which to some extent was expressed in those events he had been recalling this morning, lingered more in the practical atavism of his habits than in the theoretical evolution of his writings and rhetorically formed thoughts. The similarity with yesterday's mood also repeated itself today in the will to work. As he had yesterday, Nietzsche sat at his writing desk and read his own manuscripts. But as opposed to the previous day, his inner state did not have that pleasant uniformity. In the background it was as if some undetermined shadow was waxing, a shadow that covered the sun his soul so desired, a shadow that slowly grew as after high noon. He tried to chase away or forget that unpleasant feeling by walking in the room, trying through physical activity to bring a pleasant

ingredient to the dull chemistry of the complicated mechanism of his consciousness. After a while he sat again and began flipping quickly and chaotically through his manuscripts, one after another, as if searching in every one of them for a formula that would sum up his complete opus and teaching. From the background of his brain, from some sphere of the huge terra incognita that was his internal kingdom, an obsessive refrain, a chorus of unpleasant suspicion, was relentlessly emerging to the surface of his spiritual sea, and it was slowly but surely coming to occupy the front line of his mood, triumphing over yesterday's happy self-satisfaction. Most likely, the siren's song of this suspicion expressed skepticism toward the fruit of his efforts. It was something that must have been hard on him, although suspicion is in fact something *human, truly human.* It must have seemed to Nietzsche that the various casual thoughts and associations he had had over the previous two days had carried a hint as to what was now happening, like when a sailor understands the meaning of what had seemed to be an innocent cloud just before a storm breaks. Then he took up the manuscript of *The Will to Power,* a work he thought that by its name alone expressed the concrete quintessential originality and novelty of his teaching. This work, too, had been created last year. His spirit lives in all the other works from that period. *What is good?—Whatever augments the feeling of power, the will to power, power itself, in man.*—This nearly catechistical phrase, in question and answer form, is at the beginning of *The Antichrist.* But the unpleasant feeling was spreading organically through his body. Nietzsche again stood up and began walking about the room. He had no desire to go out, as if the unpleasant feeling manifested itself also in some kind of agoraphobia. Suddenly he stopped by the bedside night table, a night table with books, as if seeing it for the first time. He looked at the hardbound works of his teachers and educators. As if hypnotized, he picked up *The World as Will and Representation.* Then perhaps he remembered Dostoyevsky, *the only psychologist from whom he learned anything, a psychologist who belongs to the most beautiful happy moments of his life.* In one Dostoyevsky novel, a German (apropos—Dostoyevsky, *that* deep *man, was right ten times over to devalue trivial Germans*) looks for answers to his dilemmas by opening the Bible at random and taking the first sentence he sees as a

prophecy, as a kind of Pythian perfect advice to be followed. At random Friedrich opened the Bible of his youth: *The World as Will and Representation.* The heavy tome opened to the beginning of the fifty-fourth chapter. Nietzsche's glance fell on the next-to-last sentence of the second paragraph: *Since the will always wants life, exactly because life is nothing else but a manifestation of that will in representation, it is completely unimportant, it is just a pleonasm, if instead of saying simply* will *we say* will to live. Nietzsche read this sentence aloud several times, and then closed and put aside the book. He sat on the bed and stared at the wall. He must have been remembering two opposite pages of his experience that stood for the two poles of his youth: his education of a philologist and his enthusiasm for Schopenhauer. Now these two poles melted together in some kind of metaphysical disappointment. Perhaps it seemed to him that his whole life was just a pleonasm. Because what is the will for power other than the most ordinary will to live or simply just will, the blind will of Schopenhauer. He had dedicated his life to a phantom. And perhaps he remembered his pure youthful love for Schopenhauer, a love he had betrayed so nastily so many times in last year's writings, like a divorced husband slandering the former wife whom he still loves above all. He was disgusted by this yearning for his youth, just as he was disgusted by all vulgar commonplaces, but he was also yearning for sincerity, for a source, for health, strength, vigor, enthusiasm. Outside it was getting darker, as it was in his soul. Nietzsche probably sat in the dark till after midnight.

1.3.1889

Opening his eyes this morning, Nietzsche did not know if he had awakened. In fact, he was not sure if he slept at all last night. He had spent the whole night in some giddy delirium, a surrogate of sleep. It was overcast outside. The first clouds of the new year were floating above Turin. Immediately after opening his eyes, which could be called awakening only by inertia, Nietzsche got dressed and went out. He had not left the house for a full two days. He went out into the fresh air driven perhaps by some ancient instinct, some almost archetypical hope that relief would come from fresh air