Nietzsche and Kant as Thinkers of Antagonism

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Towards a Philosophy of Conflict

Herman Siemens

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For my beloved sisters, Louise, Clara and Julie
in gratitude for their
unwavering love and unstinting support

Uns scheint es so, daß die disharmonische Welt existirt, jene Harmonie im Satz der Identität aber nichts als eine Theorie, eine Vorstellung ist. Kann man sich aber das Sich-Widersprechende als wirklich denken?
Nietzsche, 9[1] 8.136 (1876 commentary on Dühring's 'Der Werth des Lebens')

[T]he question of 'thinking' and the question of 'antagonism' should be treated on their own terms, but, at the same time, cannot be tackled separately.
(Oliver Marchart, Thinking Antagonism)

Wir wenden alle guten und schlechten gewöhnten Triebe gegen uns: das Denken über uns, das Empfinden für und gegen uns, der Kampf in uns – nie behandeln wir uns als Individuum, sondern als Zwei- und Mehrheit […]
Nietzsche, 6[80] 9.215

Je me souviens de la devise d'un cemitiere, avec ce mot: P a x p e r p e t u a. Car les morts ne se battent point: mais les vivans sont d'une autre humeur: et les plus puissans ne repectent gueres les tribunaux
Leibniz to Jean-Leonor le Gallois de Grimarest, 4. Juni 1712

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Acknowledgements

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Abbreviations and references
for Kant's and Nietzsche's writings

References to Kant's texts: follow the standard German abbreviations given in *Kant-Studien* and are listed here. The abbreviations are followed by the page or paragraph number(s) in the 'Akademie Ausgabe' (AA), for example, KU 5.238 (= AA vol. 5, p. 238), Anth 7.315–16 (= AA vol. 7, pp. 315–16).

References to Nietzsche's works follow the standard German abbreviations, as used in the *Kritische Studienausgabe* (= KSA: G. Colli and M. Montinari (eds), dtv and de Gruyter, Munich and Berlin, 1980), with section / aphorism numbers and/or names, as appropriate; where necessary, page references are given (e.g. 3.42 = KSA vol. 3, p.42). References to the *Nachlass*, also from the KSA, follow the notation therein (e.g. 2[13] 7.23 = note 2[13], KSA vol. 7, p.23). Wherever possible, page numbers are to KSA; otherwise from other editions listed below:
BAW Nietzsche, F. (1933–40), Historisch-kritische Gesamtausgabe, Hans Joachim Mette/Carl Koch/Karl Schlechta (eds), Munich: C.H. Beck'sche Verlags- buchhandlung. Reprinted as: Frühe Schriften 1854–1869, Munich: DTV 1994.
KGW Nietzsche, F. (1967–), Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe, established by Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari, continued by Wolfgang Müller-Lauter and Karl Pestalozzi (eds), Berlin/New York: De Gruyter.
KSB   Nietzsche, F. (1986), Sämtliche Briefe. Kritische Studienausgabe in 8 Bänden, Giorgio Colli/Mazzino Montinari (eds), Munich/Berlin/ New York: DTV/De Gruyter.

Abbreviations or 'Siglen' for Nietzsche's Writings
AC   Der Antichrist. Fluch auf das Christenthum
EH   Ecce homo. Wie man wird, was man ist EH (GT)   see GT
EH Schicksal   Warum ich ein Schicksal bin
FW   Die fröhliche Wissenschaft ('la gaya scienza')
GD   Götzen-Dämmerung oder Wie man mit dem Hammer philosophirt
GD Moral   Moral als Widernatur
GD Streifzüge Streifzüge eines Unzeitgemässen
GM   Zur Genealogie der Moral. Eine Streitschrift
GT   Die Geburt der Tragödie
JGB   Jenseits von Gut und Böse. Vorspiel einer Philosophie der Zukunft
M   Morgenröthe. Gedanken über die moralischen Vorurtheile
MA   Menschliches, Allzumenschliches. Ein Buch für freie Geister. Erster Band
VM   (MA II) Erste Abtheilung: Vermischte Meinungen und Sprüche
WS   (MA II) Zweite Abtheilung: Der Wanderer und sein Schatten
Z   Also sprach Zarathustra. Ein Buch für Alle und Keinen

Abbreviations for Kant's Writings with Indication of the Corresponding AA Volume
Anth   Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht/Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View (AA 07)
BDG   Der einzig mögliche Beweisgrund zu einer Demonstration des Daseins Gottes/ The Only Possible Proof of God's Existence (AA 02)

GSE	Beobachtungen über das Gefühl des Schönen und Erhabenen/ Obervations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime (AA 02)
GSK	Gedanken von der wahren Schätzung der lebendigen Kräfte/ Thoughts on the True Estimation of Living Forces (AA 01)
IaG	Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht/Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim (AA 08)
KpV	Kritik der praktischen Vernunft/Critique of Practical Reason (AA 05)
KrV	Kritik der reinen Vernunft/Critique of Pure Reason
KU	Kritik der Urteilskraft/Critique of the Power of Judgement (AA 05)
MAN	Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Naturwissenschaften/ Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science (AA 04)
MS	Die Metaphysik der Sitten/ Metaphysics of Morals (AA 06)
NG	Versuch, den Begriff der negativen Größen in die Weltweisheit einzuführen / Attempt to Introduce the Concept of Negative Magnitudes into Philosophy (AA 02)
NTH	Allgemeine Naturgeschichte und Theorie des Himmels/ Universal Natural History and Theory of the Heavens (AA 01)
TG	Träume eines Geistersehers, erläutert durch die Träume der Metaphysik/ Dreams of a Spirit-Seer (AA 02)
ZeF	Zum ewigen Frieden/ Towards Perpertual Peace (AA 08)

Manner of citation

As a rule, citations are in English in the main text, with the German in a footnote; only where the German formulations are particularly important are they placed below the English in the main text.

Emphases in English translations for both Nietzsche's and Kant's writings: normal emphases (= 'gesperrt' in KSA) are rendered in *italics*. Further emphases in Nietzsche's *Nachlass* ('halbfett' in KSA) are rendered in ***bold italics***.

Emphases in the original German for both Nietzsche's and Kant's writings: normal emphases (= 'gesperrt' in KSA) are rendered in e x p a n d e d   s c r i p t. Further emphases in Nietzsche's *Nachlass* ('halbfett' in KSA) are rendered in **bold**.

Interventions/omissions: any interventions in citations by the author, including insertions of original German words or alternative translations, are indicated by square brackets: [ ]. Any omissions by the author are also inserted in square brackets [. . .] in order to distinguish them from Nietzsche's own ellipses. The same are used where the citation begins or ends in mid-sentence.

TRANSLATIONS

Translations are the author's, although use was also made of existing translations from the following publications:

For Nietzsche: *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of idols* (2005), ed Aaron Ridley, trans Judith Norman, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; *Writings from Late Notebooks* (2206), ed Rüdiger Bittner, trans Kate Sturge, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; *On the Genealogy of Morality* (2007), ed Keith Ansell-Pearson, trans Carol Diethe, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; *Twilight of the Idols/The Anti-Christ* (1990), trans. R. J. Hollingdale, London: Penguin; *Ecce Homo* (1992), trans R. J. Hollingdale, London: Penguin (1992);); *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (2005), trans Graham Parkes, New York: Oxford University Press; *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future* (2002) eds R.-P. Horstmann and J. Norman, trans Judith Norman, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; *Unpublished Fragments from the Period of Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (Summer I882-Winter I883/84) (2019), trans Paul Loeb and David F Tinslry, Stanford CA: Stanford University Press; Unpublished Fragments (Spring 1885-Spring 1886) (2020), trans Adrian Del Caro, Stanford CA: Stanford University Press.

For Kant: Immanuel Kant (1992), *Theoretical Philosophy 1755-1770*, ed & trans David Walford, Ralf Meerbote, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; *The Critique of Pure Reason* (1929), trans Norman Kemp Smith, London: Macmillan; *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science* (1970), trans James Ellington, Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merril; *Critique of Practical Reason* (2002), trans Werner S. Pluhar, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company; *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (2006), trans and ed Robert B. Louden, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; Kleingeld, P., Waldron, J., Doyle, M.W., Wood, A. (eds) (2006), *Toward Perpetual Peace and Other Writings on Politics, Peace, and History*. New Haven : Yale University Press. *Religion within the bounds of bare reason* (2009), trans Werner S. Pluhar, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company; The Metaphysics of Morals (1991), trans Mary Gregor, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

INTRODUCTION

I Introducing the philosophy of conflict

This book is an experiment in the philosophy of conflict. By the philosophy of conflict, I mean most broadly a willingness to keep open the question of conflict; not to foreclose it by reducing it to contingent phenomena, disruptions to be resolved or remedied in favour of concord or consensus. In this book I take a primarily ontological approach to the question. An ontology of conflict, as I understand it, is the view that conflict cannot be reduced to local disturbances in otherwise co-operative, peaceful relations; it is ineradicable and all-pervasive, because it is constitutive of relations in all domains of reality, often with destructive, devastating or oppressive consequences, especially for our social and political relations, but also potentially constructive of new capacities, new relations and settlements. With an ontology of this kind in place, I believe we have a viable basis for rethinking and re-evaluating conflict.

The experiment comes out of a dissatisfaction with contemporary democratic theory, in specific, mainstream 'deliberative' theories and 'agonistic' theories that have been marshalled against them in the last twenty years or so. While deliberative theories – as charged by agonists – suppress the ineliminable, constitutive and potentially constructive moment of conflict in democratic relations for fear of its destructive consequences, agonistic theories are marked by weak and problematic notions of conflict. In order to address these shortcomings, and to stimulate more fruitful exchanges between these camps, the experiment is to go back their sources in Kant (for deliberative theories) and Nietzsche (for agonisms), and to rethink them *as philosophers of conflict*. It is striking how deliberative theorists suppress, soften or ignore the tremendous importance given by Kant to conflict on many levels, from 'unsociable sociability' to war, for the advancement of human reason and freedom. It is equally striking how agonists have not felt the need to interrogate the notion of measured, constructive conflict, which they take from Nietzsche's account of the ancient Greek agon, in relation to the unmeasured, destructive potentials of conflict that mark 'the relational character of all occurrence' in his ontology of wills to power. By examining how both philosophers think conflict as part of the 'deep structure' of reality at all levels, my hope is open a space for a genuine engagement (including disagreement!) between deliberative and agonistic theories of democracy. As philosophers of conflict, Kant and Nietzsche raise fundamental questions concerning the constitutive, constructive and destructive potentials of conflict, opposition and contestation, which we can ill afford to ignore in thinking about the state of democracy today, and how best to address it theoretically. But the focus of this book is not democratic theory; its aim, rather, is to lay the groundwork for a renewed discussion of conflict and democracy by considering the questions raised by their philosophies of conflict and comparing their responses. How to think conflict and contradiction as an ineradicable reality without thought being confounded and hollowed out by contradictions? What kinds of negation make for contradiction in thought and in real contradiction? How to understand the passage from senseless, destructive conflict to a constructive order of things? How can the relation between war and peace be thought in a way that makes for a living peace, not the peace of the graveyard? What makes for forms of conflict that break with the logic of destruction and are productive of new orders and settlements? What does it take for resistance to act, not as an inhibitor to be suffered or removed, but as a stimulant, a spur to freedom? Need hatred always be a source of destructive energy in destructive conflict, or can it under certain conditions be a creative and affirmative force? These are just some of the questions to be discussed in the course of the book.

Prima facie, Kant and Nietzsche are implacably opposed, as the celebrated philosopher of 'eternal peace', and the philosopher of conflict *par excellence*, respectively. In this book, however, my contention is that Kant, no less than Nietzsche, engages in a re-evaluation or transvaluation (*Umwerthung*) of conflict grounded in two claims: that conflict is an *ineradicable* dimension of reality at all levels, from ontology to social life, culture, politics and ethics; and that conflict is not merely *destructive* and oppressive in its consequences, but houses prodigious, and immensely valuable *productive* powers. In Nietzsche's philosophy, conflict is not just a recurrent theme, but a dynamic and structural principle that cuts across the different domains of his thought and acts as a moving centre of gravity throughout his philosophical development. He has a highly differentiated understanding of conflict and struggle, and a rich vocabulary to match it (*Agon, Auseinandersetzung, Concurrenz, Dissonanz, Gegensätzlichkeit, Kampf, Konflikt, Krieg, Streit, Wettkampf, Wettspiel, Wettstreit, Widerspruch, Wiederstreit, Zwist, Zwietracht, Zwiespalt*, i.a.). Conflict, struggle and tension are best known for the integral role they play in Nietzsche's dynamic understanding of life or reality in his later thought. In the language of force, life *is* only relations of tension: attraction-repulsion, action-resistance, commanding-obeying among forces without substance; conflict or tension is the manner in which relations are formed and transformed. In the language of will to power, the basic and pervasive character of life at all levels consists of a plurality of life-forms or power-complexes struggling to overcome and extend themselves against the resistance offered by competing forms of life equally bent on self-overcoming and expansion.

What is less well known is how conflict also plays an essential role across the various domains of Kant's thought. This is already evident in his early metaphysics, where Kant develops a dynamic concept of matter as a conflict of forces (*Streit der Kräfte*) around the key concept of real (as distinct from logical) opposition or 'Realrepugnanz',[1] with ramifications in social life (*ungesellige Geselligkeit*)[2], in animal life or health (*continuirliches Spiel des Antagonismus* between the advancement and inhibition of life)[3], in ethics (*Neigung zum Wohlleben und Tugend im Kampfe*; *Tugend* as *die moralische Gesinnung im Kampfe*; as a *Kampf gegen die Einflüsse des bösen Princip im Menschen*)[4], taste (*über den Geschmack läßt sich streiten (obgleich nicht disputiren)*)[5], and Reason (metaphysics as a *Kampfplatz endloser Streitgkeiten*)[6], to name some. In short, Kant has a wide-ranging, differentiated understanding of conflict and, like Nietzsche, a rich vocabulary of conflict to match (*Kampf, Disput, Kontroverse, Gezänk, Ungeselligkeit, Streit, conflictus, Polemik, concordia discors, discordia concors*).[7] He deserves – no less than Nietzsche – to be called a philosopher of conflict.

In broad terms the affirmative and productive senses of conflict in Kant can be placed under four overlapping headings:

1. Conflict as a constitutive principle. This applies to ontological domains (Conflict as constitutive of matter, animal life, social life etc), but also to normative ideals (: constitutive of humanity, virtue, taste, ideal health);

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[1] *Versuch über den Begriff der negativen Grösse* (= NG) II.198, II.172, 175; BDG II.86.

[2] 'Unsociable sociability'. See TG II.334 and IaG VIII.20.

[3] 'Continuous play of antagonism' (Anth VII.231).

[4] 'Inclination to good living and virtue in struggle' (Anth VII.277); 'virtue' as 'moral disposition in struggle' (KprV V.84); as a 'struggle against the evil principle in the human being' (MS VI.440).

[5] 'Of taste there is conflict (although no dispute)'(KdU V.338).

[6] 'battleground of endless disputes' (KrV A VIII).

[7] See Saner 1967 90f., 106f., 118, 121.

2. Conflict as a stimulant, motive or driving force: a *Triebfeder der Kultur*, as the key to the development of human capacities;
3. Conflict as an organising / re-organising and directive principle, generating both inner organisation (e.g. of a people into a state) and outer dynamic order or equilibrium among antagonistic instances or forces;
4. Conflict as a constructive, productive or creative principle: productive of humanity, culture, art, of equality and freedom under the rule of law and even – eternal peace.

All four issues offer rich seams of comparison with Nietzsche's philosophy of conflict; among other things, they reveal Kant to be, like Nietzsche, an analogical thinker by instinct, able to pick out similar antagonistic structures across different domains of reality and thought. My aim is this book is to offer a series of text-based comparative analyses of Kant's and Nietzsche's thought on conflict in these senses, with a view towards addressing my central question:

What does it take to think conflict, real opposition or contradiction as an intrinsic dimension of reality at all levels?

Or as Nietzsche puts it:

Kann man sich aber das Sich-Widersprechende als wirklich denken? (9[1] 8.136)

But can one think the self-contradictory as real?

My principal interest, as these questions indicate, is *how to think* conflict, opposition or contradiction as a reality, or rather: how contradiction or opposition in our *manner* of thinking relates to the *matter* of our thought when we try to think reality as contradictory or conflictual. The question of antagonism, posed as an ontological question, implicates the manner of our thinking in the matter of our thinking in a particularly acute way. In Foucault's well-known words, post-Kantian continental philosophy involves 'an ontology of the present, of present reality, an ontology of modernity, an ontology of ourselves' (Foucault 2011: 20–1). In refusing to abstract the subject from the object of knowledge for the sake of an 'analytic of truth', thinking comes to be situated in the field of interrogation. This means that our manner of interrogation is implicated in the ontology of conflict and cannot be separated from the question of conflict (Marchart 2018 5). The problem here, as the above question posed by Nietzsche indicates, can be focused on the notion of contradiction, logical opposition or what Kant calls *Repugnanz*: What is the status of logical contradiction or *Repugnanz* in a world structured by real contradiction or *Realrepugnanz*? Is thinking, so to speak, swallowed up by *Realrepugnanz*, so that we cannot think antagonism without contradicting ourselves, i.e. cannot think it at all? Or can, indeed *must* logical contradiction, as a species of negation, be distinguished from the negativity of real contradiction, so that the former can be denied and latter affirmed? If so, we may be able to think without contradiction – to negate contradiction in thought while affirming it in reality, without falling into contradiction. But does that not imply that thinking, confined to logical contradiction / non-contradiction, will inevitably fall short of real contradiction? We are, it seems, confronted by two alternatives: either thinking is swallowed up by real contradiction, or thinking necessarily falls short of thinking real contradiction. Is this, then, a dead end – or does it describe the extremes *within which* thinking can operate, the extremes that thinking must approximate without ever touching? The first alternative means taking the ontology of conflict seriously at the risk of failure, the second means taking thinking seriously at the risk of it biting its own tail.

As my point of departure for tackling these questions, I take Kant's pre-critical essay *Attempt to Introduce the Concept of Negative Magnitudes into Philosophy* from 1763.[8] In this essay he breaks with the harmonistic tendencies of European rationalism by introducing, for the first time, the notion of radical negativity into philosophy. He does so by distinguishing logical contradiction or opposition from real contradiction or opposition (*Realrepugnanz*) on the basis of two distinct types of negation. The result of Kant's argumentation is of fundamental importance for the philosophy of conflict and applies no less to Nietzsche than to him. It can be put in the following four propositions or positions, which summarise the problem of thinking reality as intrinsically conflictual or contradictory:

1. If logical contradiction is impossible, and if real contradiction is understood as logical contradiction, it is impossible to think reality as contradictory.

2. If real contradiction is possible and actual, and logical contradiction is thought as real opposition, then it is impossible to think reality as contradictory without contradiction: real contradiction swallows up discourse.

3. So whether we model real contradiction on logical contradiction or logical contradiction on real contradiction: either way it is impossible to think reality as contradictory. For a philosophy of conflict to be possible, therefore, logical contradiction must be distinguished from real contradiction, such that while the first is impossible – making coherent thought possible – the second (real contradiction) is both possible and actual. In this way, our manner of thinking (contradiction is impossible) and the matter of our thinking (contradiction is both possible and actual) do not contradict one another.

4. On the other hand, distinguishing logical from real contradiction and accepting the constraint of non-contradiction in thought has the consequence that we cannot really grasp or describe real contradiction in in its concrete facticity: if logical contradiction does not describe real contradiction, this goes even more so for the requirement for non-contradiction in thought. The best we can do is *hinweisen auf*, point towards a reality that resists or withdraws from thought.

Through a comparative study of Kant's *Realrepugnanz* with the notion of opposition (*Gegensatz*) at the centre of Nietzsche's philosophy of power, I argue in the opening chapter, that in different ways and for different reasons, both thinkers adhere to these propositions.

I.1 Comparing Nietzsche and Kant

In any worthwhile comparative study, it is essential not to efface fundamental difference for the sake of emphasising similarities or analogies. In our case, it is indisputable that Kant and Nietzsche take their normative bearings in radically different, not to say opposed ways. For Kant it is well known that philosophy must take its normative principles from pure (practical) reason, understood as an autonomous faculty in all of us with its own constitution, principles and laws. In Nietzsche's case it is much less clear, and there is nothing like a standard or broadly accepted interpretation among scholars. Even if almost everything he writes carries a normative charge, pro or contra, he rarely issues a direct imperative or 'ought' that is not ironic or paradoxical (provided we do not confuse Nietzsche with Zarathustra). I will therefore set out what I take to be his normative impulses or commitments in this book.

Throughout the book I take Nietzsche's philosophy to be driven by a life-long commitment to the affirmation and enhancement of life. His vocation to be a philosopher of life comes, at least initially, from his negatively derived one-world hypothesis, sparked off by his early engagement with the pre-Socratics, and Heraclitus in particular. With regard to morality and values, around which his

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[8] *Versuch den Begriff der negativen Größen in die Weltweisheit einzuführen*

thought comes increasingly to gravitate, this means overcoming the self-understanding of morality as sovereign and transcendent by rethinking values from a radically immanent standpoint in nature or life.[9] This project takes ever sharper contours with the critique of Christianity as "Anti-nature", in favour of a 'naturalism of morality': '[M]y task is to translate the seemingly emancipated moral values that have become *nature-less* back into their nature – i.e., into their natural "immorality"'; [10] or more bluntly: 'Fundamental principle: to be like nature'.[11] This involves *first* a *critical-genealogical* project to collapse the normative domain onto the plane of immanence by translating moral concepts and values from the language of reason and morality into of the (physiological, social, political) language of body, the drives, individual and collective conditions for existence.[12] Genealogy, Nietzsche's most sophisticated critical method, deals with really lived or 'grey' values, the life-forms or types (individual and collective) that produce them and which they inform, guide and sustain, as well as the broader (socio-physiological-political) conditions under which they emerge and thrive. In effect, he reorients philosophical reflection on moral values from the autonomous domain claimed by morality and moral philosophy – what he calls '*ignorance* of physics or in *contradiction* with it' (FW 335 3.564) – towards their socio-physiological conditions in the body (politic). But Nietzsche's 'naturalism of morality' also involves *practical-normative project* to reconstruct moral values and modes of practical engagement in terms that acknowledge (*Erkennen und Anerkennen*), affirm and enhance life or nature in its highest forms.

Nietzsche's commitments to life-affirmation and -enhancement articulate, in ethical or normative terms, the aspiration to rethink our values from a radically immanent perspective in life, with its dynamic of intensification, enhancement and overcoming. But no doubt they are also a response to what he learns from his genealogies of European – i.e. Christian-Platonic – values: that they derive from, and sustain, forms of life and willing that are turned against life and specifically: its sources in the body, the drives and the passions. Moreover, two thousand years of life-negation, he contends, have had devastating consequences for those forms life issuing in a pathology designated as 'nihilism', 'degeneration' and 'décadence', and diagnosed variously as: moral bankruptcy; the death of God and the ensuing crisis of authority; the devaluation of our highest values; the loss of 'organising powers' and its consequences in processes of disgregation, dissolution (*Auflösung*), exhaustion (*Erschöpfung*) and an incapacity to create or 'posit productively a goal for oneself' (9[35], KSA 12.350f.); the depletion of voluntaristic resources; the debilitation and contraction (*Verkleinerung*) of the human being. It is against this background that Nietzsche's project of transvaluation (*Umwertung*) must be understood: as an attempt to raise life as the highest value against life-negating values, to take the side of life, its affirmation and enhancement, so as to question, resist and overcome the forms of life-negation underpinning Christian-Platonic values and their devastating consequences for the value and quality of those life-forms.

Nietzsche's philosophy of conflict is a consequence of his life-long effort to think from a radically immanent standpoint in life, since conflict is the way relations are formed and transformed. But it is also a consequence of an ethical impulse, which in a sense he shares with Kant. If Nietzsche's

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[9] See Herschbell & Nimis 1979; Busch 1989 271ff.; Hölscher 1977.

[10] '[M]eine Aufgabe ist, die scheinbar emancipirten und n a t u r l o s gewordenen Moralwerthe in ihre Natur zurückzuübersetzen — d.h. in ihre natürliche "Immoralität"' (9[86] 12).

[11] 25[309] 11.91.For Christianity as "Anti-nature": GD Widernatur 4 6.85.

[12] For the body: 7[150] 10.291. For the drives: 7[76] 10.268. For conditions for existence:10[157] 12.545f.; 14[158] 13.343; 14[105] 13.283). See also: 4[67] 9.115; 25[460] 11.135; 26[38] 11; JGB 188; 9[86] 12.380.

'naturalism of morality' gives us a measure of what divides him from Kant, he also shares – in a different shape and form – two impulses with Kant as a philosopher of conflict: *realism* and *perfectionism*. Kant's realism is best known from his historical-political texts, IaG and ZeF, where he takes the view that hatred and antagonism are not to be rooted out of human behaviour and interaction; that our hostile inclinations, ambition, tyranny and greed (*Ehrsucht, Herrschsucht, Habsucht*) drive human behaviour inevitably towards conflict. No doubt Kant has strategic reasons for his Hobbesian presuppositions – to show that even if we assume the worst of humankind, there is still reasonable hope for sustained peace under the banner of 'eternal peace'. Then there are the worldly politicians, the men of experience, addressed in the Preface to ZeF, who must be shown that his idea of peace is not just a 'sweet dream of the philosopher'. But I believe Kant is genuinely troubled, like Nietzsche, by the non-appearance of the idea of freedom in reality. And in response, he formulates the radical thesis that the very capacities and passions that lead to conflict – considered *evil* from the standpoint of pure practical reason – are the motor of cultural and political development that make rational insight into the moral law and freedom under the rule of law possible. Our hostile inclinations are prodigiously productive for Kant, and necessary for the *perfectibility* of the species (IaG 4 VIII.21-22); they are what give us reasonable hope that society can be transformed into a 'moral whole' (ibid.).

The hallmark of Nietzsche's philosophy – and one of its most appealing qualities – is the way in which it combines unflinching realism with unremitting perfectionism; the hard, ugly truths of Nietzsche's philosophy of life, truths that he says *cannot be lived with*,[13] with the demand to enhance life, to experiment with ourselves so as to extend the range of human capacities and discover new 'possibilities of life' or arts of living.[14] Ugly truths, truths that cannot be lived with, and new arts of living: this captures the twin impulses, necessary and impossible at once, to which Nietzsche's thought responds. Throughout his writings he attempts time and again to negotiate the conflict or tension between these twin impulses in different ways. Nietzsche's realist impulse first comes to light in his youthful engagement with Schopenhauer and archaic Greek culture, and culminates in his philosophy of conflict. While taking on the ugly truths of Schopenhauer's theoretical pessimism and fusing them with his knowledge of Greek pessimism, he refuses Schopenhauer's practical pessimism of life-negation in favour of the affirmative impulses he discovers in the Greeks. Indeed, it is the Greeks who first show him how the tension between realism and perfectionism can be negotiated. While contending that every Greek was in his heart of hearts a tyrant ('The gods make human beings even more evil; that is human nature': 5[117] 8.71), he advances the contest or 'agon', an archaic Greek institution in which a plurality would-be-tyrants competing creatively for great deeds and works act as a protective measure against the tyranny of one.[15] In the course of this book, we will see how Nietzsche confronts the horrifying, destructive consequences of unmeasured conflict, as a necessary ingredient in life disclosed by his realism, and looks for ways to delimit and describe productive forms of measured conflict that would advance human perfectibility.

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[13] On the ugliness of truth, see especially: 16[40] 13.500; 16[30] 13.491; 11[108] 13.51; 41[67] 8.593; GM I 1 5.258 and GT 7 1.56f. on how the Greeks turned the horror and absurdity of existence into the sublime and the comic, as 'representations with which one can live'.

[14] On the pre-Socratic philosophers as discoverers of 'neue Möglichkeiten des Lebens', see 6[48] 8.115-118 and MA 261 2.217. See also 17[44] 8.304 and 6[359] 9.288 on the discovery of new possibilities of life. On Nietzsche as a teacher of the art of living, see: Schmid 2010; Dohmen 2008, 2000. For a sceptical response, see van Tongeren 2012.

[15] On the tyrannical desires of the Greeks, see 6[77] 8.99 and MA 261 2.214. Also: 4[301] 9.174; 6[28] 8.109. On the Greek agon, see HW 1.783-792, esp. 789.

I.2 The texts

For Kant, I draw mainly on the 1763 essay NG and other pre-critical texts, as well his historical-political essays, IaG and ZeF, and his *Anthropology*. With this selection of texts, I believe we can see well the formative and enduring influence of his philosophy of conflict on his thought. For Nietzsche, I take my bearings from the philosophy of power, inaugurated by his turn to physiology in the early 1880s, which I argue has nothing to do with scientific realism or biologism, but is an ontology of conflict predicated on a series of negations of the metaphysics of being and substance ontology. These are criticised and rejected by Nietzsche on the grounds that they fail to account for change and spontaneous, creative activity, and he tries his hand at various 'manners of speech' (*Sprecharten*) that would do a better job in line with his anti-metaphysical presuppositions. For this project, he draws extensively on a range of contemporary physiologists, using, combining, adapting their conceptual vocabularies to develop his own physio-ontology of change, which comes into its own with the discourse of will to power. The most important texts in this regard are in Nietzsche's *Nachlass*, on which I draw extensively in this book. The notebooks, on which it is based, contain a hotch-potch of notes on a great variety of subjects, and some scholars question their significance for Nietzsche's philosophical project(s). But I think this is wrong. As I hope to show, the *Nachlass* is a treasure-house of experimental philosophical thought, the laboratory of an extraordinary mind, and while it is hazardous to base an interpretation on a single note, with a thorough study of the notebooks we begin to see patterns in what seems to be haphazard. A single note may be a dead end without any bearing on Nietzsche's cardinal problems, but a series of notes that revolve around the same problem from different perspectives is no accident. It tells us something important, which may or may not come to light in published works, but deserves in either case to be reconstructed. None of this is to deny conflicting or contradictory positions taken in different notes, or dead ends that did not come to light for good reason, or the element of accident and entropy in the notebooks. But that does not detract from the extraordinary lucidity and directness with which he tackles some of the cardinal problems of his thought in the *Nachlass*. In this book, I have endeavoured to discuss notes, which I take to be part of larger patterns or complexes of thought that Nietzsche is developing in the notebooks at this stage of thought.

I.3 State of the art

While deliberative theorists of democracy tend to pass over Kant's views on the necessity of hostility and danger for human self-realization, important work on his views on war (Saner 1967), resistance (Muthu 2014), unsociable sociability (Wood 2006; Schneewind 2012) and real opposition (van der Kuijlen 2009, 2017; Schnepf 2001; Wolff 2017; Zinkin 2012) has been done by Kant scholars. Saner's book, *Kants Weg vom Krieg zum Frieden*, deserves a special mention for his thorough examination of Kant's vocabulary and changing understandings of conflict. As the title indicates Kant's work is interpreted as a trajectory from conflict to unity free of conflict, as a goal to be approximated but never attained as such. Saner's main aim is to show that Kant's political thought is the moving centre of his entire thought from the very beginning by arguing that key political concepts and forms of thought from his mature thought are prefigured in his early metaphysics. In specific, a series of analogies are drawn, rather ingeniously, between dynamic structures in his early thought and his later political thought: between his monadology and the concept of unsociable sociability; between the commerce of substances and the establishment of civil society; and between real opposition in bodies

and the function of war and radical evil in history, among others.[16] To his credit, Saner also points out where these analogies break down, particularly in Kant's philosophy of law, which is grounded in morality and excludes conflict. As a student of Jaspers, Saner criticises Kant's identification of philosophy as a science (*Wissenschaft*) and argues that he should have transposed the antinomies of aesthetic judgement onto the entire field of philosophy, displacing unity with conflict as the governing principle of non-dogmatic thought (Saner 1967 112). It is, however, questionable whether this would not have imploded the entire critical project. Apart from this attempt to save Kant from himself, much of what follows in this book is broadly in line with Saner's interpretation, especially where Kant's concept of conflict is seen to produce its own negation (chapter 2), what Saner calls the 'Zerstörung der Zerstörung' (op. cit. 26f.).

In Nietzsche's case, as noted in the Introduction to *Conflict and Contest in Nietzsche's Philosophy* (Bloomsbury 2019), many scholars have pointed to the importance of struggle, war and rivalry in his thought. A systematic study of conflict, as an integral part of his philosophy, especially his philosophy of power, and as a dynamic and structural principle across different domains of his thought, was first made by James Pearson in his 2018 PhD thesis 'Nietzsche's Philosophy of Conflict and the Logic of Organisational Struggle' (revised in Pearson 2022). Regarding comparative research on Nietzsche and Kant, inroads have been made by a few scholars (e.g. Volker Gerhardt 1988, 2005), and a start on more comprehensive approach was made in the 3 volume set I co-edited: *Nietzsche's Engagements with Kant and the Kantian Legacy* (Bloomsbury 2017). What has not been done is to read both Nietzsche and Kant as thinkers of conflict and study the astonishing intersections, affinities and analogies between them despite their profound differences. If the diagnosis of the impasse in current democratic theory offered above is correct, the value of this work speaks for itself.

I.4 The book

The **opening chapter** introduces the philosophies of conflict in both thinkers and is consequently the longest. For Kant I concentrate on the ontology of conflict set out in his pre-critical essay *Versuch den Begriff der negativen Größen in die Weltweisheit einzuführen* (1763); for Nietzsche, on the physio-ontology he develops from 1880 on, culminating in the will to power. Both thinkers, I argue, face the difficulty of thinking reality as contradictory or conflictual without falling prey to rampant contradictions in their thought, and they address it by distinguishing the meaning and structure of 'contradiction' in thought and speech (logical contradiction) from real contradiction or opposition. In *negativen Größen* Kant tackles this by distinguishing the kind of negation involved in logical contradiction or *logische Repugnanz* (as impossible or unthinkable), from that involved in real opposition or *Realrepugnanz* (as possible and actual): in the first, negation means 'lack' or 'absence' (*Mangel, Abwesenheit, defectus, absentia*) in line with the tradition, leaving '*nothing at all*': '*gar nichts* (nihil negativum irrepraesentabile)'; in the second, negation is thought as *nihil privativum*: as privation or cancellation (*Beraubung, Aufhebung*) of the consequences of what it negates. And it can only do so, according to Kant, as a *positive force that resists its opposite*. Kant goes on to identify the latter, in the form of the conflict between the forces of attraction and repulsion as the principle of reality governing everything: intra- and inter-monadic relations, impenetrability and the interaction of bodies, mental life, the regularity and very perfection of the universe. The notion of real opposition is not, however, restricted to his early metaphysics, but continues to play a key role in his thought, as I

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[16] See Saner 1967 73f. for a summary.

show in the course of the book: in the notions of equilibrium (chapter 2), unpleasure (chapter 3), unsociable sociability (chapter 4), and hatred (chapter 5).

Kant's essay begins with the manifest intention to contribute to rationalist metaphysics by introducing the notion of negation as privation, but it ends by problematizing causation in a way that threatens to undermine metaphysics altogether. At stake in this text is ultimately the same question behind Nietzsche's philosophy of conflict: change, and the cause or 'real ground' of change. And both thinkers share the insight into the *relational sources of change in conflict*. But Nietzsche departs from Kant in rejecting mechanism and the dyadic model of attraction and repulsion in favour of a pluralistic, multi-layered notion of real opposition among entities without substance, informed by physiology and ultimately will to power. His project is further complicated by two factors. While Kant breaks the rationalist equation of logic and reality and restricts logic to thought, Nietzsche develops a full-blown critique of the logical principles of identity and non-contradiction (to which he nonetheless adheres in his thought); and while affirming the reality of contradiction or opposition (Gegensatz) in some contexts, in others he denies it in favour of degrees, grades or 'valeurs'.

In order to make sense of Nietzsche's philosophy of conflict, I undertake to distinguish three different senses of the term 'opposition' or 'Gegensatz' in his usage. First there is 'opposition' in the logical and metaphysical sense (Ggz I), in which the terms are mutually exclusive and have nothing in common; they are constructed through the separation and fixing (*Feststellung*) of the terms into self-identical, durable items or entities. Then there is Nietzsche's reinterpretation of Ggz I (Ggz II.1), in which the terms are not mutually exclusive, but genealogically related (*verwandt*), and the higher valued term is derivative of its apparent 'opposite'. Thus, reason (*Vernünftiges*) comes from unreason (*Vernunftlosem*); logic derives from the illogical, and so forth. Through genealogy (GM) and historical philosophising (MA 2), these relations are exposed, radically transforming the meaning and value of things we value; they cease to have their own origin and are bound up instead with their 'opposites,' as their 'sublimations' (MA 1), 'refinements,' 'degrees' or later 'stages'. In the third place, Nietzsche takes it upon himself to defend the oppositional or contradictory character of reality against the claims of logic and metaphysics. For this he reinterprets 'opposition' in an ontological register (Ggz II.2) as the antagonism (*Gegeinander*) of a plurality of force quanta or powers without substance in unceasing transformation, whose essence is their relation of overpowering one another. This is Nietzsche's version of *Realrepugnanz* or real opposition, and in order to understand it, it is necessary to reconstruct his critique of logic, metaphysics and substance ontology, and mechanism, issuing in the turn to physiology and the will to power. Through logic (identity and non-contradiction) a simplified world of self-identical things in commerce is constructed by fixing and equalising (*Festmachen, Gleichmachen*) the complex, dynamic character of reality; a world without cognitive value but one that is life-enabling and therefore binding on us. Metaphysics and substance ontology are criticised rejected on the grounds that they fail to account for change and spontaneous, creative activity. In response, Nietzsche looks for a 'manner of speech' (*Sprechart*) or 'image language' (*Bildsprache*) that describes better the dynamic, pluralistic, conflictual character of reality; a counter-ontology of becoming, based on a series of negations of metaphysics: process or occurrence (not being); 'originary' plurality (instead of *arche* or first substance); and antagonism, real opposition or contradiction (Ggz II.2) among entities without substance (instead of harmony and consistency). For this project, he draws extensively on a range of contemporary physiologists, using, combining, adapting their conceptual vocabularies to develop his own physio-ontology of change, which comes into its own with the discourse of will to power. In this process, he confronts a psychological

constraint, which informs his concept of real opposition: that we can only make sense of change in terms of our self-understanding as agents, which he contends can be reduced to willing power.

In **chapter 2** I ask how Kant and Nietzsche address the question of war and peace: How do they formulate the problem of conflict? How do they conceptualise the relation between war and peace? And how do they envisage the transformation of, or passage from senseless, destructive conflict (in)to a constructive order of things?

The main thesis of the chapter is that Kant wages a *philosophical war of extermination (Todkrieg, Vernichtungskampf) on all war in the name of eternal peace*. By 'philosophical war of extermination' is meant *Todkrieg*, the term used by Nietzsche in AC to describe a bivalent (*zweiwertig*), oppositional manner of thinking, which makes a total and exclusive claim for its position (*Sich Absolutsetzen*) by eliminating or destroying the opposed position and with it, their relation of opposition. My argument works through an analysis of two texts in which Kant discusses conflict or war and peace: the section on the 'polemical use' of Reason in the latter part of KrV, where he addresses the conflict of Reason with itself; and ZeF, where he discusses warfare among states on the world stage. In both texts, Kant's philosophical war against war thus *replicates* in thought what he argues for in real terms: the extermination or *Vernichtung* of (the causes of future) conflict in favour of eternal peace. This makes for an utterly barren, destructive notion of conflict and a life-negating idea of peace beyond the reality of conflict. Constructive, autonomous agency requires the *extermination* of conflict under the rule of law. In the end, conflict is productive for Kant, *but only of its own negation*. I then turn to Nietzsche for an alternative manner of thinking conflict and peace, one that overcomes the Kantian oppositions and allows for a genuinely affirmative understanding of conflict and its productive qualities. In the final section I qualify the argument by considering each thinker's position from a perspective in the other's. There is, I conclude, a profound ambiguity in Kant's ideal of peace: on the one hand, it signifies a nihilistic 'peace of the graveyard', but on the other, it stands for a path to a living peace, which can be brought in line with a Nietzschean approach to peace.

In **chapters 3 and 4** I examine the notion of productive resistance (*Widerstand*, *Widerstreben*) in Nietzsche and Kant. For both thinkers, I contend, a genuinely constructive concept of conflict requires that resistance work not just as an inhibitor that reduces freedom, creativity and power, but as a stimulant (*Reiz, Stimulus*) to create new orders, new settlements, new possibilities of existence. The main question of these two chapters is, then: *What does it take to think resistance as productive, enabling, empowering – as a stimulant?*

Chapter 3 begins (§ I) with an analysis of the meanings of 'resistance' in Nietzsche's ontology of power with a view towards isolating and describing his conception of productive resistance. Drawing on descriptions of the Dionysian and the sexual act, I argue that for resistance to be productive (i.e. a stimulant) the hindrance (*Hindernis, Hemmung*) of my power and the pain it engenders must give me the feeling of power-pleasure. This thought is missing in Kant, because pain is simply equated with the feeling of hindrance and rigidly opposed to pleasure-power. Nietzsche's concept of productive resistance turns on the distinction between *active* and *reactive meanings* of 'resistance': when uttered from an *active position of strength or power*, resistance is sought out as a stimulant or source of power; from a *reactive position of weakness* vis-à-vis an overpowering resistance, by contrast, resistance is experienced and conceived negatively as *disempowering*. In sections II and III this argument is developed through a comparative analysis of resistance: Nietzsche's account of coitus as a 'play of resistance and victory' and Kant's account of health in the *Anthropology*

as a 'continual play of antagonism' between 'the feeling of advancement' and the 'hindrance of life'. Despite proximities between them, the priority Kant gives to pain and resistance as the 'spur to activity' falls short of a productive notion of resistance, because it is locked in real opposition to the pleasure of empowerment or the feeling of the advancement of life.

In the final section of the chapter I turn to the role of resistance in the context of freedom or sovereignty. For Kant, I focus on the account of 'respect for the law' (*Achtung für's Gesetz*) in the second *Critique*. The 'feeling of elevation', Kant argues, is based on the 'judgement of reason' that the moral law has overcome the resistance of our sensible inclinations, thereby advancing the causality of freedom. This is compared to the figure of the sovereign individual in GM II 2, whose feeling of freedom derives from his judgement that, in redeeming his promise, he has overcome resistances both within and without. In both cases, an equivalence is made *between the overcoming of resistance, and the consciousness or advancement of freedom.* This proximity is, however, complicated in the *Nachlass*, where this judgement is exposed as illusory, a misinterpretation of the body that condenses infinitely complex processes and tensions into a unitary act of will. But Nietzsche's response is not to reject the moral language of law and freedom; instead, he pleads for naturalistic accounts, to make them less illusory through a 'more substantial' interpretation of the physiology of agency. In the next chapter, I consider one such attempt in Nietzsche's socio-physiology of sovereignty.

In **chapter 4**, the question of productive resistance is approached by comparing Kant's notion of *ungesellige Geselligkeit* or 'unsociable sociability' in the Fourth Proposition his 1784 *History* text with Nietzsche's 'fine, well-planned, thoughtful egoism' from the *Nachlass* of 1881. The argument is that Kant's unsociability involves a very *limited* notion of egoism, derived from Hobbes, in which others are either *obstacles* or *means* to our own selfish ends. On this basis he tries to formulate a productive notion of resistance, as the engine of human – cultural and moral – development, but it remains captive to the reactive notion of power derived from Hobbes. Whereas for Kant sociability (the pursuit of common or other-centred ends) is external and opposed to unsociability or egoism, Nietzsche develops a far richer notion of egoism, in which sociability – specifically: acting for the sake of others' well-being – is central. Drawing largely on Wilhelm Roux, he develops a *socio-physiological prehistory of the individual* and the *emergence of the first individuals*, modelled on his concept of the organism and organismic life-processes. The notion of thoughtful egoism, in which this account culminates, brings a complexity to the question of our treatment of others, which is marked by *reciprocity* and *ambiguity* to the point of undermining Kant's sociability-unsociability opposition. But it also designates a *naturalistic ideal of autonomous self-regulation on the basis of physiological self-knowledge*, i.e. an intelligent, affirmative attention to our needs as unique living beings and the processes of self-regulation that we, and all living creatures, must perform if we are to meet our conditions of existence, thrive and grow. Nietzsche's commitment to life-affirmation and -enhancement leads him to locate the 'quality' or value of actions, not in the universalizability of their maxims à la Kant, but in their capacity to individuate, to actualise the radical particularity of their agents, understood as unique multiplicities. Thoughtful egoism involves *radically individual self-legislation* (as opposed to self-subjection to the universal law) on the part of a *radically socialised and plural subject* or *dividuum* (against the substantive, autonomous subject: *homo noumenon*). As such, it represents an attempt to reconstruct the moral ideal of freedom and the associated feeling of power in a way that is 'less illusory' by giving them a 'more substantial' physiological or socio-physiological interpretation. The chapter ends by considering the potential of Nietzsche's thoughtful egoism for a mode of engagement with others appropriate to agonistic politics. I do so by drawing on his attempt to bypass the false

oppositions of morality by displacing the moral discourse of persons with an impersonal, cognitive discourse of things to be known, and by tracking the shift in his later thought from the capacity to resist, to *non*-resistance, or the capacity *not* to resist. In the register of knowledge this involves a practice of possessing and being possessed by others as things to be known (rather than persons) and an episteme of calm hostility or hostile openness, which I propose as a promising basis for an agonistic disposition towards others.

Chapter 5 examines Nietzsche's and Kant's thought on hatred in the light of the realist and perfectionist impulses in both thinkers. The main argument is that Nietzsche performs a *reinterpretation* and *transvaluation* (*Umdeutung*, *Umwertung*) of the Christian-moral concept of hatred. For his part, Kant's views on hatred are profoundly ambivalent. On one side, he follows the Christian-moral condemnation of hatred in favour of love, reconciliation and peace. But as a philosopher of conflict, he also comes close to Nietzsche and concurs with him on certain aspects of hatred; in a different way Kant too performs a reconceptualization and re-evaluation of hatred.

Most of the chapter is devoted to examining Nietzsche's philosophy of hatred, beginning (§II) with its place in his ontology of conflict. This analysis isolates the familiar, negative sense of hatred as a destructive force, but also unfamiliar senses that disconnect hatred from contempt (*Verachtung*), moral condemnation and subjection, releasing affirmative potentials. Nietzsche's physiology implies that hatred is greatest where struggle and the resistance to assimilation are greatest; that is, among (more or less) equal powers. It is distinguished from revulsion and contempt, since these are attached to the process of excretion, not assimilation. And genuine hatred is bound up with love, understood as attraction and the desire to take on and accept what is hard to assimilate in the other; this is one of several ways in which the opposition between love and hate is broken.

Nietzsche's distinctive claim is that hatred need not be a destructive force, but can take creative forms, and in subsequent sections two very different forms of creative hatred are examined: an active agonal hatred *inter pares* that allows for an affirmative pride in one's enemy (§II.2); and the reactive hatred of the 'spirit of revenge' that gives birth to slave morality (§IV). Thereafter (§V), Nietzsche's philosophical response to the problem of hatred is discussed. Kant's reflections on hatred, revenge and anger are discussed in §III, which I then draw on and develop in the final section (§VI). Here I return to the origins of slave morality for a comparative examination of hatred, revenge and anger, and how each thinker envisions a solution to the pathologies of revenge he diagnoses.

Focussing on the slave revolt in morality allows us to address one of chief problems facing agonistic theories: How emancipation from conditions of radical inequality can avoid replicating *ressentiment* and the zero-sum game of 'imaginary revenge' (self-elevation by degrading the other)? Bringing the results Nietzsche's and Kant's thought to bear on this question yields a number of responses to the problem of emancipation relevant to agonistic theory: to take on from those in power the affective power of *anger* and turn it against them, instead of nurturing a slow-burning, insatiable passion for revenge (Kant); to subvert the morality that legitimates hatred of the powerful by learning to love and affirm their will to power and acknowledging that both weak and strong 'stand on the same ground' with equal standing as forms of will to power (Nietzsche); to exploit the idealising powers of hatred and turn them *against* its destructive tendencies, in favour of life-affirming and -enhancing ideals; and to see through the errors of hatred through physiological (self-)knowledge and cultivate an *episteme* of indifference 'beyond love and hate'.

The book ends with an **Epilogue**, in which some of the implications for agonistic politics of the two philosophies of conflict explored in the book are drawn and developed with an eye on opening

avenues for further research. The topics discussed are the principle of equality; pluralism; freedom; the boundary between non-violent agonism and violent antagonism, and the concept of agonistic respect as a way to secure the boundary. While Nietzsche has little or nothing to contribute to a political analysis of institutions or bureaucracy, I believe that valuable lessons can be learned from his philosophy of conflict for modalities of interaction appropriate to agonistic democracy. They include two affirmative notions of equality touched on in the book; the emphasis on the epistemic difficulties confronting genuine pluralism and the kinds of episteme proposed to address them by Nietzsche; the conjunction of sovereignty and non-sovereignty in the naturalistic account of freedom developed in his socio-physiology; and an attempt on my part to reconceptualise agonistic respect by drawing on his reflections on love and agonal hatred *inter pares*.