

Chapter 4

Towards a new agonism?

Nietzsche's 'fine, well-planned, thoughtful egoism' *contra* Kant's 'unsociable sociability'

I Introduction

The question of productive resistance will be approached from a different angle in this chapter. It begins with an analysis of Kant's best known treatment of productive resistance in the Fourth Proposition of the 1784 text *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim* (*Idee zu einer allgemeinen Ge-*

schichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht; henceforth IaG) under the rubric of *ungesellige Geselligkeit* or 'unsociable sociability'. 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. In the end, Kant's unsociable sociability describes a conflict or real opposition between a thin notion of egoism (pursuit of self-centred ends) and an under-determined notion of sociability (pursuit of common or other-centred ends), which remain *external* to one another.

This conflict resonates with Nietzsche's diagnosis of the malaise of individuals in modernity, but his response involves a far richer notion of egoism, one to which sociability is not external, but in which our treatment of others – specifically: acting for the sake of others' well-being – is central. It is what Nietzsche calls 'fine, well-planned, thoughtful egoism' (*feiner planmäßiger gedankenreicher Egoismus*) in the *Nachlass* of 1881 (notebook 11 = M III I in KSA 9). In this period he initiates his *turn to philosophical physiology*. Drawing on Wilhelm Roux, Robert Mayer among other scientists,¹ 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.² 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 main polemical targets in these notes are Spencer and Spinoza,³ but his thoughtful egoism is also specifically opposed to Kant's morality. As noted in the last chapter, 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, but in their capacity to individuate, to actualise the radical particularity of their agents, understood as unique multiplicities (p. **). In this vein, 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

¹ See Müller-Lauter 1978.

² In this regard, I view these notes as filling a gap in GM, where the emergence of the first individuals is not thematised until the 'sovereign individual' suddenly appears on stage in GM II (5.329), whom Nietzsche describes as a 'ripest fruit' of the long pre-history of the human race, the 'morality of mores' (*Sittlichkeit der Sitte*). It is with breakdown of these first social units and 'the loosening of the bonds of society' that the first individuals emerge.

³ Scholars have argued that Nietzsche most likely never knew Spinoza's work directly, and that his knowledge came from (the second 1865 edition of) Kuno Fischer's work *Geschichte der neuern Philosophie* (Scandella 2012 309), which he first read in 1881, the period of the notes we will examine in this chapter. For details on Nietzsche's acquaintance with Spinoza in the literature see Ioan 2019 98 ff.

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.

As a naturalistic ideal of autonomy, Nietzsche's thoughtful egoism harbours resources not just for ethics but for a Nietzschean agonistic politics, which I adumbrate at the end of the chapter. I do not mean agonism in the senses we are familiar with in political theory – as a model for deliberation or an approach to questions of identity, authority etc. – but as a mode of engagement with others. As J-F Drolet has remarked, Nietzsche's failure to address the political institutions, markets and bureaucracies governing late-modern societies has, as its other side, his conviction that 'any serious plan for an institutional transformation of the international [order] had to start with a radical transformation of the modalities of interaction between individuals and between individuals and their world' (Drolet 2013 39, 46). Having concentrated on Nietzsche's affirmative uses of 'resistance' in chapter 3, these reflections take off from his critical uses of the term. In Nietzsche's work, there is a shift of emphasis from resistance and the capacity to resist, to *non-resistance*, or the capacity *not* to resist, which comes to light in his late critiques of mechanism, *décadence* and his epistemic ideal of 'learning to see'. The chapter closes with a sketch of what I think could be a promising basis for an agonistic disposition towards others, as a kind of *hostile calm* or *calm hostility*.

Nietzsche's account of thoughtful egoism falls within his sustained project to reorient philosophical reflection on moral values from the autonomous domain claimed by morality and moral philosophy – including Kant's transcendental-normative sphere – towards their socio-physiological conditions in the body (politic), in the effort to make morality 'more substantial'. For Nietzsche the physiology developed by contemporary biologists like Roux afforded a 'manner of speaking' (*Sprechart*) that enabled him to develop his philosophy of conflict on the model of the (social) organism, and explore its implications for human existence and morality in ways that were in line with (or could be adapted to) the presuppositions of his ontology or counter-ontology of becoming: the emphasis on *processes* of self-regulation and self-organization that account for the formation of *living unities* or organisms out of the *struggle* of multiplicities at all levels: molecules, cells, tissues and organs. But in his preface to the *Anthropologie* Kant issues a challenge to this move when he excludes physiology – 'what *nature* makes of the human' – from his 'pragmatic' point of view and its focus on 'what he as a free-acting being, makes of himself, or can and ought to make of himself' (Anth VII.119). As Kant scholars tell us, Kant's statement is addressed to a number of physiologists of his time.⁴ Yet it also poses a challenge to Nietzsche's physiology. For in support of his exclusion he levels two criticisms at his contemporary physiologists, which also bear on Nietzsche's turn to physiology. The physiologist, Kant argues, cannot influence human existence: he remains 'a mere observer' and 'must let nature do the acting', because 1. his knowledge of physiology is insufficient, and 2. he doesn't know how to make use of it (*Handhabung*) for his own ends (*ibid.*). The Kantian anthropologist, by contrast, aspires to influence human existence, not just 'to know the world' by understanding the game he observes (*das Spiel verstehen*), but to 'have the world' by playing the game (*mitspielen; Welt kennen / Welt haben*: Anth VII.120). And he can do so because 'from a pragmatic point of view', anthropology is knowledge of what the human, 'as a free-acting being, makes of himself', and is addressed to the human 'as a free-acting being' by an author who plays the same game as a free, purposive agent. To whom, then, is Nietzsche to address his partial knowledge of physiology, and what are they or 'we' to make of it? The challenge for Nietzschean physiology is to bridge the chasm Kant opens up between what nature

⁴ Loudon (2008 516) and Sturm (2008 496) mention Ernst Platner, whose book *Anthropologie für Ärzte und Weltweise* was published in 1772, when Kant began his anthropology course. Others include Julien Offray La Mettrie (author of *L'homme machine*, 1747), Johann Gottlob Krüger, Charles Bonnet, Albrecht van Haller, and Georges-Louis Leclerc de Buffon.

makes of the human and what the human as a free-acting being, can make of himself. For Nietzsche, I will argue, it is a matter of *translation* – from the language of reason and moral sentiment into the language of physiology, and from the latter back into the former; a practice through which our moral terms acquire new meanings and nuances, informed by our history and long prehistory as living beings. On the question of influence, Nietzsche urges us to use the insights won in this process to influence our affects, on which our self-regulation as human animals turns.

II Kant: *ungesellige Geselligkeit*

Kant's political-historical writings can be read as attempts to negotiate the disjunction between *Sein* and *Sollen*, between what is and what ought to be. 'For it may be', he writes in KrV (A550/B578), 'that all that *has happened* in the course of nature, and in accordance with empirical laws must have happened, *ought not to have happened*'. Or to put it differently: they serve to reconcile the absence of morality in reality,⁵ the non-appearance of freedom, with the demand (indeed the *authority* of the demand) that morality and freedom be realised – to reconcile them by arguing that we have *reasonable hope* in the realisation of 'a *moral whole*' (IUH4) under cosmopolitan law. For there can be no doubt: the content of the moral law is directly opposed to the radical evil – the 'childish malice and mania for destruction' (IaG1), 'the quarrelsomeness, the spiteful competitive vanity, the insatiable desire to possess or even to dominate' (IUH4) – that human history so amply exhibits. The hope, Kant argues, is *grounded* in the claim that moral progress is inseparable from the evils of civilisation, which spring from the very conditions in our own nature that make rational insight into the moral law possible (see Wood 2015 123). These conditions are what he calls 'unsociable sociability'.

Despite his call for eternal peace, Kant shares with Nietzsche 1. the realist view that conflict is *irreducible*, or at least *deeply rooted* in human action and interaction, and 2. the view that conflict can have *valuable constructive or productive qualities*. As we have seen, conflict plays an essential role for him, no less than for Nietzsche, across various domains of his thought. Concerning the particular form of conflict he calls 'unsociable sociability' Allen Wood (2015 115) writes: 'No interpretation of Kant's views on any aspect of human psychology, sociology or history will get matters right as long as it ignores the theme of unsociable sociability'.

The notion of 'ungesellige Geselligkeit' is to be found across wide range of Kant's writings,⁶ but the expression itself occurs only once, in the Fourth Proposition of IaG. I shall therefore take my starting point and bearings from this text, which begins:

*The means nature employs in order to bring about the development of all their predispositions is their **antagonism** in society, insofar as the latter is in the end the cause of their lawful order.* Here I understand by 'antagonism' the *unsociable sociability* of human beings, i.e. their propensity to enter into society, which, however, is combined with a thoroughgoing resistance that constantly threatens to tear this society apart. The predisposition for this obviously lies in human nature. The human being has an inclination to become socialized, since in such a condition he feels himself as more a human being, i.e. feels the development of his natural predispositions. But he also has a great propensity to *singularise* (isolate) himself, because he simultaneously encounters in himself the unsociable property of willing to direct everything according to his wishes alone, and hence expects resistance everywhere because he knows of himself that he is inclined on his side toward resistance against others. Now it is this resistance that awakens all the powers of the human being, brings him to overcome his propensity to

⁵ As Nietzsche points out in note 11[303] 9.557: 'To glorify selflessness! and concede, as Kant does, that such a deed has probably never been done!'

⁶ MA VIII.120–1; RH VIII.65; KU V.429–31; VA VII.324, 328.

indolence, and, driven by ambition, tyranny and greed, to obtain for himself a rank among his fellows, whom he cannot stand, but also cannot leave alone.

Das Mittel, dessen sich die Natur bedient, die Entwicklung aller ihrer Anlagen zu Stande zu bringen, ist der **Antagonism** derselben in der Gesellschaft, so fern dieser doch am Ende die Ursache einer gesetzmäßigen Ordnung derselben wird. Ich verstehe hier unter dem Antagonism die ungesellige Geselligkeit der Menschen, d.i. den Hang derselben in Gesellschaft zu treten, der doch mit einem durchgängigen Widerstande, welcher diese Gesellschaft beständig zu trennen droht, verbunden ist. Hiezu liegt die Anlage offenbar in der menschlichen Natur. Der Mensch hat eine Neigung sich zu *vergesellschaften*: weil er in einem solchen Zustande sich mehr als Mensch, d.i. die Entwicklung seiner Naturanlagen, fühlt. Er hat aber auch einen großen Hang sich zu *vereinzeln* (*isolieren*): weil er in sich zugleich die ungesellige Eigenschaft antrifft, alles bloß nach seinem Sinne richten zu wollen, und daher allerwärts Widerstand erwartet, so wie er von sich selbst weiß, daß er seinerseits zum Widerstande gegen andere geneigt ist. Dieser Widerstand ist es nun, welcher alle Kräfte des Menschen erweckt, ihn dahin bringt seinen Hang zur Faulheit zu überwinden und, getrieben durch Ehrsucht, Herrschsucht oder Habsucht, sich einen Rang unter seinen Mitgenossen zu verschaffen, die er nicht wohl *leiden*, von denen er aber auch nicht *lassen* kann. (IaG VIII.20f.)

II.1 Unsociability and Resistance

How are we to understand the notion of ‘unsociability’? Rooted in a predisposition (*Anlage*) of human nature, it is a great propensity to *singularise or isolate* ourselves that threatens to tear society apart. The propensity to isolate ourselves is no innate misanthropy, but the consequence of our wanting to direct everything according to our own wishes alone: *alles bloß nach seinem Sinne richten zu wollen*. The word ‘bloß’ (according to our wishes *alone*) is important, since it connects unsociability with what Kant calls ‘moral egoism’ in the *Anthropology*. The egoist ‘limits all ends to himself, and sees no use in anything except that which is useful to himself’ (*welcher alle Zwecke auf sich selbst einschränkt, der keinen Nutzen worin sieht, als in dem, was ihm nützt*) (Anth §2 VII.8-9). Unsociability is, then, wanting to direct everything according to one’s wishes alone, in the sense that one’s concerns are strictly limited to one’s own selfish ends, to which everything else is subordinate as a means or not: as useful or not. But others are not just *means* (or not) for the egoist’s ends. They are often unwilling to be used by the egoist, for they too have the unsociable propensity to pursue their own ends alone. More often than not, then, others are *obstacles* to our ends, just as we are obstacles their selfish ends. This is why we have the unsociable propensity to isolate ourselves, so as to avoid the obstacles others put up to our own ends. This brings us to the question of resistance.

The concept of resistance takes two forms in IaG 4. There is first the ‘thoroughgoing resistance’ that our unsociability puts up to our sociable tendency. As a ‘resistance that constantly threatens to tear this society apart’, it is directly opposed by Kant to the ‘propensity to enter into society’ in each and every subject. Then there is resistance *between* subjects: the resistance that I expect and encounter from others when single-mindedly pursuing my own ends, just as I (would) resist them in their single-minded pursuit of their own ends. It is here that Kant locates his notion of *productive resistance* with the claim that this resistance does not just obstruct us from getting our own way, but stimulates or stirs us to try to overcome it. On the presupposition of a primordial state of indolence or passivity, and true to the primacy of pain adopted in the *Anthropology*, resistance is what ‘awakens all the powers [*Kräfte*] of the human being’. Given that, for our unsociable propensity to pursue our own ends alone, others are either *means* or *obstacles*, productive resistance means: turning an (expected) obstacle to my pursuit of my ends into a *means* that stimulates me to overcome

it and attain my ends. So how does this work? How is an *obstacle* to my agency turned into a *means* that stimulates all my powers?

One clue is given by Kant's reference to the 'powers [*Kräfte*] of the human being'. My suggestion is that Kant's notion of unsociability is inspired and underpinned by the notion of power set out in chapter 10 of Hobbes's *Leviathan: Of Power, Worth, Dignity, Honour, and Worthinesse*, and that his notion of productive resistance is an implication he draws from a close reading of that text. As is well known, Hobbes begins with a general or 'universal' definition of 'the power of man' as: 'his present means, to obtain some future apparent Good'. This, I would say, matches Kant's unsociable propensity to have everything go as we wish (*alles nach seinem Sinne richten*), i.e. pursue one's own goods or ends, where power is any means to do so. Hobbes then goes on to modify this general notion of power significantly, when he writes:

Natural power is the eminence of the faculties of body, or mind; as extraordinary strength, form, prudence, arts, eloquence, liberality, nobility. *Instrumental* are those powers which, acquired by these, or by fortune, are means and instruments to acquire more; as riches, reputation, friends, and the secret working of God, which men call good luck. For the nature of power is, in this point, like to fame, increasing as it proceeds; or like the motion of heavy bodies, which, the further they go, make still the more haste. (Hobbes *Leviathan* 10)

Here power is redefined in terms of 'eminence' or 'extra-ordinary' power; that is to say it is redefined in relative or relational terms as 'more power than'. In these lines Hobbes breaks through to the essence of human, social power, which, unlike mechanistic force, cannot be fixed and quantified, because it is intrinsically comparative and relational: more power than... The question interpreters face is how Hobbes gets from his first general definition of power to this social concept of power. The answer, as MacPherson (1962 35-40) pointed out, lies in the concept of resistance: it is because others will use their means or power to resist my effort to obtain my future 'good' or end that I need more means or power than them, so as to overcome their resistance and get what I want.⁷ This coincides precisely with Kant's concept of unsociability, who shares MacPherson's insight concerning resistance and social power, but also adds to it another, not present in MacPherson of Hobbes: that the resistance offered by others can act not just as an *obstacle* to my capacity to obtain my ends, but also as a *means* that stimulates new capacities or powers in me that enable me to overcome it and attain my ends.

Instead, Hobbes's text comes to focus on *acquired* or *instrumental powers*, in a line of thought that can also be tracked in Kant's Fourth Proposition. Even if the resistance of others does not stimulate the development of new powers or capacities in me, it does stimulate me to look for other means. And since power is just 'more power than', and since we know not the nature or sources of future resistance to our power, Hobbes can posit 'for a generall inclination of all mankind, a perpetuall and restlesse desire for Power after power, that ceaseth onely in Death' (Lev. Ch 11). Among instrumental powers he mentions riches, reputation and friends in the passage cited, and much of chapter 10 is devoted to cataloguing the various forms that instrumental power can take. Instrumental power has the peculiarity that it is not a means to an end or 'good', but a means or instrument to acquire more power, i.e. *a means to more means in abstraction from a specific end or 'good'*. Hence the desire for power after power, or what Hobbes describes as a dynamic of acceleration intrinsic to instrumental power: 'the further they go, make still the more hast'. What is clear from Hobbes's

⁷ Or as Hobbes writes explicitly in *The Elements of Law*: 'because the power of one man resisteth and hindreth the effects of the power of another: power simply is no more, but the excess of the power of one above that of another (Elements I, 8, 4).

account is that others figure as either obstacles or threats, or as means, as they do in Kant's concept of unsociability; and that instrumental power involves *using others (their power or means) as means*, so that we can speak with MacPherson (1962 37) of power as the *ability to command the services of other men*.

In Kant's text, Hobbes's instrumental power is at work in his attempt to explain the notion of resistance as stimulant, when he writes:

Now it is this resistance that awakens all the powers of the human being, brings him to overcome his propensity to indolence, and, driven by ambition, tyranny and greed [*Ehrsucht, Herrschsucht, Habsucht*], to obtain for himself a rank among his fellows, whom he cannot stand, but also cannot leave alone. (IaG 4 VIII.21)

At first sight this looks like a sociable desire for recognition, but it is not. Ambition or the craving for honour (*Ehrsucht*) is not the love of honour (*Ehrliebe*), which is a legitimate demand that one be esteemed for one's 'inner (moral) worth' (Anth § 85 VII.272). It is the striving for the reputation of honour, even where it is mere semblance.⁸ Together with tyranny or the craving to rule (*Herrschsucht*) and greed or the craving for possessions (*Habsucht*), it is one of Kant's three cultural or acquired passions (*Leidenschaften*) (Anth §81 VII.268). For Kant, passions are intelligent and purposive; they are connected with reason, since they presuppose a maxim to act according to an end prescribed to us by our inclinations. They therefore pose the most serious threat to freedom – far greater than blind and momentary affects – and are without exception evil (Anth §81 VII.267). What is striking in Kant's account is their *instrumental* character akin to Hobbesian instrumental power. The three acquired passions – for honour, power and wealth – are referred by Kant to our desire to have influence over others. The direct objects or ends of these passions – honour, power and wealth – are in fact mere means to gain influence over others through their good opinion, their fear or their self-interest, which in turn is not an end in itself, but a means to use others as means for one's own ends, whatever they be. Kant can therefore write that if one possesses honour, power or money 'one can get to every human being and use him according to one's purposes, if not by means of one of these influences, then by means of another' (Anth §84 VII.271).

Clearly, we are in the realm of Hobbes's instrumental power: using others as means to our own ends through the capacity to command their services.⁹ Unlike Hobbes, however, Kant claims that these unsociable passions have the unintended side-effect of developing new capacities and powers in us; or that resistance works (not just as an obstacle, but) as a means to 'awaken all the powers of the human being', making possible the transition from a brutish condition to culture and the social worth of humans. Indeed, our unsociability is essential for the establishment of a manner of thinking (*Denkungsart*) that can 'form society into a moral whole' under a legal order through insight into the

⁸ This echoes the importance of illusion and reputation in Hobbes's account of instrumental account of power, where the reputation for power *is* power, since (regardless of whether the reputation is warranted) it draws the adherence of others offering their power in exchange for protection.

⁹ Kant even hints at the peculiar acceleration when power, as a means to more means, gets cut off from its ends: 'It is true that here the human being becomes the dupe (the deceived) of his own inclinations, and in his use of such means he misses his final end' (Anth §84 VII.271). 'Possessing the means to whatever aims one chooses certainly extends much further than the inclination directed to one single inclination and its satisfaction. –' (Anth §82 VII.270) 'On the other hand, if the inclination is directed merely to the means and possession of the same toward satisfaction of all inclinations in general, therefore toward mere capacity, it can only be called a passion' (Anth §82 VII.269 [B version]).

principles of pure practical reason (IaG 4 VII.21).¹⁰ These are strong claims, but the Fourth Proposition has little to say by way of explaining and justifying them. We can suppose that our passions for ever more honour, power and wealth, being closely allied with purposive reasoning, develop our intellect to the point where it gains insight into the autonomy and demands of pure practical reason; but this is not stated. Kant writes of the *odium figulinum* that first appears in Hesiod: the ‘potter’s hatred’ that prompts one to toil, to which Kant adds a twist, leading back to a state of indolence: to toil so as to find means to relieve oneself of toil. He also tells us that ‘the sources of unsociability and thoroughgoing resistance [...] drive human beings to a new exertion of their powers and hence to further development of their natural predispositions’ (IaG VIII.22). But this describes, without explaining, how resistance can incite us to overcome it. We can still ask how an obstacle, instead of crushing, stopping or inhibiting us can turn into a means to rise above it.

The overall tenor of the Fourth Proposition is that, absent unsociability, human nature is inclined to inactivity, indolence, maximal comfort with minimal effort. Indeed, the opening passage is the *locus classicus* for the state of indolence or passivity, posited by Kant as a longed-for primordial condition or slumber, from which we are awakened by unsociable resistance (see p. ***). It is also fully in line with the notion of pain, adopted from Verri in the *Anthropology* and posited as the ‘spur’ of activity. Underpinning both is the essentially *reactive* concept of power that Kant takes from Hobbes, both here and in ZeF (see p. ***). As Paul Patton (2001 153) has shown, Hobbesian power is governed by the telos of self-preservation, because it presupposes an external threat; it is exercised from a position of weakness or lack (of security, of a future good) in relation to external power(s) and can only act by reacting to the latter. While Hobbes’s relational-differential concept of power as more-power-than is shared by Nietzsche (power as ‘a plus of power’), the presuppositions of Nietzsche’s concept of power could not be further from Hobbes’s. It is not reactive, but active and presupposes excess, rather than lack; power is defined with reference to process (expending energy) or activity (extending or increasing power), rather than goals (self-preservation). And the activity of increasing power can only be an *overpowering*, because power-as-activity can only act *in relation to* the resistance offered by other counter-powers, which it therefore seeks out.

II.2 Sociability and Resistance

I turn now to what has so far been bracketed out of the discussion of the Fourth Proposition: the notion of sociability, and the first form of resistance mentioned there: the ‘thoroughgoing resistance’ that our unsociability puts up to our sociable tendency. How are we to understand the opposition between unsociability and the ‘resistance that constantly threatens to tear this society apart’, and our ‘propensity to enter into society’?

Kant scholars typically refer to the passage on the original predisposition towards the good in human nature from Kant’s *Religion* text (RGV VI.27) for guidance. Kant breaks our disposition towards the good down into three: our disposition towards animality, towards humanity and towards personality. Our disposition towards animality is named a ‘merely mechanical self-love’ and involves three pre-rational instincts: for self-preservation, reproduction and society with others. Our sociability is, then, located at the pre-rational or instinctual level.¹¹ Our disposition towards humanity, by

¹⁰ ‘[...] thus all talents come bit by bit to be developed, taste is formed, and even, through progress in enlightenment, a beginning is made toward the foundation of a mode of thought which can with time transform the rude natural predisposition to make moral distinctions into determinate practical principles and hence transform a pathologically compelled agreement to form a society finally into a moral whole.’

¹¹ This departs markedly from Rousseau. In the Preface to the *Discourse on the Origins of Inequality*, he identifies two principles prior to reason in the human soul, self-preservation and pity, and seeks to derive the ‘rules of

contrast, depends upon reason: means-ends and comparative thinking on the part of purposive beings. It is placed under the heading of 'comparative self-love', and is our predisposition to pursue happiness, where happiness is judged only in comparison with others.

From this stems the inclination *to obtain a worth in the opinion of others*; indeed originally only the worth of *equality*: to allow no one superiority, bound up with a constant worry that that others would like to strive after that; from which eventually an unjust desire arises to gain superiority over others. (RGV VI.27)¹²

Note how even the desire to be recognised as equal has negative sources in Kant's reactive concept of power: in the desire not to allow others superiority over us and the worry that this is what they would like. Unsociability, in the form of jealousy, competitiveness and hostility, is just a rational development of these sources, described in terms that repeat the logic of Hobbes's second cause for war in *Leviathan* chapter 13, the war for security out of diffidence:¹³ They are

[...] inclinations, in the face of the anxious endeavours of others at a hateful superiority over us, to procure it [superiority] over them as a preventative measure for the sake of security [...] (RGV VI.27)¹⁴

In this text, then, unsociability is focused on the conflictual striving for superior standing over others and concomitant anxieties. It is important for Kant that it is not simply a consequence of our animal instincts, but *socially conditioned*, and that it depends on *purposive reasoning*. To blame our instincts would be to exculpate us from responsibility for our unsociable behaviour and for curbing it. Only if we are freely choosing to act on a maxim to follow our inclinations can we be held morally responsible for our unsociability. Even if '[u]nsociable sociability is nature's way of developing our rational predisposition both to humanity and to personality' (Wood 2005 115),¹⁵ unsociability is evil for Kant and ultimately we are obliged to curb it.

In consideration of these sources of unsociability in social relations and our rational predispositions, scholars view it as an *internal feature or modification* of our sociability. In a sense this

natural right' from a combination of these principles 'without the need for introducing that of sociability.' (Rousseau 1987 35).

¹² 'Von ihr rührt die Neigung her, sich in der Meinung Anderer einen Werth zu verschaffen; und zwar ursprünglich bloß den der Gleichheit: keinem über sich Überlegenheit zu verstatten, mit einer beständigen Besorgniß verbunden, daß Andere darnach streben möchten; woraus nachgerade eine ungerechte Begierde entspringt, sie sich über Andere zu erwerben.'

¹³ 'And from this diffidence of one another, there is no way for any man to secure himself so reasonable as anticipation; that is, by force, or wiles, to master the persons of all men he can so long till he see no other power great enough to endanger him: and this is no more than his own conservation requireth, and is generally allowed. Also, because there be some that, taking pleasure in contemplating their own power in the acts of conquest, which they pursue farther than their security requires, if others, that otherwise would be glad to be at ease within modest bounds, should not by invasion increase their power, they would not be able, long time, by standing only on their defence, to subsist. And by consequence, such augmentation of dominion over men being necessary to a man's conservation, it ought to be allowed him.' (Hobbes *Leviathan* chapter 13)

¹⁴ '[...] bei der besorgten Bewerbung Anderer zu einer uns verhaßten Überlegenheit über uns Neigungen sind, sich der Sicherheit halber diese über Andere als Vorbauungsmittel selbst zu verschaffen [...]'

¹⁵ The predisposition to personality is the third predisposition to the good in human nature, encompassing reason and moral responsibility.

is obvious. After all, unsociability is predicated of sociability. But there are a number of problems with this picture. Let me focus on two:¹⁶

1. In the Fourth Proposition, unsociability is not focused on self-worth and our striving for superior standing, but on our passions for honour, dominance and wealth. The latter are not means for gaining superior standing over others through their opinion, their fear or their self-interest.¹⁷ As the *Anthropology* shows, the standing (*Rang*) we gain through honour, dominance and wealth is itself a means to gain influence over others, so as to be able to use them as means to our ends, whatever they may be. The focus on self-worth and superior standing misses Kant's focus on the thoroughly instrumental character of our passions and the moral problem it raises: using others as means to our own selfish ends, so that we can have it all our own way (*alles bloss nach seinem Sinne richten*).

2. It is, Kant argues in the Fourth Proposition, because others act as obstacles to our own ends that we have a 'great propensity to singularise ourselves (isolate ourselves)' so as to get what we want without their interference. This can hardly be viewed as an internal feature or modification of our sociability. It is anti-social through and through, and Kant opposes it quite explicitly to our 'propensity to enter into society'. It is because our unsociability puts up a 'thoroughgoing resistance' to our sociability that it 'constantly threatens to tear this society apart'.

In IaG, then, our unsociability is *external* to our sociability, and their relation is one of *antagonism* or *tension*. Readings that draw on Kant's *Religion* text get this wrong, because their relation in that text is significantly different. We do much better, I suggest, if we consider a passage from the 1766 text: *Dreams of a Spirit Seer illustrated by Dreams of Metaphysics*, when Kant writes:

Among the forces that move the human heart, some of the most powerful seem to lie outside it [the heart], those namely which do not, as mere means relate to one's own self-interest and private needs as a goal that lies *within* the human being; but rather which make it that the tendencies of our impulses displace the focal point of their convergence *outside* us in other rational beings; from which a conflict of two forces arises, namely of singularity [ownness], which relates everything to itself, and of common interest, through which the soul is driven or drawn towards others outside itself [...]

Unter den Kräften, die das menschliche Herz bewegen, scheinen einige der mächtigsten außerhalb demselben zu liegen, die also nicht etwa als bloße Mittel sich auf die Eigennützigkeit und Privatbedürfnis als auf ein Ziel, das innerhalb dem Menschen selbst liegt, beziehen, sondern welche machen, daß die Tendenzen unserer Regungen den Brennpunkt ihrer Vereinigung außer uns in andere vernünftige Wesen versetzen; woraus ein Streit zweier Kräfte entspringt, nämlich der Eigenheit, die alles auf sich bezieht, und der

¹⁶ Two further considerations are:

3. There is no reason why unsociability cannot also be located at the level of our animal instincts (self-preservation, reproduction and sociability). It is clear that, being weak creatures, we join society out of fear for our self-preservation. But self-preservation can also override social goods, creating a tension or conflict between our instincts for self-preservation and for association with others.

4. Kant says little about our instinct for sociability, and scholars are hard pressed to mine his works for the little he says about love, sympathy and friendship. The account in the Fourth Proposition of IaG itself is vague and psychologically underdetermined: it is because in society we feel ourselves 'more as human beings, that is the development of our natural predispositions'. Whatever this means, it sounds more like a consequence of our predisposition to *humanity*, than a consequence of our animal instincts.

¹⁷ See Wood (2005 118): 'Specifically, social passions represent to us the acquisition of honor, power, and wealth as means of gaining superiority over others, through (respectively) their opinion, their fear, or their interest (VA 7:271).' In my view, this correct of RGV, but not of IaG 4 or Anth.

Gemeinnützigkeit, dadurch das Gemüth gegen andere außer sich getrieben oder gezogen wird. [...] (TG II.334)¹⁸

This passage captures several features of unsociability in IaG 4. First, the means-end thinking that refers all utility to what is useful to oneself, treating others as mere means to ends that are limited to oneself and one's a-social or private needs. Secondly, as in IaG 4, sociability is *opposed* to sociability and *external* to it in the precise sense that it displaces the end or 'focus' of our (sociable) impulses 'outside us' in others and in the common good. And thirdly, TG describes the opposition between sociable and unsociable propensities in dynamic terms as a relation of tension or antagonism. Indeed, the expression used in this text – the 'Streit zweier Kräfte' or 'conflict of two forces' – is the same expression used three years earlier to describe the concept of real contradiction or 'Realrepugnanz' in *Negative Magnitudes* (1763).¹⁹ Perhaps the most pertinent example of real opposition for us concerns impenetrability (see p. ***). The impenetrability of a body can only be explained if we presuppose an inner force of repulsion that resists the force attracting other bodies, so that a body occupies space by virtue of a balance between conflicting forces: a 'Conflictus zweier Kräfte, die einander entgegengesetzt sind' (NG II.179). Thus, repulsion, although a 'true force' of repulsion or *Zurückstoßung*, can also be called negative attraction: *negative Anziehung*, to indicate that it is a *positive* ground that resists the force of attraction.²⁰ It is by analogy with this example of real opposition that Kant presents unsociable sociability in the *Dreams* essay with his talk of the conflict of two forces ('Streit zweier Kräfte'), that of singularity (ownness: *Eigenheit*), which relates everything to oneself, and that of common interest (*Gemeinnützigkeit*) which drives or attracts the soul towards others. This model gives a *dynamic* character to unsociable sociability: as a continuous and never-ending conflict between active forces in us that move us to use others (external forces) as means to our own good, and external forces in others that move (drive or attract) us to consider the good of others or the common good. It is only on this model, I submit: *the real opposition or conflict between a 'force' or concern for our own good, and a force or concern for the common interest, that we can*

¹⁸ See also: 'Wenn wir äußere Dinge auf unser Bedürfniß beziehen, so können wir dieses nicht thun, ohne uns zugleich durch eine gewisse Empfindung gebunden und eingeschränkt zu fühlen, die uns merken läßt, daß in uns gleichsam ein fremder Wille wirksam sei, und unser eigen Belieben die Bedingung von äußerer Beistimmung nöthig habe. Eine geheime Macht nöthigt uns unsere Absicht zugleich auf anderer Wohl oder nach fremder Willkür zu richten, ob dieses gleich öfters ungern geschieht und der eigennütigen Neigung stark widerstreitet, und der Punkt, wohin die Richtungslinien unserer Triebe zusammenlaufen, ist also nicht bloß in uns, sondern es sind noch Kräfte, die uns bewegen, in dem Wollen anderer außer uns. Daher entspringen die sittlichen Antriebe, die uns oft wider den Dank des Eigennutzes fortreißen, das starke Gesetz der Schuldigkeit und das schwächere der Gütigkeit, deren jedes uns manche Aufopferung abdringt, und obgleich beide dann und wann durch eigennütige Neigungen überwogen werden, doch nirgend in der menschlichen Natur ermangeln, ihre Wirklichkeit zu äußern.' (TG II.334-5)

¹⁹ In NG Kant uses the expression 'Streit zweier einander aufhaltenden Bewegkräfte' (recalling the 'Streit zweier Kräfte' used for unsociable sociability in the *Dreams* essay) for the state of rest when it is a consequence of 'two effective causes, of which one which cancels [*aufhebt*] the consequence of the other [i.e. motion] through real opposition' (NG II.184).

²⁰ 'Die Ursache der Undurchdringlichkeit ist demnach eine wahre Kraft, denn sie thut dasselbe, was eine wahre Kraft thut. [...] so ist die Undurchdringlichkeit eine negative Anziehung. Dadurch wird alsdann angezeigt, daß sie ein eben so positiver Grund sei als eine jede andere Bewegkraft in der Natur [...]' (NG II.180).

understand the ‘thoroughgoing resistance’ that our unsociability puts up towards our sociability in the Fourth Proposition of IaG.²¹

III Nietzsche on fine, well-planned, thoughtful egoism

With the conflict between an exclusive concern for one’s own good and a concern for the common good, Kant’s unsociable sociability makes contact with Nietzsche’s thought. In this section, I concentrate on the *Nachlass* of 1881 (the period of M / FW), where Nietzsche inaugurates his turn to the body and the project of a philosophical physiology. In this context, he develops a *socio-physiological prehistory of the individual* and the *historical emergence of the first individuals*, modelled on his concept of the organism and organismic life-processes. It involves a speculative narrative of our long prehistory as organs of the social organism, which then undergo a difficult and painful transition into the self-regulating organisms that we take for individuals (11[128] 9). This narrative serves both critical and constructive ends: to generate a *critical diagnosis* of the malaise of modern individuals, as a condition of bondage, and *constructive guidelines* for overcoming this condition and realising individual sovereignty. So, although this project is worked out in polemical opposition to Kant (as well as Spinoza and Spencer), we can say that, like Kant’s historical-political writings, it is a response to the *non-appearance of freedom* in history and the *demand that freedom be realised*; a very different response, of course, in approach and normative orientation. As such it is the constructive pendant or counterpart to Nietzsche’s physiological destruction of Kantian freedom set out in chapter 3.

Nietzsche’s socio-physiology is part of his sustained effort to naturalise morality. For Nietzsche this means *first* a *critical-theoretical* project to collapse the normative domain onto the plane of immanence by translating moral values from the language of reason and morality back into back into their ‘natural “immorality”’²² and the physiological language of life-processes and life-forms. But it also involves *secondly* the *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. In this sense Nietzsche’s socio-physiology represents one articulation of his life-long commitment to life-affirmation and -enhancement. And it culminates in a naturalistic ideal of autonomous self-determination that revolves around a ‘thoughtful egoism’ informed by physiological self-knowledge and knowledge of others; that is, knowledge of one’s needs as a living being and one’s life-processes as a self-regulating organism, as well as those of others.

In these notes, Nietzsche works mainly with a model of the organism derived from the evolutionary biologist Wilhelm Roux.²³ On this view, any form of life must perform certain processes

²¹ Saner (1967 20f.) takes the analogy all the way to the conflict of attractive and repulsive forces within and between monads in Kant’s early metaphysics.

²² ‘[M]y task is to translate the apparently emancipated moral values that have become *nature-less* back into their nature — i.e. , into their natural “immorality”’ ([M]eine Aufgabe ist, die scheinbar emancipirten und naturlos gewordenen Moralwerthe in ihre Natur zurückzuübersetzen — d.h. in ihre natürliche “Immoralität”’: 9[86] 12).

²³ These notes attest to Nietzsche’s first encounter with Roux’s *Kampf der Theile im Organismus: Ein Beitrag zur Vervollständigung der mechanischen Zweckmässigkeitslehre* (1881), to which returned in 1883 and 1884. See Müller-Lauter 1999 163 (also Müller-Lauter 1978) and Pearson 2018 306-342. Nietzsche was first drawn to Roux by two key moves he made: 1) to extend Darwinian evolutionary struggle *between* organisms to the relations *within* the organism; and 2) to displace teleological accounts of the inner purposiveness of organisms with non-teleological, mechanistic causation, as the explanans of organisational struggle or conflict at all levels: molecules, cells, tissues and organs. Over time, Nietzsche comes to criticise and reject Roux’s account for relying on covert teleological principles: survival of the organism, the struggle for nutrition, and overcompensation for energetic loss. In their place, Nietzsche develops the dynamic of power and overpowering, based on excess (rather than

that enable it to regulate itself and so meet its conditions of existence. For Nietzsche, this does not mean self-preservation through the calculus of compensation for energetic loss, but a *non-teleological dynamic of over-compensation, accumulation, boundless growth and reproduction*. As the basic process in all organic life, Nietzsche takes assimilation, appropriation or incorporation (*Habsucht, Aneignungslust, Assimilation an sich, Einverleiben*) within a dynamic of overcompensation (*überreichlicher Ersatz*).²⁴ Other essential life-processes discussed by him include excretion or secretion, transformation, regeneration and metabolism.

The first phase of Nietzsche's story concerns our long prehistory as members of tightly knit social groups, what the GM calls 'those immense periods of the "morality of mores"[...] that precede "world history"', 'the real and decisive principal history, which fixed the character of humanity' (GM II 2). In this phase the organismic model is applied by Nietzsche not to individual humans or proto-humans, but to the social group, so that humans are but organs of a larger, self-regulating social organism to which they belong ('society' / 'the state'). As organs, their actions and impulses are determined by the needs and interests of the organism to which they belong: they feel the '*affects of society towards [gegen] other societies and single beings [...] and not as individuals;*' there are *only* public enemies. But as an organ, the human being also assimilates or incorporates the interests, needs, the 'experiences and judgements' of the organism, so that later 'when the ties of society break down,' it can use them to reorganise itself into an independent, self-regulating organism.

The second phase begins with the emergence of the first experimental individuals or *Versuchs-Individuen*, as the bonds of society weaken. On Nietzsche's organismic model, the emergence of individuals requires that organs in the service of the social organism learn to become independent organisms. This means that the affects, experiences and judgements of the social organism they have incorporated as organs in its service must be re-oriented towards their own conditions of existence as independent organisms, rather than organs of a larger whole; a process described as a painful and difficult '*reordering, and assimilation and excretion of drives.*'

The times when they emerge are those of de-moralisation [*Entsittlichung*], of so-called corruption, that is, all drives now want to go it alone and, since they have not until now *adapted* to that personal utility [i.e. the vital interests of the individual - HS], they destroy the

loss or lack) and an economy of expenditure (rather than compensation / overcompensation for loss). He also rejects Roux's mechanistic causation as insufficient to explain self-regulation as a function of power relations, in favour of commanding and obeying (Müller-Lauter 1978, 209ff.). But as Pearson (2018 318, 306-341) has shown, the processes assimilation or incorporation (*Einverleibung*) and excretion, first gleaned from his reading of Roux, remain central to the will to power, albeit on these different terms. In the 1881 notes to be discussed in this chapter, Nietzsche's criticisms do not appear yet, but he seems to appropriate Roux in ways that prefigure key elements of the will to power: accumulation, boundless growth through assimilation, the craving for power, commanding, and expenditure.

²⁴ E.g. '[...] 2) overcompensation: in the form of *acquisitiveness* the pleasure of appropriation the craving for power / 3) assimilation to oneself: in the form of praise reproach making others dependent on oneself, to that end deception cunning, learning, habituation, commanding incorporating [*Einverleiben*] judgements and experiences [...].'

"[...] 2) überreichlicher Ersatz: in der Form von Habsucht
Aneignungslust Machtgelüst
3) Assimilation an sich: in der Form von Loben Tadeln
Abhängigmachen Anderer von sich, dazu Verstellung
List, Lernen, Gewöhnung, Befehlen Einverleiben von
Urtheilen und Erfahrungen [...]" (11[182] 9.509).

individual through excess [*Übermaß*]. Or they lacerate it in their struggle [*Kämpfe*] with one another. (11[182] 9.511f.)²⁵

The destructive conflict of drives unleashed by the emancipation of the first individuals from bondage to the social organism has one of three likely results: 1) One drive gains absolute supremacy over the others and a unified individual is attained, but one that is dominated by one excessive drive and the interests of that drive, rather than the entire organism; the individual perishes. Alternatively 2) in the conflict of drives, those functions that have long-served the social organism gain ascendancy over others that serve the new emerging organism, with the result that it cannot meet its conditions of life as a new unity and perishes:

In the one who wants to become free, those functions with which he (or his forefathers) served society inevitably predominate in strength: these pre-eminent functions guide and further or limit the rest – but he needs *all of them* in order to *live* as an organism himself, they are *conditions of life!* (11[182] 9.488)²⁶

Or 3) the conflict of drives remains unresolved and the organ fails to attain the unity of an individual organism altogether. The problem for the emerging individual is, then, *how to attain unity*, and on Nietzsche's organismic model this means: *the unity of a viable organism able to meet its conditions of life by means of self-regulation*, so that he can write:

Self-regulation does not just happen of its own accord. Indeed, all in all, the human is a being that necessarily goes to ground, because it has not yet attained it. (11[130] 9)²⁷

The conflict of the drives moves the first moral philosophers to save the individual by commending a reactionary path of bondage:

The ethicists [*Ethiker*] then come forward and seek to show human beings how they can still live without suffering so from themselves – mostly by commending to them the *old conditioned way of life* under the yoke of society, only that in place of society it is [the yoke of] a concept – they are *reactionaries*. But they *preserve* many, even if they do so by recurring back to bondage [*Gebundheit*]. Their claim is that there is an *eternal moral law* [ewiges Sittengesetz]; they will not acknowledge the individual law [*das individuelle Gesetz*] and call the effort to attain it immoral and destructive. – (11[182] KSA 9.512)²⁸

²⁵ 'Die Zeiten, wo sie entstehen, sind die der Entsittlichung, der sogenannten Corruption d.h. alle Triebe wollen sich jetzt persönlich versuchen und nicht bis dahin jenem persönlichen Nutzen angepaßt zerstören sie das Individuum durch Übermaß. Oder sie zerfleischen es, in ihrem Kampfe mit einander.'

²⁶ 'Unvermeidlich überwiegen bei einem, der frei werden will, die Funktionen an Kraft, mit denen er (oder seine Vorfahren) der Gesellschaft gedient haben: diese hervorragenden Funktionen lenken und fördern oder beschränken die übrigen – aber alle hat er nöthig, um als Organism selber zu leben, es sind Lebensbedingungen!'

²⁷ 'Die Selbstregulirung ist nicht mit Einem Male da. Ja, im Ganzen ist der Mensch ein Wesen, welches nothwendig zu Grunde geht, weil es sie noch nicht erreicht hat.'

²⁸ 'Die Ethiker treten dann auf und suchen dem Menschen zu zeigen, wie er doch leben könne, ohne so an sich zu leiden – meistens, indem sie ihm die alte bedingte Lebensweise unter dem Joche der Gesellschaft anempfehlen, nur so daß an Stelle der Gesellschaft ein Begriff tritt – es sind Reactionäre. Aber sie erhalten Viele, wenn gleich durch Zurückführung in die Gebundenheit. Ihre Behauptung ist, es gebe ein ewiges

The individual is hereby saved and saved from suffering, but *not* its sovereignty. The ethos of self-subjection to the concept of the moral law enables the nascent individual to impose measure and peace among its drives, but it does so at the cost of bondage and conformism. The achievement of the first moral philosophers or ‘wise men’ was to exploit the predominance of the social drives (2. above) and to teach the nascent individuals how to thrive as individuals in bondage to society and social goods (‘to demonstrate the old morality as agreeable and useful *for the singular being* [den Einzelnen]: 11[189] 9.516); that is, how to achieve viable unity, not as autonomous organisms, but as individual organs of society.

III.1 Nietzsche’s critical diagnosis of the modern subject

According to Nietzsche, this reactionary strategy has had enormous consequences. It inaugurates the history of the ‘herd-animals and social plants’ (11[130] 9.488) that have come to dominate in modernity. Nietzsche’s socio-physiological analysis allows him to draw three consequences for his diagnosis of the malaise of modern individuals:

1. The first consequence is the *continued predominance of social drives in their conflict with individual drives*. As modern individuals, we are more concerned with the well-being of our group or society than with our own being and well-being (11[130] 9.487 f.).²⁹ The predominance of what Nietzsche’s variously calls our ‘herd feelings’, ‘herd-drives’, ‘herd-forming affects’ or ‘function-feeling’ (‘Heerden-Gefühle’, ‘Heerdentriebe’, ‘heerdenbildenden Affekte’ or ‘Funktionsgefühl’) derives from the sheer weight of time that we spent as organs of the social organism, and it serves Nietzsche to reinterpret some prevailing moral and social phenomena today and to explain their prevalence. These include:

* Our desire for recognition, encapsulated in the value of ‘honour’, unmasked by Nietzsche as vanity.
* The ease with which fall for patriotism, patriotic hatred and wars, and our willingness to sacrifice ourselves for family, church, political parties and other socio-political groupings.³⁰ What Nietzsche’s analysis highlights is not our altruism, nor the freedoms of the modern subject, but the patterns of conformism, piety and self-subordination (on the model of the nascent individual’s self-subordination to the moral law). Indeed, according to Nietzsche, one of modernity’s discoveries is that the structure of self-subjection (for Foucault: subjectification) is so ‘natural’ or effective that political and social power need not be imposed by coercive means.³¹

Sittengesetz; sie wollen das individuelle Gesetz nicht anerkennen und nennen das Streben dahin unsittlich und zerstörerisch. —’.

²⁹ ‘Our drives and passions have been cultivated over immense stretches of time in social and family groups (previously in ape-troupes): hence as social drives and passions, they are stronger than individual [drives and passions], even still day.’ (‘Unsere Triebe und Leidenschaften sind ungeheure Zeiträume hindurch in Gesellschafts- und Geschlechtsverbänden gezüchtet worden (vorher wohl in Affen-Heerden): so sind sie als sociale Triebe und Leidenschaften stärker als individuelle, auch jetzt noch.’)

³⁰ ‘Man haßt mehr, plötzlicher, unschuldiger (Unschuld ist den ältest vererbten Gefühlen zu eigen) als Patriot als als Individuum; man opfert schneller sich für die Familie als für sich: oder für eine Kirche, Partei. Ehre ist das stärkste Gefühl für Viele d.h. ihre Schätzung ihrer selber ordnet sich der Schätzung Anderer unter und begehrt von dort seine Sanktion. – Dieser nicht individuelle Egoismus ist das Ältere, Ursprünglichere; daher so viel Unterordnung, Pietät (wie bei den Chinesen) Gedankenlosigkeit über das eigene Wesen und Wohl, es liegt das Wohl der Gruppe uns mehr am Herzen. Daher die Leichtigkeit der Kriege: hier fällt der Mensch in sein älteres Wesen zurück.—’ (11[130] 9).

³¹ We see ‘that the propensity towards the herd is so great that it always breaks through against all freedoms of thought! There is only very rarely an ego! The demand for the state, for social establishments, churches etc. has not diminished. vide the wars! And the “nations”!’ ([...] daß der Hang zur Heerde so groß ist, daß er immer

2. The second consequence is that, due to the predominance of our social drives over individual drives, *egoism is very weak in modernity*; indeed, that *as modern individuals, we have yet to attain egoism*. The thesis in the notes on socio-physiology is that we are still governed by the group-oriented or social drives cultivated and fixed in the course of our prehistory and think of our selves as functions of a greater whole, rather than autonomous living beings.

Egoism is still incredibly weak! The effects of *herd-forming affects* are so-called [egoistic] very inaccurately: one is greedy and amasses a fortune (family tribe drive), another is promiscuous, another vain (measuring oneself by the standard of the herd), one speaks of the egoism of the conqueror, the statesman etc. – they think only of themselves, but of their “self” insofar as the ego has been developed by the herd-forming affects. Egoism of mothers, of teachers. (11[226] 9.528)³²

Vices that we normally perceive and condemn as forms of egoism are unmasked by Nietzsche as multiple effects of our social drives or ‘herd-forming affects’: greed (as the wish to enrich our family or tribe); promiscuity (as the wish to propagate our family or tribe); and vanity (as the wish for recognition from family or group).

– Even in the awakened individual the primordial legacy of herd feelings still predominates and is associated with good conscience. (11[185] 9.514)³³

None of this is to deny that they represent a form of egoism. Rather, ever since the first moral philosophers, we know how to maintain a viable unity as individuals; only we act, not as autonomous beings, but as *individual organs or functions of our social group*, so that Nietzsche can write that statesmen and conquerors ‘think only of themselves’, but only because their “selves” or ego’s have been thoroughly permeated by the ‘herd-building affects’. Nietzsche distinguishes sharply between this *functional or non-individual egoism (nicht individuelle Egoismus)* and *individual egoism* concerned with the individual’s being and well-being:

– This non-individual egoism is the older, the more originary; hence so much subordination, piety (as with the Chinese) thoughtlessness about one’s own being and well-being, the well-being of the group is closer to our hearts. (11[130] 9.488)³⁴

wieder durchbricht, gegen alle Freiheiten des Gedankens! Es giebt eben noch sehr selten ein ego! Das Verlangen nach Staat, socialen Gründungen, Kirchen usw. ist nicht schwächer geworden. vide die Kriege! Und die "Nationen"! (11[185] 9).

³² ‘Der **Egoismus** ist noch unendlich schwach! Man nennt so die Wirkungen der heerdenbildenden Affekte, sehr ungenau: Einer ist habgierig und häuft Vermögen (Trieb der Familie des Stammes), ein Anderer ist ausschweifend in Venere, ein Anderer eitel (Taxation seiner selbst nach dem Maaßstabe der Heerde), man spricht vom Egoismus des Eroberers, des Staatsmanns usw. – sie denken nur an sich, aber an "sich", soweit das ego durch den heerdenbildenden Affekt entwickelt ist. Egoismus der Mütter, der Lehrer.’ (11[226] 9.528)

³³ ‘ – Auch im erwachten Individuum ist der Urbestand der Heerdengefühle noch übermächtig und mit dem guten Gewissen verknüpft.’

³⁴ ‘ – Dieser nicht individuelle Egoismus ist das Ältere, Ursprünglichere; daher so viel Unterordnung, Pietät (wie bei den Chinesen) Gedankenlosigkeit über das eigene Wesen und Wohl, es liegt das Wohl der Gruppe uns mehr am Herzen.’

Nowhere is this functional egoism (*Funktionsegoismus*) spelled out more clearly than in a note where Nietzsche describes it as a 'precursor' or 'preceding stage' (*Vorstufe*) to (real, individual) egoism:

It is the *stage before* egoism, not opposed to it: the human being *is* really not yet [longer] individual and ego; he still feels *his* existence most and best justified as a function of the whole. That is why he allows himself to be ordered by parents teachers castes princes, so as to attain a kind of **self-respect** [...] Obedience duty appears to him as "morality", that is, he *pays homage* to his herd-drives by setting them up as *onerous virtues*. – (11[185] 9.513)³⁵

Our ready compliance with the powers that be, which we dress up as moral duties and virtues, is unmasked by Nietzsche as a way for us to gain 'self-respect' by paying homage to the 'herd-drives' that dominate us as individual functions of a social whole. This is one of Nietzsche's key objections to Spinoza, another well-known advocate of egoism, whose notion of *conatus* is dismissed by Nietzsche as a primitive form of egoism or 'proto-egoism':

[...] *My counter-position: proto-egoism [Voregoismus], herd-drives are older than "wanting-to-preserve-oneself". The human being is first developed as a function [Funktion]: later on the individual breaks loose from it insofar as it has, as a function, come to know and gradually incorporated [sich einverleibt] countless conditions for the whole, the organism. (11[193] 9.518)*³⁶

The assumption that humans, like everything in nature, strive to preserve themselves ignores the predominance of our social drives, fixed in our prehistory, reinforced by ruling powers throughout history and justified by the philosophers, who have taught us to think of the self as a social function, not an autonomous living being (11[303] 9.557). What Nietzsche calls 'proto-egoism' (*Voregoismus*) is the 'prejudice' (*Vorurteil*) that we already know ourselves without the need for research:

The prejudice prevails, one knows the ego, it does not fail to assert itself continually: but hardly any work or intelligence is expended on it – as if we were exempted from research for self-knowledge through an intuition! (11[226] 9.528)³⁷

³⁵ 'Der Egoismus ist etwas Spätes und immer noch Seltenes: die Heerden-Gefühle sind mächtiger und älter. Z.B. noch immer schätzt sich der Mensch so hoch als die Anderen ihn schätzen (Eitelkeit) Er faßt sich gar nicht als etwas Neues in's Auge, sondern strebt sich die Meinungen der Herrschenden anzueignen, ebenfalls erzieht er seine Kinder dazu. Es ist die *Vorstufe* des Egoismus, kein Gegensatz dazu: der Mensch ist wirklich noch nicht mehr Individuum und ego; als Funktion des Ganzen fühlt er seine Existenz noch am höchsten und am meisten gerechtfertigt. Deshalb läßt er über sich verfügen, durch Eltern Lehrer Kasten Fürsten, um zu einer Art **Selbstachtung** zu kommen [...] Gehorsam Pflicht erscheint ihm als "die Moral" d.h. er verherrlicht seine Heerdentriebe, indem er sie als schwere Tugenden hinstellt. –'

³⁶ 'Dagegen ich: Voregoismus, Heerdentrieb sind älter als das "Sich-selbst-erhalten-wollen". Erst wird der Mensch als Funktion entwickelt: daraus löst sich später wieder das Individuum, indem es als Funktion unzählige Bedingungen des Ganzen, des Organismus, **kennen gelernt** und allmählich sich einverleibt hat.' This is an excerpt from a long note on Spinoza containing several criticisms, which will be touched on in the course of this chapter.

³⁷ 'Es herrscht das Vorurtheil, man kenne das ego, es verfehle nicht, sich fortwährend zu regen: aber es wird fast gar keine Arbeit und Intelligenz darauf verwandt – als ob wir für die Selbsterkenntniß durch eine Intuition der Forschung überhoben wären!'

This criticism applies as much to Spencer and to contract theorists like Hobbes and Locke, for whom self-preservation is both a fact (an anthropological given) and a norm (Hobbes's Right to Everything; Locke's Law of Nature). We have not even begun to think in a fine, well-planned and thoughtful way about our selves.

3. In the third place, Nietzsche's socio-physiological history of the self *unmasks the prevailing morality of altruism*³⁸ *as a form or proto-form of egoism, where the ego or self is taken to be (not an autonomous being, but) a function of a social whole.* At stake in 'altruistic' or 'un-egoistic' actions, like all our actions, is our 'feeling of power' and continued existence as individuals. Under the continued influence of our pre-historical *Funktionsgefühl* we gain our individual feeling of power, whether as patriots, soldiers, princes or mothers, by putting others (the nation, the people, the child) before ourselves in our actions. In truth, 'altruistic' actions like these, far from being self-sacrificial, are the condition for us to continue existing as the patriots, princes or mothers that we are; that is, as individual functions.³⁹

According to Nietzsche's socio-physiology, then, altruism is not opposed to egoism, but the dominant form of egoism in a social order where the ego is identified with a social function or role: altruistic actions are conditions of existence (*Existenzbedingungen*) for individuals who *are* their social role or function. We put dependents first, since their dependency is the condition for our continued existence as the function that we are; and we strive for our individual feeling of power by having our status as a function recognised by others. *Altruism is the self-assertion (Selbstbehauptung) of the individual qua organ through the exercise of its function and the desire for recognition as a function.*

³⁸ One of Nietzsche's main polemical targets in these notes is the prevailing morality of 'altruism', especially Spencer's variety, which he thinks promotes a *loss of individuality and diversity*, a levelling assimilation of all to all, by subordinating the individual to the 'Zwecke der Gattung' (11[46] 9; cf. 11[40] 9): the purposes or interest of the species. Against this, Nietzsche advances 'a new praxis' (11[63] 9.464f.) that would make possible 'as many changing, diverse organisms as possible, which drop fruits that have come to their ripeness and decomposition [*möglichst viele wechselnde verschiedenartige Organismen, die zu ihrer Reife und Fäulniß gekommen ihr Frucht fallen lassen*]' (11[222] 9), or what he also calls 'the ever enduring dissimilarity and most possible sovereignty of the singular being [*die immer bleibende Unähnlichkeit und möglichste Souveränität des Einzelnen*]' (11[40] 9).

³⁹ 'Gehorsam Funktionsgefühl Schwächegefühl haben den Werth "des **Unegoistischen**" aufgebracht [...] Auch unsere Zustände wollen Sklaverei, und das Individuum soll gehemmt werden – daher Cultur des Altruismus. In Wahrheit handelt man "unegoistisch", weil es die Bedingung ist, unter der allein man noch fortexistirt d.h. man denkt an die Existenz des Anderen gewohnheitsmäßig eher als an die eigene (z.B. der Fürst an das Volk, die Mutter an das Kind) weil sonst der Fürst nicht als Fürst, die Mutter nicht als Mutter existiren könnte: sie wollen die Erhaltung ihres Machtgefühls, wenn es auch die beständige Aufmerksamkeit und zahllose Selbstopferung zu Gunsten der Abhängigen fordert: oder, in anderen Fällen, zu Gunsten der Mächtigen, wenn unsere Existenz (Wohlgefühl, z.B. im Dienste eines Genies usw.) nur so behauptet wird.' (11[199] 9.521).

At the limit, where altruistic action require the sacrifice of one's life, the logic of this explanation breaks down. Here Nietzsche appeals to the priority of the species and its survival over the individual as an explanatory principle:

'Die sämtlichen thierisch-menschlichen Triebe haben sich bewährt, seit unendlicher Zeit, sie würden, wenn sie der Erhaltung der Gattung schädlich wären, untergegangen sein: deshalb können sie immer noch dem Individuum schädlich und peinlich sein – aber die Gattung's-Zweckmäßigkeit ist das Princip der erhaltenden Kraft. Jene Triebe und Leidenschaften ausrotten ist erstens am Einzelnen unmöglich – er besteht aus ihnen, wie wahrscheinlich im Bau und in der Bewegung des Organismus dieselben Triebe arbeiten; und zweitens hieße es: Selbstmord der Gattung. Der Zwiespalt dieser Triebe ist ebensonothwendig wie aller Kampf: denn das Leiden kommt für die Erhaltung der Gattung so wenig in Betracht, wie der Untergang zahlloser Individuen. Es sind ja nicht die vernünftigsten und direktesten Mittel der Erhaltung, die denkbar sind, aber die einzig wirklichen. – [...]' (11[122] 9.484). But see also his critique of 'Gattungs-Zweckmäßigkeit' as an abstraction that does not exist 11[178] 9; see also 11[46] 9.

III.2 Thoughtful egoism *contra* unsociable sociability

The effect of Nietzsche's socio-physiological narrative is to insert modern individuals in a long history and prehistory which cannot simply be ignored if we are to take seriously the problem of sovereignty or freedom in the present. As modern individuals, Nietzsche contends, we are still confronted with the same conflict faced by the first emergent individuals between the group-oriented or social drives, cultivated and fixed in the course of our prehistory, and self-oriented drives. As such, Nietzsche's socio-physiology recalls the conflict at the heart of Kant's unsociable sociability, between a concern for one's own good or well-being and a concern for the common good. Yet Nietzsche's account involves a very different analysis of this conflict and its consequences for sovereignty, as well as a different, if not an opposed, normative orientation.

For Nietzsche the conflict is not between an egoistic focus on ends located *within* the human being and *external* ends in other beings or the common good. From his naturalistic point of view, egoism is not a moral principle or choice (*Du sollst*), but a necessity (*Du mußt*),⁴⁰ since it refers to the processes of self-regulation that every living being must perform if it is to meet its conditions of life and survive. Every living being is necessarily egoistic, and the conflict is between what Nietzsche calls '*non-individual*' or '*functional egoism*' and '*individual egoism*'. In functional egoism, the self is identified with a non-unique social role, 'function' or 'organ' of a social whole, rather than a unique and autonomous living being. Altruistic actions are conditions of existence for individuals who *are* their social role and who demand recognition of their status as that role or function. The prevailing morality of altruism is therefore a misnomer for this form of egoism that been dominant, largely [but not only] as a result of 'the primordial legacy of our herd-feelings' (11[185] 9.513). Indeed, it follows from Nietzsche's socio-physiological history that the opposition between altruism and egoism, understood as moral principles, collapses: both are thoughtless forms of functional egoism in the service of social wholes, divided by a veil of ignorance from each individual's needs and conditions as a unique form of life. In this regard, Nietzsche's objections to Spinoza and Spencer apply equally to Kant's unsociability or 'moral egoism' (Anth §2 VII.8-9): all are forms of '*proto-egoism, herd-drive, Voregoismus*, since we have not even begun to think in a fine, well-planned and thoughtful way about our selves. Nietzsche's objections apply equally to the instinct of self-preservation Kant appeals to in *Religion* (RGV VI.27). If it is part of our 'disposition towards animality', as Kant says, it is only because our animality is thoroughly socialised. Indeed, Nietzsche goes so far as to implicate Kant in the *political* reasons for the historical predominance of functional egoism:

Egoism has been maligned by those who *exercised* it (communities princes party leaders founders of religion philosophers like Plato); they needed the opposed disposition in people who were to perform *functions* for them [...] To glorify selflessness! and concede, as Kant does, that such a deed has probably never been done! Thus, only in order to disparage the opposed principle, to reduce its value, to make people cold and contemptuous, consequently *thoughtless* towards egoism! – For until now it has been the *lack* of a fine well-planned thoughtful egoism that has kept human beings as a whole on so low a level! *Equality* counts as binding and worth striving for! (11[303] 9.557)⁴¹

⁴⁰ 'NB. Der Egoismus ist kein Moralprincip, kein "Du sollst!" denn es ist das einzige "Du mußt". (7[182] 10.301)

⁴¹ 'Der Egoism ist verketzert worden, von denen die ihn übten (Gemeinden Fürsten Parteiführern Religionsstiftern Philosophen wie Plato); sie brauchten die entgegengesetzte Gesinnung bei den Menschen, die ihnen Funktion leisten sollten [...] die Selbstlosigkeit verherrlichen! und zugeben, wie Kant, daß wahrscheinlich nie eine That derselben gethan worden sei! Also nur, um das entgegengesetzte Princip herabzusetzen, seinen

What worries Nietzsche is both our unfreedom as individuals and the loss of human diversity that have resulted from the patterns of self-subjection, conformism and functional egoism uncovered by his socio-physiology. Since our self-subjection as functions of a greater whole has been the path of bondage and uniformity, the path to sovereignty requires the cultivation of difference and diversity among individuals through 'a fine well-planned thoughtful egoism'. If our self-subjection as equals to state law or the moral law (whether Socratic or Kantian) has confined us to the level of interchangeable functions, our *enhancement into autonomous individuals requires the cultivation of individual diversity through radically individual self-legislation*.

Richness of individuals is richness of those who are no longer ashamed of what is their own and what in them is deviant. (ibid.)⁴²

In response to his critical *Zeitdiagnose*, Nietzsche calls for the cultivation of our freedom of thought and our individual drives and passions, over our social drives and our 'propensity towards the herd' ('Hang zur Heerde': 11[186] 9.514); he calls on us to conceive ourselves 'as something new', not just as a 'function of a whole' ('Er faßt sich gar nicht als etwas Neues in's Auge': 11[185] 9.513) and for the liberation of our ego from 'herd-building affects' through the '*ascertainment of the ego before ourselves: 'die Feststellung des ego vor uns selber' (11[226] 9.528).*

If Kant calls on us to take moral responsibility for our unsociable propensity to subordinate everything as means to our own ends and to curb it for the sake of realising the kingdom of ends, we would expect the opposite from Nietzsche's egoism: to promote unsociability – the assertion of the individual's well-being as a unique form of life – and the resistance it offers to our sociability. This is exactly what he seems to do when he writes that sovereignty is attainable only by those few who are able to assert their own interests as living beings *against* the interest of the species in social wholes *without going to ground*:

The strongest individuals will be those who go against the laws of the species and do not go to ground in the process, the singular beings. (11[126] 9.486)⁴³

But Nietzsche does not simply take the side of unsociability against sociability. Instead he argues that 'all of our animal-human drives' ('sämmlichen thierisch-menschlichen Triebe') have only endured because they serve the survival of our species; they cannot be eliminated, even if they conflict with our needs and life-interests as individuals:

Werth zu drücken, die Menschen kalt und verächtlich, folglich gedankenfaul gegen den Egoismus stimmen! – Denn bisher ist es der Mangel an feinem planmäßigen gedankenreichen Egoismus gewesen, was die Menschen im Ganzen auf einer so niedrigen Stufe erhält! Gleichheit gilt als verbindend und erstrebenswerth!'. It may seem odd to associate Kant with altruism, but there are moments where something like this comes out – as an aspect of sociability under the sign of normative equality: 'The characteristic of sociability is not always putting yourself before another. Always putting oneself before another is weak. The idea of equality *regulates* everything' ('Das Merkmal der Geselligkeit ist sich nicht jederzeit einem andern vorzuziehen. Einen andern sich jederzeit vorziehen ist schwach. Die Idee der Gleichheit *regulirt* alles' (NL 1764-68 XX.54). There could not be a stronger sign of the difference between Kant and Nietzsche on equality than these two texts: for Nietzsche it is what keeps human existence on a low level, for Kant it is what makes social life possible.

⁴² 'Reichthum an Individuen ist Reichthum an solchen, die sich ihres Eigenen und Abweichenden nicht mehr schämen.'

⁴³ 'Die stärksten Individuen werden die sein, welche den Gattungsgesetzen widerstreben und dabei nicht zu Grunde gehen, die Einzelnen.'

To *eliminate* those drives and passions in the singular being is first of all *impossible* – he consists of them, and the same drives are probably at work in the architecture and in the movement of the organism [...] (11[122] 9.485)⁴⁴

As the path to sovereignty, ‘thoughtful egoism’ must acknowledge the social drives in us that subordinate us as individuals to social wholes, while at the same time directing us towards our own conditions of existence (*Existenz- or Lebens-Bedingungen*) as singular beings. Nietzsche can therefore write that ‘[t]he discord [*Zwiespalt*] of these drives is just as necessary as all conflict [*Kampf*] [...]’ (ibid.). Since the conflict between social and individual drives cannot be eliminated, it needs to be borne and regulated by every sovereign individual. Taking its normative bearings from necessary life-processes, ‘thoughtful egoism’ differs sharply from unsociable sociability on this point. From the standpoint of pure practical reason, unsociability is morally blameworthy, and Kant’s historical thought is teleologically oriented towards the elimination of conflict, competition and the other evils of unsociability in a frictionless kingdom of ends⁴⁵ – even if in reality it can only be approximated.

The most profound difference with Kant concerns the relation between unsociability and sociability. As argued above, in laG our unsociability is *external* to our sociability, and their relation is one of *antagonism* modelled on the real contradiction or ‘conflict of two forces’. In a sense, this relation is mirrored in Nietzsche’s conflict between social drives, oriented to the well-being of the social group, and individual drives oriented to individual well-being. Yet this relation is complicated by his socio-physiology, which builds social drives into ‘the [very] architecture and movement’ of the human beings as the consequence of their pre-historical labour of incorporating the interests, needs, ‘experiences and judgements’ of the social organism. In other words, sociability is *intrinsic* to thoughtful egoism, which, in addressing the well-being of the individual, must also acknowledge its social drives. Indeed, this is but one of several ways in which sociability is built into Nietzschean egoism. Let me indicate three more.

1. In translating the human being back into nature, Nietzsche’s socio-physiology has the immediate consequence of replacing the substantive, autonomous subject (*homo noumenon*) as the centre of our self-relation with a *pluralised subject* or *dividuum* and a more complex synthetic of unity modelled on the self-organising organism. Nietzsche warns repeatedly against conflating our *self-conscious sense of unity* – *Das Ich, Das ich-Bewusstsein, Einheits-Gefühl des Bewußtseins* – with our unity as organic living beings.⁴⁶ Socio-physiology *displaces* the concept of unity from consciousness to

⁴⁴ ‘Jene Triebe und Leidenschaften ausrotten ist erstens am Einzelnen unmöglich – er besteht aus ihnen, wie wahrscheinlich im Bau und in der Bewegung des Organismus dieselben Triebe arbeiten [...]’.

⁴⁵ ‘The idea of a realm of ends is essentially that of a system of collective human action that precludes any ultimate competition between ends, but involves the adoption by rational beings only of those ends that can be combined with those of all others in a mutually reinforcing system of purposive activity.’ (Wood 2015 121). ‘In effect, then, the moral law of reason of which we become aware through the development of our faculties, has a content directly opposed to the natural purposiveness of the process through which we become aware of it. For it is only through our unsociable competitiveness that our faculties are developed, but of these faculties, the chief one – our moral reason – makes us aware of an unconditional law commanding us to renounce all competitive relations with others of our kind and to pursue only those ends that can be shared by all in common as part of an ideal universal community of all rational beings.’ (Wood 2015 123).

⁴⁶ See 11[316] 9.563:

‘Die letzten Organismen, deren Bildung wir sehen (Völker Staaten Gesellschaften), müssen zur Belehrung über die ersten Organismen benutzt werden. Das Ich-bewußtsein ist das letzte, was hinzukommt, wenn ein Organismus fertig fungirt, fast etwas Überflüssiges: das Bewußtsein der Einheit, jedenfalls etwas höchst

the body and *decenters* it from a substantial, ruling I towards a self-regulating plurality of functions or life-processes; what Nietzsche's calls 'the amoeba-unity of the individual' (11[189] 9) or 'the really inborn incorporated working unity of all functions' (11[316] 9.563). Nietzsche does not, however, seek to *reduce* the human individual to an amoeba or protoplasm,⁴⁷ and the main task of his *socio-physiology* is to show how deep the process of socialisation has gone:

The naive egoism of the animal has been completely altered by our *social integration*: we just can no longer feel a singularity [*Einzigkeit*] of the ego, *we are always among many*. We have split and continue to divide ourselves again and again. *The social drives (like enmity envy hatred)* (which presuppose a plurality) have transformed us: we have displaced "society" within ourselves, compressed it, and to retreat into oneself is not a flight from society, but often a discomfoting *dreaming-on and interpreting* of the processes in us according to the scheme of earlier experiences. [...] (6[80] 9.215)⁴⁸

'We are always among many': By incorporating the needs, values and judgements of the social organism in our prehistory, 'we have displaced "society" inside us' and relate to ourselves in thoroughly socialised terms. Not only do the norms, prohibitions and moral judgements of the social organism in-form our moral sentiments; our very self-relation is constituted by social drives and practices like friendship enmity hatred revenge envy. Even individuals who, as singular beings (*Einzelne*) achieve sovereignty through thoughtful egoism, must treat themselves as a social unity or organism and relate to themselves through social practices.

2. At stake in 'thoughtful egoism' is our emancipation from the thoughtless domination of functional egoism, in which the self is identified with a (non-unique) social role or function, rather than

Unvollkommenes und Oft-Fehlgreifendes im Vergleich zu der wirklich eingeborenen einverlebten arbeitenden Einheit aller Funktionen. Unbewußt ist die große Hauptthätigkeit. Das Bewußtsein erscheint erst gewöhnlich, wenn das Ganze sich wieder einem höheren Ganzen unterordnen will – als Bewußtsein zunächst dieses höheren Ganzen, des Außer-sich. Das Bewußtsein entsteht in Bezug auf das Wesen, dem wir Funktion sein könnten – es ist das Mittel, uns einzuverleiben. So lange es sich um Selbsterhaltung handelt, ist Bewußtsein des Ich unnöthig. – So wohl schon im niedersten Organismus. Das Fremde Größere Stärkere wird als solches zuerst vorgestellt. – Unsere Urtheile über unser "Ich" hinken nach, und werden nach Einleitung des Außer-uns, der über uns waltenden Macht vollzogen. Wir bedeuten uns selber das, als was wir im höheren Organismus gelten – allgemeines Gesetz.

Die Empfindungen und die Affekte des Organischen sind alle längst fertig entwickelt, bevor das Einheitsgefühl des Bewußtseins entsteht.'

⁴⁷ 'Whoever hates or disdains foreign blood is not yet an individual, but a kind of human protoplasm'

('Wer das fremde Blut haßt oder verachtet, ist noch kein Individuum, sondern eine Art menschliches Protoplasma.' (11[296] 9.555). We will return to this text in chapter 5.

⁴⁸ [...] 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; alle socialen Übungen (Freundschaft Rache Neid) üben wir redlich an uns. Der naive Egoismus des Thieres ist durch unsere sociale Einübung ganz alterirt: wir können gar nicht mehr eine Einzigkeit des ego fühlen, wir sind immer unter einer Mehrheit. Wir haben uns zerspalten und spalten uns immer neu. Die socialen Triebe (wie Feindschaft Neid Haß) (die eine Mehrheit voraussetzen) haben uns umgewandelt: wir haben "die Gesellschaft" in uns verlegt, verkleinert und sich auf sich zurückziehen ist keine Flucht aus der Gesellschaft, sondern oft ein peinliches Fortträumen und Ausdeuten unserer Vorgänge nach dem Schema der früheren Erlebnisse.[...]. See also 11[7] 9.443: 'We treat ourselves as a multiplicity and bring to these "social relations" all the social habits which we have towards humans animals things'.

a unique and autonomous living being. Our enhancement into autonomous individuals requires *the cultivation of individual diversity through radically individual self-legislation*. Nietzsche's organismic model of sovereignty takes its normative guidance from the processes that all living beings must perform, yet each form of life is unique and the task of 'thoughtful egoism' is to apply the 'work and intelligence' needed for genuine 'research' into the life-processes that best enable one to meet the conditions of existence unique to oneself and thrive as a singular being. Radically individual self-legislation revolves around *radically individual self-regulation*.

For Nietzsche, the defining characteristic of an organism, as distinct from a machine, is that all life-processes have evolved *from within* and are *determined from within* by the co-ordinated activity (*Selbsttätigkeit*) of its diverse organs or parts (Müller-Lauter 1999a 162; 1999b 56f., 60f.). But self-regulation includes regulating its relations with its environment, and since the human organism is profoundly social for Nietzsche, his concept of sovereignty depends on the kinds of social relations we maintain with others. We can therefore say that Nietzschean sovereignty is *non-sovereign* in the sense that it depends on cultivating certain relations with others; it is deeply embedded and thoroughly relational in character. But it is *sovereign* in the sense that those relations are determined *from within* by the specific life-form ('organism') in search of the optimal conditions of existence unique to it and by the kind of self-regulation this requires. The socio-physiological turn in Nietzsche's thought allows him to rethink sovereignty as self-determination in both *radically individual* and *relational* terms. So what kinds of social relations are required for Nietzschean sovereignty?

3. We would expect the 'thoughtful egoist' to use others as means for its own ends, in line with Kantian unsociability. This is confirmed by Nietzsche, who points out that this applies equally to altruistic individuals – read: functional egoists: 'even when they subjected themselves: they furthered their advantage through the power of that to which they subjected themselves' (11[63] 9.464). But his emphasis is on the complexity of our self-regulation as social organisms and the complexity of the *task* of thoughtful egoism – to translate these processes into our affective and practical relations to others. As I will try to indicate, thoughtful egoism issues in ways of treating others that are characterised by *reciprocity* and *ambiguity* to the point of undermining the Kantian opposition between sociability and unsociability. At the same time, the ways in which Nietzsche translates the language of physiology into the language of morality and back show us how he answers the Kantian challenge to physiology – how it can influence human existence in the world.

III.3 Thoughtful egoism and sovereignty: *contra* Spinoza

Nietzsche's ethos of thoughtful egoism and its consequences for sovereignty and the treatment of others rests on a number of presuppositions, worked out by him in polemical opposition to Spinoza. They concern 1) the necessity of conflict all the way down *contra* peace; 2) the limits of consciousness; and 3) the economy of expenditure in nature *contra* utility.

1) *On the necessity of conflict*: We have seen that Nietzsche draws the consequence from his socio-physiological history that the 'discord [*Zwiespalt*]' of drives 'is just as necessary as all struggle [*Kampf*]' (11[122] 9). Thinking with Roux and against him, he argues (with) that conflict and the struggle for scarce resources are intrinsic to the life of the organism at all levels (cells, tissues, organs), but (against) that struggle requires difference and diversity:

Where there is life there is a formation of corporate bodies, where the constituents struggle for nutrition and space, where the weaker ones accommodate themselves, live shorter, have

less progeny: diversity rules in the smallest things, sperm-animals eggs – Equality is a great delusion (11[132] 9.490)⁴⁹

Life-processes consist of the formation of ever larger corporate unities and presuppose 1) the struggle for nutrition and space, and 2) diversity and differentiation among its constituent parts. In Roux's book *Der Kampf der Theile im Organismus* the idea of a productive struggle in the organism is ultimately grounded in Heraclitus's *polemos* ('Der Streit ist der Vater der Dinge': Roux 1881 65), while for Nietzsche all struggle is ultimately grounded in his 'ontology' of power: 'Resisting is the form of power – in peace as in war': 11[303] 9.557). This point is made with Spinoza in mind, as when Nietzsche writes:

How Spinoza fantasises about *reason*! A *fundamental error* is the belief in concord and the absence of struggle – this would really be death! (11[132] 9.490)⁵⁰

Against Spinoza's concept of aggregation through processes of harmonization among 'those which agree entirely with our nature' (or between 'individuals of the same nature'), rejected by Nietzsche as non-life or death,⁵¹ he insists that life consists of processes of aggregation that can only take place through *struggle* among 'different powers': without power differentials there can be no struggle, and without struggle there can be no formation of larger unities: '*without struggle and passion everything becomes weak, the human being and society.*' (11[193] 9.517).

2) Another fundamental objection to Spinoza's project to naturalise morality concerns his appeal to 'usefulness' or 'efficacy' as a naturalistic norm. According to Nietzsche this falsifies the reality of nature, which is uneconomical – extravagant, wasteful and destructive:

⁴⁹ 'Wo Leben ist, ist eine genossenschaftliche Bildung, wo die Genossen um die Nahrung den Raum kämpfen, wo die schwächeren sich anfügen, kürzer leben, weniger Nachkommen haben: Verschiedenheit herrscht in den kleinsten Dingen, Samenthierchen Eiern – die Gleichheit ist ein großer Wahn.' For Roux conflict is mostly confined to approximately equal entities at each level of organisation (molecules, cells etc.) (Pearson 2018 308-9). This is one of several instances where we see already Nietzsche breaking with key principles in Roux in ways that point forward to the will to power.

⁵⁰ 'Wie phantasirt Spinoza über die Vernunft! Ein Grundirrtum ist der Glaube an die Eintracht und das Fehlen des Kampfes – dies wäre eben Tod!'

⁵¹ Nietzsche has Ethics IV 18 Scholium in mind here, where Spinoza writes that nothing is more useful to us 'than those which agree entirely with our nature. For if two individuals of the same nature are joined with each other, they constitute an individual twice as powerful as either. Nothing therefore is more useful to man than man. I mean by this that men can ask for nothing that is more efficacious for the preservation of their being than that all men should agree in everything in such a way that the minds and bodies of all should constitute one mind and one body [...]' (Spinoza 2000 240). See Nietzsche's excerpts in 11[193] 9.517 and his conclusion: 'Unsere Vernunft ist unsere größte Macht. Sie ist unter allen Gütern das Einzige, das alle gleichmäßig erfreut, das keiner dem anderen beneidet, das jeder dem Anderen wünscht und um so mehr wünscht als er selbst davon hat. – Einig sind die Menschen nur in der Vernunft. Sie können nicht einiger sein als wenn sie vernunftgemäß leben. Sie können nicht mächtiger sein als wenn sie vollkommen übereinstimmen. – Wir leben im Zustande der Übereinstimmung mit Anderen und mit uns selbst jedenfalls mächtiger als in dem des Zwiespalts. Die Leidenschaften entzweien; sie bringen uns in Widerstreit mit den anderen Menschen und mit uns selbst, sie machen uns feindselig nach außen und schwankend nach innen. – **ego**: das Alles ist **Vorurtheil**. Es giebt gar keine Vernunft der Art, und ohne Kampf und Leidenschaft wird alles schwach, Mensch und Gesellschaft.'

On the extravagance of nature! Then the sun's warmth in Proctor! [...] Hence, no false "utility as norm"! Extravagance [Expenditure] is of itself not a reproach: it is perhaps *necessary*. The *vehemence of the drives* also *belongs here*. (11[24] 9.451)⁵²

This gives us the second important presupposition for Nietzsche's naturalistic model of sovereignty: against 'utility' or 'usefulness' as the norm for moral behaviour, Nietzsche's sovereign individuals will take their normative bearings from the necessity of expenditure. The immediate consequence is to displace the *telos* of 'self-preservation' (*contra* Spinoza and Roux) and the calculus of compensation for energetic loss with a non-teleological dynamic of over-compensation, accumulation, boundless growth and reproduction, so that Nietzsche can write:

To extend the concept of nutrition; not interpret one's life falsely, as do those who only have an eye on their preservation.

We must not allow our life to slip through our fingers, on account of a "goal" – but rather reap the fruits of all the seasons of our lives.

Den Begriff der Ernährung erweitern; sein Leben nicht falsch anlegen, wie es die thun, welche bloß ihre Erhaltung im Auge haben.

Wir müssen unser Leben nicht uns durch die Hand schlüpfen lassen, durch ein "Ziel" – sondern die Früchte aller Jahreszeiten von uns einern. (11[2] 9.441; cf. 11[132] 9)

3) According to Nietzsche, we have seen, Spinoza succumbs to the common prejudice that we know ourselves and the error of conflating the unitary I of consciousness with our 'the really inborn incorporated working unity of all functions' (11[316] 9.563). Consciousness is not only a late and highly fallible organ; it first arises in relation to a greater social whole as a means for us to subordinate and incorporate (*einverleiben*) ourselves within it as a function through the power of representation. To begin with, consciousness is *consciousness of a greater whole outside us*:

– Our judgements concerning our "I" limp behind and are carried out following the lead of that which is outside us, of the prevailing power over us. *We signify to ourselves what we are considered to be in the **higher** organism* – general law. (11[316] 9.563)⁵³

On the basis of this general law (functional egoism), Nietzsche argues, it is a mistake to rely on our (self-)conscious reasoning for normative guidance on how to regulate ourselves and sustain our unity as *autonomous* living beings.⁵⁴ Instead, our cognitive capacities must be put to work 'in service of the

⁵² 'Zur Verschwendung der Natur! Dann die Sonnenwärme bei Proctor! [...] Also keine falsche "Nützlichkeit als Norm"! Verschwendung ist ohne Weiteres kein Tadel: sie ist vielleicht nothwendig. Auch die Heftigkeit der Triebe gehört hierher.'

⁵³ '– Unsere Urtheile über unser "Ich" hinken nach, und werden nach Einleitung des Außer-uns, der über uns waltenden Macht vollzogen. Wir bedeuten uns selber das, als was wir im **höheren** Organismus gelten – allgemeines Gesetz.'

⁵⁴ 'Sonderbar: das worauf der Mensch am stolzesten ist, seine Selbstregulirung durch die Vernunft, wird ebenfalls von dem niedrigsten Organism geleistet, und besser, zuverlässiger! Das Handeln nach Zwecken ist aber thatsächlich nur der allergeringste Theil unserer Selbstregulirung: handelte die Menschheit wirklich nach

organic drives' and the 'real inborn incorporated working unity of all our functions' by developing and refining our physiological self-understanding as self-regulating organisms. Instead of regulating ourselves through rational deliberation of purposive agency alone – 'acting according to purposes [Zwecken] is actually only the smallest part of our self-regulation'(11[243] 9.533) – we need to take our normative guidance from the processes that enable us to live.

Purposive consciousness and agency are, of course, the element or medium of Kantian anthropology (p.***), and Nietzsche's objections to Spinoza can equally be turned against Kant as an initial riposte to the challenge he issued to physiology. *Pace* Kant, purposive consciousness is captive to the levelling social 'purposes' of functional egoism; it is not the *mobile* of agency, but a small part of physiological processes within a non-teleological economy of expenditure; the overestimation of reason is a phantasm, which advances life-negating ideals of concord – not to mention the inestimable damage it has done:

– Whether reason has overall preserved more than it has destroyed until now, with its conceit of knowing everything, to know the body, to "will" – ? Centralization is far from perfect – and the conceit of reason to **be** this centre is certainly the greatest deficit of this perfection (11[132] 9.490)⁵⁵

But what exactly is to be gained philosophically from Nietzsche's translations of the language of reason and morality into physiology and back? And how can this praxis aspire to *influence* human behaviour in a way that surpasses the limitations of Kantian anthropology?

Nietzsche's response to the question of influence turns on affects. From his socio-physiology we know that we are not just organisms on the level of animal life, but thoroughly socialised beings. And for Nietzsche it is clear that 'our affects are the means to maintain the movements and constructions of a *social organism*'; it is the affects 'which self-regulate, assimilate, excrete transform, regenerate here'.⁵⁶ This goes equally for the social organisms that we are each of us as individuals, as for the greater social organisms to which we belong. A 'fine well-planned thoughtful egoism' must therefore focus on *understanding and influencing our affects*, as the means by which we regulate ourselves as individual social organisms and regulate our relations to others in the larger social organism we inhabit. And since for Nietzsche, 'our affects presuppose thoughts and tastes' (ibid.), *individual sovereignty can be achieved only by using our knowledge of organismic self-regulation to influence the 'thoughts and tastes' upon which our affects depend, so as to adapt them to our needs as singular autonomous organisms, rather than organs of a social whole*. This describes both the work

ihrer Vernunft d.h. nach der Grundlage ihres Meinens und Wissens, so wäre sie längst zu Grunde gegangen. Die Vernunft ist ein langsam sich entwickelndes Hilfsorgan, was ungeheure Zeiten hindurch glücklicherweise wenig Kraft hat, den Menschen zu bestimmen, es arbeitet im Dienste der organischen Triebe, und emancipirt sich langsam zur Gleichberechtigung mit ihnen – so daß Vernunft (Meinung und Wissen) mit den Trieben kämpft, als ein eigener neuer Trieb – und spät, ganz spät zum Übergewicht.' (11[243] 9.533).

⁵⁵ '– Ob die Vernunft bisher im Ganzen mehr erhalten als zerstört hat, mit ihrer Einbildung, alles zu wissen, den Körper zu kennen, zu "wollen" – ? Die Centralisation ist gar keine so vollkommene – und die Einbildung der Vernunft, dies Centrum zu **sein** ist gewiß der größte Mangel dieser Vollkommenheit.'

⁵⁶ See 11[241] 9.532: 'Wenn unsere Affekte das Mittel sind, um die Bewegungen und Bildungen eines gesellschaftlichen Organismus zu unterhalten, so würde doch nichts fehlerhafter sein als nun zurückzuschließen, daß im niedrigsten Organismus es eben auch die Affekte seien, welche hier selbstregulieren, assimilieren, exkretieren umwandeln, regenerieren – also Affekte auch da vorauszusetzen, Lust Unlust Willen Neigung Abneigung. [...] – Unsere Affekte setzen Gedanken und Geschmäcker voraus, diese ein Nervensystem usw.'

each of us must do on themselves and the task Nietzsche sets himself in this notebook. So what exactly does this mean for our treatment of others?

III.4 Thoughtful egoism and our treatment of others

Nietzsche's 'thoughtful egoism' requires research into *both* the life-processes that regulate each of us as organisms *and* our affective relations to others through which these processes are realised. For preliminary orientation, Nietzsche lists a number of questions near the beginning of the notebook:

- A. How much do I need in order to live in a way that is healthy and agreeable to me?
- B. How do I acquire this in a way that the process of acquisition is healthy and agreeable and meets the requirements of my spirit, especially as recreation
- c. How do I have to think of others in order to think as well as possible of myself and to grow in the feeling of power?
- d. How do I bring others to acknowledge my power? (11[11] 9.444f.)⁵⁷

These questions suggest what we would expect from an egoistic ethos of any kind, namely that it *uses others for its own ends*. This is confirmed by Nietzsche when, under the heading 'neue Praxis', he asks how we are to treat others:

– Use them as powers for our goals – how else? Just as people always did (even when they subjected themselves: they furthered their advantage through the power of that to which they *subjected* themselves) – Our intercourse with people must be geared towards *discovering* the available *powers*, those of peoples classes etc. – and then disposing over these powers to the advantage of our goals (including allowing them to destroy one another, if this is necessary). (11[63] 9.464)⁵⁸

The importance of this instrumental perspective (and its possible implications in parentheses!) for Nietzsche's '*new praxis*' is undeniable. Yet it cannot be left at that. Our self-regulation as social organisms is enormously complex, as is the 'thoughtful egoism' that would translate these processes into affective relations to others. We get an indication of this complexity from an organismic model of sovereignty sketched by Nietzsche in this notebook, in which a list physiological processes on the left hand side is then filled out in the language of morality on the right:

-
- ⁵⁷ 'A. Wie viel brauche ich, um gesund und angenehm für mich zu leben?
B. Wie erwerbe ich dies so, daß das Erwerben gesund und angenehm ist und meinem Geiste zu Statten kommt, zumal als Erholung?
c. Wie habe ich von den Anderen zu denken, um von mir möglichst gut zu denken und im Gefühle der Macht zu wachsen?
d. Wie bringe ich die Anderen zur Anerkennung meiner Macht?'

⁵⁸ '– Als Kräfte für unsere Ziele sie verwenden – wie anders? So wie es die Menschen immer machten (auch wenn sie sich unterwarfen: sie förderten ihren Vortheil durch die Macht dessen, dem sie sich unterwarfen) – Unser Verkehr mit Menschen muß darauf aus sein, die vorhandenen Kräfte zu entdecken, die der Völker Stände usw. – dann diese Kräfte zum Vortheil unserer Ziele zu stellen (eventuell sie sich gegenseitig vernichten lassen, wenn dies noth tut).'

A strong free human being feels *the qualities of the **organism*** towards [gegen] everything else

1) self-regulation: in the form of *fear* of all alien incursions, in the *hatred* towards [gegen] the enemy, moderation etc.

2) overcompensation: in the form of *acquisitiveness* the pleasure of appropriation the craving for power

3) assimilation to oneself: in the form of praise reproach making others dependent on oneself, to that end deception cunning, learning, habituation, commanding incorporating [Einverleiben] judgements and experiences

4) secretion and excretion: in the form of revulsion contempt for the qualities in itself which are *no longer* of use to it; communicating [mittheilen] that which is superfluous goodwill

5) metabolic power: temporary worship admiration making oneself dependent fitting in, almost dispensing with the exercise of the other organic functions, transforming oneself into an "organ", being able to serve

6) regeneration: in the form of sexual drive, pedagogic drive etc. (11[182] KSA 9.509f.)⁵⁹

In what follows I will illustrate the complexity of 'thoughtful egoism' by concentrating on the function of nutrition, set out under rubric 2) 'overcompensation' above, and its implications for our treatment of others.

Nutrition as the guiding thread for our the treatment of others

The presupposition for all organic life, as we saw earlier, is over-compensation for energetic losses within a non-teleological dynamic of expenditure:

If we translate the properties of the lowest living being into our "reason", they become moral drives. Such a being assimilates what is nearest, turns it into its property (property is first nutrition and storage of nutrition), it seeks to incorporate as much as possible into itself, not just to compensate for loss – it is avaricious. Only thus does it grow and in the end it becomes

⁵⁹ Ein starker freier Mensch empfindet gegen alles Andere die Eigenschaften des **Organismus**

- 1) Selbstregulierung: in der Form von Furcht vor allen fremden Eingriffen, im Haß gegen den Feind, im Maaßhalten usw.
- 2) überreicher Ersatz: in der Form von Habsucht Aneignungslust Machtgelüst
- 3) Assimilation an sich: in der Form von Loben Tadeln Abhängigmachen Anderer von sich, dazu Verstellung List, Lernen, Gewöhnung, Befehlen Einverleiben von Urtheilen und Erfahrungen
- 4) Sekretion und Excretion: in der Form von Ekel Verachtung der Eigenschaften an sich, die ihm nicht mehr nützen; das Überschüssige mittheilen Wohlwollen
- 5) metabolische Kraft: zeitweilig verehren bewundern sich abhängig machen einordnen, auf Ausübung der anderen organischen Eigenschaften fast verzichten, sich zum "Organe" umbilden, dienen-können
- 6) Regeneration: in der Form von Geschlechtstrieb, Lehrtrieb usw.

reproductive – it splits into 2 beings. Growth and generation follow the unlimited drive to appropriate. (11[134] 9.490)⁶⁰

Property, appropriation, assimilation, incorporation are all referred to the function of nutrition and the accumulation of nutrition needed to overcompensate for energetic losses, grow and reproduce. Clearly this can translate into using others for our own ends, exploiting, tyrannizing, even destroying them (11[134] 9.490). But we need to expand and refine our understanding of nutrition, according to Nietzsche:

To extend the concept of nutrition; not to interpret one's life falsely, as do those who only have an eye on their preservation [...]

We want to reach out to everything that is outside us as to our nutrition. Often they are the fruits that have ripened just for our age. – Must one always have only the egoism of the robber or the thief?

Why not that of the gardner? Joy in caring for others, like that of a garden! (11[2] 9)⁶¹

Using others need not mean robbing them of their power or autonomy. It can coincide with caring for them and their well-being in our actions towards them, for then we benefit from the fruits of their energetic expenditure: there is nothing as useful to man as man. This deeply Spinozistic thought (EIII 18) – malgré Nietzsche – is *reciprocal* for Nietzsche when he describes, under the function of '4) secretion and excretion [...] sharing [*mittheilen*] that which is superfluous goodwill' (11[182] 9; p. ***):

When he "shares" with others, is "unselfish" – this is perhaps only the excretion of his useless faeces, which he must get rid of in order not to suffer from them. He knows that this dung is of use to other fields and makes a virtue out of his "generosity". – (11[134] 9.492)⁶²

The use we make of others by enjoying the fruits of their well-being is *reciprocated* by processes of fertilisation and fructification of use to them.

If *goodwill* or friendliness (*Wohlwollen*) is placed under the rubric of secretion / excretion in one note, in others it too is placed under nutrition in the form of *appropriation* (*Besitzlust*):

⁶⁰ 'Wenn wir die Eigenschaften des niedersten belebten Wesens in unsere "Vernunft" übersetzen, so werden moralische Triebe daraus. Ein solches Wesen assimiliert sich das Nächste, verwandelt es in sein Eigenthum (Eigenthum ist zuerst Nahrung und Aufspeicherung von Nahrung), es sucht möglichst viel sich einzuverleiben, nicht nur den Verlust zu compensiren – es ist habsüchtig. So wächst es allein und endlich wird es so reproduktiv – es theilt sich in 2 Wesen. Dem unbegrenzten Aneignungstrieb folgt Wachstum und Generation.'

⁶¹ 'Den Begriff der Ernährung erweitern; sein Leben nicht falsch anlegen, wie es die thun, welche bloß ihre Erhaltung im Auge haben [...]

Wir wollen nach den Andern, nach allem, was außer uns ist, trachten als nach unserer Nahrung. Oft auch sind es die Früchte, welche gerade für unser Jahr reif geworden sind. – Muß man denn immer nur den Egoismus des Räubers oder Diebes haben? Warum nicht den des Gärtners? Freude an der Pflege der Andern, wie der eines Gartens!'

⁶² 'Wenn er "mittheilt" an Andere, "uneigennützig" ist – so ist dies vielleicht nur die Ausscheidung seiner unbrauchbaren faeces, die er aus sich wegschaffen muß, um nicht daran zu leiden. Er weiß, daß dieser Dünger dem fremden Felde nützt und macht sich eine Tugend aus seiner "Freigebigkeit". –'

In *goodwill* there is refined possessiveness, refined sexuality, refined laxness in security etc.

As soon as refinement is there, the *earlier* stage is felt to be not a stage, but opposed. It is *easier* to think oppositions than degrees. (11[115] 9.482)⁶³

Here Nietzsche's appeal to us to refine and extend our understanding of nutrition is repeated for our understanding of possessiveness (*Besitzlust*). What appears to be the opposite of *Besitzlust*, goodwill, is in fact a refined form of *Besitzlust*. The term 'Verfeinerung'- also called sublimation ('sublimirten': 11[105] 9) – recurs in these notes to denote *changes in degree and form of expression wrought upon our organismic functions by the process of social evolution; changes in which the same function is still performed (this does not change), but is transformed into social modes of engagement, or what Nietzsche calls 'moral drives', like goodwill, care, exploitation etc.*

We saw earlier that caring for others is not the opposite of using them, since others are more useful to us if we care for their own well-being. We now see that goodwill is not the opposite of possessiveness, but its refined expression. Under Nietzsche's socio-physiological perspective, moral modes of behaviour are not opposed to natural functions, as morality would have it, but are those same natural functions performed in a different register. What appear to be opposites – virtuous, altruistic acts on one side, and basic organic functions on the other – turn out not be opposites at all. In this way, the concept of refinement or sublimation introduces an irreducible *ambivalence* into the grammar of moral agency and interaction, which is the subject of another note:

In the most acclaimed acts and characters are murder theft cruelty deception as necessary elements of power. In the most censured acts and characters there is *love* (esteem and over-esteem of something one desires to possess) and *goodwill* (esteem of something one has in possession, which one wants to retain for oneself)

Love and cruelty not opposites: in the best and most solid natures they are always found with one another. (The Christian God – a person very wisely conceived and without moral prejudices!) (11[105] 9.478)⁶⁴

⁶³ 'Im Wohlwollen ist verfeinerte Besitzlust, verfeinerte Geschlechtslust, verfeinerte Ausgelassenheit des Sichereren usw.

Sobald die Verfeinerung da ist, wird die frühere Stufe nicht mehr als Stufe, sondern als Gegensatz gefühlt. Es ist leichter, Gegensätze zu denken, als Grade.'

⁶⁴ 'In den gelobtesten Handlungen und Charakteren sind Mord Diebstahl Grausamkeit Verstellung als nothwendige Elemente der Kraft. In der verworfensten Handlungen und Charakteren ist Liebe (Schätzung und Überschätzung von etwas, dessen Besitz man begehrt) und Wohlwollen (Schätzung von etwas, dessen Besitz man hat, das man sich erhalten will)

Liebe und Grausamkeit nicht Gegensätze: sie finden sich bei den besten und festesten Naturen immer bei einander. (Der christliche Gott – eine sehr weise und ohne moralische Vorurtheile ausgedachte Person!)

Once again this text performs a naturalisation of Christian / post-Christian values by grounding them in organismic processes of self-regulation: ‘love’ and ‘goodwill’ are exposed as different variations of *Besitzlust*, (depending on whether one does or does not yet have one’s object of desire), itself an extension of nutrition, as we know. Our most valued actions are but sublimated forms of (necessary) self-regulatory processes, in which we ignore certain elements because they conflict with social norms and values we have incorporated.⁶⁵ What is new here is the *radical ambivalence* this analysis brings to all our actions. If love and goodwill are not opposed to possessiveness, but related to it as refinements or sublimations, so too are they related (not opposed) to other degrees or (less refined) expressions of possessiveness, such as cruelty, hatred, theft etc. The effect of Nietzsche’s socio-physiology here is to ‘contaminate’ our most valued actions with an admixture of their ‘opposites’, not as their opposites, but as less refined expressions of one and the same organic function fulfilled by both; and equally, to elevate our most reprobate (censured) actions by disclosing within them our most valued moral sentiments like love and goodwill.

Our most cherished value-oppositions are undermined and discredited by this analysis, which directs our attention as ‘thoughtful egoists’ towards the entwinement of ‘good’ and ‘evil’, love and cruelty, in all our actions, especially our best acts. Once we learn to see through our evaluation of actions as good or evil as an internalisation of social norms and prohibitions that falsifies the real character of those actions, we must then learn to *rename* our actions so as to sensitise ourselves to their natural complexity and alter our affective responses to them. The knowledge of ourselves and others required for Nietzsche’s ‘thoughtful egoism’ is a matter of education, where ‘education is learning to rename [*Umtaufen-lernen*] or learning to feel otherwise [*Anders-fühlen lernen*]’ (ibid.).

If there is an admixture of good and evil, love and hate in every deed; if caring for others is not opposed to using them, since others are more useful to us if we care for their well-being, – then the basic oppositions in Kant’s concept of unsociable sociability are undermined. Nietzsche’s socio-physiology brings a complexity to our understanding of unsociable sociability that completely revises their relation of external opposition or contradiction in Kant. And in taking its normative bearings from the necessity of expenditure and from the life-processes that regulate us as organisms, it confronts the authority of Kant’s practical reason and the universal moral law head on.

These notes also enable us to formulate a Nietzschean response to the Kantian objection to physiology, since they illustrate well the philosophical benefits to be gained from the kinds of translation they perform between the discourses of morality and socio-physiology. Drawing on the different senses of opposition or *Gegensatz* in Nietzsche’s vocabulary from chapter 1, we can say that the basic and recurrent operation in these texts is to overcome metaphysical value-oppositions (Ggz I) by translating them into Nietzsche’s genealogical notion of opposition (Ggz II.1), in which the terms are related (*verwandt*), ‘linked, bound up in an incriminating manner [...] perhaps even essentially the same’ (JGB 2; see p. **). When our values are viewed as refinements, sublimations or later stages of their so-called ‘opposites’, their meaning, structure and value is radically altered. Nietzsche’s socio-physiology brings insights into the historical and pre-historical sediments of our most cherished moral values and sentiments, exposing their entwinement with ‘those bad, apparently opposed things’ and impulses, and brings a degree of nuance and complexity to our understanding of morality that is not

⁶⁵ See the end of note 11[105] 9.478:

‘Die Menschen sehen die kleinen sublimierten Dosen nicht und leugnen sie: sie leugnen z.B. die Grausamkeit im Denker, die Liebe im Räuber. Oder sie haben gute Namen für alles, was an einem Wesen hervortritt, das ihren Geschmack befriedigt. Das "Kind" zeigt alle Qualitäten schamlos, wie die Pflanze ihre Geschlechtsorgane – beide wissen nichts von Lob und Tadel. Erziehung ist Umtaufen-lernen oder Anders-fühlen lernen.’

only absent in Kant, but unprecedented in the history of philosophy. And with its focus on our affective lives and relations, socio-physiology supplements the exclusive attention to purposive consciousness in Kantian anthropology, as the way to influence human existence, by using its insights to rename and influence our feelings and affective relations with others.

III.5 Translating morality into knowledge

Clearly, the question of knowledge is crucial for 'fine well-planned thoughtful egoism' and the claim that it involves a more 'substantial', less illusory interpretation of the moral ideal of sovereignty and associated feelings of power. At issue for thoughtful egoism in specific is *knowledge of affects*, our own and those of others, for affects are for Nietzsche the means whereby we regulate ourselves as both individual and collective social organisms (p. **). A 'fine well-planned thoughtful egoism' must therefore focus on *understanding and influencing affects*, our own and others'. Strictly speaking, 'knowledge' is a misnomer here, for as we learned from Nietzsche's 'epistemology' in chapter 1 (p. ***) 'the affects (struggles etc.) are only intellectual interpretations in areas where the intellect knows absolutely nothing, and yet *believes* itself to know everything'.⁶⁶ So knowledge of one's own affective life and others' is at once necessary and impossible for thoughtful egoism. With this caveat in mind, the egoist can only *interpret* where he knows nothing, and the question is what makes for better and worse interpretations. What, then, is the best 'manner of speaking' or 'image-language' (*Sprechart, Bildsprache*) for our affective lives and relations?

So far, we have focused on his practice of 'translation' between the language of physiology and the language of morality. But Nietzsche takes this question one step further. In exploring the question of knowledge, he experiments with the thought of translating the moral language of persons into an amoral and impersonal language of cognition. In effect, the experiment is to exercise his insatiable acquisitive drive in the register of knowledge by using insights gained from his socio-physiology to treat and engage with others, not as moral persons, but as things to be known.

In Nietzsche's socio-physiology, the knowledge-drive is a refinement or sublimation of nutrition and its extension in the acquisitive drive:

The acquisitive drive – continuation of the *nutritional* and hunting *drive*. Even
The knowledge drive is a higher acquisitive drive. (11[47] 9.459)⁶⁷

The first task for thoughtful egoism is to transform one's feeling of subjectivity – 'das Ichgefühl umschaffen' – in the light of a refined understanding of our acquisitive drive:

[...] the principal progress of morality lies [...] in a sharper grasp of what is true in the other and in me and in nature, hence to emancipate the will to possess ever more from the semblance of possession, from imaginary possessions, thus to purify the I-feeling of self-deception. (11[21] 9.450)⁶⁸

The same goes for understanding others, for how can we know how to treat another unless we understand him or her as the unique person who (s)he is?

⁶⁶ 11[128] 9.487. See p. **.

⁶⁷ 'Der Eigentumstrieb – Fortsetzung des Nahrungs- und Jagd-Triebs. Auch der Erkenntnißtrieb ist ein höherer Eigentumstrieb.'

⁶⁸ '[...] der Hauptfortschritt der Moral liegt [...] im schärfer-Fassen des Wahren im Anderen und in [...] mir und in der Natur, also das Besitzenwollen immer mehr vom Scheine des Besitzes, von erdichteten Besitzthümern zu befreien, das Ichgefühl also vom Selbstbetrüge zu reinigen.'

[...] *probity* forbids [us] to *misapprehend* him, and to treat him on the basis of presuppositions that are imaginary and superficial [...] Not to treat everyone as a human being, but as a human being constituted in *such* and *such* a way: first point of view! As something that must be known before it is treated in such and such a way. Morality with universal prescriptions does every individual an injustice. (11[63] 9.464)⁶⁹

If universal norms necessarily do injustice to others by ignoring their singularity, what then does it take to do them justice? Nietzsche's response is quite radical: to treat them *not* as persons but as things, and to do justice to them as we endeavour to do justice to all objects of knowledge:

To treat the other human being first as a thing, to look upon it as an object of knowledge, to which one must do justice [...] (ibid.)⁷⁰

Along this line of thought, the task is to *de-personify* others in our cognitive interactions with them:

To weaken the personal tendency! To accustom the eye to the reality of things. *To disregard persons as far as possible for the time being!* What effects must this have! (11[21] 9.450)⁷¹

This prescription is not, however, limited to our treatment of others, but to all beings, including ourselves: '– Just as we deal with things in order to know them, so also with living beings, so with us.' (11[63] 9.464).⁷² So the thought-experiment in these notes is to translate the idiom of moral persons into an impersonal, amoral idiom that would do more justice to the affects governing organismic self-regulation in ourselves and others. But what can it mean in practical terms to treat others and oneself as things to be known, as individual objects of knowledge, rather than individual persons? A first indication comes when Nietzsche writes:

Perhaps it will end in such a way that instead of the I we know the affinities and enmities among things, *multiplicities* and their laws: that we *seek to emancipate* ourselves from the *error* of the I (altruism has also hitherto been an error). Not "the sake of the other", but "to live for the sake of the true"! Not "I and you!" How could we be permitted to advance "the other" (who is himself a *summation of delusions!*) (11[21] 9.450)⁷³

At issue for Nietzsche, as these lines make clear, is once again the prevailing morality of altruism and the false (substantive / noumenal, asocial) concept of personhood upon which it rests. Thoughtful egoism displaces the altruistic imperative: "'for the sake of the other'" with the cognitive imperative: "'to live for the sake of the true'". But as these lines also make clear, the falsification of the subject

⁶⁹ '[...] die Redlichkeit verbietet, ihn zu verkennen, ja ihn unter irgend welchen Voraussetzungen zu behandeln, welche erdichtet und oberflächlich sind. [...] Nicht Jeden als Menschen behandeln, sondern als so und so beschaffenen Menschen: erster Gesichtspunkt! Als etwas, das erkannt sein muß, bevor es so und so behandelt werden kann. Die Moral mit allgemeinen Vorschriften thut jedem Individuum Unrecht.'

⁷⁰ 'Den anderen Menschen zunächst wie ein Ding, einen Gegenstand der Erkenntniß ansehen, dem man Gerechtigkeit widerfahren lassen muß [...].'

⁷¹ 'Den persönlichen Hang schwächen! An die Wirklichkeit der Dinge das Auge gewöhnen. Von Personen soviel wie möglich vorläufig absehen! Welche Wirkungen muß dies haben!'

⁷² '– Wie wir mit den Dingen verkehren, um sie zu erkennen, so auch mit den lebenden Wesen, so mit uns.'

⁷³ 'Vielleicht endet es damit, daß statt des Ich wir die Verwandtschaften und Feindschaften der Dinge erkennen, Vielheiten also und deren Gesetze: daß wir vom Irrthum des Ich uns zu befreien suchen (der Altruismus ist auch bisher ein Irrthum). Nicht "um der Anderen willen", sondern "um des Wahren willen leben"! Nicht "ich und du!" Wie könnten wir "den Anderen" (der selber eine Summe von Wahn ist!) fördern dürfen!'

applies as much to the 'ego' of egoism as it does to the 'tu' of altruism. At issue is, then, not just altruism, but the entire egoism-altruism opposition and our emancipation as knowers from the erroneous concept of the self or person upon which it rests. Whatever the exact status of the I or ego, we do know as 'thoughtful egoists' that our organismic function of nutrition must be performed and our acquisitive drive (*Besitztrieb*) achieve satisfaction. Nietzsche therefore prescribes cognitive mastery over things, as a sublimated alternative to the egoistic drive to acquire or possess persons:

To seek to become master over *things* and thereby satisfy one's will to possess! Not to want to possess persons! (ibid.)⁷⁴

And yet, as thoughtful egoists we also know that one and the same drive can take *seemingly opposed* forms in our practical engagements with the world, and that *reciprocity* is a key element in those engagements. This insight allows Nietzsche to displace altruism, as the desire to be possessed by other persons, with a cognitive alternative that satisfies the same acquisitive drive: to be possessed by *things*:

To **allow ourselves to be possessed** by things (not by *persons*) and from as great a range of *true things* as possible! (11[21] 9.451)⁷⁵

In these texts, then, Nietzsche calls on us to *de-personify* our relations to others, so as to know them better, not as abstract substantive subjects, but as a plurality of autonomous living beings with their own affects and needs, their own affinities and enmities with others and with us: 'Perhaps it will end in such a way that instead of the I we know the affinities and enmities among things, *multiplicities* and their law' (ibid.). Thoughtful egoism combines seemingly opposed practices – taking possession of objects of knowledge (to the point of mastery) and being possessed by them (to the greatest extent) – as different ways to satisfy the organismic function of nutrition / acquisition. This 'oppositional' practice – to possess and be possessed by others as things to be known – is designed to displace the egoism-altruism opposition – to possess *persons* (egoism) or be possessed by other *persons* (altruism) – which trades on a false metaphysical understanding of the subject as substance.

From the notes it is not entirely clear whether knowing others better through de-personification is the *prerequisite* for treating them better as persons, (i.e. as a plurality of autonomous living beings), or whether thoughtful egoism displaces persons with things altogether. On the one hand he describes de-personification as provisional (*vorläufig, zunächst*), on the other hand, as an end state ('Vielleicht endet es damit..') that makes any kind of egoism impossible. For in that case, the ultimate consequence of Nietzsche's cognitive practice is not just purification (*Reinigung*) or transformation (*Umschaffung*) of the I, but its dissolution (*Abschaffung*), as he is well aware:

⁷⁴ 'Über die Dinge Herr zu werden suchen und so sein Besitzen-wollen befriedigen! Nicht Menschen besitzen wollen!'. On agonal mastery see Siemens 2021 34f. Mastery is taken to denote a complex combination of limited affirmation and limited negation of the other, best expressed in note 10[117] 12.523:

'I have declared war on the anaemic Christian ideal (including what is closely related to it), not with the intention of annihilating [*vernichten*] it, but only of putting an end to its *tyranny* and making place for new ideals, more *robust* ideals... The *continued existence* of the Christian ideal belongs to the most desirable things that there are: and just for the sake of the ideals that wish to assert themselves next to it and perhaps over it – they must have opponents, *strong* opponents in order to become *strong*. – Thus we immoralists need the *power of morality*: our drive for self-preservation wills that our *opponents* retain their strength – wills only to become *master over them*. –'

⁷⁵ 'Uns von den Dingen **besitzen lassen** (nicht von Personen) und von einem möglichst großen Umfange wahrer Dinge!'

– But does this not also mean to weaken the individuals? Something new is to be created: not ego and not tu and not omnes! (11[21] 9.450)⁷⁶

At certain moments, it looks like Nietzsche's efforts to construct a 'more substantial', organismic account of sovereignty culminate in an overcoming of self- or personhood altogether, and with it existing notions of sovereignty, in favour of creating new 'images of human existence' (*Bilder des Daseins*) beyond individuation – 'In the end a point appears where we want to go beyond the individual and idiosyncratic' ('Endlich erscheint ein Punkt, wo wir über das Individuelle und Idiosynkratische hinauswollen': 11[171] 9.507). At other times, he asks how a 'more substantial' knowledge of others as things can benefit and enhance our self-regulation as organisms:

To **allow ourselves to be possessed** by things (not by *persons*) and from as great a range of *true things* as possible! What will *grow* from that remains to be seen: we are *fruit fields* for things. *Images of existence* ought to grow from us: and we ought to be such as this fruitfulness requires us to be: our inclinations and disinclinations are those of the field that is to bring forth such fruits. (11[21] 9.451)⁷⁷

To nourish ourselves by allowing ourselves to be possessed by others as things to be known, Nietzsche supposes, will lead to over-compensation and growth in the register of knowledge. What forms this can take is unknown, but he supposes that it can lead to the creation of new 'images of existence', that is, possible forms of sovereign human existence, which we can strive to actualise, offer up to others, and use to guide our relations with them. In this way, nourishing ourselves on others turns us into fruit fields (*Ackerland*), which others can use and appropriate to nourish themselves and grow. We see here again the pattern of *reciprocity* Nietzsche discerns in our relation to others when we take our normative bearings from the life-processes that regulate us as organisms. We saw earlier how promoting their well-being so as to benefit from the fruits of their existence is coupled with processes of fertilization or fructification (excretion) on our part from which they benefit. The *pattern of reciprocity* is perhaps most clearly inscribed in Nietzsche's organismic model of sovereignty (p.***), in which 'commanding' is complemented by obeying ('being able to serve'), 'making others dependent' by 'making oneself dependent', 'hatred' by 'goodwill', taking by giving, and 'learning' by 'the pedagogic drive'.

IV Hostile calm, calm hostility: Towards a new agonism?

In the final part of the chapter, I take Nietzsche's thought-experiment one step further and consider another cognitive ideal of his as a modality for our self-relation and relations with others. Nietzsche's socio-physiology and his translation-experiment from the language of persons into the language of cognition harbour a conjuncture of promising elements for an agonistic politics appropriate to our historical juncture, as I will try to indicate in the Epilogue. At this point, the argument concerns only one such element: *pluralism*. For Nietzsche, genuine pluralism requires an openness to each and every person that allows us to understand each one as a unique, living multiplicity with a complex affective life, which can only thrive under conditions unique to it. The greatest obstacle to genuine pluralism

⁷⁶ '– Aber heißt dies nicht auch, die Individuen schwächen? Es ist etwas Neues zu schaffen: nicht ego und nicht tu und nicht omnes!'

⁷⁷ 'Uns von den Dingen **besitzen lassen** (nicht von Personen) und von einem möglichst großen Umfange wahrer Dinge! Was daraus wächst, ist abzuwarten: wir sind Ackerland für die Dinge. Es sollen Bilder des Daseins aus uns wachsen: und wir sollen so sein, wie diese Fruchtbarkeit uns nöthigt zu sein: unsere Neigungen Abneigungen sind die des Ackerlandes, das solche Früchte bringen soll.'

are moralities that confound this kind of attunement by operating with an abstract, substantive concept of personhood and demanding subordination to the interest of an extraneous social whole (functional egoism) or self-sacrifice to the unknown – be it ‘utility’, Kantian moral law or the greatest happiness for the greatest number:

Individual morality: as the result of a random throw of the dice a being is there, which seeks its conditions of existence – let us take *this* seriously not be fools to *sacrifice for the unknown!* (11[46] 9.458)⁷⁸

Radically individual morality depends on radically individual knowledge, what Nietzsche calls ‘die individuelle Wissenschaft’ (4[118] 9.130), where ‘knowledge’ and ‘science’ stand for practices of interpretation that take seriously the difficulty of knowing ‘*true things*’. As described in note 11[21] above, this means circumventing the false hypostases and oppositions of morality and attending to our acquisitive drive through the ‘contradictory’ practice of possessing and ‘being possessed by as great a range of *true things* as possible,’ so as to open our eyes to ‘the affinities and enmities among things, *multiplicities* and their law’ (11[21] 9.451).

Nietzsche’s socio-physiological *episteme* of openness can be taken further by considering the critical turn in the late Nietzsche’s late thought on question of resistance, in which the affirmation of resistance and the capacity to resist gives way to *non-resistance*, or the capacity *not* to resist. Examining how Nietzsche works out the *ideal of non-resistance* in the sphere of knowledge will give a more concrete, phenomenological turn to his socio-physiological *episteme* of openness, as well as a new and rather surprising twist to agonistic relations – into relations of non-resistance.

In chapter 3 we saw that Nietzsche promotes the active power to resist, a seeking out of resistance out as a stimulant or source of power, over and against the reactive ‘incapacity to resist’ (*Die Unfähigkeit zu Widerstand*). In the late 1880’s, however, the meaning of active resistance shifts from *the capacity to resist* to *resisting the impulse to resist* or the capacity to resist resisting, which Nietzsche describes as a kind of calm hostility or hostile openness. This shift coincides with an increasing preoccupation with the problem of *décadence* and a conceptual shift in his thought from the active-reactive dyad to the governing distinction between rapid reacting / hyper-sensitivity and slow or not reacting.⁷⁹ The concept of *décadence* will serve as a guiding thread for reconstructing Nietzsche’s changing views on resistance in this period.

The incapacity to resist, at the heart of the reactive meaning of *resistance*, is often linked to the condition of *décadence* by Nietzsche. As mentioned in the last chapter, *décadence*, recurrently identified with exhaustion (*Erschöpfung*), is for Nietzsche the congenital defect of philosophers and psychologists, leading them to think resistance and pain from a reactive standpoint. But it is first and foremost the signature illness of modernity. Here it is important to see that *décadence* is a peculiar, second order illness. For Nietzsche (following Claude Bernard) health and sickness are not essentially or qualitatively different or opposed.⁸⁰ To be sick is to deal with your sickness (*Krankheit*) in a sickly

⁷⁸ ‘Die individuelle Moral: in Folge eines zufälligen Wurfs im Würfelspiel ist ein Wesen da, welches seine Existenzbedingungen sucht – nehmen wir dies ernst und seien wir nicht Narren, zu opfern für das Unbekannte!’

⁷⁹ See Brusotti 2012.

⁸⁰ ‘Gesundheit und Krankheit sind nichts wesentlich Verschiedenes, wie es die alten Mediziner und heute noch einige Praktiker glauben. Man muß nicht distinkte Principien, oder Entitäten daraus machen, die sich um den lebenden Organismus streiten und aus ihm ihren Kampfplatz machen. Das ist altes

(*krankhaft*) manner. That is to say: to *be unable to resist* damaging, pathogenic influences, those influences that make you sick because they interfere with the conditions of your existence as the specific form of life that you are. Nietzsche can therefore write under the rubric of 'décadence':

What is inherited is not sickness, but *sickliness*:
the impotence in the resistance against the danger of damaging
incursions etc.; the broken power of resistance – in *moral* terms:
resignation and humility before the enemy. (14[65] 13.250)⁸¹

As we might expect, health is not opposed to sickness, but is the sick person's second order capacity to resist pathogenic influences:

The *energy of health* in sick persons is betrayed
by *brusque resistance* against *pathogenic* elements ... (14[211] 13.389)⁸²

But Nietzsche takes his diagnosis of *décadence* one step further, and in doing so he suggests a form of practice that goes beyond the (second order) opposition between the 'broken capacity for resistance' and 'brusque resistance'. The incapacity to resist hostile forces is referred back to a prior *incapacity to resist stimuli überhaupt*, a hyper-sensitivity or irritability typical of modern *décadence* and the prevailing morality of altruism:

[N]ot to be able to offer resistance when a stimulus is given,
but to *have to* follow it: this extreme irritability of the decadents [...] (14[209] 13.388)⁸³

Towards the history of *nihilism*.
Most general types of décadence:
[...]
2) : one loses the *power of resistance* towards
stimuli, – one is conditioned by fortuities: one
coarsens and exaggerates experiences to a monstrous degree...
a 'depersonalisation', a disgregation of the will –
– that is where an entire kind of morality belongs, the altruistic [morality]

Zeug und Geschwätz, das zu nichts mehr taugt. Thatsächlich giebt es zwischen diesen beiden Arten des Daseins nur Gradunterschiede: die Übertreibung, die Disproportion, die Nicht-Harmonie der normalen Phänomene constituiren den krankhaften Zustand. Claude Bernard.' (14[65] 13.250).

⁸¹ 'Was sich vererbt, das ist nicht die Krankheit, sondern die Krankhaftigkeit: die Unkraft im Widerstande gegen die Gefahr schädlicher Einwanderungen usw.; die gebrochene Widerstandskraft – moralisch ausgedrückt: die Resignation und Demuth vor dem Feinde.'

⁸² 'Die Energie der Gesundheit verräth sich bei Kranken in dem brüskten Widerstande gegen die krankmachenden Elemente...'

⁸³ '[N]icht Widerstand leisten können, wo ein Reiz gegeben ist, sondern ihm folgen müssen: diese extreme Irritabilität der *décadents* [...]'.
[...].

One might still expect Nietzsche to prescribe the capacity to offer brusque resistance, to-be-an-enemy (*Feind-sein-können*) against such forms of altruism. But what we find is that where *décadence* signifies the *incapacity to resist stimuli*, Nietzsche's prescribes *the capacity to resist stimuli*. And the capacity to resist stimuli need not translate into enmity, warfare or wanting-to-resist (*Feind-sein-wollen*), but can entail precisely: *the capacity to resist resisting*. Where the stimulus is one of external resistance, the capacity to resist this stimulus involves: not resisting it, not reacting, that is, the capacity to overlook and *not-resist resistance*. Precisely this capacity is identified with the philosopher as an '[a]scending type' (*Aufgangs-Typus*): 'Strength in calmness. In relative indifference and difficulty reacting.'⁸⁵

Nietzsche's anti-decadent philosophical counter-praxis of calm and non-resistance is taken further in GD Deutschen. Here the 'objectivity' prized by modern science is referred back to a compulsion to react to everything, to an incapacity *not* to react, against which Nietzsche prescribes an *episteme* based on a kind of hostile calm or openness

All unspirituality, all commonness rests on the incapacity to offer resistance to a stimulus – one *must* react, one follows every impulse. In many cases such a compulsion is already sickness [morbidly], decline, a symptom of exhaustion, – almost everything that the unphilosophical crudity designates by the name 'vice' is merely that physiological incapacity *not* to react. (GD Deutschen 6 6.108)⁸⁶

If reactive forms of knowing are rooted in the incapacity to resist stimuli, the counter-capacity to resist stimuli makes possible an active form of knowing or seeing:

Learning to *see* – habituating the eye to calm, to patience, to letting things come to it; learning to defer judgement, to peruse and grasp the particular case from all sides. That is the *first* preliminary schooling in spirituality: *not* to react immediately to a stimulus, but to get a hold over the inhibiting, concluding instincts in hand. (GD Deutschen 6 6.108)⁸⁷

⁸⁴ 'Zur Geschichte des Nihilismus.

Allgemeinste Typen der *décadence*:

[...]

2) : man verliert die Widerstands-Kraft gegen die Reize, – man wird bedingt durch die Zufälle: man vergrößert und vergrößert die Erlebnisse ins Ungeheure... eine 'Entpersönlichung', eine Disgregation des Willens – – dahin gehört eine ganze Art Moral, die altruistische

⁸⁵ 'Problem des Philosophen und des wissenschaftlichen Menschen.

Stärke in der Ruhe. In der relativen Gleichgültigkeit und Schwierigkeit, zu reagieren.' (14[83] 13.262)

⁸⁶ 'Alle Ungeistigkeit, alle Gemeinheit beruht auf dem Unvermögen, einem Reize Widerstand zu leisten – man *muss* reagieren, man folgt jedem Impulse. In vielen Fällen ist ein solches Müssen bereits Krankhaftigkeit, Niedergang, Symptom der Erschöpfung, – fast Alles, was die unphilosophische Rohheit mit dem Namen 'Laster' bezeichnet, ist bloss jenes physiologische Unvermögen, *nicht* zu reagieren.'

⁸⁷ 'Sehen lernen – dem Auge die Ruhe, die Geduld, das An-sich-herankommen-lassen angewöhnen; das Urtheil hinausschieben, den Einzelfall von allen Seiten umgehen und umfassen lernen. Das ist die erste

The attitude or practice of openness, patience, calm made possible by the capacity to resist reacting could not be further from the pugnacious ideal of active agency we are used to associate with Nietzsche as a philosopher of conflict. This is not, however, to strip Nietzsche's epistemic ideal of all hostility or resistance:

[O]ne will have become slow, mistrustful, resistant as a *learner* in general. One will allow the alien, the *novel* of every kind to approach one with hostile calm at first, – one will draw one's hand back from it. (GD Deutschen 6 6.109)⁸⁸

The capacity to resist stimuli makes possible a form of resistance that is *qualitatively distinct* from the forwards-grasping, coercive forms of agency usually associated with Nietzsche. Instead, it is a capacity to *resist resisting*, which makes possible a non-coercive openness, a resistance to conceptual closure that would allow us to acknowledge what is radically other (*Fremdes*) and particular in its otherness and particularity. When viewed as modality of our interactions with others, it gives a tangible form to Nietzsche's socio-physiology of openness – of 'being possessed by as great a range of *true things* as possible' – and opens the prospect of non-coercive, non-oppressive forms of power. These are, I believe, of importance for agonistic politics and its aspiration of to be genuinely pluralistic. In the final chapter, I consider a further permutation of our affective relations to others to come out of Nietzsche's philosophy of conflict with potential for agonistic politics: agonal hatred.

Verschulung zur Geistigkeit: auf einen Reiz nicht sofort reagieren, sondern die hemmenden, die abschliessenden Instinkte in die Hand bekommen.'

⁸⁸ '[M]an wird als Lernender überhaupt langsam, misstrauisch, widerstrebend geworden sein. Man wird Fremdes, Neues jeder Art zunächst mit feindseliger Ruhe herankommen lassen, – man wird seine Hand davor zurückziehen.'