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# Nietzsche on Productive Resistance

Herman Siemens

*‘What is happiness? – The feeling that power grows, that a resistance is overcome.  
Not contentment, but more power; not peace at all, but war [...]’* (AC 2)

*‘Was ist Glück? – Das Gefühl davon, dass die Macht wächst, dass ein Widerstand  
überwunden wird.*

*Nicht Zufriedenheit, sondern mehr Macht; nicht Friede überhaupt, sondern Krieg [...]’*

*‘Resistance is the form of force – in peace as in war [...]’* (NL 1881 11[303], KSA 9.557)  
*‘Das Widerstreben ist die Form der Kraft – im Frieden wie im Kriege [...]’*

## Introduction

An important element of Nietzsche’s lifelong project to transvaluate all values is to contest the Christian and post-Christian condemnation of conflict in favour of ‘love’, ‘peace’, or ‘harmony’ with the thesis that conflict has untold productive qualities. One of the distinctive features of Nietzsche’s understanding of conflict, and the key to the productive qualities he ascribes to conflict, is the claim that resistance need not be something that oppresses or reduces freedom, creativity and power, but can act as a *stimulant*.

In this chapter, I will consider the viability of this thought by examining some of the key meanings of the term ‘resistance’ or *Widerstand* (and related terms<sup>1</sup>) in Nietzsche’s vocabulary. As a contributor to the *Nietzsche Dictionary* project,<sup>2</sup> I believe it is essential to raise the question of the meaning of specific terms before launching into philosophical interpretations on the assumption that we know what they mean. The *plurality of meanings and connotations* for any given term – as we see again in this volume – is key to the richness of Nietzsche’s thought. In my experience, this exercise has also been extremely fruitful in bringing to light themes and problems that otherwise escape our attention. In the case of ‘resistance’, I will concentrate on the ontology of power developed by Nietzsche in the 1880s and hope to show how focusing on this term, crucial yet somewhat submerged, brings some neglected

aspects of his ontology to the surface. In particular, I will argue that the concept of resistance exposes a key tension in his ontology concerning the *status of conflict*. In a nutshell, my thesis is that Nietzsche develops an active concept of resistance, but also 'deconstructs' it by showing that it depends on non-resistance. Indeed, Nietzsche's critique of resistance goes so far as to ground his concept of philosophical warfare in a practice of hostile love.

Like so many key terms in Nietzsche's vocabulary, 'resistance' (*Widerstand*) has a range of different meanings and uses. The basic and recurrent meaning of 'resistance' (its *Grundbedeutung*), following normal usage, is: an obstacle, impediment, hindrance (*Hemmung, Hemmniss, Hindernis*) to something, usually an activity or impulse. But this can carry positive-normative or negative-critical connotations in Nietzsche's texts, depending on the conditions under which resistance is encountered or exercised, and/or on the consequences it has for the activity or initiative in question. In his writings from 1880 on, to which I restrict myself in this chapter, Nietzsche develops his ontology of power, often under the rubric 'will to power'. As we would expect, resistance is an indispensable descriptive term in these contexts, but it is also used affirmatively: to affirm power entails that one affirm (the) resistance (upon which power relations depend). What is more surprising are his critical uses of 'resistance'. Resistance is criticized in four main contexts:

1. As the resistance (*Widerstands-Kraft*) of the Many against the One – the great or exceptional individual(s) – and especially the hostility (*Feindseligkeit*) of contemporary democrats, socialists and revolutionaries towards the idea of a non-universal or 'exceptional claim', the 'exceptional right or privilege' needed by deviant individuals to survive in today's mass society.<sup>3</sup>
2. As the condition for the supreme cognitive values of objectivity and universality.<sup>4</sup>
3. In the context of Nietzsche's critique of 'free will': resistance is part of the false phenomenology of 'free will', which trades on a misinterpretation of the actual physiology of human agency.<sup>5</sup>
4. In the context of Nietzsche's critique of mechanism and the mechanistic explanation of change, as denoting the *reactive* character of the mechanistic concept of force, against which Nietzsche tries to develop an active concept of force.

In this chapter, I will consider only the critique of objectivity and mechanism (2 and 4 above). They are of importance for my thesis, since they mark a shift from resistance to non-resistance in Nietzsche's concept of power and open the prospect of *non-coercive forms of power*. But I begin with the affirmative meanings of 'resistance', as they occur in the context of Nietzsche's ontology of power, with a view towards understanding the concept of productive resistance or resistance as stimulant.

## I Affirmative uses of ‘resistance’

My interpretation is organized around a note from the late *Nachlass*, where, in the guise of a retrospective account of the ‘artist’s metaphysics’ in his first work, *Die Geburt der Tragödie*, Nietzsche describes some key aspects of his late ontology of power:

[A] Der Wille zum Schein, zur Illusion, zur Täuschung, zum Werden und Wechseln gilt hier als tiefer und ursprünglicher ‘metaphysischer’ als der Wille zur Wahrheit, zur Wirklichkeit zum Sein: – letzterer ist selbst bloß eine Form des Willens zur Illusion. [B] Ebenso gilt die Lust als ursprünglicher als der Schmerz: der Schmerz ist nur bedingt als eine Folge des Willens zur Lust (des Willens zum Werden, Wachsen, Gestalten, folglich zur Überwältigung, zum Widerstand, zum Krieg, zur Zerstörung) [C] Es wird ein höchster Zustand der Daseins-Bejahung concipiert, in dem sogar der Schmerz, jede Art von Schmerz als Mittel der Steigerung ewig einbegriffen ist: der *tragisch-dionysische* Zustand. (NL 1888 14[24], KSA 13.229)

[A] Here the will to semblance, to illusion, to deception, to becoming and change counts as deeper and more originary, more ‘metaphysical’ than the will to truth, to reality, to being: – the latter is itself just a form of the will to illusion. [B] Likewise pleasure counts as more originary than pain: pain is just conditioned as a consequence of the will to pleasure (of the will to becoming, growth, forming, consequently to overpowering, to resistance, to war, to destruction) [C] A highest state of the affirmation of existence is conceived, in which even pain, every kind of pain is eternally included as a means of intensification: the *tragic-Dionysian* state.

These lines articulate three thoughts that are essential for understanding Nietzsche’s affirmative uses of resistance: [A] *the critique of substance*; [B] *the necessity of conflict* – but also: *the primacy of becoming, growth and pleasure over conflict and resistance*; and [C] *resistance as stimulant*.

### [A] *The critique of substance:*

The opening line makes two moves against the substance ontology that has dominated Western metaphysics. It asserts the primacy of becoming over being, of the will to becoming (‘Wille zum Schein, zur Illusion, zur Täuschung, zum Werden und Wechseln’) over the will to being (‘Wille zur Wahrheit, zur Wirklichkeit, zum Sein’). It then subordinates being to becoming and integrates it into becoming: being is posited as a product of becoming in the form of the will to illusion (‘– letzterer ist selbst bloß eine Form des Willens zur Illusion’). These moves encapsulate Nietzsche’s

confrontation with the metaphysics of being (*Seinsmetaphysik*) that has dominated Western philosophy, and with three characteristic positions or moves in specific:<sup>6</sup>

1. becoming is opposed to being (substance);
2. becoming is denied reality: it is not real or less real than being; and
3. becoming is denied the independence that belongs properly to being.

By means of these three claims, metaphysics (substance ontology) explains becoming from fixed, invariable principles. But in doing so, it *negates* becoming and so fails to account for change or motion: for the dynamic character of reality – at least according to Nietzsche, who reconfigures the relation of becoming and being in a way that opposes all three positions of the metaphysics of being. Through the subordination of being to becoming in the above text he reverses the ontological priority and greater reality of being over becoming (positions 2 and 3 of traditional metaphysics), and by *integrating* being into becoming as a product of the 'will to illusion' he opposes their opposition in traditional metaphysics (position 1). This last move is perhaps better expressed as the claim that life or reality as becoming or occurrence (*Geschehen*) has the character of an incessant *Feststellen*, a multiple fixing (*Fest-setzen*) or positing (*Setzen*) of being within an ongoing struggle or conflict of forces:

All occurrence, all movement, all becoming as a fixing [*Feststellen*] of relations of degree and power, as a *struggle* ... (NL 1887 9[91], KSA 12.385)

Alles Geschehen, alle Bewegung, alles Werden als ein Feststellen von Grad- und Kraftverhältnissen, als ein *Kampf* ...

Being, while derivative of becoming, is not opposed to it (position 1 of traditional metaphysics), but is dynamized and pluralized as that which emerges from the essential or characteristic tendency of becoming.

In response to his critique of substance ontology, then, Nietzsche attempts to formulate a counter-ontology of becoming that would do justice to the reality of change and movement. In his *dynamic, relational ontology of occurrence* (*Geschehen*), the relational character of occurrence ('die Relations-Charakter des Geschehens': NL 1884, 26[36], KSA 11.157) necessarily takes the form of conflict or struggle, because these relations are thought as relations of power or force. As Nietzsche puts it elsewhere:

The degree of resistance and the degree of power-over – that is what it is about in all occurrence.

Der Grad von Widerstand und der Grad von Übermacht – darum handelt <es> sich bei allem Geschehen. (NL 1888 14[79], KSA 13.257)

The *primary meaning* of 'resistance' in the context of Nietzsche's ontology is given by his dynamic, relational concept of power or rather *powers*, that is: (1) power as activity, the activity of increasing power, which can only be an *overpowering*, because

(2) power as activity can only act *in relation to* the resistance offered by other counter-powers.<sup>7</sup> The idea of a single power or force that somehow generates relations from within is an absurdity, since power or force is intrinsically relative or relational. A force cannot be a force in isolation, but only in relation to other forces that limit and determine it, while being limited and determined by it.<sup>8</sup> The only quality of power or force is activity, but a force can only act in relation to the resistance of (an)other force(s). These relations are therefore relations of struggle, conflict, tension (*Kampf*, *Streit*, *Spannung*), reciprocal action or overpowering-and-resistance. Nietzsche's ontology is an ontology of conflict, and resistance or *Widerstand* is the correlate of his relational concept of power or force. It is implied in the analytic structure of Nietzsche's concept of power or force, so that Nietzsche can write:

Resisting is the form of force – in peace as in war [...]

Das Widerstreben ist die Form der Kraft – im Frieden wie im Kriege [...]  
(NL 11[303], KSA 9.557)

[B] *On the necessity of conflict, and the primacy of becoming, growth and pleasure over conflict and resistance:*

In the second line [B], Nietzsche asserts the necessity of resistance or the will to resistance (the 'Wille[.] zur Überwältigung, zum Widerstand, zum Krieg, zur Zerstörung'). But he does so by *deriving* the will to resistance and the concomitant pain of resisting from the primary principle of reality: 'the will to becoming, to growth, to pleasure' ('Wille zum Werden, zum Wachsen, zur Lust'): because becoming (*Werden*), in the form of growth (*Wachsen*) necessarily encounters (cannot be conceived without) resistance, the will to growth implies – 'as its consequence' (*folglich*) – the will to resistance needed to overcome these resistances. In this thought, resistance occurs in two forms: (1) as the correlate of Nietzsche's dynamic-relational concept of power: becoming takes the form of power, that is, power as the activity of increasing power (*Wachsen*), which can only be exercised (and thought) in relation to resistance(s). But resistance also occurs as (2) the will to resist the resistance of the counter-power(s), to react so as to overcome them for the sake of growth and intensification (*Wachsen*, *Steigerung*). This gives us a first formulation of Nietzsche's *active concept of resistance*.

As a form of the primary principle of reality – the will to becoming, to growth, or the activity of increasing power – the will to resistance is affirmed by Nietzsche. But there is also a *tension* or *discontinuity* between this second line of the opening text and the ontology of conflict implied by his relational concept of power: conflict and resistance are indeed necessary, but only 'as a consequence' of the primary principle of occurrence or becoming, and their derivative or conditioned status in this line intimates Nietzsche's more critical views on resistance as *a reactive concept of power* over and against the active power of growth or intensification (*Wachsen*, *Steigerung*) that precedes it. Indeed, as we shall see, Nietzsche's critique of resistance goes so far as to disconnect active power from resistance altogether, as a form of non-resistance, and points towards non-coercive forms of power that precede the entire domain of conflict.

[C] *Resistance as stimulant:*

The third line of the note broaches the key affirmative meaning of resistance in Nietzsche's ontology: resistance as stimulant. It does so under the sign of pain (i.e. the pain of resisting/being-resisted) in the context of Nietzsche's concept of the Dionysian as the highest form of life affirmation:

Es wird ein höchster Zustand der Daseins-Bejahung concipirt, in dem sogar der Schmerz, jede Art von Schmerz als Mittel der Steigerung ewig einbegriffen ist: der tragisch-dionysische Zustand.

[C] A highest state of the affirmation of existence is conceived, in which even pain, every kind of pain is eternally included as a means of intensification: the tragic-Dionysian state. (quoted above)

Here, Nietzsche mobilizes the primacy of (the will to) pleasure over pain (from line [B]) against Schopenhauerian life-negation. Against Schopenhauer's attempts to use pain as an argument against life, Nietzsche integrates pain *within* life, as part of its intrinsic dynamic of growth or intensification (*Steigerung*) of power and pleasure. To be precise, in the Dionysian state, pain or, rather, resistance and the concomitant pain of resistance do not reduce power, inhibit desire or pleasure; they act as a means or *stimulant* for the intensification of power-pleasure. Hence, to affirm life as power-pleasure also means to affirm the resistance-pain that acts as the stimulant of life.

A related, more tangible example of this is the sexual act, which Nietzsche describes as follows:

There are even cases where a kind of pleasure is conditioned by a certain *rhythmic sequence* of small unpleasure-stimuli: a very rapid growth of the feeling of power, of pleasure is thereby reached. This is the case e.g. with tickling, also with sexual tickling in the act of coitus: we see in this form unpleasure acting as an ingredient of pleasure. It seems a small hindrance that is overcome and upon which again a small hindrance immediately follows, which is again overcome – this play of resistance and victory arouses that total-feeling of overflowing excessive power, which makes up the essence of pleasure, to the strongest degree. –

Es giebt sogar Fälle, wo eine Art Lust bedingt ist durch eine gewisse *rhythmische Abfolge* kleiner Unlust-Reize: damit wird ein sehr schnelles Anwachsen des Machtgefühls, des Lustgefühls erreicht. Dies ist der Fall z.B. beim Kitzel, auch beim geschlechtlichen Kitzel im Akt des coitus: wir sehen dergestalt die Unlust als Ingredienz der Lust thätig. Es scheint, eine kleine Hemmung, die überwunden wird und der sofort wieder eine kleine Hemmung folgt, die wieder überwunden wird – dieses Spiel von Widerstand und Sieg regt jenes Gesamtgefühl von überschüssiger überflüssiger Macht am stärksten an, das das Wesen der Lust ausmacht. – (NL 1888 14[173], KSA 13.358)

The point of Nietzsche's account of coitus is to break with an oppositional model of pleasure-pain by showing how pain (resistance) can be an ingredient or stimulant of pleasure (empowerment). Resistance-pain, far from being opposed to the feeling of power-pleasure as the feeling of impotence or loss of power, acts as a 'condition' or 'ingredient' of sexual pleasure; indeed, as a *stimulant* that arouses the pleasure of 'overflowing power' to the maximum. The notion of resistance as stimulant is made explicit and generalized in the subsequent note, where Nietzsche describes unpleasure – identified with the hindering (*Hemmung*) of power by resistance – as 'a normal fact [*Faktum*], the normal ingredient of every organic occurrence':

It is so little the case that unpleasure necessarily has a *reduction of our feeling of power* as its consequence that, in average cases, it works precisely as a stimulus of the feeling of power, – the hindrance is the *stimulus* of this will to power.

Die Unlust hat also so wenig nothwendig eine *Verminderung unseres Machtgefühls* zur Folge, daß, in durchschnittlichen Fällen, sie gerade als Reiz auf dieses Machtgefühl wirkt, – das Hemmniß ist der *Stimulus* dieses Willens zur Macht. (NL 1888 14[174], KSA 13.361)

Nietzsche goes on to distinguish two forms of unpleasure, depending on the consequences for a given form of life of the hindrance or restriction (*Hemmniss*) of its power through the encounter with resistance. In one case, the unpleasure felt in the restriction of its power has an actual loss of power and a feeling of impotence as its consequence; unable to resist the 'excessive stimulation' (*übermäßige Reizung*) exerted by the resistance encountered, it squanders energy uselessly (*Vergeudung*) resulting in a 'deep reduction [*Verminderung*] and depression [*Herabstimmung*] of the will to power, a measurable loss of strength'. In this case, 'resistance' signifies *energetic loss* or *disempowerment*. In the other case, the unpleasure of restriction (*Hemmniss*) acts as a 'stimulus' (*Reiz, Reizmittel*) for the intensification or strengthening (*Verstärkung*) of power. Resistance is therefore sought out and challenged (*Herausforderung des Widerstehenden*), for the intensification of power that comes from resisting and overcoming it:

[E]very victory, every feeling of pleasure, every occurrence presupposes a resistance that has been overcome

[J]eder Sieg, jedes Lustgefühl, jedes Geschehen setzt einen überwundenen Widerstand voraus. (NL 1888 14[174], KSA 13.360)

Here 'resistance' signifies, not disempowerment but a *source of power, a stimulant*. The philosophers and psychologists, Nietzsche argues, have mistaken the first kind of unpleasure, that of 'exhaustion' (*Erschöpfung*), for *all* unpleasure and have neglected unpleasure as stimulant. But what, then, makes for these different kinds of unpleasure? In the background of Nietzsche's distinction is a twofold differential. The first is a *power-differential*. Forms of life that lack the power to react and overcome the restriction of their power by an overwhelming or excessive resistance (Nietzsche writes of 'übermäßige Reizung') experience and conceive resistance as loss of power,



as disempowering. According to Nietzsche, this incapacity to resist (*Die Unfähigkeit zu Widerstand*) is a sign of exhaustion (*Erschöpfung*) and typical of *décadence* – the signature illness of modernity, as well as the congenital defect of philosophers and psychologists! On the other side are forms of life with the power or capacity to resist and overcome the resistance(s) they seek out, and for them resistance is empowering (i.e. the term 'resistance' signifies a source of power). The second differential behind the distinct kinds of unpleasure is that between *active and reactive forms of life*. Where 'resistance' signifies *disempowerment*, it is described from the standpoint of one who has *reacted* to a prior overwhelming resistance, failed to resist it and suffered a loss of power. Where 'resistance' signifies a *source of power*, it is described from the standpoint of one who *will react* to a resistance, but it is a resistance that was *actively* sought out in the first place (precisely as a source of power). In this light, we can refine Nietzsche's *active concept of resistance* (the will to resist and overcome the resistance of counter-powers for the sake of growth or intensification: *Steigerung*) by distinguishing *active* from *reactive* meanings of 'resistance', depending on the position from which it is uttered: an *active position of strength or power* on one side (resistance = a source of power/empowering), or a *reactive position of weakness or lack of power vis-à-vis* the resistance (resistance = loss of power/disempowering).

Central to Nietzsche's active concept of resistance is the thought that *the actual hindrance (Hemmnis) of my power by a resistance and the pain it engenders can give me the feeling (not of obstruction or limitation, but) of power-pleasure*. The absence of this thought among philosophers and psychologists expresses their *reactive* standpoint, which begins to think, not from excess and the activity of increasing power-pleasure, but from a lack of power and from unpleasure – a 'No!' to the outside. From this standpoint it is impossible to break through the meaning of resistance as *disempowering* to its active meaning as a *source of power-pleasure*.

## II Towards a critique of resistance

### II.1 Nietzsche's local ontology

Turning to Nietzsche's more critical views on resistance, I begin with the claim in line B of the opening text that the entire domain of conflict, resistance and overpowering is *derivative and secondary* to the primary principle of becoming, growth and form-giving. In the context of Nietzsche's critique of substance (line A) we saw that the concept of resistance is intrinsic to his *dynamic counter-ontology of conflict*, as the form of power or force. Yet in the second line (B) Nietzsche casts the dynamics of conflict and resistance as somehow derivative of becoming and growth. One way of putting the problem is this: strictly speaking, relations of struggle – of overpowering-and-resisting – can only hold (or be thought as holding) among entities or unities of some kind. Yet, Nietzsche's critique of substance forbids the positing of durable things or unities of any kind as originary. We see several approaches to this problem in his writings. In the present context, I will consider just one, namely, the attempt to derive the entities or unities engaged in relations of conflict from the dynamic principle of becoming or occurrence (*Geschehen*).

The difficulty is to explain how the unities-in-relations-of-conflict can be formed out of prior processes – *without smuggling unities or unitary grounds into the explanans*.

We see Nietzsche tackling this in a *Nachlass* note, where he argues against ‘the absolute concept “atom” and “individual”’ that the ‘struggle’ (*Kampf*) among atoms derives from prior *processes of aggregation or condensation (Verdichtung)* and *processes of dissolution or thinning-out (Verdünnung)*:

The atom struggles for its condition, but other atoms attack it so as to increase their power.

*Both* processes, that of dissolution and that of condensation [are] to be understood *as effects* of the will to power.

All the way down to its smallest fragments, it [the will to power—HS] has the will to condense itself [*sich zu verdichten*]. But it is *constrained* to condense itself in a specific direction **around** itself [*gezwungen, um sich irgendwohin zu verdichten*], to thin itself out at another place [*sich zu verdünnen*] etc. (NL 1885 43[2], KSA 11.702)

Das Atom kämpft um seinen Zustand, aber andere Atome greifen es an, um ihre Kraft zu vermehren.

*Beide* Prozesse: den der Auflösung und den der Verdichtung *als Wirkungen* des Willens zur Macht zu begreifen.

Bis in seine kleinsten Fragmente hinein hat er [der Wille zur Macht- HS] den Willen, sich zu verdichten. Aber er *wird gezwungen, um sich irgendwohin zu verdichten*, an anderer Stelle sich zu verdünnen usw.

Here, the struggle among atoms is explained with reference to the general dynamic principle of *spontaneous, effective activity*, where this activity is specified as *the activity of increasing power through processes of aggregation or condensation*. This general principle is, however, only actualized or effective in *concrete, particular* situations, where the processes of condensation constitute power-complexes, such as atoms, which engage in a struggle to increase their power. Thus, even if all power or ‘will to power’ is by definition the activity of increasing power through condensation, the actual *direction or form* this takes for a given power-complex is *limited or constrained (gezwungen)* by the kind of resistance it encounters from the other power-complexes in its vicinity. Here ‘resistance’ takes on the specific meaning of ‘constraint’ (*Zwang*), that is, the *limits* imposed on a given power-complex by the counter-powers around it, where those limits determine the *direction and form* it takes. Resistance is what actualizes or realizes the general dynamic principle of *spontaneous, effective activity*.

Here, the concept of resistance derives its meaning as ‘constraint’ from the peculiar character of Nietzsche’s ‘ontology’: its orientation to *concrete, local* power-complexes for understanding the actual forms and directions taken by the spontaneous, effective activity that is reality. Nietzsche has no general ontology in the sense of a general or universal theory of reality. The only general principle is the dynamic principle of effective activity: the activity of increasing power. But this only becomes actual or effective in particular, local complexes of powers and counter-powers. In this radically immanent, local ontology, then, reality consists of antagonistic relations of power-over and resistance,



Was ist 'passiv'? widerstehen und reagiren. *Gehehmt* sein  
 in der vorwärtsgreifenden Bewegung; also  
 ein Handeln des Widerstandes und der Reaktion  
 Was ist 'aktiv'? nach Macht ausgreifend [...] (NL 1886 5[64], KSA 12.209)

Here, the active concept of power as (the will to) growth, increasing power, or intensification (*Steigerung*) translates into a spontaneous forward-looking form of agency, which Nietzsche opposes to a reactive form of agency that is incapable of forwards movement and merely reacts or resists. In Section I, active and reactive meanings of 'resistance' were distinguished, depending on whether it is conceived from an active position of strength or a reactive position of weakness vis-à-vis the resistance. Nietzsche now takes this distinction to breaking point by *disconnecting* active power and agency from resistance altogether. Resistance or, rather, the *will to resistance* is confined entirely to the reactive sphere, criticized and opposed to active forms of agency.

The implication of Nietzsche's critique of resistance is that active power can and must be conceived independently of resistance. This implication is pursued in his critique of mechanism. At issue for Nietzsche is the mechanistic account of motion and change. If traditional metaphysics, in subordinating becoming to being, fails to do justice to the dynamic character of reality, this goes equally for mechanistic science, which falsifies motion by operating with fictional unities (particles, atoms, etc.) that subordinate it to being on the 'doer-deed' scheme. Thus, in a *Nachlass* note dedicated to the critique of mechanism, Nietzsche tries to think away all the 'beings' or unities that condition and populate the mechanistic world ('things', atoms, causes, etc.):

If we eliminate these ingredients: what remains are not things, but dynamic quanta in a relation of tension to all other dynamic quanta: whose essence consists of their relation to all other quanta, in their 'having effect on' these — [...] (NL 1888 14[79], KSA 13.259)

Eliminiren wir diese Zuthaten: so bleiben keine Dinge übrig, sondern dynamische Quanta, in einem Spannungsverhältniß zu allen anderen dynamischen Quanten: deren Wesen in ihrem Verhältniß zu allen anderen Quanten besteht, in ihrem 'Wirken' auf dieselben — [...]

This emphatic statement of Nietzsche's dynamic, relational concept of power is then followed by the decisive critical point:

Mechanics formulates the consequences as they appear, what is more it does so semiotically in sensate and psychological means of expression, it does not touch upon the causal force ...

die Mechanik formulirt Folgeerscheinungen noch dazu semiotisch in sinnlichen und psychologischen Ausdrucksmitteln, sie berührt die ursächliche Kraft nicht ... (NL 1888 14[79], KSA 13.259)

This connects with a broader claim of Nietzsche's that mechanism draws its intuitive appeal from the tactile experience of resistance:

Mechanistic force is familiar to us only as a *feeling of resistance*: and this is only *interpreted* in sensate form with *pressure and thrust*, not *explained*.

Die mechanische Kraft ist uns nur als ein *Widerstandsgefühl* bekannt: und dieses wird mit *Druck und Stoß* nur sinnfällig *ausgelegt*, nicht *erklärt*. (NL 1885 2[69], KSA 12.92)

Here we get a clear indication that the concept of resistance somehow falls short of explaining the dynamic character of reality. In the mechanistic account of motion, causes presuppose an exogenous push or thrust (*Stoss*), and change is explained as a local movement of atoms or particles caused by an external push.<sup>9</sup> In other words, mechanism explains (change of) movement (*Bewegung*) as the *reactive effect of an exogenous cause*. Nietzsche, in search of an *active* concept of force, draws on the Leibnizian concept of a 'living' or dynamic force, conceived as an *endogenous* source of activity.<sup>10</sup> What Nietzsche calls 'dynamic quanta' in the above note are forces in this sense: *endogenous sources of activity* stripped of any underlying monad or substance. But this just raises the question: If there are in reality no beings (things, atoms, causes, subjects) that interact, but only the reciprocal 'effects' of forces without substance, what then makes such reciprocal 'effecting' without underlying causes possible? How can force or power as *spontaneous effective activity* without substance be thought?

In response, Nietzsche takes up the notion of aggregation or condensation discussed earlier and turns it against mechanism. The mechanistic concept of cause as an exogenous 'push' (*Stoß*), he reminds us, presupposes a whole that can push. Since the critique of substance forbids the assumption of atoms or unities of any kind, mechanism must explain the formation of relational wholes that can act as mechanistic causes; only this cannot be done in mechanistic terms (since it presupposes wholes). Instead, Nietzsche appeals to the general dynamic principle of *spontaneous, effective activity*, understood as *the activity of increasing power through processes of aggregation or condensation*. Only now it is radicalized into an *active concept of force* that is opposed to the *reactive, mechanistic concept of force*, yet precedes it.

*Thrust* [or *Push*] is not the first mechanistic matter of fact, but rather that something exists, which can thrust [push], that aggregative herd-state of atoms, which is not the same as dust, but rather holds together: here is precisely *not-thrust* [*not-push*] and nonetheless force, not only of striving against, of resistance, but first of all of order, integration, adherence, *guiding* [*bridging*] and *connecting force*. A lump like this can then '*thrust*' [*push*'] as a whole!

Der *Stoß* ist nicht die erste mechanische Tatsache, sondern daß etwas da ist, welches stoßen kann, jener Aggregat-Heerdenzustand von Atomen, der nicht gleich Staub ist, sondern zusammenhält: hier ist gerade *Nicht-Stoß* und trotzdem Kraft, nicht nur des Gegenstrebens, Widerstands, sondern vor allem der Anordnung, Einordnung, Anhänglichkeit, *überleitenden* und *zusammenknüpfenden Kraft*. So ein Klümpchen kann nachher als Ganzes '*stoßen*'! (NL 1881 11[264], KSA 9.542)

Or again:

Pressure and thrust something unspeakably late, derivative, non-originary. Indeed it already presupposes something that *holds together* and *can* press and thrust! But whence might it hold together?

Druck und Stoß etwas unsäglich Spätes, Abgeleitetes, Unursprüngliches. Es setzt ja schon etwas voraus, das *zusammenhält* und drücken und stoßen *kann*! Aber woher hielte es zusammen? (NL 1885–6 2[105], KSA 12.112)

If mechanism explains change as the reactive effect of an exogenous ‘push’, Nietzsche’s force is ‘not-push’, but instead the activities of ordering, integrating, adhering, guiding, connecting (*Anordnung, Einordnung, Anhänglichkeit, überleitenden und zusammenknüpfenden Kraft*) that form the unities capable of ‘push’. In this context, the concept of resistance is associated with the reactive concept of force (*Gegenstreben*), criticized for not explaining motion, and opposed to an active concept of force, conceived in anti-mechanistic terms as ‘not-push’, *spontaneous and non-coercive organizing force*, or rather: *forces* that form relational unities. At the limit of Nietzsche’s critique of mechanism, the concept of active force is completely divorced from the dynamics of conflict and resistance, and we can speak of active power as ‘not-thrust’ and ‘not-resistance’.

## Interlude

So far, we have seen Nietzsche adopting a number of positions vis-à-vis resistance.

1. As the analytic correlate of his dynamic-relational concept of power qua intensification (*Steigerung*) [A]

But also:

2. As derivative and secondary to the primary dynamic principle of *Steigerung* [B].

Within the space or tension opened by these two positions, we see various attempts to formulate an *active concept of resistance*, beginning with:

3. The will to resist and overcome the resistance of counter-powers for the sake of growth and intensification (*Wachsen, Steigerung*);
4. In the context of ‘resistance’ as stimulus [C], the active concept of resistance was then qualified by distinguishing it from a *reactive meaning* of resistance: as a *stimulant or source of power* (rather than as energetic loss or disempowerment), depending on the position of utterance: an active position of power–pleasure (as distinct from a reactive position of impotence over and against resistance). Here the claim is that the *actual hindrance* (*Hemmnis*) of my power by a resistance and the pain it engenders can give me the *feeling* (not of weakness, but) of *power–pleasure*.
5. In the last position we considered, active power and agency are divorced from resistance altogether. The very possibility of resistance presupposes a *qualitatively*

*different form of power and agency (not-push, not-resistance): a spontaneous and non-coercive organizing force, or rather: organizing forces, which form the relational unities capable of push and resistance. Resistance, or rather: the will to resistance is confined entirely to the reactive sphere, so that strictly speaking, there can be no such thing as an active concept of resistance. Nietzsche's active concept of resistance is collapsed into not-resistance.*

### II.3 Décadence or the incapacity to resist (resisting)

In his critique of mechanism, then, Nietzsche performs a proto-deconstruction of the active form of resistance into not-resistance by showing its dependence on its opposite. But this move is not confined to his critique of mechanism, and can also be made out in his account of *décadence* as *the incapacity to resist* (*Die Unfähigkeit zu Widerstand*) that lies at the heart of the *reactive meaning of resistance*. As mentioned, *décadence*, often identified with exhaustion (*Erschöpfung*), is for Nietzsche the congenital defect of philosophers and psychologists, leading them to think resistance from a reactive position of weakness. But it is also 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.<sup>11</sup> To be sick is to deal with your sickness (*Krankheit*) in a sickly (*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 resisting the danger of damaging  
incursions etc.; the broken power of resistance – in *moral* terms:  
resignation and humility before the enemy

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. (NL 1888 14[65], KSA 13.250)

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  
in the *brusque resistance* against *pathogenic* elements ...

Die *Energie der Gesundheit* verräth sich bei Kranken  
in dem *brüskten Widerstande* gegen die *krankmachenden* Elemente ... (NL 1888  
14[211], KSA 13.389)



Yet, as the first note makes clear, Nietzsche's preoccupation with *décadence* is not primarily medical or psychiatric in nature, but philosophical and moral. And in the late 1880s, he is prone to generalize the incapacity to resist well beyond modernity as an explanation of moral values and attitudes. This is nowhere clearer than in *The Antichrist*:

But if something is unevangelical it is the concept hero. Precisely the opposite of all struggling, of all feeling of doing battle has become instinct here: the incapacity for resistance becomes morality here ('resist not evil' the most profound words of the Gospels, the key to their meaning in a certain sense), blessedness in peace, in gentleness, in the *ability* not to be an enemy.

Aber wenn irgend Etwas unevangelisch ist, so ist es der Begriff Held. Gerade der Gegensatz zu allem Ringen, zu allem Sich-in-Kampf-fühlen ist hier Instinkt geworden: die Unfähigkeit zum Widerstand wird hier Moral ('widerstehe nicht dem Bösen' das tiefste Wort der Evangelien, ihr Schlüssel in gewissem Sinne), die Seligkeit im Frieden, in der Sanftmuth, im Nicht-feind-sein-können. (AC 29)

Or, more simply:

... 'Not to defend oneself, *not* to rage, *not* to make [others] responsible...  
But not even to resist the evil one, – to *love* him ...'

... 'Nicht sich wehren, *nicht* zürnen, *nicht* verantwortlich-machen ...  
Sondern auch nicht dem Bösen widerstehen, – ihn *lieben* ...' (AC 35)

– an attitude that culminates in the 'evangelical practice' that Nietzsche identifies as the core of Christianity:

The Christian is not distinguished by a 'belief' [faith]: the Christian acts, he distinguishes himself through an agency that is *otherwise*. That he offers no resistance, either in words or in his heart, towards the one who is evil towards him

Nicht ein 'Glaube' unterscheidet den Christen: der Christ handelt, er unterscheidet sich durch ein andres Handeln. Dass er dem, der böse gegen ihn ist, weder durch Wort, noch im Herzen Widerstand leistet. (AC 33)

The incapacity to resist hostile or 'evil' forces (*Nicht-feind-sein-können*) is here taken to be the physiological condition for the principal Christian values of love, humility, peace, but also their modern derivatives in compassion, tolerance, humanity,<sup>12</sup> even democratic rights and Kant's eternal peace.<sup>13</sup>

Yet 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 that conditions the 'instinctual hatred of reality' characteristic of Christianity:

*The instinctual hatred towards reality:* the consequence of an extreme susceptibility to suffering and to stimuli, which does not want to 'touched' at all any more, because it feels every contact too acutely.

*The instinctual exclusion of all aversion, all enmity, all boundaries and distances in feeling:* the consequence of an extreme susceptibility to suffering and to stimuli, which already feels all resisting, all having-to-resist as an unbearable *unpleasure* (that is to say as *damaging*, as *dissuaded* by the instinct of self-preservation) and knows blessedness (pleasure) only when it longer offers resistance to anyone, neither the wicked nor the evil, – love as the only, as the *final* possibility of life ...

*Der Instinkt-Hass gegen die Realität:* Folge einer extremen Leid- und Reizfähigkeit, welche überhaupt nicht mehr 'berührt' werden will, weil sie jede Berührung zu tief empfindet.

*Die Instinkt-Ausschliessung aller Abneigung, aller Feindschaft, aller Grenzen und Distanzen im Gefühl:* Folge einer extremen Leid- und Reizfähigkeit, welche jedes Widerstreben, Widerstreben-Müssen bereits als unerträgliche *Unlust* (das heisst als *schädlich*, als vom Selbsterhaltungs-Instinkte *widerrathen*) empfindet und die Seligkeit (die Lust) allein darin kennt, nicht mehr, Niemandem mehr, weder dem Übel, noch dem Bösen, Widerstand zu leisten, – die Liebe als einzige, als *letzte* Lebens-Möglichkeit ... (AC 30)

Or, as Nietzsche puts it laconically and brutally in *Ecce Homo*:

'Neighbourly love' [charity]. For me it counts as weakness, as a particular case of the incapacity to resist stimuli

'Nächstenliebe'. Sie gilt mir an sich als Schwäche, als Einzelfall der Widerstands-Unfähigkeit gegen Reize (EH Weise 4, KSA 6.270)

The renunciation of revenge, resistance, enmity and rage<sup>14</sup> in favour of love and peace is grounded in the unbearable unpleasure of resisting, of having-to-resist (*Widerstreben-müssen*) on the part of those who, unable to resist stimuli, suffer from extreme sensitivity. Nor is this diagnosis restricted to the origins of Christianity and evangelical practice; it is also applied to modern *décadence*:

[N]ot to be able to offer resistance when a stimulus is given,  
but to *have to* follow it: this extreme irritability of the *décadents* [...]

[N]icht Widerstand leisten können, wo ein Reiz gegeben ist,  
sondern ihm folgen *müssen*: diese extreme Irritabilität der  
*décadents* [...] (NL 1888 14[209], KSA 13.388)

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]

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 (NL 1888 17[6], KSA 13.527)

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 prescribes *the capacity to resist stimuli*. And the capacity to resist stimuli need not translate into anti-Christian values of enmity and warfare or anti-Christian practices of 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*. In a peculiar way, then, Nietzsche’s diagnosis of *décadence* as the incapacity resist stimuli leads via detour to a form of practice or ideal that approaches the evangelical practice, as when he writes:

Problem of the *philosopher* and of the  
*scholarly [scientific] human*.

*Ascending type*

Strength in calmness. In relative indifference and  
Difficulty in reacting.

Problem des *Philosophen* und des  
*wissenschaftlichen Menschen*.

*Aufgangs-Typus*

Stärke in der Ruhe. In der relativen Gleichgültigkeit und  
Schwierigkeit, zu reagiren. (NL 1888 14[83], KSA 13.262)

Or:

[...] the *calm of strength*, which is essentially abstention from reacting, the type of the gods whom nothing moves ...

[...] die *Ruhe der Stärke*, welche wesentlich Enthaltung der Reaktion ist, der Typus der Götter, welche nichts bewegt ... (NL 1888 14[65] 13.251)

The best-known formulation of Nietzsche's anti-decadent counter-praxis of calm and non-resistance occurs in the context of knowledge 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.

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. (GD Deutschen 6, KSA 6.108)

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.

*Sehen* lernen – dem Auge die Ruhe, die Geduld, das An-sich-herankommen-lassen angewöhnen; das Urtheil hinausschieben, den Einzelfall von allen Seiten umgehn und umfassen lernen. Das ist die *erste* Vorschulung zur Geistigkeit: auf einen Reiz *nicht* sofort reagieren, sondern die hemmenden, die abschliessenden Instinkte in die Hand bekommen. (GD Deutschen 6, KSA 6.108)

The attitude or practice of openness, patience and 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; indeed it comes closer to the evangelical practice not only in refraining from reacting and resisting external stimuli, but also in refraining from judgement. This is not, however, to assimilate the two, nor 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.

[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 zurückziehn. (GD Deutschen 6, KSA 6.109)

The capacity to resist stimuli makes possible a form of resistance that is *qualitatively distinct* from the forwards-grasping, coercive forms of agency that we usually associate with Nietzsche's ideal. Instead, it is a form of resistance that itself makes possible a non-coercive openness that would resist conceptual closure and allow us to acknowledge that which is radically other and particular in its otherness and particularity.

Once again, we see how the concept of resistance moves Nietzsche to formulate a notion of activity or agency that is non-coercive, non-oppressive and dependent on a sense of non-resistance. Pushing this thought further – perhaps a little too far – we could describe this as a hostile kind of evangelical practice and conclude that Nietzsche's concept of war culminates in an ideal of hostile love, or rather: a philosophical practice of hostile love.

## Notes

- 1 'Widerstehen', 'Widerstandskraft', 'Widerstandsgefühl', 'Widerstands-Unfähigkeit', 'Widerstreben', 'Widersacher' among others.
- 2 *Nietzsche-Wörterbuch* (Nietzsche Online. Berlin/Boston, De Gruyter, n.d. (<http://www.degruyter.com/view/NO>)).
- 3 Nietzsche writes of its 'zählen Widerstände gegen jeden Sonder-Anspruch, jedes Sonder-Recht und Vorrecht': JGB 202; NL 1887 11[179], KSA 13.78). In GM this is traced back to the priest, the 'natural antagonist' (*Widersacher*) of violent, healthy nobles, and the resistance he offered sick human animals against them: 'Er muss selber krank sein, er muss den Kranken und Schlechtweggekommenen von Grund aus verwandt sein, um sie zu verstehen, – um sich mit ihnen zu verstehen; aber er muss auch stark sein, mehr Herr noch über sich als über Andere, unversehrte namentlich in seinem Willen zur Macht, damit er das Vertrauen und die Furcht der Kranken hat, damit er ihnen Halt, Widerstand, Stütze, Zwang, Zuchtmeister, Tyrann, Gott sein kann. Er hat sie zu vertheidigen, seine Heerde – gegen wen? Gegen die Gesunden, es ist kein Zweifel, auch gegen den Neid auf die Gesunden; er muss der natürliche Widersacher und Verächter aller rohen, stürmischen, zügellosen, harten, gewaltthätig-raubthierhaften Gesundheit und Mächtigkeit sein' (GM III 15, KSA 5.372).
- 4 See NL 1888 14[83], KSA 13.262 contra Kant; NL 1887 9[91], KSA 12.387; cf. GD Deutschen 6, KSA 6.108 on objectivity as a result of 'Unvermögen, einem Reize Widerstand zu leisten'. I turn to this in the final section.
- 5 For example NL 1884 27[24], KSA 11.281; NL 1888 14[81], KSA 13.260. See Siemens 2017. This is not, however, to deny the affirmative sense of resistance in Nietzsche's counter-concept of freedom. For 'freedom under pressure', 'freedom under the law', 'dancing in chains' and related expressions, see: NL 1888 14[14], KSA 13.224; NL 1882 3[1].358, KSA 10; FW 290; JGB 188; NL 1875 6[24], KSA 8.107; NL 1885

- 34[92], KSA 11.450f.; WS 140; WS 10. This concept of freedom is discussed at length in Siemens 2006.
- 6 For an extended treatment of Nietzsche's critique of substance ontology, see Aydin (2003).
- 7 On Nietzsche's dynamic, relational concept of force (*Kraft*) and its sources, see Abel (1984: 6–27) and Mittasch (1952: 102–13). On Nietzsche's concept of power (*Macht*), see also Gerhardt (1996: 155–61, 203–45, 285–309).
- 8 '[...] a force *without* limits, and at the same time *with* all the limits, [a force] that engenders all relations — that would be a force without *specific* force, a nonsense. — Thus the limitedness of force, and the placing itself of this force in relation to others is "knowledge". *Not* subject [in relation] to object: rather, something different [...]' (NL 1880 6[441], KSA 9.312)
- '[...] eine Kraft *ohne* Grenzen, und zugleich *mit* allen Grenzen, die alle Relationen schafft — das wäre eine Kraft ohne *bestimmte* Kraft, ein Unsinn. — Also die Beschränktheit der Kraft, und das immer weiter in Verhältniß Setzen dieser Kraft zu andern ist "Erkenntniß". *Nicht* Subjekt zu Objekt: sondern etwas Anderes. [...]'
- 9 See Aydin (2003: 44, 142) and Mittasch (1952).
- 10 See Abel (1984: 16ff).
- 11 '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 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' (NL 1888 14[65], KSA 13.250).
- 12 NL 1888 23[4], KSA 13.606:
- '2) die Widerstands-Unfähigkeit: z.B. im Mitleiden,  
– er giebt nach ("nachsichtig" "tolerant" ...  
"er versteht Alles")  
"Frieden und den Menschen ein Wohlgefallen"  
[...]
- 5) die Schwäche, die sich in der Furcht vor Affekten,  
starkem Willen, vor Ja und Nein äußert: er ist  
liebenswert, um nicht feind sein zu müssen, – um  
nicht Partei nehmen zu müssen –
- 6) die Schwäche, die sich im Nicht-sehn-Wollen  
verrät, überall, wo vielleicht Widerstand nöthig werden  
würde ("Humanität")'
- 13 Understood as the impulse to avoid confrontation by creating conditions where it is no longer necessary to resist and defend oneself:  
'– Der Rest von Menschen, alles, was nicht kriegerisch  
von Instinkt ist, will Frieden, will Eintracht, will "Freiheit",  
will "gleiche Rechte" –: das sind nur Namen und Stufen für

Ein und dasselbe.

– Dorthin gehen, wo man nicht nöthig hat, sich zu wehren.

Solche Menschen werden unzufrieden mit sich, wenn sie genöthigt sind, Widerstand zu leisten

– Zustände schaffen, wo es überhaupt keinen Krieg mehr giebt.’ (NL 1888 15[116] 13.475). This is the precisely the aim of Kant’s articles of peace in *Zum ewigen Frieden*: to destroy (*vernichten*) the occasions for future wars.

14 Cf. NL 1888 14[65], KSA 13.250:

‘[...] die Schwächung als Verzichtleisten auf Rache, auf Widerstand, auf Feindschaft und Zorn.

der Fehlgriff in der Behandlung: man will die Schwäche nicht bekämpfen durch ein système fortifiant, sondern durch eine Art Rechtfertigung und Moralisierung: d.h. durch eine Auslegung...[...].’

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